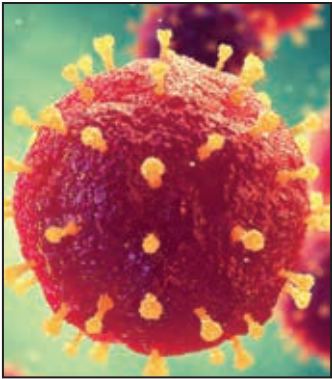




Liberal government  
attempts to  
outlaw  
conversion  
therapy  
p. 2



The culture  
of death  
in the  
time of  
coronavirus  
p. 4, 5, 8



Nova Scotia  
enacts  
anti-free speech  
bubble zone  
law  
p. 11

# The Interim

Canada's Life and Family Newspaper

April 2020, Vol. XXXVII No.2

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## Conservative leadership race

One pro-lifer barred from running  
One pro-lifer disqualified  
Two pro-lifers still in race  
p. 3





# Federal ban on ‘conversion therapy’ threatens to jail caring parents



## Law Matters John Carpay

If Trudeau’s Bill C-8 becomes law, parents could spend up to five years in jail for trying to help their son accept himself as a boy, or for helping their daughter to accept herself as a girl. C-8 would also impose prison terms up to five years for doctors, counsellors, psychiatrists, psychologists, and other paid professionals whose treatment for gender confusion departs from the new gender orthodoxy. If MPs vote to make C-8 the law, parents and professionals wanting to help gender-dysphoric children will effectively have only one legal option: to encourage a confused child to “transition” to the opposite gender.

“Transitioning” means taking puberty blockers, opposite-sex hormones, and even undergoing permanent sterilization and physical surgeries: healthy organs such as breasts and testicles are removed.

The Liberal government’s new ban on “conversion therapy” defines it as “a practice, treatment or service designed to change a person’s sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour.” The term “cis-gender” (pronounced “sis-gender”) is a term used by transgender activists to refer to a woman who also feels like (or identifies as) a woman, or a man who feels like (or identifies as) a man. Under C-8, trying to change “gender identity” to “cisgender” means trying to help a male feel comfortable as a male, or likewise helping a female to feel comfortable as a woman. If C-8 becomes law, it will become criminal in Canada to help boys and girls who struggle with gender identity to find peace in accepting biological reality.

Bill C-8 ignores the fact that the vast majority of children experiencing gender identity disorder will outgrow it by the time they reach the age of 18, provided that they are allowed to go through puberty. Over the course of many years, doctors Kenneth J. Zucker and Susan Bradley helped hundreds of children at the Gender Identity Service of Toronto’s Centre for Addiction and Mental Health feel comfortable in the body they were born in.

Bill C-8 creates a one-way street. Helping a confused boy to accept his gender becomes criminal. But causing a boy to feel uncomfortable about being a boy, and suggesting to youngsters that “there is no such thing as boys and girls,” and convincing a girl that she is actually a boy trapped in a girl’s body, all remain perfectly legal. Activists who have so shrewdly infiltrated our public (and religious) schools have nothing to fear from C-8; they can continue sexualizing our children and promoting transgender ideology to vulnerable youth.

Bill C-8 also imposes this hypocrisy with regard to sexual orientation. C-8 ignores the reality of people who testify publicly about having personally experienced changes in their sexual orientation, for which they are grateful. Trudeau Senior said “there’s no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation,” but Trudeau Junior is now inviting the state into the offices of all doctors, counsellors and clergy.

Bill C-8 makes it illegal to “cause” a person under the age of 18 to undergo “conversion therapy,” which includes trying to reduce non-heterosexual sexual behaviour. Religious counselling is certainly both a “practice” and a “service” that falls under C-8. Religious adherents voluntarily discuss their sexual attractions and sexual behaviour with trusted and respected clergy. C-8 creates a double-standard for people who seek to reduce – or eliminate – their sexually promiscuous behaviour. C-8 allows pastors, rabbis, imams, and priests to counsel straight people (of all ages) to refrain from sexual promiscuity. But C-8 makes it a crime for those same religious leaders to counsel gay teens to refrain from sexual promiscuity. C-8 also makes it a crime for clergy to help children and teens to accept their birth-gender.

It would be possible to challenge C-8 in court for violating *Charter* rights and freedoms, like the right of parents to raise and educate their own children as parents deem best, and the freedoms of religion, expression and association. But it would be far, far better to defeat this anti-*Charter* bill, and prevent it from becoming law in the first place. Canadians who care about children and who cherish our *Charter* freedoms need to contact their MP immediately.

*Lawyer John Carpay is president of the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms (JCCF.ca).*

# Trudeau government proposes conversion therapy ban

## Yukon looks to join provinces, cities outlawing the procedure

Paul Tuns

On March 6, Justice Minister David Lametti tabled a bill to make it a crime to outlaw conversion therapy for minors to help them overcome same-sex extraction or gender confusion.

If passed Bill C-8 will add five new crimes to the Criminal Code including causing a minor to undergo conversion therapy, removing a minor from Canada to undergo such treatment, to cause a person to have conversion therapy against his or her will, to profit from conversion therapy, or to advertise such services.

Bill C-8 defines “conversion therapy” as “a practice, treatment or service designed to change a person’s sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour.” It adds: “For greater certainty, this definition does not include a practice, treatment or service that relates (a) to a person’s gender transition; or (b) to a person’s exploration of their identity or to its development.”

The penalties for advertising or profiting from such services is a maximum of two years in jail while those convicted of causing a child to undergo conversion therapy in Canada or abroad or forcing an adult to undergo such treatment carries a maximum of five years in prison.

In a press conference, Lametti said, “As to minors, we are criminalizing this across the board.” But he also said the additional measures would criminalize “coerced” conversion therapy and activities related to providing the therapy for adults, effectively banning it completely.

Lametti admitted the political nature of the bill, saying it provides a “balance between progressive policies and constitutional (rights).” He boasted that if Bill C-8 is passed, “Canada’s law will be the most progressive and comprehensive in the world.”

But the Justice Minister dismissed concerns about constitutional rights when a reporter asked about any infringement of *Charter* rights to freedom of expression and religion by saying that the government was more concerned about the “devastating effects” of conversion therapy.

Lametti called conversion therapy a “discredited practice” and “not based in science.” He also said conversion therapy “sends a demeaning and degrading message.” He was joined at the press conference by Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Youth Bardish Chagger and so-called survivors of conversion therapy.

Conservative Party MP and leadership hopeful Derek Sloan, one of two pro-life candidates

on the leadership ballot supported by Campaign Life Coalition, called the Trudeau government’s C-8 “madness,” saying that if passed parents will go jail for trying to help their minor children. In an email to supporters, Sloan said: “The Liberals condemn the notion that parents should be able to help a child identify with the body they were born with. ‘Conversion therapy’ is what they call any professional treatment in this area. All the while, the Liberals celebrate giving a child hormones and irreversible plastic surgery as ‘gender affirmation’.” He added: “If that seems backwards to you, that’s because it is. In fact, for teenagers suffering from

of conversion therapy to a person under the age of 18 – and I stress under the age of 18.”

Campaign Life Coalition director of political operations, Jack Fonseca, criticized both bills as a threat to religious freedom and the medical and spiritual care and support some confused youth are desperately seeking. “Any kind of clinical therapy or spiritual counseling to help a person overcome their gender identity confusion and to accept their bodily reality, including the pastoral support ... will be defined as ‘conversion therapy,’ and thus, become illegal.”

Fonseca also said that the political push is a reaction to widespread misinformation. “At this very



**Ann Gillies speaking at a Campaign Life Coalition clergy luncheon in February warning that bans on conversion therapy threaten religious freedom and parental rights.**

gender dysphoria, it can be a nightmare.”

Sloan said the Trudeau government is being “radically ideological – and completely out to lunch” with their “biggest priority” being a bill outlawing conversion therapy while Canadians are grappling with the coronavirus pandemic.

Pro-family advocates, many who have been

moment, dishonest media outlets and even more dishonest LGBT activists are running around the country, lying and claiming that gays and lesbians are being electroshocked, and forcibly confined, and tortured by churches and psychotherapists who practice ‘conversion’ therapy. And this is a lie.” Fonseca explained that conversion therapy is “loving, standard

### Conservative MP Derek Sloan

### called Trudeau government’s

### C-8 ‘madness’

working to defeat a similar bill, S-202, in the Senate, are critical of the government’s bill, saying it will prevent Canadian youth from receiving treatment that they want. In 2019 Senator Serge Joyal (Liberal) introduced Bill S-260 which would ban the provision or advertisement of conversion therapy service. The bill died on the Senate floor when the election was called last year, but Joyal re-introduced it as Bill S-202 in December. Joyal said during second reading of Bill S-202 that the “purpose of this bill ... is to make it an offence to advertise conversion therapy services for consideration and to obtain financial or other material benefit for the provision

talk therapy” and “there is nothing forcible about it.”

Talking to a Campaign Life Coalition clergy luncheon in February about Senate Bill S-202, Ann Gillies, a psychotherapist and author of the 2017 book *Closing the Floodgates*, an analysis of propaganda promoting the sexual revolution, echoed this when warning: “The ultimate goal is to silence the Christian church in Canada. It is to silence us from talking. It’s totally totalitarian.” She noted that a leading advocate of banning conversion therapy is Kristopher Wells, Canada Research Chair for the Public Understanding of Sexual and Gender Minority Youth at MacEwan University in Edmonton,

Alberta. A well-known LGBTQ activist, Wells has promoted a cartoon comparing Christians to Nazis. He also wrote a book urging municipalities to ban conversion therapy, and included among the types of activities he wanted to see prohibited were talk therapy, group therapy, spiritual prayer, exorcism, or medical or drug-induced therapy “which attempt to actively change someone’s sexual orientation.”

Many municipalities, especially in Alberta, have followed Wells’ advice. At least seven Alberta cities have banned or limited conversion therapy within their borders, including Calgary, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, and Medicine Hat.

Vancouver was the first Canadian city to outlaw conversion therapy – banning advertising for the therapy and refusing to license businesses that offer it – in June 2018.

Human rights tribunals and professional bodies have effectively outlawed conversion therapy in Quebec since 2012. Ontario passed the Affirming Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Act (Bill 77) in 2015, outlawing conversion therapy for minors and prohibiting it from being funded under the provincial health plan. The same year, Manitoba Health Minister Sharon Blady enacted measures to end the practice in her province, saying “it is the position of the Manitoba Government that conversion therapy can have no place in the province’s public health-care system.”

In 2018, Nova Scotia’s Liberal government banned conversion therapy with the unanimous support of the opposition parties for the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Protection Act, which is similar to the Ontario law. In 2019, the Progressive Conservative government in Prince Edward Island also passed unanimously legislation banning conversion therapy, the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Protection in Health Care Act.

Advocates are pushing for bans in Alberta and Saskatchewan. A legislative working group in Alberta that was developing a plan to ban conversion therapy and headed by Alberta NDP MLA Nicole Goehring, was disbanded by Jason Kenney’s United Conservative Party government last May.

A bill banning conversion therapy for minors under 19 years old was introduced by the Green Party of British Columbia last May, but has not yet proceeded in the legislature.

Last month, the Yukon government tabled legislation to ban the practice. Jeanie Dendys,



# Conservative leadership race features two pro-lifers

Décarie was barred, Karahalios disqualified

Paul Tuns

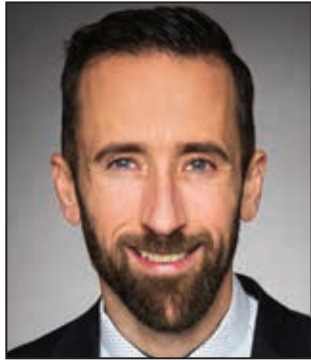
With a week to go before the deadline to become a verified candidate for the leadership of the Conservative Party of Canada, three Campaign Life Coalition-endorsed candidates met the threshold of \$300,000 and 3000 signatures to qualify. A fourth, Richard Décarie, had been barred three weeks earlier from running by the Leadership Election Organizing Committee (LEOC).

Décarie was not told the reason he was disqualified, although party sources indicate that it was because he erred in filling out the 40-page application form. Most observers assume it was because he was outspoken on abortion and same-sex “marriage.”

