

carpe diem

for Life!

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Thousands Brave the Cold to March for Life

by Mary Ailes

Thousands from across the nation, including bishops from the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), braved the massive snowstorm that shut down major cities along the Eastern seaboard of the United States, and joined the annual March for Life on January 22, 2014, in Washington, D.C.

"I am honored to stand, along with my fellow bishops of the Anglican Church in North America," said ACNA Archbishop Robert Duncan, "in recognition of the millions lost through abortion and to demonstrate our commitment to uphold the sanctity of life for all of God's children." Archbishop Duncan had flown back from East Africa to join the event.

"The Anglican Church in North America has a deep commitment to the sanctity of life," said the Rt. Rev. John Guernsey, bishop of the Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic. "Our hope is that the presence of many of our bishops for the March for Life this year will help spur the Church to even greater support for the sacredness of human life."

Following the landmark Supreme Court ruling *Roe v Wade* on January 22, 1973, thousands have assembled each year on that date to witness to the sanctity of human life.

"Wherever you look in the world, you can see God's commitment to life. New life springs up everywhere, even in the most hostile circumstances. But new life is also fragile and vulnerable," said the Rt. Rev. Bill Atwood of the International Diocese, who flew in from Texas. "Tragically in our culture, those who cannot speak for themselves—the unborn—are the most vulnerable of all human life. Scripture calls us to be faithful to God's creation of life and support His agenda for life and redemption. That means that we are to model the ministry of Jesus, standing up and speaking out for those who cannot speak for or defend themselves."



Anglican Bishops from around the country joined Georgette & Anglicans for Life at the March for Life!

The Anglican bishops began their day in prayer by participating in the ecumenical prayer service at the National Memorial for the Preborn and their Mothers and Fathers at the historic Constitution Hall. Following the service, the bishops gathered at the Institute for Religion and Democracy for brunch and then made their way to the Washington Mall for the March for Life and Rally.

On the Mall, they were joined by other Anglicans, including members from All Nations DC (Washington, D.C.), Potomac Falls Anglican Church (Potomac Falls, VA), The Falls Church Anglican (Falls Church, VA), Shepherd's Heart Anglican Church (Fairfax, VA), Truro Anglican Church (Fairfax, VA), and others. All were wrapped up in multi-layered clothes to protect themselves from the plunging cold temperatures, as they stood on the snow-covered grounds of the Washington Mall.

A rally was held before the start of the march that included speak-

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“March for Life,” from p. 1

ers such as Dr. James Dobson founder of Focus on the Family, as well as music from singer/composer Matt Maher. Also on the platform was Georgette Forney, President of Anglicans for Life and a founder of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign, where those impacted by the pain and grief of abortion share their personal stories on the steps of the Supreme Court during the March for Life.

“A love of life—for lives of unborn children, elderly, and those most vulnerable—is a natural reflection of Christ’s love for each of us; it is not as much a requirement of Christian life as a privilege of it,” Georgette Forney wrote before this year’s March for Life, commending Anglicans to join their bishops and come to Washington.

By 1:30 p.m. the March for Life was underway, with thousands walking up Constitution Avenue to Capitol Hill and to the steps of the Supreme Court. It soon became quite obvious that the overwhelming majority of those marching were under the age of 21. Carrying signs that said, “Team Life,” and “I am the Pro-Life Generation,” the young people marched knowing *Roe v Wade* has been in effect for their entire lives and it is their generation that has lost an estimated 55 million through legalized abortion in the United States.

“It was a privilege to stand shoulder to shoulder with our Anglican brothers and sisters, as well as the larger Body of Christ, in contending for issues pertaining to life in our nation,” said the Rt. Rev. David Bryan, Bishop of PEARUSA’s Southeast Network, who had flown in from South Carolina. “It is encouraging and hopeful to see how well the younger generation was represented in the March for Life.”

