

**ARCHDIOCESE  
OF BALTIMORE**

**BUILDING A CULTURE OF LIFE WITH  
MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**



**Respect Life Office  
Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry**

**“In this mobilization for a new culture of life no one must feel excluded:  
*everyone has an important role to play.*”**

**Together with the family,  
*teachers and educators* have a particularly valuable contribution to make.**

**Much will depend on them if young people, trained in true freedom,  
are to be able to preserve for themselves and make known to others  
new, authentic ideals for life,  
and if they are to grow in respect for and service to every other person,  
in the family and in society.”**

*Evangelium Vitae* n. 98.

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## Respect Life Prayer

### Opening Prayer

O God, our Creator, all life is in your hands from conception until death. Help us to reverence the awesome privilege of our share in creation. May all people live and die in dignity and love. Bless all those who defend life in all of its forms. Enlighten and be merciful toward those who fail to love, and give them peace. Let freedom be tempered by responsibility, integrity and morality. We ask this through Christ, our Lord, Amen



**Blessed Damien of Molokai**  
To be canonized Oct.11, 2009

### First Reading

A Reading from the Book of Genesis (4:8-12)

Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let us go out in the field." When they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the LORD asked Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He answered, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" The LORD then said: "What have you done! Listen: your brother's blood cries out to me from the soil! Therefore you shall be banned from the soil that opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. If you till the soil, it shall no longer give you its produce. You shall become a restless wanderer on the earth."

The Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

### Reflection

The first reading tells us the story of Cain and Abel. In it, we are told we have a responsibility to protect life, that we are our "brother's keeper." Damien of Molokai lived out his sacred duty of ours to defend life in all of its forms. It is a sacred duty in which we all share.

### Reflection Questions

What are the many ways in which we serve as our "brother's keeper?" How is that different considering the different settings you find yourself in as a family member, as a classmate, as a member of your local community, and as a world citizen?

### Second Reading

A Reading from the Gospel According to St. Luke (10:29 –37)

But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged

them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

The Gospel of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

### **Reflection**

All people, by the nature of their very creation, have immeasurable value and worth and should be treated with the dignity that they deserve as a creation of the Lord. Damien of Molokai treated even the undesirable lepers with compassion and mercy.

### **Reflection Question**

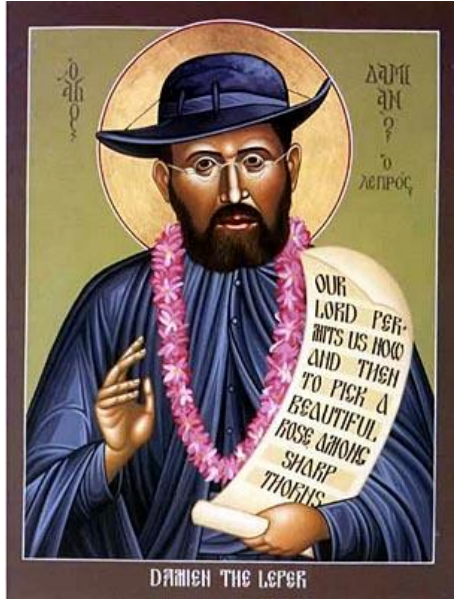
"And who is my neighbor?" Jesus identifies the act of being a neighbor as one who treats those in need with mercy. What are the choices that we can make – both smaller everyday decision as well as larger value statements – that help to build a “culture of life” around us?

### **Closing Prayer**

Loving God,

We are thankful for your love. In all we say, all we do, and who we are, may we remember that we are witnesses of your love in the world. May the power of the Holy Spirit strengthen us to make positive decisions and communicate your love. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**



## Fr. Damien: Recognizing the Value of Every Human Life

For use in October,  
around the canonization of Father Damien

### OPENING PRAYER

5 minutes

Lord God Almighty, our Creator, as we gather here today in Your presence, we celebrate our existence, we rejoice to be alive. Teach us to understand more and more profoundly that every human life is sacred, whether it belongs to an unborn infant, or to a terminally ill patient; to a handicapped child, or to a disabled adult; to people who live next door, or to those who live far away.