Campaign Life Coalition celebrated the fact that their three endorsed candidates submitted the entry and deposit fees and requisite number of signatures signing their nominations but the celebration was short-lived. The same day, Jim Karahalios, a Cambridge lawyer and former member of the party’s policy committee, was disqualified from continuing his leadership race.

The CBC reported LEOC said a complaint was received about Karahalios on March 9, “in relation to statements made by Mr.

Karahalios through email, mail and social media earlier in the month.” Political insiders suggest that it was his fundraising appeal to supporters saying if he was elected prime minister he



Derek Sloan

would never allow sharia law and sharia finance to be established in Canada. He has also been critical of Erin O’Toole’s campaign chair, Walied Soliman, a Toronto lawyer and former close confidant of Patrick Brown. Soliman is an expert on sharia finance and Karahalios implied that he might influence O’Toole to establish elements of Islamic religious law in Canada. Karahalios sent a March 7 email to supporters with the subject line: “Say No to Shariah Law. Stop Erin O’Toole.”

The *Globe and Mail* reports that the Urban Alliance on Race Relations filed a complaint, accusing Karahalios of racism

in a Facebook post. The alliance claims that the post includes a picture of Karahalios surrounded by “images of angry black men and women, a few of whom appear to be hold-



Leslyn Lewis

ing either baseball bats or pieces of wood.” Nigel Barriffe, president of the alliance, said in his complaint that “this image is profoundly insulting and deeply racist.”

A ruling was made against Karahalios by the Chief Returning Officer on March 17 and he immediately appealed the decision to LEOC’s dispute resolution appeals committee (DRAC). That ruling is not public and it might have been a disqualification or might have been loss of part of the \$100,000 compliance fee the party makes candidates pay to ensure good behaviour. DRAC announced that Karahalios was disqualified.

Karahalios said in a statement the party is trying to “hijack democracy by removing my name from the ballot.”

CLC initiated a campaign demanding National



Jim Karahalios

Council overturn the Karahalios disqualification. Karahalios has filed a petition with the Superior Court of Justice in Ontario asking for the decision to be overturned.

In a press release, CLC national president Jeff Gunnarson called the decision “an outrage,” noting that, “Thousands of our supporters answered our call to sign nomination papers and donate towards the Karahalios, Lewis and Sloan campaigns. Even though the barriers to entry were clearly designed by LEOC to keep out grassroots, non-establishment individuals like Jim, we helped him

See, ‘Sloan’ p. 13

# Dismount the O’Toole train



Talk Turkey  
Josie Luetke

On Super Tuesday II, I was watching the left-wing YouTube channel The Young Turks while primary results rolled in and I sat up when political pundit Krystal Ball joined the hosts. For some much-needed background, The Young Turks co-founder Cenk Uygur is also one of the founders of Justice Democrats, a political action committee committed to getting “progressives” like Bernie Sanders, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and Ilhan Omar elected.

Ball argued that if Joe Biden becomes the Democratic nominee, Sanders supporters have “got to realize that this whole ‘Vote Blue no matter who’ thing is a complete con” and that if they vote for Biden they “lose any kind of power.”

While Uygur disagreed with her, the vast majority of top commenters concurred, insisting that they’d rather stay home after how the Democratic Party had treated them.

I find it very interesting to contrast that with the situation of conservatives in Canada. I don’t want to directly address the “Vote blue no matter who” adage (which means something quite different here), but I think the shared rejection of this sentiment speaks to how activists on both the left and right appreciate that they lose their leverage if they’ll just vote for a candidate for being the lesser of two evils. That brings me to Erin O’Toole.

I shouldn’t have to talk about him because he’s so unmemorable, but for some reason a number of pro-lifers, including MPs like Garnett Genuis, have decided that he’s the candidate to back in the Conservative Party of Canada leadership race, despite the fact that he’s neither pro-life nor pro-family.

I understand that they want to avoid a dreaded Peter MacKay win, but as the CPC uses a ranked ballot, they could always primarily promote Campaign Life Coalition’s endorsed candidates covid-19 Derek Sloan and Leslyn Lewis covid-19 and only afterwards encourage voters to put O’Toole ahead of MacKay. Instead, Genuis and others are devoting their precious time and energy towards propping up O’Toole and trying to endear him to social conservatives.

Maybe it’s that they want to endorse an obvious winner in the hopes of jockeying for a favourable spot in a potential cabinet. We do need pro-lifers in prominent positions of influence. We’re playing the long game. I get it.

We must also recognize, though, that there’s a real trade-off in doing so. When pro-lifers back candidates who are not pro-life, not only are they making the morally questionable decision of supporting a candidate who condones the bloodshed of the innocent, but they are also obscuring the true strength of the pro-life voter base and contributing to the false rhetoric that vocally social conservative candidates can’t win.

In the last CPC leadership election, Brad Trost and Pierre Lemieux got a combined 15.73 per cent in the first round and Trost’s surprise fourth place finish has seemed to carve out a bigger space for social conservatives in political discourse. However, we know also that there were pro-lifers who ranked other candidates like Andrew Scheer and Maxime Bernier first. How many did so? Frustratingly, we don’t know.

Let’s say that this time around all pro-life CPC members place the pro-life candidates at the top of their ballots. With Sloan’s and Lewis’ combined supporter bases, we could very well have the numbers to elect a pro-life leader. Even without a win, the better they do, the greater the dent in the narrative that social conservatives should just be discarded and their candidates disqualified. We could provide a very clear indication of exactly how influential we are. Improved recognition will inevitably improve our chances of victory as well.

And indeed, our goal should be electing a pro-life leader (and one who isn’t apologetic about their position either). Injecting our viewpoint into the political mainstream helps normalize it and forces people to consider the pro-life argument more seriously.

Also, because social conservatives always get courted in leadership elections and promptly dumped in general elections, we must consider a candidate’s trustworthiness. While it has been proven that identifying as pro-life doesn’t prevent a politician from betraying the preborn (looking at you, Jason Kenney and Andrew Scheer), logically, pro-lifers can have more confidence in those who actually run on a pro-life platform than those who just pay us lip service.

Whether you put O’Toole on your ballot or not (and Ball’s plea in the American context suggests we shouldn’t), we should all be rallying around the pro-life candidates first. We need to make our presence known, because that’s how we preserve our voice. We don’t retain power by settling for a mediocre candidate. Scheer taught us that. O’Toole’s no different.

# Décarie barred from Conservative leadership race

Paul Tuns

The Conservative Party of Canada’s Leadership Election Organizing Committee (LEOC) has informed pro-life and pro-family candidate Richard Décarie he is not allowed to contest the party’s leadership. In February, Décarie told CTV’s Evan Solomon that he did not refer to people as LGBTQ, which he labeled a liberal term, saying he looks at every person as an individual, not as a member of an invented term. He was criticized by several other leadership candidates and others in the Conservative Party for his position. Pundits predicted he would be disqualified over his remarks.

Décarie was running as a self-styled True Blue Conservative, endorsed by Brad Trost and supported by campaign strategists from the Trost and Tanya Granic Allen leadership campaigns. He said he would defund abortion and redefine marriage as the union of one man and one woman. The French-Canadian media ignored Décarie’s campaign after he announced he wanted to defund abortion, and after the Solomon interview his campaign appeared to disappear from the national media. But successful tours

of Quebec and southwestern Ontario ensured that Décarie raised the requisite amount of money (at least \$25,000) and gathered the necessary minimum of 1000 signatures by the Feb. 27 deadline to become a candidate.

Eight candidates were approved by LEOC, but



**Richard Decarie says Conservative Party is rejecting its own base.**

Décarie was not one of them. LEOC did not provide a reason and the decision cannot be appealed.

Décarie told *The Interim*, LEOC made a mistake disqualifying him because “the CPC rejected the base of the party.” He explained that if there was little interest in these supposedly controversial issues, the “problem would go away on its own” because he would not garner the support necessary

to make it through the next hoop (more money and signatures for nomination) or do well in the leadership race. He also expressed surprise with the decision considering he thought the LEOC interview went well.

He said the decision was certainly made because many in the party do not want to address issues such as abortion and same-sex “marriage.” He said if he was running, the party would be forced to deal with these issues.

Following the general election last October, Peter MacKay, another leadership contender, blamed Andrew Scheer’s personal pro-life and pro-traditional marriage beliefs for the Tories losing the election and called social conservatism the “stinking albatross around the neck of the party.” Prominent party strategists like Kory Teneycke declared that the party would have to shuck any hint of social conservatism if it were to be electorally relevant. Such declarations reflected personal opinions but were not supported by any data. The media has dutifully reiterated the anti-social conservative narrative.

Décarie told LEOC that he would work to undo the 2016 policy change that made the Conservatives

officially neutral but was effectively supportive of same-sex “marriage,” when it rescinded the party policy book to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. (That change convinced Brad Trost to run for leader in 2017.) Décarie said if he won the leadership he would advocate changing back to the former policy of defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman at this November’s policy convention and, if passed, would run on it in the next election. “It is ultimately up to the party members and members should be respected,” he said. He said that his proposal – winning the leadership, changing the policy, and running in a general election – would be a three-pronged democratic test of the change in policy. “What are they afraid of,” he asked of the party.

Still, Décarie did not think that it was an easy decision for LEOC to disqualify him. “The impact is important,” and he predicted they deliberated over it at some length. Sources within the party told the campaign and *The Interim* that he had been approved to run following his Feb. 27 interview. But

See, ‘Campaign’ p. 7



# Deep trouble

Spring has come, yet cafés and parks are empty. At rush hour, traffic lights cycle through their colours to empty intersections. The doors of classrooms, arenas, and restaurants are locked, and only a handful of pedestrians shuffle through the streets with purpose and unease. The office buildings are as empty as the hospitals are full. There is a worldwide, long-term “snow day” but with no blizzard in sight, an all-but universal “sick day” where the healthy must stay home – and the afflicted, too, if they can. In the quarantine imposed in response to the coronavirus, we have become a sequestered society as we await the abatement of an invisible threat.

For an as-yet-untold number of Canadians, this pandemic will be a bodily reality – perhaps even a fatal one. For many more, however, these weeks of quarantine have been an unexpected pause, a sudden interruption of the familiar rhythms of life, imposing everything from boredom and inconvenience to dire financial distress. While sickness will reach some, a degree of upheaval has already affected us all. But the very hardships that the pandemic has imposed are also, in a strange way, a medicine. A distracted world of frenetic activity has suddenly screeched to a halt, and an overlooked landscape has come into view. The background of our daily lives has become the foreground, and we are all discovering what Virginia Woolf once called (with eerie accuracy) the “wastes and deserts of the soul (that) a slight attack of influenza brings to view.”

This unprecedented situation, however, does not let us test Blaise Pascal’s judgement that “all of humanity’s problems stem from man’s inability to sit quietly in a room alone.” While social distancing might stem the spread of the pandemic, there are ample means for endless distraction – and destruction – in the rooms in which we find ourselves confined. Thus do we perform frequent and thorough hand-washing to kill viruses, and “streaming services” of a different kind provide a constant flow of images and noise which, likewise, stave off the encroachment of silence. While the pandemic has put public health and our economy into one kind of “deep trouble,” it has also revealed our own trouble with reaching and remaining in the depths – of silence, of solitude, and of prayer. Headphones prevent us from listening to the rhythms of life; moving pictures stop us from seeing the faces which should move us to new reaches of empathy and love; and the phones created to connect us to each other confine us in shallow cycles of irrelevant updates. Our apparently interconnected world is really beset by isolation, diversion, and a deep addiction to slight, continuous, digital agitations.

In being unplugged from these poor imitations of connection, a new reality reveals itself: the blessings our families and the true needs of our neighbours. So too do we see the vanity, inanity, and insanity of so many of modern Canada’s policies and apparently pressing concerns. For instance, this genuine public health crisis has brought the claims of norm-destroying social saboteurs into an unflattering comparison; the rhetoric of so-called “gender identity” activists, breathlessly worrying about safety and danger, vulnerability and threat, can now be clearly seen as a sham. The coronavirus has also given us a much-needed lesson about the protection of the vulnerable and the elderly, who need to be welcomed into the centre of our culture and not abandoned to the ice floes of isolation, and offered only the cold comfort of euthanasia. Indeed, this pandemic should spur us to create what Thomas Cardinal Collins of the Archdiocese of Toronto has called an authentic “culture of care.”

