

40 Days for Life Leeds Information 2019

40 Days for Life is 40 days of prayer and fasting, peaceful prayer vigil outside an abortion centre and community outreach. It first ran in the USA in 2004 and it has since come to be run in 50 countries, over 800 cities and involving more than one million people. Through it over 16,000 babies and their mothers have been saved from abortion. It runs twice a year in the Autumn and during Lent

Marie Stopes International Centre in Barrack Road Leeds provides abortions for mothers with babies up to about 20 weeks gestation. In 2017 they did 2165 abortions. Christians have been praying outside Marie Stopes in Leeds for many years and offering help to women to choose life.

Since 2013, Leeds People for Life have organised an Autumn 40 Days for Life campaign. We aim to have a presence outside Marie Stopes from 7am to 7pm daily throughout the 40 days. It is a peaceful and lawful presence. We have consulted with the police and cooperated with Safer Leeds, the joint council/police body in Leeds, to address concerns. Since 2016 Marie Stopes have been informed in advance of the campaign. Volunteers are asked to agree to a statement of peace.

We have help and information leaflets available for those who wish to take one as well as information for healing and reconciliation retreats for women who have had an abortion. We have a banner offering help to chose life with a helpline number on it.

This is faith in action. We are ambassadors for Christ, and not just for those who are clients of Marie Stopes. Here is one encounter related by a volunteer

We were shocked by a gentleman, maybe late fifties or early sixties. He was driving and pulled off road stopped joined us while praying the rosary. He first read the 40 days poster, he was so sorry he told us (He and his brother) were abortionists and were caught by the police were nearly Imprisoned. That's what they had done for 35 years. Since then they have stopped and he really regretted doing abortions. we said a prayer for him he also gave each a pound for a coffee which we put in the collection box. Our prayers are working and must persevere even if few are touched.

Abuse and encouragement: We have both abuse and encouragement from passers by. Some say “get a life”, which is what we are trying to do, to get a life saved. Others say “shame on you”, yes and on us all, for allowing this killing of millions of innocent lives. Other bless us, like the lorry driver who gave me a cup of hot chocolate from his cab, or the family who donated £100 or the young man off night shift who stopped to give a sandwich and bottled water he had bought.

We are there particularly for those who want to chose life but are being pressured and feel they have no choice but abortion.

Sunday 5th November outside Marie Stopes. Young woman,came past. She Asked if I got cold. I said sometimes but wrap up warm. I asked if she knew why we were here. She said “yes, I wish you were here 4 years ago when I was forced to have an abortion” Sh e said she was now 9 weeks pregnant. I got the sense that she was pleased and was keeping this baby and said would pray for her and her baby.

There are 480 hours to cover on the vigil. We aim to have a maximum of five volunteers on duty at any one time when Marie Stopes are open to clients. This is an agreement with Safer Leeds. More normally there are one, two or three people. So I am appealing to you. Will you sign up for vigil hours? The rota will be covered by least one person between 7am and 7pm and so you can go and join them at any time. If you want someone to meet you to go with you then let me know. If you could join with one or two other friends and come along, then once you have got used to the vigil, you could volunteer to cover some of the rota just with your friends. Could your church take on a three hour shift once a week or one hour a day.