

*She says it's a matter of conscience*

# This pro-life author will pay the price

By PAUL DANIEL

Special to *The Mississauga News*

Choosing to block the entrance to an abortion clinic despite the threat of arrest is a matter of conscience, says the wife of a Metro Toronto police officer who refused to guard an abortion clinic.

Anne Packer, wife of constable David Packer, last week told more than 80 people in attendance from the Mississauga and area Right to Life Association at St. Catherine of Siena Church how she came to support the pro-life movement. Packer is also author of the 1988 book *A Matter of Conscience*, dealing with her work and her husband's.

As a student nurse in New York City, she accompanied a nursing friend to an abortion clinic.

"It didn't really bother me. I just sat there even though I knew it was wrong," said Packer.

Following the birth of her first child, Packer said she began to understand the cause of pro-life supporters.

"I became more aware that I couldn't do nothing and just stand back," she said.

Soon she and her husband were attending pro-life rallies and protesting in front of Dr. Henry Morgentaler's Harbord St. clinic in Toronto.

It was last year that Const. Packer refused to guard the clinic as a matter of conscience. He asked his superiors to be reassigned.

His request was denied and he was given a choice of being fired or resigning.

The Metropolitan Police Commission fired him and he is currently appealing the decision to the Ontario Police Commission. At the moment, Packer is working at the Metropolitan Toronto Police Resource Centre.

Packer's wife formed a group, Operation Rescue, made up of protesters to stand in front of abortion clinic entrances.

During the act of blocking entrances, said Packer, she has seen members of Operation Rescue "kicked, punched and dragged out by police."

Despite these actions, Packer said the effort is worth it. "That's exactly the price to be paid," she said.

When asked by a member of the audience how she felt about breaking the law, Packer responded that her respect for the fifth commandment — Thou shalt not kill — overruled a trespass law.

"I don't go around all the time breaking laws," she added.

Peel B10y.BK  
June 7-89 NW

JE 7-89 NW

PEEL BOG BK  
PACKER, ANNE