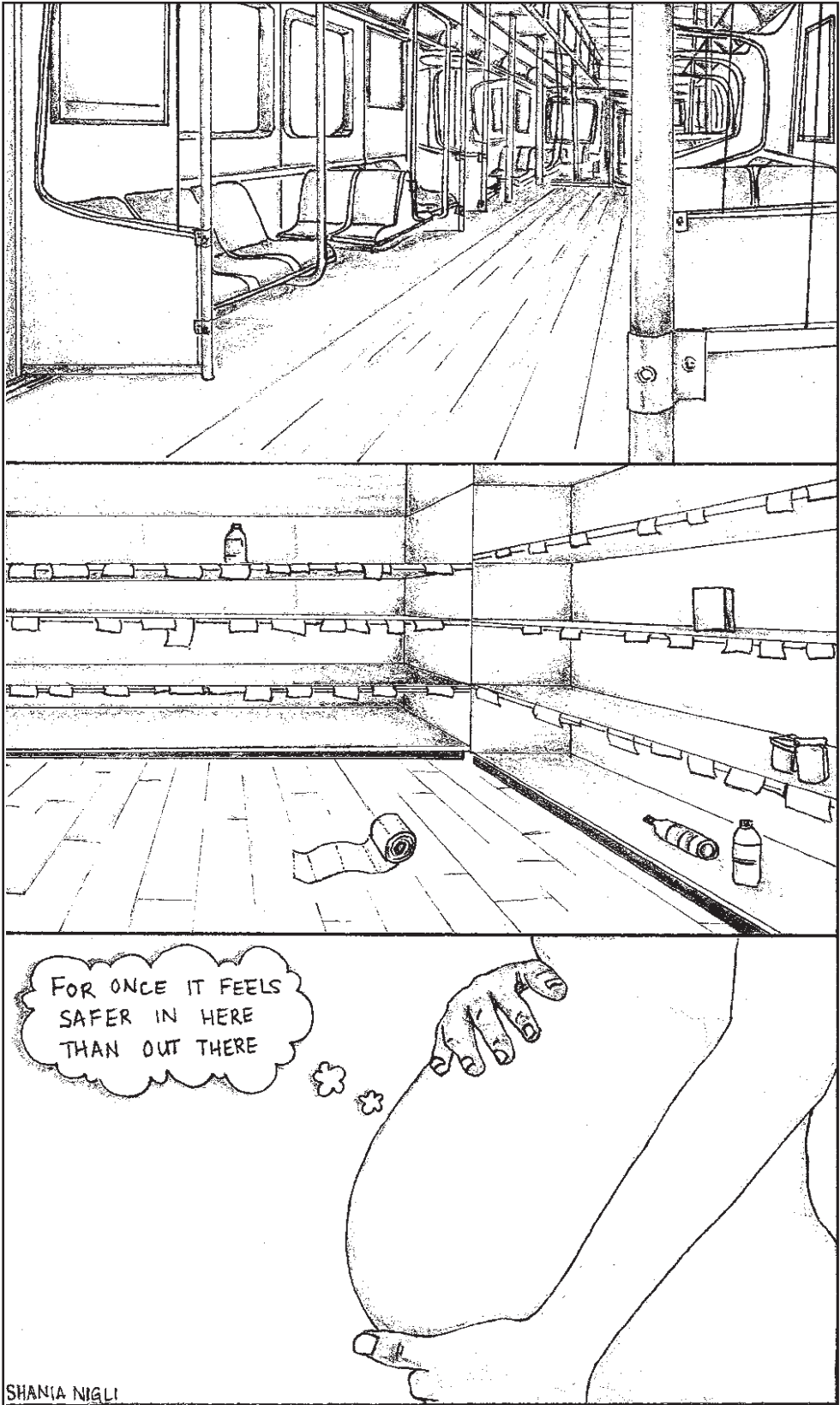
The threat that the coronavirus poses to the aged and infirm also points to a peril of our own creation. Since the sexual insurrection of the 1960s, birthrates in the developed world have declined; most first-world countries are now well below the demographic “replacement rate” at which a population remains stable. For decades, we murderously disposed of the unborn in the womb, treating our incubating offspring as the unwelcome detritus of transient pleasures. Having sown the wind, we now reap the whirlwind: our dalliance with the culture of death has created a different kind of “deep trouble.” Ours is a crisis exacerbated by our empty cradles.

An ancient proverb identifies the two best times to plant a tree: twenty years ago – and now. When we eventually emerge from our confinement and quarantine and assess the damage to our population and our livelihoods, the din of our daily lives will return. The times which now seem like such a burden will, in retrospect, appear like an oasis of halcyon days. But, as our habitual rhythms again find their familiar grooves, and pundits begin to opine about solutions and preventions, we must not forget the real lesson of these previous days. The ultimate remedies and safeguards to similar threats are things which no politician will have the insight or the courage to prescribe, but which we all know well enough: we should welcome more children into the world, and cherish all of our generations with generosity and love. We must let the deep lessons, learned in this desert, blossom in the seasons when health and habit return lest we be even less able to weather the other storms which must, without fail, come.

# Get even, not mad

Granting that there is time for righteous anger and that revenge is not particularly ennobling, our advice to pro-lifers disgusted that various bodies of the Conservative Party have prevented two pro-life, pro-family candidates from becoming verified candidates for the CPC leadership, is to stay engaged and show the party elite the importance of the social conservative vote by supporting the two remaining pro-lifers, Leslyn Lewis and Derek Sloan. Yes, many of us angry at the shabby treatment of Richard Decarie and Jim Karahalios – and by

extension, all pro-life and pro-family Canadians. The temptation to thumb our nose at a party that actively disrespects its socially conservative base is great; the desire to lash out at a party that took membership fees from thousands of grassroots Conservatives and then bar or disqualify their preferred candidates is nearly insurmountable. But it would be a tragic mistake to effectively punish the pro-life candidates for the sins of the party. The best revenge is to stay in the process and help the remaining pro-life contenders.



SHANIA NIGLI

# Letters

*The Interim* welcomes letters of 300 words or fewer. Letters may be edited. Please send to:

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## Judging politicians

I am not pro-life only because of religious beliefs, but also because science and reason tell us that life begins at conception and each person is unique infinitely precious from the moment of coming into being in the mother’s womb. Just view an ultrasound and see the baby growing. Just watch the ultrasound of an abortion and watch the baby pulling back, away from being killed and ripped apart. The baby in the mother’s womb is most beautiful and precious. Let’s make it irrefutably clear that abortion is the taking of a human life. In a caring and loving humane society, an innocent, defenseless life would be cherished and protected.

Ultimately, it is a question of human rights for the baby to be protected from the moment of conception. Rejecting life in the womb is rejecting God and His plan for mankind. Good luck and woe to all

of you radically pro-abortion government politicians and opposition party leaders who refuse to recognize that the baby in the womb is a human being that deserves life when you stand and face God and give an accounting of what you did to those babies made in His likeness and image. Hell is real. Heaven is real. We are all living our own judgement with the choices we make. There are no excuses when you are before God. How can the government protect anyone if they don’t even protect the human being at the embryonic stage. If there is no protection for new life then, other protections throughout society also wither away which is very much evident in the doctor-assisted suicide deaths which are now sweeping across the country. Doctors killing babies and doctors killing patients – it is a barbaric crisis of epic proportions.

*Jerome Desilets  
Powell River, BC*

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# The decline of the nuclear family



National Affairs  
Rory Leishman

In March, *The Atlantic* published an informative essay by David Brooks on the current state of marriage and the family in the United States that is well worth reading, notwithstanding that he comes to the wrongheaded conclusion that creation of the nuclear family, defined as a married couple and their biological children, was a mistake and needs to be replaced.

To begin with, Brooks, a *New York Times* columnist, notes that the nuclear family is a relatively recent development that coincided with the growth of urbanization and industrialization in the 19th century. Prior to 1850, about three-quarters of Americans older than 65 were farmers who lived in extended families with their children, grandchildren and sometimes other relatives, but by 1960, 77.5 per cent of American children were living in a home with no other relatives than their own married, biological parents.

During this same period, Canada went through a similar transition extended to nuclear families. By 1961, 94 per cent of Canadian children were living with married parents and only six per cent with a single parent.

Meanwhile, in both the United States and Canada, higher rates of divorce, declining rates of marriage, increasing incidents of common law unions, and soaring rates of out-of-wedlock births have all had an adverse impact on the nuclear family. In the case of out-of-wedlock births, about 40 per cent of children in the United States are now born to an unwed mother, up from scarcely five per cent in 1960, whereas in Quebec, no fewer than 62 per cent of children are born to an unwed mother, up from fewer than four per cent in 1960.

Brooks acknowledges that the decline in marriage and the nuclear family has been especially hard on children. “We all know stable and loving single-parent families,” he writes, “But on average, children of single parents or unmarried cohabiting parents tend to have worse health outcomes, worse mental-health outcomes, less academic success, more behavioral problems, and higher truancy rates than do children living with their two married biological parents.”

Quite so. The fragmentation of nuclear families has also been particularly tough on low-income mothers and fathers. With regard to the latter, Brooks observes that “in the absence of the connection and meaning that family provides, unmarried men are less healthy – alcohol

and drug abuse are common – earn less, and die sooner than married men.”

Highly educated and high-income Americans are fortunate in that among them, marriage and the family are almost as stable today as in the 1950s. It is only among the less educated and less wealthy that the nuclear family is in deep trouble.

Brooks concludes: “The shift from bigger and interconnected extended families to smaller and detached nuclear families (has) ultimately led to a familial system that liberates the rich and ravages the working-class and the poor.” Really? On the basis of the evidence Brooks cites in his article, there is far better reason to believe that it is not the presence, but the widespread absence of the nuclear family that ravages the working-class and the poor.

Regardless, as Brooks sees it, working class Americans cannot afford the house cleaners, baby sitters and other amenities that enable the rich to keep their nuclear families intact. But if that is true, how is it that 70 years ago, when living standards were far lower than they are today, most working class Americans got married, stayed married, and thrived in nuclear families.

Brooks is on the right track when he concedes that it is not so much a shortage of income as a radical change in culture that is mainly responsible for shattering so many nuclear families. Compared to the 1950s, many more parents today are so individualistic, self-oriented, and focused on professional careers that they refuse to make the sacrifices necessary to attain the overriding joys of nurturing children and a loving marriage.

As a supplement to Brooks’ article, *The Atlantic* has published a rebuttal by W. Bradford Wilcox, director of the National Marriage Project at the University of Virginia, and Hal Boyd, associate professor of family law and policy at Brigham Young University. They insist: “The nuclear family is still indispensable: Rumors of its demise have been greatly exaggerated.”

As evidence, Wilcox and Boyd point to a 30 per cent decline in the divorce rate since 1980, a more recent and modest decline in out-of-wedlock births, and the fact that: “Since 2014, the share of kids in intact families has begun to climb, reversing a decades-long trend in the opposite direction.”

While Brooks argues that biologically unrelated friends is a modern form of the extended family that can substitute for the absence of a biological parent in the home, Wilcox and Boyd convincingly rejoin: “As any parent knows, when it comes to an inconsolable child, even a ‘dozen pairs of arms’ from the village don’t quite compare to the warm and safe embrace of Mom or Dad.”

The conclusion is clear: Instead of some newfangled form of extended family, most low-income Canadians and Americans would benefit far more from the social, cultural, and governmental supports they need to join with the wealthy in enjoying the benefits of a loving marriage and nuclear family.

have long operated without central offices, it was a bit of learning curve for many of us to work completely online. The back-and-forth by email and reading copy on screens is a new and sometimes challenging way of doing things for us. There is something lost without face-to-face interactions. We persevered and I think it worked out rather well. I hope you appreciate the effort that goes into every issue to bring you life and family news, but especially this month.

