

THE ERIE ECHO

"voice for life"

Vol. XLIX No. 1

Circulation 5,449

January 2021

Erie March for Life

The 2021 Erie March for Life will take place on Saturday, January 23 to mark anniversary of the January 22, 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. Come march with us! The 48th Annual March for Life in Washington, DC will follow six days later.

The Erie March will be held once again in downtown Erie. Please be at Perry Square on the west side of State St. by 10:45 a.m. The March will begin at 11 a.m. Local college students will lead the way carrying the Erie March for Life banner.



Signs will be available for those who would like to carry one. Hand-crafted signs with positive pro-life messages are also fine. People for Life does, however, reserve the right to exclude messages that do not reflect the purpose and spirit of the March.

Speakers

The Erie March for Life will conclude with a brief program of speakers. Rev. Matthew Taylor, Pastor of Holy Trinity Luther Church in Albion, will open with a prayer. The list of speakers so far includes Erie native Matt Blackburn, Western Pennsylvania Director

for U.S. Senator Pat Toomey; Erie County Councilman Brian Shank; Rachel Praetzel of Gannon Students for Life; and Sheila Barajas, a first-generation Mexican-American with years of experience in sidewalk counseling and other pro-life activities out in California. Sheila's father was born in Mexico and served in the United States Marine Corps. The program will wrap up around noon, 12:15 p.m. at the latest.

Bad Weather

Please do not be deterred by a little rain or snow. No matter the weather, we will do our best to make the March happen. Just dress appropriately, with warm layers and waterproof, non-slip footwear, and come on down.

We did, very reluctantly, cancel the March last year, because of freezing rain. That was the first cancellation in the history of the March, something that may never be necessary again. Just in case, though, please check the People for Life website or Facebook page for any announcements if the weather forecast sounds really ominous.

March Theme

If you need some ideas for making a sign, consider the theme of this year's March: "Abortion: The Global Pandemic. Who is protecting the most vulnerable?"

Comparing the Pandemics

The corona virus has claimed an estimated 1.8 million lives in a single year. That is an alarming number and difficult to fathom. Far more difficult to fathom is the number of human lives that were ended by abortion during the same period: 56 million, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). Ironically, WHO recognizes the 1.8 million

corona virus deaths as a calamity of monumental proportions that justifies draconian government interventions, lockdowns, quarantines, disruption of national economies, and so forth but sees government sanctioned abortion-on-demand as "progress," progress in "reproductive health care" and women's rights.

In the United States, the latest figures show an annual death toll from abortion of 862,000 deaths per year—lives ended only weeks or months after they have just begun. This amounts to a fatality rate of 18.5% for the vulnerable populations: innocent and defenseless Black, White, Hispanic, and Asian boys and girls. But even these figures are probably low. Undocumented abortions are on the rise due to a growing online black market for abortion drugs. In comparison, U.S. COVID-19 deaths number approximately 333,000 for the entire year.

Pennsylvania recorded 30,364 abortions in 2018, 13,150 or 43% resulting in the deaths of Black children even though Blacks account for only 13% of the U.S. population. COVID-19, on the other hand, is blamed for 15,000 deaths statewide. Based on Erie County's share of the total Pennsylvania population, the number of abortions carried out annually on women who live in Erie County, is about 640. The Pennsylvania Department of Health reports 170, but this only counts abortions carried out within the state. Since Cleveland and Buffalo abortion facilities are closer to Erie than those in Pittsburgh, the higher number is more realistic. COVID-19 deaths? Erie County reports 200 as we go to print. (There is no record of any abortions being done *within* Erie County in recent years.)

DC March for Life 48th Annual Bus Trip

The 2021 Washington, DC March for Life will take place on Friday, January 29. And for the 48th year in a row, People for Life has arranged safe, convenient, and economical transportation to and from the event. Join us and be part of the most famous annual gathering in the world.

Round up a group of your own friends and family members to bring with you, or

come all by yourself and link up with some of the other marchers on your bus.

The cost per seat is still just \$55. The only other essential budget items are \$10.90 for Metro fare and the cost of snacks and meals.

Forty-seven overnight trips to Washington, DC and back, through all kinds of weather, have proven the grit and determination of the Erie pro-life community.

Not being the type to give up easily, we applaud the March for Life organizers for not surrendering this year's March to COVID-19.