“The March for Life is remarkable in that hundreds of thousands of people care enough about life to brave bitter cold to speak out for life,” said Bishop Atwood. “It is inspiring that so many young people were involved, probably the majority of those present at the march. Everywhere I looked there were young people under twenty-five, many wearing ‘I’m worth waiting for’ buttons, carrying signs and smiles, and even picking up litter along the way. The future looks really bright even in the cold!”

The Anglican marchers included ACNA Canadians who found public support for the sanctity of human life from fellow Canadians in front of the Canadian Embassy, prominently located right on the march route on Constitution Avenue. They all stood for a picture in front of their embassy, anticipating that they would see

the Canadian-version of the March for Life on Thursday, May 8 2014, in Ottawa.

On Saturday, January 25, 2014, Bishop Eric Mendez of the Diocese of San Joaquin, will join fellow bishops and other Anglicans to participate in the 9th Annual Walk for Life West Coast in San Francisco, CA. They will witness, as the canons of the Anglican Church in North America state, that “God, and not man, is the creator of human life. The unjustified taking of life is sinful. Therefore, all members and Clergy are called to protect and respect the sanctity of every human life from conception to natural death.” (Canon II.8.3)

“Advocating for the life of the unborn is the civil rights issue of our day, and it is a great honor to serve and love the culture of life as a bishop,” said the Rt. Rev. Stewart Ruch, Bishop of the Diocese of the Upper Midwest who came from Wheaton, IL, for the March for Life. “Here, in the Upper Midwest, we are working and praying toward seeing a revival of Word and Sacrament. I am convinced this revival includes reversal of the culture of death—I have faith my generation will celebrate the day in which the culture of life is legally sanctioned. Until then we will pray, witness, preach, and march.”

Mary Ailes is the Director of Communications for the Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic. Photos by Dennis Eagan, the Rev. Jeremiah Brown, and Mary Ailes.

Read more about Anglicans for Life Canada on page 7.



The Rev. Vicky Hedelius and her group from Anglicans for Life in Canada

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March for Life - Rebuilding a Culture of Life

Meg and I joined many from our diocese and hundreds of thousands from across the country at the 41st March for Life in Washington on Wednesday.

In spite of temperatures in the teens and a wind chill below zero, a massive crowd was there, with 80% of the participants age 25 or younger. That is astonishing.

After 41 years of legalized abortion and being relentlessly told that we must accept this “right,” the March for Life grows bigger and bigger and younger and younger.

I was delighted to spend time during the March with three of The Falls Church’s Nehemiah Venture interns and I praise God for the leadership of these young adults in discipling our teens. They know that one-third of their generation has been lost to abortion and they are helping to rebuild a culture of life among us.

The March for Life is one of the most joyous, positive experiences I know and the overwhelming presence and enthusiasm of so many young people gives great hope for the future.

Our diocese again hosted the bishops of the Anglican Church in North America as we joined in upholding the sanctity of life. (Great thanks to our staff team for all their hard work!) This year, 11 bishops were on hand, including Archbishop Duncan, who flew overnight from Africa to get here—it was to be 18 bishops, but the snow and canceled flights

prevented seven from making it.

Additional bishops will be participating in the Walk for Life in San Francisco on Saturday. I am so thankful for this united witness from such a large portion of our College of Bishops.

Before the March itself, the bishops helped lead the ecumenical prayer service at Constitution Hall, were hosted at a brunch by the staff of the Institute on Religion and Democracy, then headed out into the cold on the Mall for the Rally and walk to the Supreme Court.

Testimonies are a key part of the witness of the March for Life. Georgette Forney, President of Anglicans for Life co-founded the Silent No More Awareness Campaign to tell the stories of women and men who have experienced the great hurt caused by abortion and to bring healing and hope.

You can read and watch Silent No More testimonies here:
abortiontestimony.com

Georgette Forney’s own powerful testimony can be read here: www.anglicansforlife.org/content/realities-abortion-%E2%80%93-reflections-my-journey

At next year’s March for Life, we’ll be there again. Mark your calendars for Thursday, January 22, 2015 and join in this glorious witness to life.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

The Rt. Rev. John A. M. Guernsey

Welcome to the Polar Vortex Issue of Carpe Diem!

by Georgette Forney

As noted in many of the articles in this issue, the March this year was very cold and snowy, but the weather didn’t slow us down!

