

Illiana Right to Life Newsletter

Fall 2023

ALL LIFE IS SACRED

www.IllianaRightToLife.org

WHAT'S NEW WITH ILLIANA RIGHT TO LIFE:

2023 Banquet

Illiana Right to Life is excited to welcome Seth Dreyer from Created Equal as our keynote speaker at our annual banquet this October! Seth is the vice president of Created Equal, an organization that works to equip individuals and groups in engaging in pro-life apologetics in their hometowns and on school campuses. Created Equal has used abortion victim photography and structured dialogue to effectively change hearts and minds on the issue of abortion since 2011. Seth has engaged several university professors in debates about abortion and is currently working to change hearts and minds in his home state of Ohio, where a constitutional amendment giving the 'right' to abortion is on the ballot this fall. We are excited to welcome him to our banquet! For more information about Seth and Created Equal, visit www.createdequal.org.

Our emcee for this year's banquet is Luke Venhuizen, a member of Oak Glen URC and a strong pro-life advocate in our Illiana community. Luke has attended the national March for Life several times, participated in local Life Chains, and supported various pro-life causes in our area for many years. We are excited to welcome him to the microphone!

2024 March for Life

This year, Illiana Right to Life has made the decision to travel to Washington, D.C. for the annual March for Life by air! We will be flying out to D.C. early on Thursday morning, January 18 and arriving back in Chicago on Saturday, January 20. If you have been hesitant to attend the March for Life in previous years because of the overnight bus ride, this year is the perfect opportunity to attend! Because of our updated travel plans, reservations will need to be made by **November 16**. Please contact Jan VanderZee at (219) 488-6784 or jacknjanvz@sbcglobal.net if you are planning on attending. This year's cost is \$225 for adults and \$175 for children.

Billboard Campaign

Thanks to your generous donations, we have been able to extend the run of our pro-life billboards! Be sure to look for it on 394, north of Steger Rd. until October 22. We will also have a "Christmas run" in December at three locations: 394 near Steger Rd., I-80/294 near Vincennes, and 41 near 45th.

HOW TO (UNINTENTIONALLY) DEFEAT PRO-LIFE CANDIDATES

The following is an excerpt from an article published by National Right to Life on how to effectively support pro-life candidates. The article highlights several suggestions of what NOT to do.

Fall in love with your candidate

We encourage pro-life advocates to get involved in campaigns. Your active participation and volunteer activities can help a pro-life candidate build a strong campaign. It also puts you in a position to build and strengthen a relationship if the candidate wins. Sometimes, pro-life advocates get so excited about their candidate that if they lose to another pro-life candidate (especially in a primary), they can become like the child who lost a game – he takes his toys and goes home. In this scenario, some refuse to support the pro-life candidate who won the primary. They decline to volunteer with the campaign and will not work to get others to vote for that candidate. Pro-life candidates need the active support of all pro-lifers and, all too often, without that full support, a pro-abortion candidate wins.

Expect the candidate to always make abortion the major issue in the campaign

According to an August 2023 survey for Newsweek conducted by Redfield and Wilton Strategies, American voters cited the economy (60%) as their top concern heading into the 2024 election cycle. The second most important issue cited was healthcare (33%) followed by immigration and crime, which tied for third (24%). Abortion and the environment tied for fourth (21%). In order to win, candidates have to address many issues and appeal to a wide electorate. It is our job as the pro-life movement to reach out to friends, family, and neighbors who share our views and inform them of the candidates' positions on abortion. It is the candidate's job to build a winning coalition of voters based on a broad range of issues and interests. Based on the political leanings of particular states or districts, the ways in which pro-life candidates address the abortion issue may vary. For example, winning strategies may look different in Louisiana versus California. However, when abortion comes up in an interview or during a debate, pro-life candidates must clearly and directly articulate their positions. They must also not be afraid to call out their pro-abortion opponents for supporting unlimited abortions and using taxpayer money to pay for them.

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However, to expect a pro-life candidate to always make abortion the top issue in the campaign can be a sure-fire way to lose an election. To assume every voter takes the abortion issue into account is another.

Believe that your candidate is the only 'real' pro-life candidate in the race and bash other pro-life candidates

In a primary where there are several pro-life candidates, pro-life individuals should select the candidate they think is best. Sometimes, unfortunately, some pro-life advocates attack the other pro-life candidates for not being "pro-life enough." For example, if a candidate has a decades-long pro-life voting record, they pick out the one or two votes in which the candidate did not vote correctly and attack him as not being sufficiently pro-life. Yet both share the same pro-life platform. By doing this, the pro-life advocate demoralizes fellow pro-life advocates and weakens enthusiasm for the pro-life candidate who does win the primary. Pro-abortion groups will, of course, take advantage of this circular firing squad. Pro-abortion candidates will highlight these divisions in pro-life circles to hold down support for their opponents. Ironically, at the same time, pro-abortion candidates will go to other voters and label the same pro-life candidate as an "anti-choice extremist."

Expect candidates to sound like Right to Life chapter leaders

People who are not directly involved in the pro-life movement are not going to be as articulate or well-versed in all the pro-life issues. At the onset, they may not know all the ins and outs of Roe v. Wade or Dobbs v. Jackson, or why we prefer the term "pro-life" as opposed to "anti-abortion" or "anti-choice." Unless there has been some prior discussion with active pro-life advocates, some candidates may not realize that there are certain "code words" that are interpreted differently by the pro-life community. Just because the wrong word comes out of their mouth does not necessarily make the candidate a phony. Sometimes a truly pro-life candidate can be tripped up by the media, confused, ill-informed, or quoted out of context. Give candidates a chance to explain what they really believe. In most cases, they will do what is right once they are in office, but that does not mean they will be comfortable or articulate talking about the killing of unborn babies. Remember, words are nice, taction is better.

Decline to vote if there is no "pro-life" candidate in the race

Sometimes, both major political parties nominate candidates who identify themselves as "pro-choice." Neither one supports the passage of greater protections for unborn children and their mothers. In these cases, some key considerations are which candidate would do the least amount of harm to the pro-life cause, what impact a candidate's election would have on the balance of power in a particular legislative body, and which candidate could be open to some persuasion and possibly cast a few pro-life votes once in office. In these less-than-ideal races, it is worth considering the minor differences between the candidates on the issue. For example, sometimes candidates who characterize themselves as "pro-choice" will take a position against new protections for unborn children and their mothers, but they support keeping in place those currently on the books. Another example is the candidate who generally supports abortion but also happens to be a fiscal hawk and is willing to take a position against the use of tax dollars to pay for abortions. Meanwhile, in both of these examples, their opponent wants to strike down all pro-life protections and actively supports the passage of pro-abortion laws. In these cases, even though there is no "pro-life" candidate in the race, in name at least, there are distinctions between the two major candidates that make one preferable to the other. We can never afford to leave important races on our ballot blank or skip elections altogether. Your vote and your voice matter way too much for that!

OTHER PRO-LIFE OPPORTUNITIES & INFO

40 Days for Life

The 40 Days for Life fall campaign has begun! Please consider joining and praying outside of local Planned Parenthoods. The campaign will run through October 31 in Flossmoor, IL and through November 5 in Merrillville, IN. For more information or to sign up for a time slot, please visit www.40daysforlife.

Safe Haven Baby Boxes

The Munster Fire Department recently received a \$10,000 grant to install a Safe Haven Baby Box at Station No. 2. This project is projected to be completed by June 2024. We have seen great success in saving babies' lives through this initiative!