Remind us, Heavenly Father, that whatever a person's age, race, color or creed, each individual has been made in Your image and likeness; and has been redeemed by Christ. This makes them precious in Your sight. Help us to see other people with Your eyes, so that we may reverence, preserve and sustain Your gift of life in them and use our own lives more faithfully in Your service. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*From the Pro-life Prayer Book,  
Cardinal G. Basil Hume, O.S.B., Archbishop of Westminster*

A Reading from the Book of Psalms, 139

O Lord, you have probed me, you know me: you know when I sit and stand; you understand my thoughts from afar. My travels and my rest you mark; with all my ways you are familiar. Even before a word is on my tongue, LORD, you know it all. Behind and before you encircle me and rest your hand upon me. Such knowledge is beyond me, far too lofty for me to reach. Where can I hide from your spirit? From your presence, where can I flee? If I ascend to the heavens, you are there; if I lie down in Sheol, you are there too. If I fly with the wings of dawn and alight beyond the sea, Even there your hand will guide me, your right hand hold me fast. If I say, "Surely darkness shall hide me, and night shall be my light" -- Darkness is not dark for you, and night shines as the day. Darkness and light are but one. You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb. I praise you, so wonderfully you made me; wonderful are your works! My very self you knew; my bones were not hidden from you, When I was being made in secret, fashioned as in the depths of the earth. Your eyes foresaw my actions; in your book all are written down; my days were shaped, before one came to be. How precious to me are your designs, O God; how vast the sum of them! Were I to count, they would outnumber the sands; to finish, I would need eternity. If only you would destroy the wicked, O God, and the bloodthirsty would depart from me! Deceitfully they invoke your name; your foes swear faithless oaths. Do I not hate, LORD, those who hate you? Those who rise against you, do I not loathe? With fierce hatred I hate them, enemies I count as my own. Probe me, God, know my heart; try me, know my concerns. See if my way is crooked, then lead me in the ancient paths.

**OBJECTIVE:**

We are beautifully and wonderfully made. Human life is a gift from God to be celebrated and protected.

***Learning Objectives***

During this presentation it is essential to communicate the following points:

- We are created in the image and likeness of God. This holds true when we are in our mothers' wombs, healthy or sick, as we approach death, and all the time in between.
- Life is a gift.
- We are to live it to its fullest and help others to do the same.

**SHORT VIDEO**

Life: Imagine the Potential, Spot 3 – 45 seconds <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxH7CUhHkug>

**LECTURE**

*20 minutes*

- “A person’s a person no matter how small.” – Dr. Seuss
  - Basic fetal development facts<sup>1</sup>
    - From the moment of conception, all 46 chromosomes are present, gender is determined, and a new unrepeatable human being comes into the world.
    - During the first month, the baby grows to 10,000 times his size at conception.
    - By the third week, the heart begins to beat.
    - Brain waves can be recorded in the second month. Teeth form and fingers and toes begin developing.
    - By eight weeks, all body systems are present.
    - In the third month, fingernails and toenails form, and the baby has a unique fingerprint.
    - In the fourth month, facial expressions can be seen, and babies dream.
    - At five months, some babies are viable, meaning they can survive outside the womb.
    - During the 6<sup>th</sup> month, babies respond to sound.
    - At seven months, babies can hear, taste, cough, yawn, and hiccup.
    - Through the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> months, babies continue to gain weight and prepare for birth.
  - Hand out “Watch Me Grow” brochure (available from Respect Life Office)
  - Show the students the fetal models (if you have them). If not, pass a model of an 11 week old fetus around the classroom (available from the Respect Life Office).
  - Video suggestions
    - There is probably only time for one.

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<sup>1</sup> *Watch Me Grow*, Little One Sweet Publishing (2004).

- 4 ½ minute You Tube Video that shows fetal development (no narration, images with music): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RS1ti23SUSw>
  - 5 minute American Life League's *Baby Steps* video (narrated ultrasound images): <http://babystepsdvd.com/>
- Value of the already born, despite their age, infirmity, guilt, or disability.
  - “The elderly are not only to be considered the object of our concern, closeness and service. They themselves have a valuable contribution to make to the *Gospel of Life*. Thanks to the rich treasury of experiences they have acquired through the years, the elderly can and must be sources of wisdom and witnesses of hope and love.” *Gospel of Life* n. 94.
  - Think of your grandparents or older people in your life. Do you know anyone with a disability or illness? Do you love them any less because of their age or disability? Do you think God does? What have you learned from them? Do you think helping others brings out something good in you – something you might not have shared without the person who needed your help?
- We are impassioned, inspired, and energized by the love of Christ.
  - Questions
    - Have you ever met someone who had something about them (joy, hope, strength, wisdom, peace) that you craved?
    - Who are these people in your life?
    - What inspires them? What gives them this joy, hope, strength, etc?
  - Fr. Damien
    - “It is impossible to further the common good without acknowledging and defending the right to life, upon which the other inalienable rights of individuals are founded and from which they develop.” *Gospel of Life* n. 101.
      - He saw human life -- not leprosy, infirmity, criminal history, handicap, age, infancy, etc.
    - He will be canonized October 11, 2009 in Rome by Pope Benedict XVI.
    - Biography: (from *Catholic Encyclopedia*, available at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04615a.htm>)
      - Missionary priest, born at Tremeloo, Belgium, 3 January 1840; died at Molokai, Hawaii, 15 April 1889.
      - His father, a small farmer, sent him to a college at Braine-le-Comte, to prepare for a commercial profession; but as a result of a mission given by the Redemptorists in 1858, Joseph decided to become a religious. He entered the novitiate of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary at Louvain, and took in religion the name of Damien. He was admitted to the religious profession, 7 Oct. 1860. Three years later, though still in minor orders, he was sent to the mission of the Hawaiian Islands, where he arrived, 19 March, 1864. Ordained priest at Honolulu 24 May of the same year, he was later given charge of various districts on the island of Hawaii, and, animated with a burning zeal, his robust constitution allowed him to give full play to the impulses of his heart. He was not only the missionary of the natives, but also constructed several chapels with his own hands, both in Hawaii and in Molokai.