In addition to the bishops marching, members of the Silent No more Awareness Campaign (co-sponsored by Anglicans for Life) provided testimonies at both events. Our Regional Coordinator for Connecticut shared her testimony in front of thousands on the Mall in DC, and millions more viewed it on C-Span and EWTN. For the first time, a father who lost a child to abortion shared his testimony from prison, after completing a healing program during his incarceration. His written story was read by Kevin Burke, SNMAC’s Pastoral Associate. In San Francisco, Campaign members were interviewed for EWTN’s television show ‘Life on the Rock.’

While the testimonies were being shared, thousands of referral cards were handed out in the crowds at both events, so walkers and marchers could have information to find help for anyone they know who is hurting after abortion. We gave a card to Tammy, a homeless woman who stood off to the side of the stage in San Francisco listening to the abortion testimonies. Every time the word abortion was said, Tammy would shriek loudly. When we sought to help her, she screamed how her parents forced her to have two abortions. Her anguish was palpable and her grief seemed inconsolable. I keep praying for Tammy and wonder how many prisoners and homeless folks are suffering after abortion like her and Kevin’s friend?

How can the Church, your church, my church, take what happened in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, and at other March for Life events throughout the our country and make a difference for life, day after day? How does our witness in the streets translate into our daily lives over the next eleven months?

It must start in our hearts, individually and collectively. It must start with some soul searching—asking ourselves some tough questions. Do I

believe life is sacred? Do I believe God is the creator of life? Do I believe it is wrong to kill unborn children in the womb and the elderly, disabled, and terminally ill? Do I believe these things fervently enough to DO something about them?

If you said yes four times—let’s team up and get busy! Here are a few things you can do to get started:

- Help your church provide a witness for life by becoming a Life Liaison Leader in your church.
- Use AFL’s Curriculums - Project Life and Embrace the Journey to educate yourself and others about life issues.
- Pray daily to end abortion and prevent assisted suicide from being legalized – join the AFL prayer team to have our prayer calendars sent to you.
- Request AFL’s 2014 Life-Affirming Activities Calendar, that features a different life topic monthly and a variety of things to do, prayers to pray and facts to share.
- Pledge monthly financial support to Anglicans for Life and see your gift make twice the impact through a Matching Grant. [Details are explained on the next page.]
- Get AFL’s list of 99 things you can do to protect life and commit to doing one of them daily.

You can request these items by sending us a note with your donation in the enclosed envelope. As Fr. Laird said, “And now the march will continue, day after day, in thousands of churches and pro-life resource centers and in the work of our own Anglicans for Life, until we gather to march together next January 22.”

As we aspire to march on... imagine what will happen when every Christian in every church does one thing every day to uphold the sacredness of life. God’s people will defeat the evil forces that seek to kill, steal and destroy life. It can start with you! So please join your bishops in making life a priority in your schedule in 2014.



Life Leaders Update

All Saints Anglican Church
Attleboro, Massachusetts

AFL Chapter Leader, Carol Leonard & church members Ruby, Erin, & Katie celebrated the National Cupcakes for Life campaign in October!



In January, members of the Chapter also joined All Saints to celebrate Sanctity of Life Sunday by sharing the 2014 AFL bulletin insert.



