Thousands of people gathered in New Zealand’s capital, Wellington, for the country’s third National March for Life on Saturday 7 December.

More than 2400 people from all over the country attended the March, doubling in number from the previous year.

Joyful entertainment, celebrating the gift of life, added to the atmosphere of expectation as people gathered in readiness to March. That mood continued throughout the streets of Wellington as the large group made their way to Parliament Grounds.

Personal stories had a powerful impact and brought home the reality of abortion, unexpected pregnancy and the hope that can be found in difficult circumstances.

Naomi who had an abortion 10 years ago expressed her dismay at not being told how alone she would feel. She shared her own pain, shame and guilt and the long path to healing after her abortion.

“Women are hurting and broken everywhere” she said. “They are looking for open hearts to sit with them in their brokenness.”

She concluded her powerful testimony by issuing a challenge to the crowd to love no matter what.

“As you arise to be a voice for the voiceless … make sure you are known to be a safe place. That you’ll love women no matter what. No matter the choices they choose to make and that you will sit with them in their darkest hour. Be that someone they can talk through their fears, their options, their future and a place to come when and if they are broken because of abortion. Love them both without reservation. Love her no matter what and do not turn away.”

Another young woman, Joanna, spoke of her surprise when at 17 she told her parents she was pregnant and found that contrary to what she expected, they were supportive and encouraging. Others in the community were not so encouraging.

At 19 Joanna opened her own café and later on furthered her studies. “Having my baby did not stop me from achieving my dreams, in fact she motivated me to be the best me possible” she declared.

The hearts of everyone present were captured by nine-year-old Reuben, who has Down syndrome,
as he stood proudly next to his parents Aggie and Derek Brown on stage. Aggie spoke of her surprise and joy at learning she would finally be a mother at 48 when she and Derek were approached by friends to adopt Reuben.

“In my view adoption has a more positive and rewarding outcome than termination.”

“Yes, he may be Downs but he has undeniably shown us and others so much love, joy and happiness. He has taught us tolerance, empathy and kindness” Aggie said. She added that “much work needs to be done to eliminate the vast majority of genocide, discrimination and mistreatment that people with Down syndrome face.”

The moving testimony concluded with Aggie thanking Reuben’s birth mother for “making a courageous and selfless decision to choose adoption as a living option.”

The New Zealand government is currently considering legislation that would remove abortion from the Crimes Act and place it within the health framework. The Bill passed its first reading in Parliament with a massive majority.

The proposed law would remove all abortion restrictions before 20 weeks and include only a vague test of maternal “wellbeing” after that time with no time limit.

A report from the Abortion Legislation Committee to the House is expected by 14 February 2020. A second reading and vote will take place soon after.

Since 1974, when the first abortion facility opened, more than 500,000 abortions have taken place.

In a statement prior to Saturday’s March, the organisers pointed out that New Zealanders love both women and their unborn children and they want that law to reflect that love.
March for Life wrapped in prayer

"The stillness of prayer is the most essential condition for fruitful action.
Before all else, the disciple kneels down."
St Gianna Beretta Molla

Throughout New Zealand people of faith were praying for a fruitful outcome to the third National March for Life. Messages were received by the team at FLI from numerous people who couldn’t make the March, but were with us in spirit and joining us in prayer for an end to abortion in this nation.

For those that were able to come to Wellington, a beautiful, peaceful evening of prayer occurred on the evening prior to the March for Life.

Cardinal John Dew, celebrated Holy Mass for the 350 people gathered at St Mary of the Angels in Wellington City. Those in attendance came from the very north and the very south of New Zealand and everywhere in between.

In his homily, the Cardinal referred to the abortion law reform and newly passed euthanasia law saying that we are like the blind men of the Gospel. “We are also crying out” he said “asking God to look on us, on all people in New Zealand with pity, with mercy, with love.”

He reminded those present that each of us are “called to oppose human tyranny and evil wherever it occurs” and that we all have the ability to change how people are valued in our society.

“We can help overcome evil through love, through loving actions as well as by our voices raised in protest.”

Cardinal Dew explained that “it was faith that helped the blind men to see” and that there is power in “being faithful.”

“Perhaps today’s readings are God’s way of reinforcing the importance of making time to spend in silence and in prayer so that I can be stout-hearted and act courageously” he concluded.

After Mass a beautiful hour of Adoration took place, led by the Mother of Divine Mercy Refuge. The evening concluded with Benediction.

On Saturday afternoon at the conclusion of the National March for Life, those who wished to participate in the nationwide Rosary Coast to Coast made their way up the hill at Parliament. The intentions of the Rosary were for life and faith. About 150 people gathered. The prayer was a beautiful way to conclude a moving display of passion for the unborn and their mothers in the March for Life.

Eucharistic Adoration at St Mary of the Angels on Friday evening and praying the Rosary outside Parliament after the National March for Life on Saturday 7 December.
If you’ve seen
UnPlanned the movie
you’ve seen the powerful impact
prayerful witness outside abortion
centres has on mothers, abortion
workers and the wider community.

Now is the time to
HELP SAVE LIVES
Auckland ♥ Wellington ♥ Christchurch

40 Days for Life is a peaceful, prayerful vigil outside local abortion
centres with the intention of praying for an end to abortion.
It involves prayer and fasting, peaceful vigil and community outreach.

40 Days for Life is for all people of good will who wish to pray for an end to abortion in their local community.

Each vigil site has its own daily start and finish times and every hour of the day is filled by prayer volunteers - made up of individuals or groups. A minimum of two people are present for each hour of the vigil which is why it is important to SIGN UP so we know you will be there!

People are free to pray in groups or alone. We encourage periods of silence as this is a powerful testimony to the tragedy that occurs within the walls of the abortion centre.

Every prayer participant is asked to sign a Statement of Peace.

40 Days for Life is not a political campaign, nor a protest. It is not a time for an educational display or for graphic images. Various pro-life resources are provided in the Vigil box and people are welcome to use as required.

A worldwide effort, New Zealand has participated in 40 Days for Life since 2014. At least 6 babies have been saved and countless hearts changed in this country.

Please join us during Lent 2020 and help save lives!

To learn more, register yourself, your Church or group for prayer hours,
or to be on the promotion team please contact us or visit fli.org.nz/40daysforlife

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26 February to 5 April 2020