Nevertheless, things will be a bit different than what we have gotten used to over the years. Uncertainties will persist, probably right up until the day of the March. So if you decide to march—and we hope you will—this

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FROM PAGE 1**Annual MFL Bus Trip**

year, it will be very important to stay tuned to the People for Life website and/or Facebook pages for all the latest information. Subscribing to our E-Mail Update list is also strongly recommended.

We know that the March for Life Expo, which normally showcases pro-life organizations and educational materials from around the country and sometimes from overseas, has been canceled. The annual Rose Dinner, which is traditionally held in the evening after the March for Life, will be a virtual event this year.

As of this writing the Smithsonian museums and the Holocaust Museum are closed. We can only hope they will reopen by January 29. The Museum of the Bible, however, remains open. Government points of interest such as the White House and the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center are closed to the public. Eating accommodations are also sure to be limited. Some congressional cafeterias and eateries are closed, and the ones that remain open may have restrictions. Likewise, there is only limited access to the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, and the cafeteria is completely closed. Outdoor attractions such as the World War II Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial are likely to remain open.

Once again, we hope things will improve by the end of January. But for now, this is the situation. In any case, we go to the March as advocates for the oppressed and dehumanized, not as tourists. Perhaps the greater our discomforts and inconveniences, the more powerful will be our message.

Bus Trip Details

As you look over the following plans for the Bus Trip, please bear in mind the possibility of some adjustments due to COVID-19 contingencies.

Our Anderson motor coaches will set out from Erie at 11 p.m. on Thursday, January 28 and return about 1:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 30. Marchers will board the buses in the Gabe's parking lot, located at 7200 Peach St., in the Summit Towne Center near Sam's Club. There will be a stop for passengers at the Edinboro Exit of I-79 if needed. The buses will arrive at West

Falls Church Metro Station on the outskirts of Washington around 7 a.m. From there, it is a 25-minute Metro ride directly to the National Mall.

The March for Life program begins at noon with a Rally on the Mall. A pre-Rally concert will begin at 11 a.m. The March itself usually gets underway around 1:30 p.m. The last marchers usually reach the Supreme Court, the terminus of the March, around 4 p.m.

Our buses will depart Falls Church at 5:30 p.m. and arrive back in Erie at approximately 1:30 a.m. depending on traffic and weather conditions.

COVID-19 Precautions

We encourage everyone who is thinking about the Bus Trip to evaluate their own risks and comfort levels relative to the dangers posed by COVID-19. Some may have already received the vaccine or have the antibodies from an actual infection. Others, however, may be in a high risk category because of age, underlying medical conditions, or other risk factors, and would be well-advised not make the trip this year.

Anyone who has a temperature above 100.3 degrees, is experiencing COVID-like symptoms, has been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or is simply not feeling well will not be allowed to make the trip. A non-contact temperature check will be conducted prior to our departure.

Anderson's buses are equipped with an ActivePure high-efficiency air filtration system like the one used on the International Space Station. Even so, marchers will be required to wear face coverings while on the buses. Medical grade n95 respirators can provide some additional peace of mind. Face coverings will also be required while using the Metro system and during the official March for Life activities.

After reviewing conditions in DC (e.g., COVID-19 lockdowns and long range weather forecast) as we get closer to January 29, it is possible that we will decide to delay our departure from Erie so we arrive in DC later in the morning, closer to the time of the March for Life Rally. Marchers will want to watch for any online announcements and also to make sure People for Life has their correct e-mail addresses and phone numbers.

10 and grades 11-12 compete separately. A panel of judges will score each speech, note the strong points and weak points, and offer some positive, constructive suggestions to each speaker. Speeches are evaluated on originality, depth of research, accuracy, and careful reasoning, as well as delivery style. Cash prizes will be awarded: \$100 for first place, \$50 for second, and \$25 for third.

You must register in advance by e-mailing your name, age, grade, school, and phone number to office@peopleforlife.org.

The Essay Contest is for middle school

Sponsorships

Thanks to the kindness and generosity of local sponsors, assistance is available for students and others on tight budgets. Inquiries about financial help are strongly encouraged. Please call or send an e-mail. We don't want anyone to miss the March due to financial constraints.