We debated how to put out this paper, with conversations about combining it with next month’s issue or providing it only online or cancelling it completely. The Culture of Death does not take a break during a pandemic, so we decided that we could not, either. Read the stories in our centre spread to see how culture wars continue while many families are scrambling to feel safe, worry about home finances, and arrange for children to be cared for or busy while schools are closed or providing online instruction. I hope you do not find this paper to be an intrusion. Maybe it is a distraction from other worries. Maybe it provides you with inspiration to get involved in battles for life and family while you have some time at home. As long as there are doctors killing babies and other vulnerable people, and as long as politicians refuse to pass laws that bring justice for the unborn and infirm, we will get the word out about it.

Next month we plan to do a story on medical ethics in the pandemic. We also have a story about a charming new pro-life children’s book from a Canadian couple in Alberta.

There are still bills and salaries to pay, and many of our advertisers (especially churches) and other supporters are facing their own challenges. If you can, please consider a donation to *The Interim* to help us get through this rough patch. Our address is The Interim, Suite 300, 104 Bond St., Toronto, Ont., M5B 1X9.

I would like to end by passing along a prayer I saw on Bishop Joseph Strickland’s (Diocese of Tyler, Texas) Twitter feed the morning I wrote this column: “Lord, turn hearts back to your Truth of Life that every person is sacred from conception to natural death. May the peril of this coronavirus finally awaken humanity to the sanctity of life. In Jesus name we pray.” Amen.

—Paul Tuns

# Coronavirus church



Laying Down  
the Lawton  
Andrew Lawton

“I can’t talk right now; I’m at church,” I told my mother when she called me up on a Sunday morning in March.

I wasn’t lying, though admittedly I could have been a bit clearer. I was actually sitting upright in my bed, watching a streaming video of my pastor preaching about God’s forgiveness.

There was worship. There was prayer. There was a message. Arguably the comment section of the video stream was a form of fellowship. Except for my lack of pants, what I was experiencing had all the constituent parts of church, though I was sitting in my bedroom.

I went through all the steps, but it just didn’t feel like church.

Perhaps I was distracted by the sheer novelty of it – the first of what would ultimately be several coronavirus church services relegated to the internet. In general, looking at a screen-sized image of a place makes you an outsider in a way that you aren’t by immersing yourself in a sanctuary.

If this virtual service was a test of faith, I failed. I was better by the second service I took in electronically. I made a point of approaching it with more formality and better insulating myself from distractions.

I was able to connect with God as I would through prayer, though the experience was still too similar to streaming a movie on Netflix for my liking.

I’m not one of these people who reject the use of technology in places of worship. I attend a Pentecostal church, after all, so I’m invariably comfortable with sound systems and projected lyrics on screens (my apologies to the Catholic and Anglican readers – truly).

As someone who spends more time on my smartphone and computer than I’d like to admit, this isn’t about me being a luddite. I simply think some things can’t be replaced with an electronic version without losing something vital to their essence.

Screens in the church? Sure. Church on a screen? I’m still working through this one.

If the only way to hear the sermon is through a webcast, it’s certainly better than nothing.

While God exists inside and outside of physical churches, and his word can technically be shared across time and space via the internet, there’s no substitute for the real thing.

Catholic readers are surely unsurprised by this, having long known that the absence of the Eucharist is the absence of the Mass itself. As a Protestant, I hoped it would just work itself out and I would feel the Holy Spirit the way I’ve always known.

Church doesn’t need to be a building: The Bible is pretty clear on that. “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,” we read in *Matthew*. I’d have to check the footnotes but I’m not sure if the King James version makes exceptions for pandemics or allows for gatherings to take place in a Facebook group chat.

It’s entirely possible the feeling of incompleteness I experienced was a reckoning with how the world itself was changing at that very moment. The shuttering of churches’ physical doors went along with closures of restaurants, recreation facilities, many stores, not to mention all of the travel disruptions and cancellations.

While relatively assured of my own health, I still took to heart the ubiquitous calls for social distancing to protect those in my community. Despite often craving alone time, it feels very different when ordered by executive fiat.

In the church, just as in society itself, isolation can lead to alienation.

In the midst of all that chaos, there was nowhere I wanted to be more than at church. Instead, we were all confronted by with the earthliness of church buildings and the mortality of our Christian brethren.

It was only a year ago that Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris erupted in flames, and countless essays and columns put forth the idea that, tragic as the church’s blaze was, it didn’t incinerate faith itself.

Whenever a house of worship endures a tragedy there tends to be resilience from its flock, despite the impermanence of bricks and mortar.

I expect the same resilience to carry us through public health emergencies to come (though I hope they will be few and far between). The lesson is to never lose the community and fellowship that accompany our practice of faith.

## Getting this issue to you



### From the editor’s desk

It’s been a while since I wrote one of these other than to sneak in a book review. But these are unusual times for us all and I thought I would let you know what is going on in our office. It’s closed. We are still working, but the office is closed. We are allowed to operate because communications and media were deemed essential by the Ford government. But even before the order came down, to protect staff and their families, our office manager arranged for most employees at *The Interim* and Campaign Life Coalition to work from home. This is easier for some of us than others. For our family it meant rearranging some of the rooms in our house in order to provide a quiet space for me to work a few hours each day without interruption. Now we are finding which routines work best for us all – both in person at home and online with my co-workers. I hope you keep CLC and *The Interim* in your prayers. We are praying for you and your loved ones at this time. (Just before noon each day, we come together in the office to pray; we now do so by conference call.)

The fact is many publications write, edit, and do layout remotely. Modern technologies, for all their problems, have upsides, too, and it is unimaginable that we as a society would be able to handle these trying and uncertain times as smoothly as we are without the internet and the efficient ways to communicate and work that these technologies facilitate. While other publications



# COVID-19 ANNOUNCEMENT

**All National March for Life ‘indoor’ events cancelled; decision on the Rally on Parliament Hill and the March for Life on May 14 is pending**

As per the recommendation of government officials and public health experts, we are cancelling all indoor events associated with the National March for Life in Ottawa, scheduled for May 13-15, 2020.

Events cancelled:

- Candlelight Vigil for Victims of Abortion, May 13
- Rose Dinner, May 14
- Youth Banquet, May 14
- Youth Conference, May 15

In respect to the Rally on Parliament Hill and the March through downtown Ottawa, we will continue to monitor the situation, as are other organizers responsible for outdoor festivals/ events in Ottawa. The health and safety of Canadians is our main priority as we listen to the recommendations of health officials.

In the meantime, together with our partners, we are developing an alternate, online program for May 14 that will provide a national platform for Canadians to speak out against the greatest human rights injustices facing our country. We remain committed to fighting against abortion-on-demand by supporting legislation like Bill C-233; blocking euthanasia-on-demand, which Bill C-7 would establish; and supporting pro-life candidates in the Conservative Party of Canada Leadership race.

We will continue to keep all people affected by COVID-19 in our prayers.

For life,



Jeff Gunnarson  
National President  
Campaign Life Coalition



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# Yukon minister worries covid-19 outbreak could prevent ban from passing

Continued from p.2

the minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, tabled Bill 9, the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Protection Act, on March 12. Alex Muszynski, the acting director of the Women's Directorate, said Bill 9 is designed to prevent minors and adults who have

someone appointed as a decision maker on their behalf, from accessing conversion therapy and to ensure it is not a funded service. "We're planning to prohibit conversion therapy from being offered," Muszynski said. Bill 9 goes further than many provincial laws, defining conversion therapy as a service

including counselling, behaviour modification techniques or prescription of medications, provided to an individual with the goal of having the person change gender identities or sexual orientations. But it also states that it is not "a practice, treatment or service that provides acceptance, support or understanding of a person or that

facilitates a person's coping, social support or identity exploration or development," or "gender-affirming surgery or any practice, treatment or service related to gender-affirming surgery." Muszynski said she was concerned the covid-19 pandemic could prevent the Yukon legislature from passing Bill 9 in the current sitting.

# Campaign will become a movement

Continued from p.3

two days later, he received official notice of LEOC's final decision, a decision that risks alienating the sizable pro-life and pro-family base of the Conservatives. Asked why LEOC disqualified him and not the other three pro-life leadership contenders endorsed by Campaign Life Coalition, he said they were not as vocal about it as he was. Décarie said that the response he has received since the news he was

being barred from running has been supportive, and "even people who do not share my views" said the incident shows "the CPC is not respecting freedom of expression and freedom of conscience." He encouraged supporters to stay involved with the Conservatives, saying he would likely endorse a candidate soon. He said he wants a "genuine conservative" and that must include a declaration that the candidate "recognizes that life begins at conception and ends at natural death." He

would also like to see the candidate be bilingual in order to "take the fight to Trudeau in both debates." The campaign will morph into a "genuine conservative movement" Décarie said. He hopes to attract party members, supporters of other parties, and those who are not traditionally involved in partisan politics, but who are committed to pro-life, pro-family, limited government, and fiscally responsible policies. He said he is not sure what that looks like quite yet, but his website and social media accounts will provide more information shortly about how to support the new endeavour. He said there is no chance he will back "Red Tory Peter MacKay or Red Tory Erin O'Toole." Décarie said the "Conservatives cannot beat Justin Trudeau if they are Liberal-lite." Asked about O'Toole's outreach to social conservatives with the idea that all stripes of Conservatives are welcome in his party, Décarie called it "a marketing strategy," not a core belief for that candidate. Décarie said to win the next election, the CPC must offer "full spec-

trum conservatism" and that must include social conservatives. "It is very clear that social conservatism is conservatism," he explained. He also noted that MacKay has shown his true colours by criticizing social conservatives last October and "he wants to kick them out of the party" if he wins. He accused MacKay of having hid his progressive tendencies when Stephen Harper was prime minister, but they would quickly return if he became leader. Décarie said he thought he was done with high-level politics after leaving Stephen Harper's Office of the Leader of the Opposition more than a decade ago and returning to the private sector. But the timing of the leadership race and the threats that MacKay, Jean Charest and others presented to the conservatism of the Tory party, dragged him into the race. Saying there was a "craving in the population for this type of leadership," and the "momentum is humongous" he is remaining involved. What that looks like is not clear yet. But it is obvious we have not heard the last from Richard Décarie.

# Too much room



Light is Right  
Joe Campbell

I used to labour under a terrible delusion. I assumed that my weight had stayed the same over the last thirty or so years because of will power. But it's not the strength of my will that has kept me from getting fat. It's the size of my tableware. Gut size varies directly with plate size, apparently. You can look it up under nutritional and psychological science. Oh yes, researchers have studied it. Nothing is off limits to researchers nowadays. Although I've watched diners expand over the decades, I failed to notice dinner plates expand as well. But why would I? I haven't replaced my tableware since the advent of the personal computer. I had little reason to believe my plates were no longer standard. Oh, at an all-you-can eat buffet in Las Vegas I feasted off plates promoted as the world's largest. But I assumed they were an exception. It didn't occur to me that they were a trend. What's more, the researchers have found that the trend has been with us for centuries. Through the second millennium, the plates in paintings of the Last Supper have expanded progressively by up to two-thirds. So has the amount of food on them. This expansion isn't due to a miracle like the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. It's due to a series of artists depicting the meal in images that reflects the reality around them. Since I bought my antique tableware, dinner plates have increased in diameter to 12 inches from 8.5. These, of course, are imperial units. But I have it on good authority that metric units produce similar results. Whatever the measuring system, the larger diameter plates hold nearly twice as much food. My Las Vegas experience should have taught me that bigger plates mean larger portions and greater consumption. But, as the wine glasses were also oversized, I wasn't in a teachable mood. When my companions rose to leave, I refused to get out of my chair. It wasn't because I wanted to eat more. It was because I regretted having eaten so much. My doctor had warned against heavy lifting and I was afraid to stand up. Apparently, increases in plate size alter our perception of what is normal, and deceive us into eating more than we otherwise would. This, at any rate, is the theory. My friend Dingwall noticed a similar perceptual change with increases in the size of his trousers. He told me that when he dresses for comfort, giving himself extra room around the waist, he puts on weight. To return to normal, he forces himself into trousers a size smaller. "That must be unpleasant," I said. "Of course, it's unpleasant," he replied, "The pants are so tight I can hardly breathe. But since I'd rather breathe than overeat, dieting comes easy." Reflecting on Dingwall's strategy, I saw fashion models in a new light. They don't diet so they can more easily wear tight clothes and look more attractive. They wear tight clothes so they can more easily diet and lose weight. I hope I haven't misjudged them. My own experience suggests that eating isn't the only activity that waxes and wanes with altered perception. After my wife and I married, we rented a tiny upstairs apartment, where we had our first child. Wanting more room, we moved to a larger basement suite, and produced a second child within sixteen months of the first. Blissfully unaware of a possible room-to-womb relationship, we next recklessly bought a two-storey house with four bedrooms and an undeveloped basement. The following decade is a blur as we produced another six children at incredibly short intervals and turned the rumpus room we had built in the basement into a dormitory. Then we rested, but not for long. Although we wisely declined to move into a bigger house, we foolishly decided to enlarge the one we had. The mere decision to add on, not the addition itself, was enough to produce our ninth child. Does the room-to-womb relationship operate in reverse? Apparently, it does. In our mid-fifties, after the nine had fled, we traded the large two-storey home for a small bungalow to retire in. We haven't produced any children since. My hope is that the theory applies to writing. At best, I produce a couple of brief essays a month. But I can't wait to experiment with a bigger computer screen. If I enlarge what I write on, I should be able to increase what I write. If the theory is valid with food for the body, why not with food for the mind, not to mention the soul?