- On the latter island there had grown up a leper settlement where the Government kept segregated all persons afflicted with the loathsome disease. The board of health supplied the unfortunates with food and clothing, but was unable in the beginning to provide them with either resident physicians or nurses. On 10 May, 1873, Father Damien, at his own request and with the sanction of his bishop, arrived at the settlement as its resident priest. There were then 600 lepers. "As long as the lepers can care for themselves", wrote the superintendent of the board of health to Bishop Maigret, "they are comparatively comfortable, but as soon as the dreadful disease renders them helpless, it would seem that even demons themselves would pity their condition and hasten their death." For a long time, however, Father Damien was the only one to bring them the succour they so greatly needed. He not only administered the consolations of religion, but also rendered them such little medical service and bodily comforts as were within his power. He dressed their ulcers, helped them erect their cottages, and went so far as to dig their graves and make their coffins. After twelve years of this heroic service he discovered in himself the first symptoms of the disease. This was in 1885. He nevertheless continued his charitable ministrations, being assisted at this period by two other priests and two lay brothers. On 28 March, 1889, Father Damien became helpless and passed away shortly after, closing his fifteenth year in the service of the lepers.
- Certain utterances concerning his morality called forth Robert Louis Stevenson's well-known philippic against the Rev. Dr. Hyde, wherein the memory of the Apostle of the Lepers is brilliantly vindicated. In addition a correspondence in the "Pacific Commercial Advertiser", 20 June, 1905, completely removes from the character of Father Damien every vestige of suspicion, proving beyond a doubt that Dr. Hyde's insinuations rested merely on misunderstandings.
  - Long before he had the disease, he spoke of himself and the people of Molokai as "we lepers." Six months after his arrival at Kalawao he wrote his brother in Europe: "...I make myself a leper with the lepers to gain all to Jesus Christ. That is why, in preaching, I say 'we lepers'; not, 'my brethren...'"
  - 8 minute video available online regarding the Legacy of Father Damien:  
<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/episodes/january-23-2009/father-damiens-legacy/2030/>

## ACTIVITY

*5 minutes*

Each and every person has unique gifts and talents.

The objective of this assignment is to help students realize the biases involved in humans choosing who lives and dies and to highlight the important gifts that each and every person has to offer the world.

A hospital has been notified that a human heart is available for transplant. Each patient on the list is in immediate need of a heart and in danger of dying within days. Imagine that you are on the board of health care professionals that decides who gets the heart. Assuming all the following patients are

medically qualified and a “match,” whom do you choose and what criteria do you use to make your decision?

The patients are:

31 year old African American world famous brain surgeon, single, no kids

40 year old Hispanic male teacher, 2 kids

50 year old homeless woman

62 year old Jewish doctor on staff at your hospital, a respected colleague, 3 grown children, 8 grandchildren

10 year old quadriplegic girl, alert and oriented

15 year old pregnant girl, high school student

67 year old President of the United States

21 year old waitress helping to support her family, has no insurance, high school dropout

72 year old Chinese research scientist, on the verge of finding a cure for AIDS, no family newborn with congenital heart disease

26 year old woman incarcerated for attempted murder  
your best friend

Ask students to consider the options, brainstorm all possible social, religious, ethnic, financial, etc factors they would use as a basis for the decision, choose the patient they would give the heart to, and determine the basis for their decision. If they would like to, invite students to share their choices and their reasons.

The instructor then suggests to the students the dangers of choosing one person’s life over another and wrestling with prejudices and “quality of life” judgments.