Why We March

As we geared up for the March for Life events, inevitably someone asks why we March and bother showing up every year in the freezing cold. Different people march for different reasons so there is not one pat answer. But we asked the 19 Anglican Bishops who were planning to join the March and the Walk for Life this year, why they did so, here are their responses:

1. Bp. John Miller – I march because I believe every human God creates deserves to have life according to His plan; someone must bear witness to that divine truth. I march for the many children who will never use their feet to walk, their lips to speak, their ears to hear, or their hearts to love. I march to acknowledge their tragic loss; I am honored to do so.
2. Bp. John Guernsey - I march to honor God the creator of life and in support of those who are at the beginning or the end of life, those who are the weakest and most vulnerable among us” –
3. Bp. Wood – Marching for the first time with my fellow bishops, I am inspired by the amount of people standing up for Life in Washington DC. Our prayer is that we will be examples in the Anglican Church and global Church, as leaders standing for Life.
4. Bp. Ilgenfritz – I am so grateful to have the opportunity to listen to the stories of men and women who gave their testimonies at the March for Life—their stories are a powerful reminders of the destructiveness and pain of the sin of abortion.
5. Bp. Sutton – Because Christ has given us the Gospel of Life, which calls us as Christians always to stand for and protect life, we march for the generation of children we have lost since January 22nd, 1973—and that, by marching, we can inspire the next generation’s children to embrace God’s gift of Life.
6. Bp. Atwood – The tenets of the Anglican Church of North America declares the Sanctity of Life. By marching my fellow bishops and I serve as a visible declaration of the Church’s continuing defense of the defenseless, the unborn.
7. Bp. Breedlove –My wife Sally and I march not only for the children who have been lost to abortion but for the women and men who have been devastated by a Culture of Death



See Why We March on p. 6

Bishops Praying and Leading for Life

Archbishop Robert Duncan - January 22, 2014 - March for Life The National Memorial for the Preborn and their Mothers and Fathers: Closing Prayer and Blessing

Almighty God, Heavenly Father, Holy Trinity, One God: You created all things in heaven and on earth and ordered human kind to have stewardship of it all; You made us in your image, male and female, and gave us voice to praise you and to speak your Truth; and You came to us in the Incarnation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, born of a pregnancy of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary; Renew within us, in the power of the Holy Spirit, a commitment to steward your creation, especially of the unborn, and of all those living who have no one to defend their life.

Restore in us Your image as co-creators and givers of life, with voices aligned with Your voice and voices lifted for the voiceless, silent no more.

Re-establish justice in our land, justice for all, especially for the unborn, the terminally ill, the poor, the need, the threatened, the defenseless, and bring the reign of our Lord and Savior here today.

So, brothers and sisters as the Apostle Paul exhorted, be watchful, stand firm in your faith and in action, be courageous, be strong, let everything you do be done in love. And, the blessing of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with you all today and forever. Amen.



Arch Bp. Duncan @ National Memorial Service



Georgette & Bp. Menees, Walk for Life West Coast

Bp. Eric Menees - January 25, 2014 - Walk For Life-Invocation (English)

Father God send your Holy Spirit upon us as we gather in this plaza - and in this city - that we may beautifully and wonderfully represent you and your special love for women and babies.

Father we thank you for allowing us to speak this day on behalf of the most vulnerable in our midst - pregnant women and their unborn babies.

Father we know that every abortion grieves your heart because your Word declares to us that all people are made in your image. (Genesis 1:27)

From the moment of conception to natural death we as human beings bear the ability and the responsibility to reflect you and your love in a fallen world.

Forgive us Father for our failure as a nation and as individuals to protect your unborn children.

We gather today dear Lord as men and women - boys and girls united with a common voice - and a common plea - **END THE ABORTIONS THAT END INNOCENT LIVES** - and scars so many women and men - Women and men who act out of fear - who act out of ignorance - and who feel that they have no options.

We beg your blessing dear Lord upon our endeavors today - that we will faithfully represent the very best of what it means to be men and women of peace - but who stand resolute in our struggle to protect the most innocent among us.

ALL THIS I ASK IN THE NAME OF MY LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST - AMEN.

Bp. Menees - Invocation (Spanish)

El Señor sea con ustedes - Padre celestial - te damos gracias por su santa presencia hoy con nosotros.