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### Holy Week & Easter Liturgies

**PASSION (Palm) SUNDAY – April 5, 2020:**  
5:00 pm (English) – Saturday evening  
8:30 am (English) 10:00 am (German)  
12:10 noon (English) 5:00 pm (English)

**Monday April 6 and Tuesday April 7, 2020:** 7:30 a.m. & 12:10 p.m.

**Wednesday, April 8, 2020:** 7:30 am, 9:30 am, 12:00 pm, 2:30 pm, 5:05 pm & 7:00 pm  
(Mother of Perpetual Help Devotions and Masses)

**HOLY THURSDAY: Mass of the Lord's Supper – April 9, 2020:**  
7:00 pm Mass (English & German)

**GOOD FRIDAY: Solemn Liturgical Service – April 10, 2020:**  
3:00 pm (English & German) Stations of the Cross 7:00 pm

**HOLY SATURDAY – Easter Vigil Mass – April 11, 2020:**  
8:30 pm (English & German)

**EASTER SUNDAY – April 12, 2020:**  
8:30 am (English) 10:00 am (German) 12:10 pm (English) 5:00 pm (English)

**EASTER MONDAY – April 13, 2020:**  
9:00 am (English / German)

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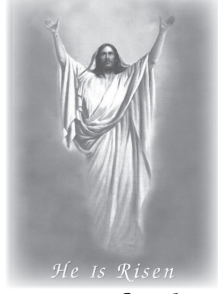
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"I am the Light of the World,  
Anyone who follows Me  
will not be walking in the dark;  
he will have the light of life."  
John 7:12




He Is Risen

## Easter Greetings

from

**Stratford and District Right to Life**  
Box 21133  
Stratford, Ontario N5A 7V4  
www.stratfordright2life.com  
elisabeth.dobbe@sympatico.ca



What holy hearts of my heart,  
What my heart like unto Thine...

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often leads  
to abortion

Pray for an end to  
contraception and  
For openness to  
God's Gift of Life

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# Coronavirus-related pro-life stories

## Canadian abortionists respond to covid-19

On March 18, *Global News* reported on how various work environments were impacted by the coronavirus; one was a Toronto abortuary. Jane Gerster reported on the “seemingly never-ending list of cancellations and closures,” noting that “The situation changes almost hourly.” She sought out human interest stories on how the widespread closure “is already changing people’s lives nationwide,” including “a microbiologist, a call centre agent, a school custodian, abortion providers, kids’ counsellors and an inmate.” She talked to one microbiologist, one call center agent, one school custodian, and one inmate, but Gerster talked to four sources from facilities that commit abortions: Clare Hacksel, executive director of Choice in Health Clinic in Toronto; Katherine Ragsdale, president of the U.S.-based National Abortion Federation, and unnamed spokesmen for the Athena Health Centre in St. John’s, Newfoundland and Women’s College Hospital in Toronto. Gerster reported that at Choice in Health, staff made the “heartbreaking decision” (the reporter’s words) to no longer allow women seeking abortions to bring along a support person. Hacksel added that “We do not see abortion services as elective ... They are an essential service, and our goal is to maintain operations while maintaining staff and client safety as much as possible.” They also moved all post-abortion counselling to phone services rather than in-person. A spokesman for the Athena Health Centre asked women to wait 14 days if they had travelled outside the province and were limiting waiting rooms to patients only. Women’s College Hospital told *Global News* the pandemic made no difference to them: “We are continuing to offer these services as we normally do.” Life Canada said in a statement: “While governments jump into gear and prohibit the free movement of people and close businesses, keep in mind that abortion clinics continue to operate.” They urged people to pray for pregnant women, including those abortion-minded ones, during the emergency measures so that mothers would not feel vulnerable.

## CHP on the House of Commons suspended session

Christian Heritage Party leader Rod Taylor noted in a recent commentary that “covid-19 has gripped” the nation and that among the parts of life affected was the suspended session of the House of Commons. While expressing some concern over the “size and implementation” of the economic measures in reaction to the pandemic, Taylor said, “In at least two cases, the pause in House debates is welcome.” He singled out the inability of legislators to pass Bill C-7, which broadens the criteria for assisted suicide, and Bill C-8, which bans conversion therapy. He called them, “two terrible pieces of proposed legislation,” and added that the limits on the legislature meeting provides a “pause ... a welcome respite from the Liberals’ relentless social agenda.” While there are financial and social concerns with the covid-19 pandemic and the reaction to it, Taylor paused to acknowledge “the good side” that “the Liberals’ plan to kill more Canadians under MAiD and to restrict the ability for unhappy victims of ‘transitioning’ to seek sensitive professional counselling are both on hold.” He urged Canadians to use the additional time they might have to “educate themselves on these issues and to bring their concerns to the attention of their MPs.” He also urged supporters “to get behind Cathay Wagantall’s private member’s bill, C-233, the Sex-Selective Abortion Act and help her gain the support of as many MPs as possible.”

## Conservatives refuse to delay vote

On March 22, the party’s leadership race committee decided to not extend the deadline of March 25 for verified candidates to qualify to run, for individuals to become a member of the party (April 17), nor for the leadership voting on June 22, despite requests to do so by some candidates as Canada goes into partial shutdown. At least four provinces so far – British Columbia, Quebec, Ontario, and Alberta – have declared a state of public health emergency in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.

ic. Days later, Leadership Election Organizing Committee chair Lisa Raitt said they were monitoring the situation but that the party intended to proceed with their original timeline. Campaign Life Coalition-endorsed candidate Leslyn Lewis has called for the deadlines to be maintained while another CLC-endorsed candidate, Derek Sloan, has been front-and-center calling for deadlines to be postponed. Presumptive frontrunner Peter MacKay said this is no time for the Tories to be leaderless and called for an expedited race.

## Prayer and fasting

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and the World Evangelical Alliance invited Canadian individuals and church congregations to participate in a Global Day of Prayer and Fasting on March 29, as a response to the covid-19 pandemic. Bruce Clemenger, president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, said: “Canadian churches have been working hard through this pandemic to serve a complexity of expanding needs and to stay connected with members of their congregations – reaching out with care throughout Canada’s local communities, all while following the protocols provided by Public Health officials.” He added, “I am encouraged to hear of the many, many stories of churches being creative in this extremely challenging time. Now on Sunday March 29 we have an opportunity to come together with the global Church in prayer for healing.” Philippines bishop Efraim Tendaro, secretary-general of the World Evangelical Alliance, a network of churches in 129 nations, representing more than 600 million evangelical Christians, said: “We know that many among our constituency have already been praying for those affected. We would like to now specifically call on churches and individual believers to take time to pray for God to intervene in this crisis and stop the virus from spreading any further.” Clemenger said: “Now is the time to remember we are part of a global body, and to draw together in prayer.” Meanwhile, on March 25, Pope Francis called upon all Christians to pray the Our Father, “for the sick and their families; for health workers and those who help them; for the authorities, law enforcement agencies and volunteers; for the ministers of our communities.” In an event livestreamed on Facebook from the Vatican’s library, Pope Francis recited the Lord’s Prayer, beginning, “As trustful children we turn to the Father. We do it every day, several times a day; but right now we wish to beg mercy for mankind, so sorely tried by the coronavirus pandemic. And we do this together, Christians of every church and community, of every tradition, of every age, language and nation.”

## National Abortion Federation calls abortion an essential service

On March 17, the National Abortion Federation (NAF) issued a statement insisting that abortion is an essential service. The statement began: “As states and municipalities enact measures to slow the spread of covid-19, more non-essential businesses will be instructed – or required – to close. At the same time, hospitals are preparing for a surge in covid-19 cases and increased strain on their staff, resources, and systems, and will likely begin indefinitely postponing non-essential or elective procedures. During this public health crisis, pregnancy care, including abortion care, remains an essential health service. The National Abortion Federation calls on leaders to ensure that outpatient abortion clinics can remain open and urges hospitals to continue to provide abortion care.” The unsigned statement claims that because abortions must be done in a “timely” manner and the ramifications of not having access to wanted abortion services has a “profound” impact on women and their families, it is definitionally essential. “As we navigate covid-19, it is critical that leaders treat outpatient abortion providers as essential businesses, and that hospital systems ensure the continuation of abortion care as an essential service.” NAF also said that abortion services cannot be lost as hospitals deal with coronavirus patients. The pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute also released a statement that the covid-19 outbreak could impact access to abortion: “Health care providers are being diverted to help address

the epidemic while also being most at risk of acquiring the disease. This may create a shortage of clinicians who can provide sexual and reproductive health services and increase wait times for patients in need ... In places that already have a limited number of providers, this will put an extreme strain on capacity to serve patients, especially for non-emergency care.”

## Ohio declares abortion non-essential service

Abortion facilities attempted to remain open after the state mandated all non-essential services closed as part of efforts to arrest the spread of the coronavirus. Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost ordered them shut. Right to Life Cincinnati discovered that Planned Parenthood of Southwest was violating Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Health Director Amy Acton’s mandate that all non-essential or elective surgeries be postponed the day after the March 18 and on March 20, Yost ordered two abortion businesses -- one in Cincinnati and another in Dayton -- to stop committing “non-essential or elective surgical abortions,” defining them as “those that can be delayed without undue risk to the current or future health of a patient.” Ohio Right to Life president Michael Gonidakis said, “We are grateful that Attorney General Yost is putting the health and safety of all Ohioans both young and old first by ordering the closure of all nonessential surgical procedures.” Acton’s mandate requires that surgeries be a threat to the patient’s life if not performed, that there is a threat of permanent dysfunction of an extremity or organ, or risk of rapidly worsening to severe symptoms if not treated in a timely fashion. Yost made clear that most abortions do not fit the criteria. “The fact that these abortion facilities have absolutely no regard for public health indicates that they are not healthcare institutions at all,” said Molly Smith, president of Right to Life Action Coalition of Ohio. State abortion facilities continue to ignore the order. Preterm, a Cleveland abortion mill, confirmed to the *Daily Caller* that they are carrying out abortions. Their statement said it would offer “the full range of abortion care services because it is essential healthcare.” In fact, Preterm executive director Chrissy France insists they are following the order: “In compliance with the order from the Ohio Department of Health, our physicians will be making individualized determinations to ensure each person gets the healthcare they need and that all healthcare providers across the state have access to the supplies needed during this pandemic.” The Ohio Attorney General’s Office has announced they are now issuing cease-and-desist orders to all abortion facilities carrying out the banned, non-essential service.