## LECTURE

*5 minutes*

**Reiterate** essential lessons

- We are created in the image and likeness of God. This holds true when we are in our mothers’ wombs, as we approach death, and all the time in between.
- Life is a gift.
- We are to live it to its fullest and help others to do the same.

### Quote

“You say A. is white, and B. is black. It is color, then; the lighter, having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with a fairer skin than your own. You do not mean color exactly?--You mean the whites are intellectually the superiors of the blacks, and, therefore have the right to enslave them? Take care again. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with an intellect superior to your own. But, say you, it is a question of interest; and, if you can make it your interest, you have the right to enslave another. Very well. And if he can make it his interest, he has the right to enslave you.” –Abraham Lincoln, 1854

**SHORT ACTIVITY***5 minutes***What can we do?**

Ask students to brainstorm individually ideas of how they can create a culture of life, reaffirming the dignity and value of each and every human life from womb to tomb. Suggest that they list small things like wearing a precious feet pin on their backpacks to large things like taking a summer internship at a respect life organization. Invite students to share their ideas with the group. Hand out the list of ways to create a culture of life attached. Invite students to reflect for a few quiet moments on 2-3 things from that list or their own list that they can commit to doing to build a culture of life. If you would like, record the shared student responses and email the list to participating students later.

**QUESTIONS***5 minutes***CLOSING PRAYER**

O Mary,  
 bright dawn of the new world,  
 Mother of the living,  
 to you do we entrust the cause of life.  
 Look down, O Mother,  
 upon the vast numbers  
 of babies not allowed to be born,  
 of the poor whose lives are made difficult,  
 of men and women  
 who are victims of brutal violence,  
 of the elderly and the sick killed  
 by indifference or out of misguided mercy.  
 Grant that all who believe in Your Son  
 may proclaim the Gospel of life  
 with honesty and love  
 to the people of our time.  
 Obtain for them the grace  
 to accept that Gospel  
 as a gift ever new,  
 the joy of celebrating it with gratitude  
 throughout their lives  
 and the courage to bear witness to it  
 resolutely, in order to build,  
 together with all people of good will,  
 the civilization of truth and love,  
 to the praise and glory of God,  
 the Creator and lover of life.

*Evangelium Vitae* n. 105

## Homily Notes

### For Use During the Weekend of October 10-11

### In Celebration of the Canonization of Father Damien

On March 19, 1864, Jozef de Veuster, a Belgian missionary, arrived in the port of Honolulu, Hawaii, determined to help spread the Gospel to the native peoples of the islands as a member of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Two months later, he was ordained a priest and began his priestly work in several parishes on Hawai'i and Oahu. During his time there, the Kingdom of Hawaii began to experience a public health crisis, as foreign diseases were introduced to the natives. One of the most devastating diseases was what we now term Hansen's Disease – then, they called it simply leprosy.

The king of Hawaii, Kamehameha V, established a village on the island of Molokai for those afflicted with the disease, with the hopes that they could take care of tilling the land and caring for themselves. Unfortunately, due to bad planning and some hopelessness on the part of the residents, the village soon deteriorated into drunkenness and disarray. It seems, being abandoned by your people and government in your plight has an adverse effect on people.

The local bishop wondered how these people could get spiritual and pastoral care – seeing how such an assignment amounted pretty much to a death sentence. Jozef, however, stepped up. He would go. Upon his arrival, hope returned – even in the midst of that despair and inevitability. Laws were enforced, homes and schools were built, and Jozef himself would dress wounds, bury the dead, comfort the sorrowing and teach the children.

Today, we know Jozef better by his religious name: Damien – Damien of Molokai – and from today, we will know him as *Saint Damien of Molokai*. Damien embodied the message of Jesus that we hear in today's Gospel: that we are not only to keep God's commandments and avoid doing what is wrong, but also to *do what is right*. Because of this, he was able to look beyond the surface of the suffering of his brothers and sisters and affirm who they truly were – children of God. This is the force behind respecting life: recognizing that each one of us is made in the wondrous image and likeness of God. No matter what sort of stigma surrounds a person, they remain a child of God and deserve that respect.

The power of stigma is strong. There are many labels, as we have seen, that place people somehow outside of us and our worlds. Be they illness, political persuasion, sexual orientation, nationality, race, economic condition, or whatever, these stigmas create the barriers that keep us from fully stretching out our hands and touching one another. As much as we may try not to, or want to admit it doesn't exist, there is an implicit judgment.