Register Today

Don't put off the March for Life for another year. Register for the Bus Trip, and find more information, at www.peopleforlife.life/january2021 and follow the Bus Trip at www.Facebook.com/MarchforLifeBusTrip to get the latest news. Registration payments can also be mailed to People for Life; P.O. Box 1126; Erie, PA 16512 or hand delivered to People for Life, 1625 W. 26th St., Erie.

Refund Policy

We are normally unable to promise refunds for anyone who reserves a seat but fails to make the trip. As you might expect, the bus company charges us by the seat, whether occupied or not. We can promise, however, that if this Bus Trip has to be cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions or another problem beyond our control, or if someone is sidelined with COVID-19, registration payments will be cheerfully refunded.

So don't let corona virus uncertainties discourage you from signing up right away. If we do not hear from enough people soon enough, we run the risk of canceling too many buses or canceling the entire Bus Trip and disappointing a lot of people who were planning to register at the last minute.

We look forward to hearing from you!

JANUARY 2021

www.PeopleforLife.life/january2021
www.Facebook.com/PeopleforLife

Erie March for Life

Saturday, January 23, 2021, 11 a.m.
Begins at West Perry Square

March for Life Bus Trip

Leave Erie January 28, 2021 at 11 p.m.
Return about 1:30 a.m., January 30
\$55 per seat

www.Facebook.com/MarchforLifeBusTrip

Student Contests

Erie-area students are invited to register for our annual essay and oratory contests, just for fun and maybe for profit.

The Oratory Contest will be held on Saturday, April 10, 2021 and is open to all high school students. It was originally scheduled for April 24, but that date is now reserved for the 2021 Pro-Life Breakfast. Contestants will research a pro-life topic of their choice, write an original 5-7 minute speech, and present it on April 10. Grades 9-

as well as high school students, This year's submission deadline is April 19, 2021.

Word limits are 500 for grades 7-9 and 750 for grades 10-12. Grades 7-9 and 10-12 compete separately. Cash prizes will be awarded: \$50 for first place, \$25 for second, and \$15 for third. Essays are judged by the same criteria as the Oratory Contest speeches, but grammar and spelling also count.

Send essays to office@peopleforlife.org in Microsoft Word or PDF format or placed in the body of the e-mail. They may also be

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Student Contests

mailed to People for Life; P.O. Box 1126; Erie, PA 16512, postmarked no later than April 19. All entries must include the student's name, address, phone number, grade, and school.

Speeches and essays may range in tone from polemical (argumentative) to purely informational, from inspirational to provocative. Topics can be chosen from a wide range of core human life issues related to: abortion, euthanasia (including assisted suicide), denial of life-saving medical treatment, exploitation of human embryos, and human cloning.

Contestants may address the sad or unpleasant realities that go along with the

öculture of death,ö but there are many upbeat topics to consider as well: adoption, motherhood, pregnancy and fetal development, personal experiences with pro-life activities (e.g., the March for Life, volunteering), and the blessings of knowing people with mental or physical challenges (e.g., Down Syndrome), to name a few. We are happy to advise contestants who are unsure about their choice of a topic and to suggest places to look for good information.

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Pro-Life Breakfast

professors at Grove City who was also the special guest speaker at our 2015 Pro-Life Breakfast. Rachel went on to earn a master's degree from the Graduate School of Political Management at George Washington

University. In 2013, she was named by *National Journal* as one of the ö25 Most Influential Women Under 35 in Washington.ö

Beginning in 2006, Rachel served in various roles in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, including as legislative director for Sen. Rand Paul and policy director for the Senate Steering Committee under the successive chairmanships of Sen. Pat Toomey and Sen. Mike Lee. She also served as director of policy services for The Heritage Foundation.

Rachel currently serves on the board of CNP [Conservative National Policy] Action, and the Advisory Board of *The American Conservative*. She is also a fellow at Defense Priorities, and a senior advisor to the Internet Accountability Project.