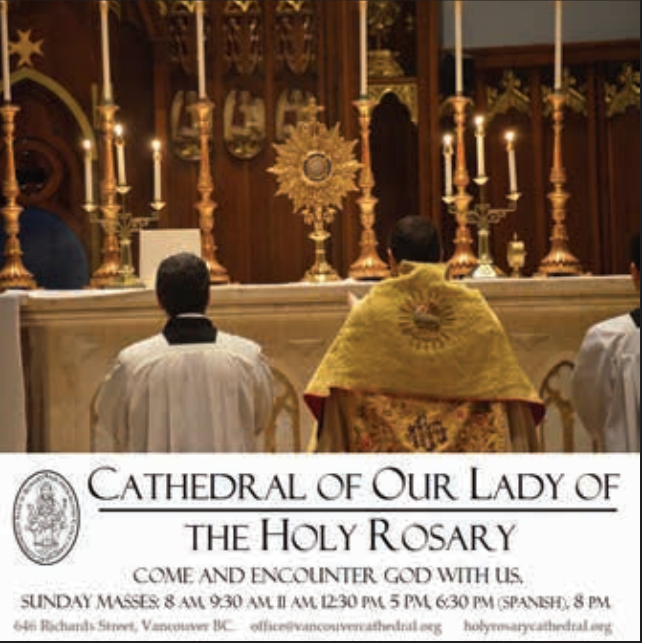
## 40 Days for Life suspended

Shawn Carney, president of 40 Days for Life, announced on March 24 that the “physical vigils” of the spring 2020 40 Days for Life campaign were suspended in the weeks leading up to Easter due to the coronavirus pandemic. He said it was a difficult but necessary decision. “The regulations and the different changes and adjustments we kept having to make in different regions and countries throughout the world was just becoming unmanageable and out of protection for our volunteers, I made the decision that we are suspending the vigils,” Carney explained. He encouraged volunteers to continue praying and fasting. He also joined other pro-life leaders in calling upon the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services to close every abortion facility across the country because “by definition, they are not essential medical providers.”

## 40 Days for Life attacked

On March 17, Shawn Carney, president of 40 Days for Life, reported that four pro-life activists were being tested for covid-19 after an employee at a Planned Parenthood facility in Pittsburgh, came out and “intentionally” coughed and sneezed on the “pro-life volunteers peacefully praying outside of the building.” Carney said “Despite [Centers for Disease Control] recommendations to cover all coughs and sneezes, this individual, who works with the public in a medical facility, purpose-

See, ‘Round-up’ p.14





# The pro-life lessons of *Horton Hears a Who*

Gabrielle Vandergragt



**Editor's Note:** Gabrielle Vandergragt, attends Bishop Smith High School in Pembroke, Ont., finished second in the 2019-2020 Fr. Ted Essay Scholarship. This is her essay.

Did you hear he heard a Who? Who heard a Who, you ask? Well, Horton did! Horton heard a Who when the Whos of Whoville were wafting in the wind.

*Horton Hears a Who* is timeless. It's classic. It's simply and profoundly pro-life and nails down several key points about the pro-life community, in addition to being hilarious and a fun adventure. Dr. Seuss didn't need to layer his story in allegories and allusions to make readers and viewers think. The movie reflected the pro-life movement beautifully, in three ways. The main character, Horton, embodies the true spirit of the movement and its individuals. The plot itself is a journey of hardship, chaos, very real physical danger, and simple parallels. And the reactions of the movie's antagonists at the end are so well-done as they realize the atrocity they very nearly commit is

so heartbreakingly real.

Horton is an elephant. He lives in the jungle of Nool. He's a wildly imaginative and caring elephant who teaches a class of young animals. While not always quickest to the draw, Horton more than makes up for it with his charm and caring nature. One day, Horton finds a speck floating through the air, and it happens that the speck is inhabited by millions of tiny people called Whos. Horton discovers that they are in serious danger, after having their speck dislodged from its resting place, Whoville could be destroyed if a safe place for them to rest isn't found. Horton sees the importance of his mission. A person is a person, no matter how small, and even the tiniest speck has a deep value to the elephant. So off Horton goes, on a long, dangerous journey that earns him many enemies who think he's gone crazy and want to stop him. Horton is the perfect example of how pro-lifers need to be in the face of adversity. Not once does he lose his temper or become angry at his adversaries, never gives up on his mission, never stops believing that what he is doing is the right thing when it would be far, far easier to just throw in the towel, give up, and say that he's done his part. Even when he's shoved into a cage and treated cruelly, Horton never holds any lasting animosity towards anyone. When the clover that bears the speck is dropped into a field of three million flowers, Horton picks every single one until he finally finds the clover with Whoville on it. Horton's determination



is perhaps extreme, but it reflects the value of human life: this one tiny "speck" (and in real life we could just insert "clump of cells") is so important that the elephant risks everything to save it. We could compare this to a pro-lifer who is at risk of losing his or her job because they refuse to back down on their belief. The movie takes it a step further, because even though Horton has been persecuted, he finds it within himself to forgive his opposition.

The plot of the movie is packed with humour, wit,

adventure, and profoundly simple messages. It kicks off with the speck being launched into danger, through no fault of its own, when a seed falls from a tree and disturbs the flower the speck was resting on. The Whos, completely unaware, are sent flying through the air, putting them at great risk. If the speck were to land on the ground and get stepped on, for example, Whoville would be destroyed and all the Whos along with it. Once again, one could take out "speck" and replace it with "clump of cells" or "fetus" and have the same story, in essence. In both cases, innocent life is being endangered because of circumstances beyond its control. Despite the movie's silliness and

humour, viewers can notice the real threats faced by the Whos. Others keep trying to force Horton to get rid of the speck, claiming that he's bonkers for thinking it's worth anything. This element is reminiscent of the pressure young women sometimes feel to get an abortion when pregnancy occurs unplanned. Throughout the movie, we also see how fragile Whoville is. It responds to outside stimulation dramatically. When Horton covers the speck with his ear, the whole world is plunged into darkness. When in the sunlight or shade or cold, the weather changes drastically. The ease with which Horton can positively or negatively affect the Whos is actually quite realistic.

Carrying on the thread of the plot, the most poignant thing about the whole movie comes at the very end. All the animals that have opposed Horton's mission finally hear the Whos. Almost like a pro-choicer listening to a pre-born heartbeat or watching a baby move on an ultrasound, the enemies are brought low by the simple cry of the tiniest Who in Whoville. It was then they realized that Horton had been right the whole time. Life did exist on the speck, it just had no voice with

part? The reaction. Once all the animals learn what they almost did, and realize the implications of that, they are horrified, especially the antagonist, Kangaroo. She begins to beat herself up for her behaviour, having been rude, prideful and arrogant throughout the entire film. When people in the real world understand what exactly abortion is, there is no way to support it. You don't have to be religious to see the atrocity of murdering babies before they are even born. The animals are educated, and once they see the truth, they are forced to admit that they have been wrong. This must be a goal of the pro-life movement if it is to gain any sort of traction; educate the people enough that they can understand the reality of abortion for themselves, make it culturally abhorrent to consider abortion, and success is sure to abound. The other beautiful scene in this movie is the closing. As the credits begin to roll, the camera pans out and zooms away, revealing that the entire world Horton and the other animals live on is also a tiny speck floating through space. Every human being is just a clump of cells. It's all a matter of size. Horton just so happened to be a large clump

Life did exist on the speck,  
it just had no voice  
with which to show itself

which to show itself. And that is a chilling reality, that so many unborn children have every right to life and happiness but they need someone else to speak for them. But the true greatest

while the Whos he fought for were smaller than the head of a pin' Because at the core, that's all a human being is. The only difference between an embryo and an adult is time.

*Horton Hears A Who* is a wonderful movie. From a purely entertainment perspective, it's a goofy adventure featuring both Steve Carell and Jim Carrey, whose excellent acting make it just that much more enjoyable. It represents the value, dignity, and importance of human life in ways that more allegorical films like *The Giver* or reality movies like *Unplanned* just can't. Which is not to say, of course, that those movies are not masterpieces or thought-provoking works. In fact it is quite the opposite. But Horton's story is one even children can learn from. It's simple and effective. Horton is an exemplary model of the patience, compassion and fortitude required for both the greater whole of the pro-life movement, the plot is full of parallels that are beautifully executed, and the heart-breaking reality of the final scenes of the movie are quite touching and promote the value of human life. The whole movie is a wonder, summarized by its most famous quote: "A person is a person, no matter how small."

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Amusements  
Rick McGinnis

Like anyone given to binge-watching shows on streaming television, I recently tore through three seasons of *Babylon Berlin*, a Netflix series set in the ominous, waning years of Weimar Germany, just as the roaring, manic 1920s tumbled into the dismal 1930s. It's the most expensive non-English TV drama ever filmed, with the first two seasons costing €40 million, most of it spent trying to replicate a city mostly bombed off the map nearly 70 years ago.

Germany's Weimar Republic, for anyone still interested in history, is the previous century's benchmark for social and political decadence, a state that failed, but not before showing the world what economic instability, rampant inflation and political corruption could do to a humiliated onetime industrial powerhouse left with little more than its national myths and considerable creative ferment.

Based on a series of detective novels, *Babylon Berlin* is ostensibly an interlocking series of murder mysteries set within the inexorable progress of a historical inevitability. The good guys are the idealists and the social adventurers who find a way to thrive amidst the chaos; the bad guys are the cynics and establishment types using that chaos to facilitate the insidious rise of the Nazis, who remain mostly offscreen until they arrive in their brownshirts in the third season.

It's no surprise that it's been praised for its "almost eerie parallels to the present" (*Die Zeit*) and "growing relevance to the present day" (*Variety*). We don't agree on much nowadays, but if there is any consensus to be shared, it's that we're living in an age of dangerous political instability and decadence, though as usual nobody seems to be able to agree on the what, who and how of the situation.

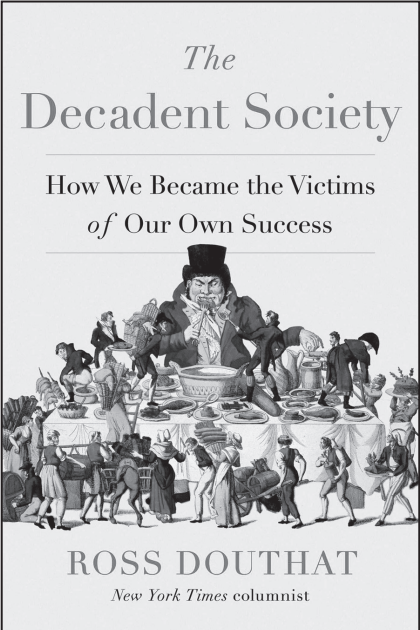
Arriving almost like a public service, Ross Douhat's new book *The Decadent Society: How We Became Victims of Our Own Success* was recently published to try to explain the moment. Douhat is the tame conservative at the *New York Times*, and his role is mostly to pretend to be a sober voice – to explain to *Times* readers why people they don't really know have such alarming opinions, and to suggest possible areas of common ground without scaring the children.

He begins in a familiar place, repeating the by-now venerable theory that America in particular and Western society in general began slipping into its decadent phase with the apex of the space program at the end of the '60s. Space, as *Star Trek* told us, was the final frontier, the one that opened up conveniently after the horrors of two world wars had put the United States of America in the driver's seat of liberal democracy, and depleting our will to thrust into space the way the country had settled its western frontiers after barely two decades of rocket launches, orbits and moon landings has been demoralizing.

As Douhat describes it, decadence is the sticky, stained Popsicle stick we're left holding after a period of prolonged technological and social progress has ended. We all remember how thrilling it was to see our lives transformed generation by generation, increasing prosperity while filling our houses with goods unimaginable to our grandparents.

But the progress has been ever more halting, our material circumstances mostly indistinguishable from those grandparents except for minor improvements in fit, finish and cut. The only really notable technological improvement is digital and virtual; to boil down Douhat's analysis of the current malaise, our cell phones and smart TVs are the Popsicle stick.

Which, Douhat reflects, might not be entirely a bad thing. We can communicate faster, entertain ourselves more efficiently, and access a world of facts and experience to make up for growing income inequality, stagnating wages and productivity, and all the other fears and insecurities – real or imagined –



that we either know or imagine beset us, now or in the near future.

Douhat's book is a belated response, perhaps even an unofficial sequel, to a book published back when we thought we were living through a transformational time in history. Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* was published in 1992, and was received and then criticized as an ambitious, hasty, and even arrogant conceit. Perhaps because of its title alone, many people took Fukuyama's thesis for a thickly-painted portrait of the zeitgeist and then later, when history seemed to return with a vengeance after the 9/11 attacks, as either premature or wholly incorrect.