The challenge of the gospel is to imitate Christ – whether he is speaking out with an unpopular opinion, criticizing authority for hypocrisy, or reaching out to those whom society at large has written off. Our task is, first of all, to see those people in our lives who are calling out to us – be they in the womb, in the streets, in jail or in a nursing home. Sometimes, the first step in healing is to simply be recognized as a

person with intrinsic value.

Before Blessed Damien came to that leper colony on Molokai, the residents had given up hope on themselves because society, it seemed, had given up on them. His arrival must have seemed like a break in the clouds and the very light of God shining down on them. We too can be that ray of light in another's day. When we affirm life and human dignity, we bring hope and a reason to live.

Today, you can visit the US Capitol building in Washington, and there, in the National Statuary Hall, there is a bronze statue, placed there in 1968, of that brave priest from Belgium who found his place with the suffering and dying in Hawaii. He is the only priest to be so honored. But even more important an honor than that, Damien makes his home now among the Blessed around God's heavenly throne. What got him there? His adherence ability to do what Jesus did: to look at even the least of our brothers and sisters and to *love them*.

We may never be honored with a bronze statue anywhere, yet our call is the same. The holiness that our faith demands of us calls us to see Christ in all people – in all circumstances – and to reach beyond ourselves, beyond expectations, beyond convention, and touch those whose lives have been for so long without that touch. Then, as we stretch out our hand, Jesus stretches out his. And we are touched as well.

**INTERCESSIONS FOR LIFE:** from [www.usccb.org/prolife/programs/rlp/2009/liturgyguide.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/prolife/programs/rlp/2009/liturgyguide.pdf)

That our President, members of Congress, and all political leaders throughout the world may recognize the sacredness of life, and defend the fundamental right of every human being to live, from the moment of conception until natural death;

*We pray to the Lord:*

That all children with disabilities will be loved and cared for in healthy and nurturing environments;

*We pray to the Lord:*

That the sick may find strength and courage in the cross of Christ and discover the redemptive value of their suffering;

*We pray to the Lord:*

That all who have been involved in abortion may come to true repentance and seek God's merciful and healing love;

*We pray to the Lord:*

That all bishops and priests may teach the lay faithful to love the Gospel of Life, encouraging them to embrace each new child;

*We pray to the Lord:*

That our country stop resorting to use of the death penalty in response to violence, and that the merciful love of God convert the violent and heal the victim;

*We pray to the Lord:*

That the elderly may cherish each moment of their lives, and in their sunset years experience the love and attention they need;

*We pray to the Lord:*

## **RESPECT LIFE RESOURCES**

God's love does not differentiate between the newly conceived infant still in his or her mother's womb and the child or young person, or the adult and the elderly person. God does not distinguish between them because he sees an impression of his own image and likeness (Gn 1: 26) in each one.

He makes no distinctions because he perceives in all of them a reflection of the face of his Only-begotten Son, whom "he chose . . . before the foundation of the world . . . . He destined us in love to be his sons . . . according to the purpose of his will" (Eph 1: 4-6).

This boundless and almost incomprehensible love of God for the human being reveals the degree to which the human person deserves to be loved in himself, independently of any other consideration - intelligence, beauty, health, youth, integrity, and so forth. In short, human life is always a good, for it "is a manifestation of God in the world, a sign of his presence, a trace of his glory" (*Evangelium Vitae*, n. 34).

Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI  
to the Participants at the  
Twelfth General Assembly of the Pontifical for Life.  
February 27, 2006

“[W]hatever is opposed to life itself, such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, or willful self-destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where people are treated as mere instruments of gain rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others like them are infamies indeed. They poison human society, and they do more harm to those who practice them than to those who suffer from the injury. Moreover, they are a supreme dishonor to the Creator.”

*Gaudium et Spes*, 27.  
*Pastoral Constitution in the Modern World.*

Enclosed, you will find a series of hyperlinks and additional information to help with research regarding many “Respect Life” related topics. They include:

Euthanasia/ Assisted Suicide	Human Trafficking
Abortion	Dignity of Persons with Disabilities
Poverty	War and Just War
Racism	Conservation and the Environment
Domestic Violence	Unemployment
Human Cloning	Homelessness
Stem Cell, Embryo & Fetal Research	Contraception
Capital Punishment	Nuclear Arms

This document contains some hyperlinks to web sites operated by parties other than the Archdiocese of Baltimore. These hyperlinks are provided for your reference only. The Archdiocese of Baltimore does not control such web sites and is not responsible for their contents. The inclusion of hyperlinks to other web sites does not imply any endorsement of the material on these web sites or any association with their operators.

## Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

Those whose lives are diminished or weakened deserve special respect. Sick or handicapped persons should be helped to lead lives as normal as possible. Whatever its motives and means, direct euthanasia consists in putting an end to the lives of handicapped, sick, or dying persons. It is morally unacceptable. CCC 2276-2279.

