

Cyntoia Brown-Long headlines California antiabortion event

by [Alejandra Molina](#) in the [February 12, 2020](#) issue



(Lacy Atkins /The Tennessean via AP)

On January 18, Cyntoia Brown-Long was the keynote speaker at OneLife LA, an antiabortion event hosted by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Since her much-publicized release in August from the Tennessee Prison for Women, where she had been serving a life sentence for killing a man who solicited her for sex at age 16, Brown-Long has advocated for incarcerated people and publicly spoken about her spiritual journey behind bars.

Brown-Long, who was released from prison after she was granted clemency, said she found OneLife LA encouraging because it approaches the issue in a holistic way.

“A lot of pro-lifers are concerned with respecting life in the early stages,” Brown-Long said.

She said it's just as important to advocate for those who are homeless and victims of human trafficking.

OneLife LA began in 2015 when about 15,000 people gathered in downtown LA for the event. Now, the gathering attracts about 30,000 people, said Kathleen Domingo, head of the archdiocese's Office of Life, Justice and Peace.

Brown-Long said her spiritual path began when she started taking courses with the LIFE program at Lipscomb University in Nashville, which is associated with the Churches of Christ. The program pairs traditional students with people serving time in prison. Brown-Long said she was under the impression that religious people would look down on her "because of what I had done."

"They just really came in and didn't care about what had happened before," she added. "It showed me there was nothing that you could do that could separate you from the love of God." —Religion News Service