Padre te damos gracias por el gran privilegio que nos has dado - a manifestar su Amor a un mundo lleno de dolor y angustia - y a manifestar su Gracia en este cuidado hoy! Tu sabes Señor que no estamos caminando - ni luchando contra nadie - estamos caminando y luchando en favor de los niños en el vientre - y sus madres.

Perdonanos Señor por todas las veces que estuvimos en silencio- cuando pudíamos haber ayudado a una hermana embarazada.

Perdonanos Señor por todas las veces cuando pudíamos hablar en favor de la sanctidad de la vida y nos quedamos callados.

Ayudanos Señor este día a ser sus brazos y su corazón a la mujer que cree que no tiene otra opción pero el aborto.

Permitanos Señor este día a comunicar con los de autoridad en el gobierno - que cuando voten a favor del aborto ellos no nos representen a nosotros - ni los bebés del mundo.

Bendícenos Señor y ayudanos estar unidos en nuestra lucha - para proteger los inocentes y sus madres.

ALL THIS I ASK IN THE NAME OF MY LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST - AMEN.

in which life is being devalued in countless ways. We pray that by marching we can not only change the hearts of those considering abortion but also declare compassion and hope for all those struggling with the pain and sorrow of their decisions. By marching we proclaim the peace and healing freely given to us all by Christ.

8. **Bp. Hicks** – I march because I believe what is said in the book of Jeremiah, when God states “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.”
9. Bp. Masters – I march because of the plight of the unborn in a culture that increasingly embraces abortion. We, as the church must call attention to their value and seek to protect them.
10. Bp. Beach – I march shoulder to shoulder with members of the Anglican College of Bishops, to provide a witness that our church affirms that life is given by God and that we are against the destruction of life through abortion and euthanasia.
11. Bp. Bryan – The Psalms describe God as the Divine Creator. “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.” He is the giver of Life and all those who follow Him know how much He loves life. Today we march because we wish to protect the lives that He hold sacred.
12. Bp. Wm. Wilson – It is remarkable to see the attendance at the March—every year there are more people who want the world to know that abortion is not the answer. We march because we believe that God can use this march to inspire the greater Anglican Commune to stand up for Life.



Arch Bp. Robert Duncan and Alex Leighton marched with AFL

13. **Bp. Lipka** – In Deuteronomy it is written: “I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God.” Choosing Life is not a political issue—it is God’s mandate to us, his people. So we march so that others may see how God has ordained life and our duty as his Children to protect it.

14. Bp. Thompson – The Canon’s of the Anglican Church state that God, not man, is the creator of human life and that the clergy are called to respect and protect the sanctity of life. We march because the sanctity of life is not just a “hot topic” issue but a truth on which the Anglican Church was founded.



Cn. Jack Lunanog and Bp. Menees @ Walk for Life West Coast, San Francisco, January 25

15. Bp. Ruch – “The greatest civil rights concern of our day is the protection of the unborn, and we as Anglican bishops consider it a sacred charge to stand with the most vulnerable. We invite our clergy and laity to work and pray with us in this most important culture of life movement.”
16. Bp. Murdoch – Over 40 years ago, the Church was silent and Roe vs Wade was decided. Now we march because the Church can no longer be silent in the face of the millions of children who have died.
17. ArchBp. Duncan – As we march in Washington, we do so prayerfully—we pray for those involved in crisis pregnancies, that they would choose life, and that those who once chose abortion would seek and receive forgiveness and peace in Christ. And we pray for more churches to join us in upholding the sacredness of life.

These bishops joined in the Walk for Life West Coast:

18. Bp. Menees - Often we buy into the media description of these events as Protest Rallies - I disagree. In Spanish this is called a “manifestación” - easily translated into English as “manifestation.” That is what this is...a manifestation of Jesus’ presence and love for the most vulnerable and fragile in our midst - pregnant mothers and the babies in their wombs. This is why the Anglican Bishops make this a priority in our schedule.
19. **Bp. Lowenfield** – As a faithful Christians, where ever we are, the Spirit of God is also, and I march with God’s light and love in a world getting darker every day.