“None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s’ (Rom. 14:7-8). Dying to the Lord means experiencing one’s death as the supreme act of obedience to the Father (cf. Phil. 2:8), being ready to meet death at the ‘hour’ willed and chosen by him (cf. Jn. 13:1), which can only mean when one’s earthly pilgrimage is completed. Living to the Lord also means recognizing that suffering, while still an evil and trial in itself, can always become a source of good. It becomes such if it is experienced for love and with love through sharing, by God’s gracious gift and one’s own personal and free choice, in the suffering of Christ Crucified.” *Evangelium Vitae* n. 67.

These are a direct attack on the dignity of the human person, attacking the vulnerable elderly and sick. Pope John Paul II points out in *Gospel of Life* that the ideal of the Messianic age is presented as a time when “no more shall there be . . . an old man who does not fill out his days.” Is. 65:20; *Evangelium Vitae* n. 46. To this end, the “the pastoral activity of the Church must help everyone to discover and to make good use of the role of the elderly within the civil and ecclesial community, in particular within the family.” *Familiaris Consortio* n. 27.

They put the will of man before that of God, the absolute Master of whether we live or die and He in whom “we live and move and have our being.” Acts 17:28; *Evangelium Vitae* n. 47. In addition, these acts disregard the value of suffering, which is part of the human condition. *Declaration on Euthanasia* III. “Suffering, especially suffering during the last moments of life, has a special place in God’s saving plan; it is in fact a sharing in Christ’s passion.” *Declaration on Euthanasia* III. To end one’s life or the life of another is “false mercy,” a “disturbing ‘perversion’ of mercy.” *Evangelium Vitae* n. 66.

Finally, these acts deny families opportunities for grace. “Charity finds the most appropriate means for enabling the elderly, especially those who can no longer look after themselves, and the terminally ill to enjoy genuinely humane assistance and to receive an adequate response to their needs, particularly their anxiety and their loneliness,” and families are indispensable to this end. *Evangelium Vitae* n. 88.



“I confirm that euthanasia is a grave violation of the law of God, since it is the deliberate and morally unacceptable killing of a human person. This doctrine is based upon the natural law and upon the written word of God, is transmitted by the Church’s Tradition and taught by the ordinary and universal Magisterium.” *Evangelium Vitae* n. 65.

### Important Church Documents

*Evangelium Vitae, Gospel of Life*, Pope John Paul II (1995). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_25031995\\_evangelium-vitae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae_en.html).

*Declaration on Euthanasia*, Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1980). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19800505\\_euthanasia\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19800505_euthanasia_en.html).

*Commentary on Provision of Nutrition and Hydration to Patients in a "Vegetative State,"* Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Available at <http://www.usccb.org/prolife/tdocs/anhcommentary.shtml>.

*Salvific Dolores, On Salvific Suffering*, Apostolic Letter from Pope John Paul II on the Christian meaning of human suffering (1984). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/apost\\_letters/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_11021984\\_salvifici-doloris\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_11021984_salvifici-doloris_en.html).

*Respect for the Dignity of the Dying*, Pontifical Academy for Life (2000). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_academies/acdlife/documents/rc\\_pa\\_acdlife\\_doc\\_20001209\\_eutanasia\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_academies/acdlife/documents/rc_pa_acdlife_doc_20001209_eutanasia_en.html).

#### **Catholic Websites:**

<http://www.religioustolerance.org/euthanas.htm> - excellent essay

<http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2005/oct/05102603.html> - excellent article

<http://www.catholicity.com/vote/euthanasia.html> - good, referenced Catechism

<http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/public-policy/human-life-issues/euthanasia-doctor-assisted-suicide/>

#### **Other Website:**

<http://www.internationaltaskforce.org/> - helpful information about current events

#### **Other Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican):**

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/euthanas/index.shtml#1> (Tons of Articles)

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/speeches/2004/march/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_spe\\_20040320\\_congress-fiamc\\_en.html#top](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/2004/march/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20040320_congress-fiamc_en.html#top) – Address of JP II

<http://www.usccb.org/bishops/directives.shtml> - Euthanasia , Abortion, and Health Care