Memorials

<i>Given by</i>	<i>In Memory of</i>	<i>Given by</i>	<i>In Memory of</i>
Florence Winslow	Ann Bednar	Frank & Theresa Bolmanski	Stan Widomski
Lawrence F. Berdis	Johanna Berdis	Daniel J. Brabender Jr.	Stan Widomski
Duane & Marcie Kerstetter	Mark Borowy	Cathedral Prep Class of 1953	Our Classmate Stan Widomski
Daniel J. Brabender Jr.	Jane & Dan Brabender, Sr.	Mary & Dave Dombrowski	Stan Widomski
Harry & Pam Amann	Mary "Peg" Fitzgerald	Mickie & Nick Gligor	Stan Widomski
Maureen Berarducci	Mary "Peg" Fitzgerald	Stephen & Gail Grillo	Stan Widomski
Mary Dombrowski	Mary "Peg" Fitzgerald	Lisa & Gerald A. Hetrick	Stan Widomski
Robert & Kathy Jenks	Mary "Peg" Fitzgerald	B. McGowan	Stan Widomski
Ken & Leslie Schroeck	Mary "Peg" Fitzgerald	Brian & Kathleen Praetzel & Family	Stan Widomski
Tom & Chris Snook	Mary "Peg" Fitzgerald	Unknown / Anonymous	Stan Widomski
Wabtec Buildings 26 and 12	Mary "Peg" Fitzgerald	Jack & Penny Warmbrod	Stan Widomski
Becky Wurst	Mary "Peg" Fitzgerald	Mary Warner	Stan Widomski
Roseanne Yadeski	Mary "Peg" Fitzgerald	Rose Ann Yadeski	Stan Widomski
Beverly Harrity	Chuck Harrity	Gratia Wittmann	Richard Wittmann
Rita Jandt	My Hon Bob Jandt		
Helen L. Guth	Ralph J. Guth	<i>Given by</i>	<i>In Honor of</i>
Lawrence F. Berdis	Carmie Hogan Munch	Jack & Margie Walsh	Michael Walsh
Jim Toohey	Mary Ann Toohey		

JOIN PEOPLE FOR LIFE OR DONATE

NAME _____ DATE _____
 ADDRESS _____ E-MAIL _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 Best Phone _____ Mobile? Yes | No Other Phone _____ Mobile? Yes | No Do not text
 AFFILIATED WITH (e.g., church, organization, business) _____ WORK/PROFESSION _____

1. DONATION: \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 \$10 Other Amount _____

2. MEMBERSHIP DUES (one year): Individual \$10 Family \$20 Senior Citizen /Student \$5 New Renewal

3. TRIBUTE DONATION AMOUNT _____ In Memory of or In Honor of _____

4. TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Donations may also be made using the DONATE button on www.peopleforlife.life or by calling-in your credit card information.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Booths	<input type="checkbox"/> Liaison to Another Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> March For Life Bus Trip Worker
<input type="checkbox"/> Phone Calling	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Demonstrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother's Day Carnation Project
<input type="checkbox"/> Office Attendant	<input type="checkbox"/> Pro-Life Breakfast Worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Erie March for Life Worker
<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Mailing	<input type="checkbox"/> Life Run Worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Call when you need an extra hand.

Please make your check payable to: PEOPLE FOR LIFE, INC. P.O. Box 1126 Erie, PA 16512

Contributions or gifts to People for Life, Inc. are not tax deductible. The official registration and financial information of People for Life, Inc. may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

PEOPLE FOR LIFE
www.PeopleforLife.life

phone (814) 882-1333
 phone / fax (814) 459-1333
office@peopleforlife.org
www.facebook.com/PeopleforLife

Mailing Address
 P.O. Box 1126
 Erie, PA 16512

— Office Location —
 1625 W. 26th St.; Erie, PA
 Open 10:00 to 5:00 weekdays
 Call for evening and Saturday hours

Membership Renewal

Is your People for Life membership expired or coming due for renewal? If you are not sure, we can check for you. Not everyone who receives the *Erie Echo* newsletter is an official member. New members automatically receive the *Erie Echo*, but newsletter subscriptions are not automatically discontinued when the regular 12-month memberships expire.

Mother's Day Carnation Project

Mother's Day seems ages away, but it's not too early to think about how you might be able to help us with the 2021 Mother's Day Carnation Project. COVID-19 virtually shut down the Project in 2020, but we look forward to rolling up our sleeves this May and working once again with hundreds of our faithful volunteers and over a hundred Erie area churches on this popular Mother's Day tradition.

Carnations are the international symbol of Mother's Day. They were becoming a part of Mom's Special Day even before the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution on May 10, 1913 calling on all government officials to wear a white carnation on Mother's Day and, the following year, Congress officially designated the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. Then after the Roe v. Wade decision in 1973 and the rise of abortion, it was natural to embrace the carnation as a reminder of the beauty and inviolability of each and every prenatal human life, and every child in the womb.