*The highlighted names reflect Bishops who had flights cancelled and were not able to participate in events, but were with us in spirit.

SAVE THE DATE:

March for Life Thursday, January 22, 2015

Walk for Life West Coast Saturday, January 24, 2015

Visit AFL’s website for more
March for life & Walk for Life
images:

www.anglicansforlife.org/life_leaders/in_action

Anglican Proud in Canada



The Truth Proclaimed by The Rev. Vicky Hedelius

Today, as the winter wind continues to blow across the Mall of Washington DC, through those grand streets and swirling up over the steps of the Supreme Court, it would appear that all traces of the recent March for Life have been swept away and nothing more than mere memories remain as captured in a multitude of snapshots and videos of that one day in January 2014. It would appear that the hundreds of thousands of people, both young and old; politicians, church leaders, organizers, and marchers; along with their signs, their slogans, their presence are—all gone! And daily living has returned—with business as usual—all is quiet—all is forgotten!

But, in reality, that is not the case—for the people who participated are still proclaiming the Message! And this Message is continuing to touch the lives of many more as it spreads out across the world. Millions can see that we who witnessed The Truth proclaimed on those streets and on those steps cannot be silenced. Human Life is Sacred! All life—from the moment of conception, through each precious breath of life, to the last one in natural death—all Life is Sacred! Each human life is to be protected! This

profound Message, although, spoken with human voice comes directly from Almighty God, Creator of all Life, through His Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit!

We, as Anglicans, all across North America, are rising to the challenge of this Message. As you reflect upon the March and the Message, look carefully at the snapshots and videos. Listen, intently, to the stories of healing and restoration. Witness for yourself His Holy Spirit! And know that your Anglican brothers and sisters in Christ are with you! Encourage others to join you and Anglicans For Life!

As AFL comes to Canada, get ready for the Holy Spirit to gather Anglicans from across North America to once again publicly proclaim His Message—that Life is Sacred! Hear His call to join together in the Canadian National March for Life, in Ottawa this coming May!

The Rev. Vicky Hedelius is the Director of our newly-formed Anglicans for Life Canada. You may email her here:
canada@anglicansforlife.org.



AFL Prez, Georgette Forney and AFL Administrative Assistant, Robin Sencenbach met for some down time after the March for Life in Washington, D.C. with The Rev. Vicky Hedelius, who is leading the development of Anglicans for Life in Canada.

Save-the-Date National March for Life Ottawa, Canada

The Rev. Vicky Hedelius invites you to join the National March and Conference for Anglicans in Canada.

Your church
can make a difference...
For Life!
National March for Life
May 8, 2014
Parliament Hill, Ottawa



2 Days—2 Events!

Quasar Conference for Anglicans on May 7

Supper & Seminar with Georgette
Wednesday, May 7, 2014 5pm-9pm
Buffet, coffee, dessert, & Quasar Conference with Georgette Forney, President, Anglicans for Life
St. Peter and St. Paul Anglican Church, 152 Metcalfe St., downtown Ottawa
Join us as we welcome **Georgette Forney**, President of Anglicans for Life and
Co-Founder of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign.

National March for Life on Thursday, May 8

10:00 am - Ecumenical March for Life Service at St. Peter and St. Paul Anglican Church,
152 Metcalfe St., Ottawa
Noon - Parliament Hill Since 1969, over 4 million children have been killed by abortion in Canada. This
year, another 100,000 babies will be put to death, at taxpayer expense, while society turns a blind eye. By
your presence, you can show lawmakers that the abortion issue is not settled.



Anglicans for Life

is the only global Anglican ministry dedicated to inspiring the Anglican Church to understand and compassionately apply God's Word when addressing abortion, abstinence, adoption, euthanasia, and embryonic stem cell research.

Shoulder to Shoulder for Life!

by The Venerable Canon Dr. Jack I. Lumanog
Canon for Provincial and Global Mission

My heart was broken to hear of the testimonies from the Silent No More campaign. The brave women and the lone man who shared their stories of pain, regret, heartbreak were almost too much to take in. But the hope in Christ that each found and bore witness to powerfully is the hope we need to share with a broken world obsessed with “choice.”