Citing Fukuyama, though, Douhat points out just how prescient he was in describing not just the tentative decade that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall but the whole subsequent era, right up to the present. "The struggle for recognition," Douhat quotes Fukuyama, "the willingness to risk one's life for a purely abstract goal, the worldwide ideological struggle that called forth daring, courage, imagination, and idealism, will be replaced by economic calculation, the endless solving of technological problems, environmental concerns, and

the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands. In the post-historical period, there will be neither art nor philosophy, just the perpetual caretaking of the museum of human history."

Douhat asserts that not even Fukuyama imagined that this "end" of history was a full stop, and dared to suggest that "this very prospect of centuries of boredom at the end of history will serve to get history started once again."

Which brings us back to what, precisely, we mean when we describe a time – either in the past or the one we inhabit – as "decadent." As portrayed in *Babylon Berlin*, the Weimar period as experienced in the capital cities was full of energy and creativity, even if a young woman would resort to prostitution as a side hustle to make ends meet in an economy in free-

all. It's hard not to imagine that some of the audience would love to experience the surplus of style and hedonism apparently available on the edge of the precipice, Nazis and all – much as a previous audience responded to the film *Cabaret* back in 1972, another story set in Weimar Berlin, released when a chaotic social moment had passed, leaving both its participants and spectators feeling mutually enervated.

But this might be a moment already passing. I'm writing this at the end of a week of semi-lockdown, socially isolated by choice as the coronavirus spreads worldwide. That digital and virtual technology – the Popsicle stick – has turned out to be the only life-line keeping many people informed, amused, and connected. History has once again arrived with a crash, and we're all wondering what the world will look like when either social pressure relents or government edict allows us to go out on the streets again. Is this a cure for our torpor, or a way of entrenching it further into the way we live? Whatever happens, it sure doesn't look much like Weimar Berlin.

For thou didst form my inward parts: thou didst knit me together in my mother's womb. I will give thanks unto thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works, and that knoweth my soul right well.

Psalms 139

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# Nova Scotia imposes anti-free speech bubble zone

Paul Tuns

On March 10, less than ten days after Bill 242 was introduced in the Nova Scotia legislative assembly, The Protecting Access to Reproductive Health Care Act passed unanimously and was given Royal Assent from the Lieutenant-Governor the same day.

On March 2, Nova Scotia MLA Claudia Chender, NDP (Dartmouth South) introduced the bubble

zone law that bans pro-life witnessing near abortion facilities in the province. A lawyer, Chender is the NDP's spokesperson for the Status of Women and NDP House Leader.

Campaign Life Coalition Nova Scotia coordinator Ruth Robert spoke against the bill in the Committee on Law Amendments, and said afterward s: "I'm just horrified about this. It's just absolutely terrible." She added that "Bubble

zones have come to Nova Scotia. They did it in eight days."

The law bans any type of pro-life witness in an "access zone" established 50 meters around an abortion centre. It prohibits pro-life demonstrators from interfering with or attempting to persuade an abortion-minded woman as they approach an abortion facility including free-standing abortion mills, hospitals, doctor's office or pharmacy, or people who work in such facilities. Currently, abortions are committed in four hospitals in the province. Bill 242 outlaws the filming or photographing of clients or workers of such facilities. It also forbids any protesting within the 50-meter bubble zone.

The law states no person shall "request that a "patient refrain from accessing abortion services," or a "physician or a service provider refrain from providing, or facilitating the provision of, abortion services."

A first offense is punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000 or a six-month prison term, or both, with fines and prison terms doubling for a second offense. If a corporation -- Campaign Life Coalition, for example -- is convicted of violating the law, it faces fines of up to \$25,000 for a first offense, then a possible \$100,000 fine for a second offense.

During third reading, Chender told the legislative assembly, the bill "brings us in line with several

other Canadian provinces and the hope is that it will open an ongoing conversation about other actions

During the March 6 committee hearings, Robert said, "It's just the beginning of the removal

women with genuine choice. Noting that many women are pressured to have abortion, she said, "I am there for the women who want their children and feel they have no other recourse, to say: 'I'm here and I can tell you from experience sometimes there are other options'." She said she never condemns women entering abortion facilities.

Robert also said the law was unnecessary. She pointed to the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada's own data which shows that violence from pro-life protestors is not an issue in Canada. "There has been no severe or moderate violence from pro-life individuals in over 20 years," she said to the committee.

Melissa Brooks, co-director of the Women's Choice Clinic at the Queen Elizabeth II hospital in Halifax, told the committee if women and abortion workers feel safe from protesters, it will increase the visibility and therefore availability of abortion in the province.

The Liberal Premier, Stephen McNeil, supported the law, saying in the legislative assembly: "On behalf of our government, on behalf of this side of the House, I am honoured to stand and support your bill." All parties supported passage of the bill.

Nova Scotia joined Alberta, British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, and Quebec in enacting bubble zone laws.



**Ruth Robert of Campaign Life Coalition Nova Scotia addresses the Committee on Law Amendments to speak against the creation of anti-free speech bubble zones in the province.**

that need to be taken to ensure that women have full autonomy over their own bodies." She admitted that "we haven't seen any violence related to the provision of abortion services in Nova Scotia, but said that although "this bill is not a response to real or perceived threat of violence right now," there is the potential for harassment or violence.

During committee hearings, women and abortionists said that women seeking abortions and staff feel unsafe or judged when they see protesters. Chender said, "We want to ensure that people are free of harassment."

of our constitutional freedoms if we don't stop and fight this." She said, "I fear this bill sets a precedent that will diminish, if not completely abolish, constitutional rights of freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and conscience." Robert added that contrary to the claims of the bill's supporters, it is "extremely troublesome because it does not protect women; it merely violates people's constitutional rights."

No amendments were proposed to protect the constitutional rights of pro-life protesters.

Robert explained that pro-life witnessing is peaceful and provides

## National March for Life indoor events cancelled

Decision on rally on Parliament Hill, march pending

Interim Staff

Campaign Life Coalition announced that they are heeding the recommendation of public health officials and cancelling all indoor events associated with the National March for Life program in Ottawa, May 13-15. The events affected by the cancellation include the Candlelight Vigil for Victims of Abortion on the eve of the March, the Rose Dinner and Youth Banquet on May 14, and the Youth Conference on May 15.

A final decision regarding the rally on Parliament Hill and the March through the streets of the nation's capital has yet to be made and proliferators are urged to follow CLC on social media for a definitive announcement.

A statement released by CLC stated. "The health and safety of Canadians is our main priority as we listen to the recommendations of health officials."

Debbie Duval, CLC's national capital organizer, told *The Interim* that "an alternative program" is being developed with CLC's partners to "give Canadians a different kind of March for Life experience regardless of whether the outdoor is cancelled or not." Duval explained: "We are fully aware that even if things clear up and we can still have the march, many Canadians will stay home for safety reasons, so we want to do something for them."

Duval said a final decision will be made in mid-May and she urged those planning to make the trip

to check marchforlife.ca or call a Campaign Life Office (see advertisement on page 6).

CLC is developing an online program for May 14 to "provide a national platform for Canadians to speak out against the greatest human rights injustices facing our country."

Jeff Gunnarson, national president Campaign Life Coalition, told *The Interim* that it is possible that few people will attend but if possible, they are going to try to have the march but provide an online program for those that cannot or will not make the trip to Ottawa. "Like any other rally, we do not do it with expectation of a lot of people," said Gunnarson, "we do it because it is a good way to make people aware of what's going on in our country."

Gunnarson said it was a difficult but responsible decision to cancel the inside events. He said that CLC had a responsibility "to not increase the risk of spreading covid-19." He also said that there were financial obligations to a number of vendors if a final decision to caterers, hotels, and speakers was not made sooner rather than later.



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And he said to them, “Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, {here is} the place where they laid Him.

Mark 16:6

Il leur dit: Ne vous épouvantez pas; vous cherchez Jésus de Nazareth, qui a été crucifié; il est ressuscité, il n’est point ici; voici le lieu où on l’avait mis.

Marc 16:6



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# Sloan, Lewis vow not to march in pride parades

Continued from p.3

and the other pro-life candidates overcome them with a strong and effective grassroots campaign, by marshalling thousands of supporters to sign their nomination forms and donate.” Gunnarson recalled Karahalios’ resume that included past Electoral District Association president and serving on the party’s National Policy Committee where Karahalios proved he was “a true conservative,” and said the “grassroots party members have a right to vote for him in this leadership race.”

Gunnarson told *The Interim* that while he understands many pro-life grassroots party members will be upset and want to boycott the leadership campaign out of frustration with two pro-lifers being nixed from the race – first Décarie and then Karahalios – he had a simple message: stay engaged. “To those who have taken out

memberships, signed nomination forms, and donated to candidates, thank you, stay in the process, don’t give up.” He said, “We still have two candidates worthy of support.” For those who have yet to become a Conservative Party member, Gunnarson pleaded, “please do so because it is vital that we show our strength and we show that in numbers in the final ballot.”

Décarie had vowed to defund abortion and reserve the term “marriage” for church ceremonies. He also said he thought homosexual activity was a choice, denying that people are born that way. He also dismissed LGBTQ as an ideological term. He told *The Interim* he opposed gestational limits on abortion and wanted legal protection for all human beings from the moment of conception to natural death.

Karahalios promised to end Justin Trudeau’s multi-billion dollar overseas abortion commitment, to

appoint only conservative judges to the Supreme Court, ensure free votes for MPs on matters of conscience, to defund the



**CLC national president Jeff Gunnarson urges pro-lifers to remain involved in the process and vote for the pro-life candidates.**

CBC, and stop shariah law and shariah financing.

Derek Sloan has come out against the government’s ban on conversion therapy which would ban psychological treatment for minors uncomfortable with same-sex attractions or who suffer gender confusion and restrict the treatment in a number of ways. Sloan said the bill caters to “gender ideologists” who believe gender is fluid and could criminalize parents who refuse to go along with hormones or surgery to “affirm” their children’s imagined gender.

In an interview with Laura-Lynn Tyler Thompson, host of *The 700 Club Canada*, Sloan declared, “I’m pro-life and I’ve made no secret of that fact.” He said “it’s time to have a discussion about abortion and the laws surrounding it or the lack thereof.” He said, “As leader, I would encourage individual MPs to bring forward bills addressing this issue and we can let parliamentary democracy do its work and have a discussion.” On gay pride

parades, Sloan said he would not participate: “I won’t be marching in a pride parade and I’ve said that. It’s funny that that has become the political litmus test of the year, and I won’t be jumping through any hoops that the media is imposing on the Conservative party.”

In an interview with the CBC, Leslyn Lewis said: “I didn’t march in the parade before I became a politician. And I would feel that it’s very disingenuous for me to use a particular vulnerable group to advance my political career.” She disagreed with Décarie that homosexuality was a choice, saying she could not imagine why people would choose it and the incumbent difficulties it presents, especially “coming out to parents.” Yet she also opposes the government’s conversion therapy ban.

Lewis declares herself pro-lifer and has said she would rescind overseas funding of abortion.

All four have condemned Peter MacKay’s comments last October describing pro-life and pro-family views as the “stinking albatross” around the neck of then leader Andrew Scheer. Scheer, however, promised not to reopen so-called divisive social issues. The four CLC-endorsed candidates said moral issues would be on the table if they were elected leader, and indeed their presence put those issues in the limelight of the leadership contest until the coronavirus disrupted the race. CLC’s Gunnarson said that he has no doubt that the reason two of the pro-life candidates were either barred or disqualified was to reduce the likelihood that life and family issues would come up dur-

ing debates and show the strength of the social conservative movement within the party. “If there were four pro-life candidates in the debates up against two pro-abortion politicians, it would send a strong signal that life and family issues were important and had to be addressed,” said Gunnarson. “Many in the party want these issues to either go away or just acquiesce with the Liberals and NDP. Having four candidates speaking out against the elite consensus was too much of a threat to their unproven, in fact, tragically wrong ideas about how to win elections.”

Décarie endorsed Sloan shortly after exiting the race. Lewis told the CBC she had not talked to Décarie at all during the campaign.