Since the 1970s People for Life has celebrated both wonders, motherhood in all its splendor and the sanctity of every human life, with Mother's Day carnations, while also raising some of the money that we need to continue the indispensable work of local, neighbor-to-neighbor pro-life education and advocacy right

here in our own communities.

Typically, volunteers offer carnations to the individual members of a congregation after church, and donations to advance the pro-life cause, \$2 for a single carnation, are received in return. The carnations are intended especially for mothers and grandmothers, but almost everyone enjoys the beautiful blooms.

Thanks to the generous support of so many churches, the Carnation Project has become our largest and most indispensable fundraiser. Fundraising is not really what we want to focus on, but it is a necessity. Neither Silicon Valley, nor the multinational corporations, nor billionaires like Bill Gates, George Soros, and Warren Buffet are likely to cut any checks for the pro-life cause any time soon.

We are always in need of new volunteers and happy to connect with new churches. If you might be able to help in any way, please let us know. It's not too early to give us a call or shoot us an e-mail.

Pro-Life Breakfast

After 42 consecutive Januaries, change has caught up with the Pro-Life Breakfast. The 43rd edition was scheduled for Saturday, January 16. The date was settled with the Erie Bayfront Convention Center last February, and by September we had secured a wonderful special guest speaker. The corona virus, however, was having none of

this. We normally plan for 600 guests or more, but the Grand Ballroom, our usual venue at the Convention Center, was restricted to a maximum occupancy of 180.

Fortunately, the Convention Center was able to offer a substitute date of April 24, and our speaker graciously accepted the new arrangement. We cannot know exactly what April will bring, but we are hoping for the best. Better weather will be an extra plus, and the date will be better for local college students, who will not be resuming classes this year until late January. The cost of reservations is going to depend on whether or not we can have our popular buffet breakfast. If COVID-19 precautions make a plated meal necessary, we will be forced to adjust the ticket price to cover the extra cost.

Because of all the uncertainties, we are asking everyone to please monitor our E-Mail Updates, website, and Facebook pages for the latest developments. There is a Facebook page dedicated exclusively to the event: www.Facebook.com/ProLifeBreakfast. We will begin accepting reservations and get set up for online registration as soon as we can, hopefully at least by early March.

You won't want to miss our main speaker, Rachel Bovard, the Senior Director of Policy at the Conservative Partnership Institute in Washington, DC. You may have seen or heard her on CNBC, Fox and Friends, Fox Business, EWTN, MSNBC, or

National Public Radio. Her writing has appeared in such places as *The Hill*, *Real Clear Policy*, *Boston Herald*, *The Sacramento Bee*, *The Daily Signal*, and *Conservative Review*. She is the coauthor, with Sen. Jim DeMint, of a 274-page book, *Conservative: Knowing What to Keep*.

Born and raised in Rochester, New York, Rachel graduated from Grove City College summa cum laude in history and political science. She was recommended as a speaker by Dr. Paul Kengor, one of her

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2021 PRO-LIFE CALENDAR 2021

Jan. 20	Presidential Inauguration
Jan. 23	Erie March for Life - 11 a.m., Downtown Erie
Jan. 28	48th Annual Bus Trip to the March for Life - leaves Erie at 11 p.m.
Jan. 29	48th Annual March for Life - Washington, DC
Jan. 30	March for Life buses return to Erie - approximately 1:30 a.m.
March 5	Last day for statewide PPLF Student Essay contest entries
March 15	General Meeting, 6:30 p.m. - 1625 W. 26th St., Erie
April 10	People for Life High School Oratory Contest - Erie
April 24	43rd Annual Pro-Life Breakfast, 9 a.m. - Bayfront Convention Ctr.
April 26	Last day to submit People for Life Student Essay Contest entries
April 30	Last day for statewide PPLF High School Oratory Contest entries
May 3	Last day to register to vote in the May 18 primary election
May 9	Mother's Day / Mother's Day Carnation Project
May 17	Annual Election of Officers Mtg., 6:30 p.m. - 1625 W. 26th St., Erie
May 18	Primary Election
June 25-26	National Right to Life Convention