As the walk began, it was remarkable to see so many young faces part of the Walk for Life. Though I am still a young leader in the Church, the youthfulness of the crowd made me feel a bit old! But, the joy of our hope in Christ in the face of the dire reality we find ourselves in as a nation was so uplifting to me.

Bishop Eric Menees (Diocese of San Joaquin) and I were so warmly embraced by the mostly Roman Catholic leadership of the Walk for Life. Bishop Menees and I were honored to be with Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of the Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco and to stand shoulder to shoulder with Catholic bishops from the region at the Walk for Life in San Francisco. This was our unity in Christ and in standing for the culture of life that was a powerful witness to the 60,000+ faithful gathered for the Walk for Life.

The Anglican Church in North America was featured prominently in the day's proceedings – with the Silent

No More testimonies (with Georgette Forney as a co-founder), Bishop Menees delivering an anointed and prophetic invocation in English and in Spanish, to Georgette Forney receiving the St. Gianna Molla award for her dedicated work to the pro-life movement – our Province is making strides within the greater Church for our commitment to life!



Walk for Life West Coast, San Francisco, January 25

anglicansforlife

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I Will Never Recover

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

On January 22, I followed the call from Georgette Forney and her staff at Anglicans for Life to “Join Your Bishop!” at the March for Life in Washington, D.C. I joined Bp. Foley Beach of our own Anglican Diocese of the South, along with ten other bishops, including Archbishop Robert Duncan of the Anglican Church in North America, Anglican clergy and laity from across the country, and even from Canada. And we marched for life.

I may never recover.

Oh, I recovered quickly enough from the freezing cold and the wind-chill factor, all of which conspired to turn fingers, noses, ears, and feet into frozen appendages despite thermal heat pads applied liberally to boots, gloves, and back. This temporary discomfort resolved after a few minutes back in our warm hotel with some hot coffee.

The recovery from the cold was easy.

What I may never recover from, and in fact pray that I don't ever recover from, was being there, to use our brother Paul's imagery, as one tiny little cell of the glorious Body of Christ, His Church. I don't know, nor can I find, a break-out of the numbers, but I am certain that of the estimated 250,000 to 300,000 souls there that cold and blustery day, the vast majority were Christians, those called to follow Christ as His own forever, a royal priesthood of all believers who proclaim the Gospel of God's sovereignty over all life and His eternal victory over death - to tell our nation and the world that God is the God of life and not death!

Think of it - a quarter of a million Christians united, regardless of denomination, gender, race, color and age to proclaim God's ever-present care for the most vulnerable among us: the unborn child, the infirm and those at the very end of this earthly life! And the part about “regardless of . . . age”? that was a part of the Body of Christ that was most mind boggling. Tens of thousands of those there in the cold that day were young people! High school students, college students, other young adults - all of them filled with energy and joy and purpose and passion - to stand together for the value of each and every life.

As one banner, which many of them carried, proclaimed: “Life counts.” And on that banner was the picture of a newborn, held aloft by a pair of hands, held up to the light of life against a black background of death.

Life is of God, and each life is precious in His sight! And, as the Church marched for life, for those precious hours the Kingdom came on earth as it is in heaven - in Washington, D.C. of all places! And now the march will continue, day after day, in thousands of churches and pro-life resource centers and in the work of our own Anglicans for Life, until we gather to march together next January 22.

The culture of death will, by God's grace, eventually end, and life will become the right for every child of God, from conception to natural death. I ‘joined my bishop,’ and together with a wonderful and glorious gathering of Christ's Church we marched for life. I will never recover. Thanks be to God! And so, God willing, I'll join them next year. May ever more and more of our brothers and sisters march with us . . . for Life!

In Christ, Who came to us as a babe in Mary's womb,

The Rev. Laird Bryson, Apostles Anglican Church, Knoxville, TN