Campaign Life Coalition is urging pro-life Canadians over 14 years of age to buy Conservative Party memberships before April 17 to be eligible to vote for the party’s next leader. Gunnarson said with a preferential ballot there is no worry about splitting votes, so supporters should vote for Sloan and Lewis either first or second, and mark the other one as their second preference. The preferential ballot means the bottom candidate in each round is dropped off subsequent ballots and those who voted for dropped candidates have their votes reapportioned according to preference.

Conservative MP Marilyn Gladu, former parliamentary staffer Rudy Husny, and businessman Rick Peterson – all pro-abortion and pro-LGBTQ rights – qualified as approved applicants in February but did not qualify as authorized

candidates or verified candidates by the March deadlines. Gladu and Husny called upon LEOC to extend the March 25 deadline to become a verified candidate. Sloan and Erin O’Toole asked that all deadlines be extended including the membership sign-up and vote. Lewis said the deadlines should be maintained, but Peter MacKay said they should be moved up so that the party can choose a leader sooner rather than later at a time of national uncertainty due to the covid-19 pandemic.

On March 23, LEOC co-chair Lisa Raitt, a former MP and leadership candidate, told CTV there was no plan to change the timelines for membership or the vote. Raitt said she and LEOC co-chair Dan Nowlan are “monitoring developments around covid-19 continuously,” but indicated the only consideration for delaying the vote was whether or not it was possible for Canada Post to deliver mail-in ballots. The Conservative Party’s constitution allows for other voting options including online, but guarantees the right to the option of a postal ballot.

Campaign Life Coalition said that the membership deadline and vote should be extended. Gunnarson said people should be focused on keeping their families safe, not partisan politics. “The leadership race is important but can wait,” Gunnarson told *The Interim*. “Protecting our families and keeping society safe from the spread of a deadly virus cannot.”

CLC continues operations with employees working from home to help people stay informed about the leadership race, among other responsibilities.

The victory of life is won,  
The song of triumph has begun:


Alleluia  
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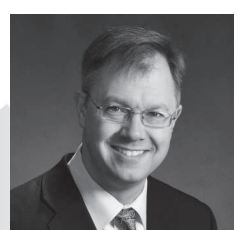
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John 8:12

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# Round-up of coronavirus-related pro-life stories

Continued from p.8

fully violated these needed precautions in the wake of a global pandemic. We are calling for this individual to be removed from their position immediately.” Furthermore, 40 Days for Life is also complying with the CDC recommendations of having fewer than 50 people at any event for the next eight weeks and it is cancelling any public demonstrations that could “could potentially endanger volunteers and encouraging those who feel ill to stay home and follow CDC guidelines.” 40 Days for Life is the twice-yearly witness outside abortion facilities that has saved thousands of women from killing their preborn babies, converted abortion workers to the pro-life cause, and temporarily or permanently shut down dozens of abortion facilities.

## Euthanasia activist calls for telehealth assisted suicide

Kim Callinan, president of the Portland, Oregon-based Compassion and Choices pro-euthanasia lobby, sent out a fundraising email on March 20 saying that authorities should liberalize rules to allow approval of assisted suicide and prescribing of lethal drugs via telehealth due to the coronavirus pandemic. (Telehealth is defined in the *New England Journal of Medicine* as “the delivery and facilitation of health and health-related service including medical care, provider and patient education, health information services, and self-care via telecommunications and digital communication technologies.” It is being widely used during the covid-19 pandemic.) Using telehealth would mean doctors could approve euthanasia or assisted suicide without examining a patient in person. Callinan wrote in an email: “As always, we are responding quickly to the needs and opportunities of the times. As the workforce grapples with the pandemic, telehealth is gaining prominence as a critical mode of delivering medical care. This provides a unique opportunity to make sure health systems and doctors are using telehealth, where appropriate, for patients trying to access end-of-life care options. These efforts should improve access to medical aid in dying in the short and long-term.” The 2019 New Mexico assisted suicide bill included a telehealth provision and the recent Hawaii bill to

expand assisted suicide in the state includes permitting telehealth provision. As Alex Schadenberg, executive director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, noted: “Let’s think this through. A person with difficult health issues who feels like a burden on others, or is experiencing depression or existential distress, could be assessed, via telehealth, and prescribed lethal drugs for suicide. The death lobby focuses on facilitating death and protecting doctors who are willing to be involved with killing their patients. They are not concerned with protecting people.”

## Scientists call for lifting fetal tissue research ban

The *Washington Post* reported that Kim Hasenkrug, an immunologist at the National Institutes of Health’s Rocky Mountain Laboratories in Montana, said an exemption should be made “to a ban imposed last year prohibiting government researchers from using tissue from abortions in their work” in order to permit coronavirus research. President Donald Trump’s Dept. of Health and Human Services brought in the ban last year as part of the administration’s goal of “promoting the dignity of human life from conception to natural death.” Hasenkrug began advocating for lifting the ban in mid-February. The Post reports that mice transplanted with fetal tissue that develops into lung might provide “humanized mice” on which research can be performed. It is believed that mice themselves are not susceptible to the coronavirus. A pro-life think tank, the Charlotte Lozier Institute, issued a statement saying that “Those who advocate experimentation using body parts harvested from aborted children are shamelessly exploiting the coronavirus pandemic, playing on people’s fears at a vulnerable time so that a select few can continue to use aborted fetal tissue in their research.”

## Churches close around the world

Many of the faithful are disappointed that many church leaders put restrictions on church services even before governments were forcing so-called social distancing rules that impacted the ability of churches to remain open. On March 14, Rev. Patrick Mahoney, a Presbyterian minister and veteran pro-life, human

rights activist, told *LifeSiteNews*: “A.W. Tozer said, ‘A scared world needs a fearless church.’ During these difficult days of the coronavirus, it is critical that the church provide hope, comfort, inspiration, and support. What the church must never become, is an extension of the uncertainty and fear swirling around them. The Christian community must be transformational and never reactionary. In light of that, it is troubling to see so many churches cancelling their worship services. While each pastor must ensure the physical welfare of their parishioners, church leaders also have a sacred responsibility to oversee the spiritual and emotional welfare of their members. Given the current data surrounding covid-19, churches can put in safeguards to protect their most vulnerable members and still ensure a safe environment for community worship. Finally, it is very concerning to see governmental officials dictate to local churches how they are to conduct their spiritual life together and when and how they are gather.”

## Dutch euthanasia facility temporarily closes

The Euthanasia Expertise Center (EEC) in The Hague, Netherlands, has temporarily shut-down amid the coronavirus crisis. The facility killed 898 people in 2019 and 727 people in 2018. According to Alex Schadenberg, executive director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, the EEC is “the euthanasia clinic that specializes in euthanasia for psychiatric reasons and euthanasia for people with dementia or questionable competency.” The Euthanasia Expertise Center announced in a press release, “In the interest of public health, our patients, their loved ones and employees of the expertise center, it is no longer responsible to continue our current care provision.” It will not accept new patients, although clients are “requested to submit their request at a later date.” It also states that “the care for current patients of the Euthanasia Expertise Center is suspended,” with “existing processes ... on hold.” It continues: “However harsh: euthanasia care cannot be identified as a top priority in health care. The risk of infection is high and the expertise center employs ambulatory doctors and nurses who also work elsewhere.” The closure is in effect until April 6.

# And then there was this ...

As the world is in the midst of the pandemic coronavirus, we are told to: keep a distance of 6 feet from the next person; practice ‘social distancing’ (one of many new words we will see during this epic time); wash our hands vigorously with soap and water while singing ‘Happy Birthday To You’ twice (a good way to get children to wash their hands); sneeze into our elbow, left knee, or whatever is most convenient; and refrain from hoarding toilet paper (What is that all about?). To help us not only get through this crisis, and do so with patience, humour, music, and prayer, we present a number of stories to lift our spirits by showing how others are lifting spirits and inspiring hope. Humanity is rising to the occasion to evoke laughter and smiles. Enjoy the following, bearing in mind that the evil of abortion and other assaults on the human person are still among us. Pray, be vigilant, and always support life – from conception to natural death.

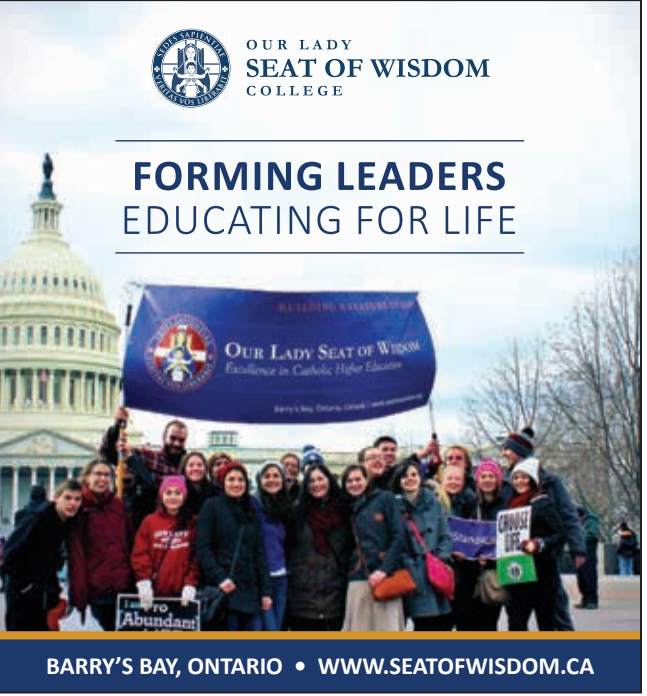
We begin by suggesting a short video of an Italian nonna who presents the above advice, and then some, with *umorismo e amore*. The video is on YouTube, which you can access by keying in “Italian grandma’s suggestions, coronavirus.” Honestly, it is worth the view.

Next, we have a story from the U.S. about Brandon, age 4 and his sister, Cameron, age 6. Both children are autistic. Brandon has a “crippling fear” because of his autism, a fear that is compounded by stories of the coronavirus and its attending quarantine and health concerns. His sister comes to his rescue with consoling words from Scripture. In Sunday school she learned a short passage

from 2 *Timothy* 1:7: “The Spirit God has given us is no cowardly spirit, but rather one that makes us strong, loving and wise.” Cameron went over each word with Brandon until he was able to understand and quote the text and have his fear reduced. Their mother, Sheletta Brundidge, posted on Twitter: “Stop letting your fear of coronavirus be bigger than your faith in God. Plead The Blood, pray, and wash your hands. Amen.” Sheletta, who is an author and blogger has just published a picture book, *Cameron Goes to School*, the story of her daughter’s autism journey. See her Twitter account for more information and inspiration. The aforementioned video appeared March 12.

Quarantined Italians have taken their social life to a new level – on their balconies. With instruments from violins to accordions and voices from professional opera singers to casual but enthusiastic singers, Italians are joining their neighbours from across the street to across the piazza to sing and play music as only Italians can – with hope, love and an abundance of joy. There are numerous videos on YouTube at this calamitous time to lift your spirits in song. Google ‘Coronavirus outbreak: Italian residents join together to sing from balconies during lockdown’ and then scroll down to view all the videos that are inspiring the world to not give up, to not have fear, to trust in God and each other. A professional Italian tenor and opera singer, Maurizio Marchini, goes out on his balcony each evening to serenade quarantined Florence. All these videos will bring hope to your heart and tears to your eyes.

There was plenty of regular life and family news that could have filled this space, but we wanted to provide you with something that might illicit a smile. If this situation with the coronavirus lasts for long, we might open up this space to some jokes by Campaign Life Coalition president emeritus Jim Hughes.



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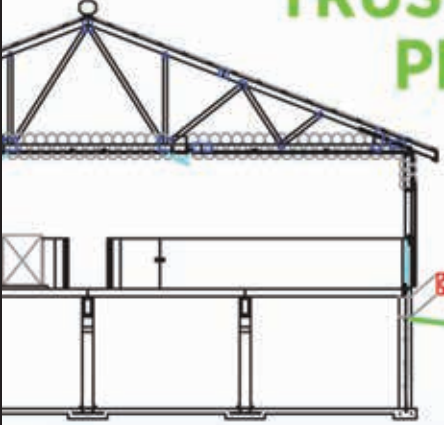




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