#### **Fact Sheets:**

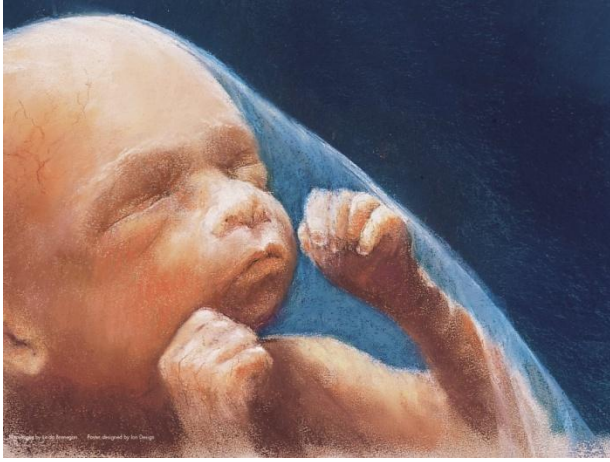
- [Q & A on Nutrition and Hydration for Patients in a "Vegetative State", September, 2007](#)
- ["Pain Relief Promotion Act of 2000"](#)
- [The U.S. Supreme Court's 1997 Decisions on Assisted Suicide, June 13, 1998](#)
- [Assisted Suicide: What is at Stake?, May 19, 1998](#)
- [DEA and Assisted Suicide, 1998](#)

#### **Important Dates:**

- 1994 Oregon passes *Death with Dignity Act*, legalizing assisted suicide. The law went into effect in 1997. Since then 401 deaths have been reported under the statute.
- 1997 In *Vacco v. Quill*, 521 U.S. 793 (1997), and *Washington v. Glucksberg*, 521 U.S. 702 (1997) the Supreme Court held that New York's and Washington's bans on assisted suicide are constitutional.
- 2008 Washingtonians vote to legalize assisted suicide under Initiative 1000.



## Abortion



Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life. CCC 2270-2275.

“Therefore, by the authority which Christ conferred upon Peter and his Successors, and in communion with the Bishops of the Catholic Church, I confirm that the direct and voluntary killing of an innocent human being is always gravely immoral.”  
*Evangelium Vitae* n. 57.

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you.” Jer. 1:5.

### Important Church Documents

- *Evangelium Vitae, Gospel of Life*, Pope John Paul II (1995). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_25031995\\_evangelium-vitae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae_en.html).
- *Respect for Unborn Human Life: The Church's Constant Teaching*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2008). Available at <http://www.usccb.org/prolife/constantchurchteaching.shtml>.
- *Declaration on Procured Abortion*, Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1974). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19741118\\_declaration-abortion\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19741118_declaration-abortion_en.html).

### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01046b.htm>  
<http://www.catholicity.com/vote/abortion.html> - good, referenced Catechism  
<http://www.catholic.com/library/Abortion.asp>  
[http://www.religioustolerance.org/abo\\_hist\\_c.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/abo_hist_c.htm)  
[http://www.archdiocese-chgo.org/catholic\\_values/catholic\\_teaching/abortion.shtml](http://www.archdiocese-chgo.org/catholic_values/catholic_teaching/abortion.shtml)

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican):

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/abortion/index.shtml#documents> – tons of articles  
[http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc\\_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a5.htm](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a5.htm)

### Articles:

Abortion: What the Church Teaches,” Helen Alvare, available at <http://www.americancatholic.org/Newsletters/CU/ac0898.asp>

Resources to describe historical and current cases and legislation from Americans United for Life → *Defending Life 2009*, available at <http://dl.aul.org/#abortion>

**Dates to Note:**

- On January 22, 1973, the US Supreme Court issued its decision in *Roe v. Wade*, addressing the issue of abortion, one of the most controversial and politically significant cases in U.S. Supreme Court history.
- April: National Post Abortion Healing Awareness Month
- November: National Adoption Month
- December 12: Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Unborn

## Poverty

St. John Chrysostom vigorously recalls this: "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs." "The demands of justice must be satisfied first of all; that which is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity": When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice. CCC 2446.

“One of the most striking aspects of development in the present day is the important question of *respect for life*, which cannot in any way be detached from questions concerning the development of peoples. It is an aspect which has acquired increasing prominence in recent times, obliging us to broaden our concept of poverty and underdevelopment to include questions connected with the acceptance of life, especially in cases where it is impeded in a variety of ways.” *Caritas in Veritate* n 28.

“By cultivating openness to life, wealthy peoples can better understand the needs of poor ones, they can avoid employing huge economic and intellectual resources to satisfy the selfish desires of their own citizens, and instead, they can promote virtuous action within the perspective of production that is morally sound and marked by solidarity, respecting the fundamental right to life of every people and every individual.” *Caritas in Veritate* n. 28.

### Important Church Documents:

*Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI (2009). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20090629\\_caritas-in-veritate\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html).

### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.catholicity.com/vote/poverty.html> - references *Libertatis Conscientia and Pacem in Terris*

[http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article\\_id=11401](http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article_id=11401)

<http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=1143>

<http://www.nccbuscc.org/cchd/povertyusa/catholic/resources.shtml>

[http://www.catholicerald.com/detail.html?sub\\_id=10298](http://www.catholicerald.com/detail.html?sub_id=10298)

<http://www.catholicnetlinks.com/Poverty%20-%20child%20poverty,%20debt%20relief%20and%20Catholic%20organizati.htm>

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican)

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/globalpoverty/>

<http://www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/>

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/secretariat\\_state/2003/documents/rc\\_seg-st\\_20030616\\_crepaldi-ilo\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/secretariat_state/2003/documents/rc_seg-st_20030616_crepaldi-ilo_en.html)

### Dates to Note

November 8 is the birthday of Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker movement.

## Racism

Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature. These rights are prior to society and must be recognized by it. They are the basis of the moral legitimacy of every authority: by flouting them, or refusing to recognize them in its positive legislation, a society undermines its own moral legitimacy. If it does not respect them, authority can rely only on force or violence to obtain obedience from its subjects. It is the Church's role to remind men of good will of these rights and to distinguish them from unwarranted or false claims. CCC 1930.



### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.osjspm.org/racism.aspx>

<http://www.cuicinfo.org/racism/racism.html>

[http://www.archchicago.org/catholic\\_values/catholic\\_teaching/moving\\_beyond\\_racism.shtm](http://www.archchicago.org/catholic_values/catholic_teaching/moving_beyond_racism.shtm)

[http://www.archbalt.org/bishops/keeler/homilies-talks-item.cfm?customel\\_datapageid\\_2039=14589](http://www.archbalt.org/bishops/keeler/homilies-talks-item.cfm?customel_datapageid_2039=14589)

<http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=874>

<http://www.villanova.edu/mission/resources/cst.htm?page=racism.htm>

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican):

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/justpeace/documents/rc\\_pc\\_justpeace\\_doc\\_20010829\\_comunicato-razzismo\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20010829_comunicato-razzismo_en.html)

<http://www.usccb.org/saac/bishopspastoral.shtml>

### Dates to Note

Martin Luther King Junior Day is observed annual on the third Monday of January. His birthday was January 15.

## **Domestic Violence**

"Violence against women, inside or outside the home, is never justified. Violence in any form—physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal—is sinful; often, it is a crime as well" U.S. Catholic Bishops, When I Call for Help, 2002.

### **Catholic Websites:**

<http://www.uscatholic.org/news/2009/05/domestic-violence-rise-recession-stresses-hit-home>  
<http://www.flacathconf.org/Publications/Positionpapers/Domesticviolence02.htm>  
<http://www.dor.org/psm/domviolence.htm>  
<http://www.cdow.org/ccdomestic.html>  
<http://www.dnu.org/service/domesticviolence.pdf>  
<http://www.aodonline.org/AODOnline/Offices+and+Ministries+12009/Parish+Life+and+Services+12112/Valuing+All+Life+9186/Family+Violence+9200/help.htm>  
<http://www.cdeducation.org/oym/sj/dven.htm>

### **Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican):**

<http://www.usccb.org/laity/women/violence.shtml>  
<http://www.usccb.org/laity/help.shtml>

### **Dates to Note:**

October is often considered Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

## Human Cloning and Engineering

“Human cloning is intrinsically illicit in that, by taking the ethical negativity of techniques of artificial fertilization to their extreme, it seeks to *give rise to a new human being without a connection to the act of reciprocal self-giving between the spouses* and, more radically, *without any link to sexuality*. This leads to manipulation and abuses gravely injurious to human dignity.” Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Dignitas Personae* on Certain Bioethical Questions n. 28.

### Important Church Documents:

*Instruction Dignitas Personae on Certain Bioethical Questions*, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (2008). Available at [http://www.usccb.org/comm/Dignitaspersonae/Dignitas\\_Personae.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/comm/Dignitaspersonae/Dignitas_Personae.pdf).

*Donum Vitae*, Instruction on Respect for Human Life in Its Origin and On the Dignity of Procreation, Replies to Certain Questions of the Day, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1987). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19870222\\_respect-for-human-life\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19870222_respect-for-human-life_en.html).

### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.catholicity.com/vote/bioethics.html> - on bioethics, references Catechism, *Evangelium Vitae*, and others  
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=2968&CFID=11132520&CFTOKEN=91990088>  
<http://www.ncbcenter.org/stemcell.asp>  
<http://www.archbalt.org/respect-life/news-links/cloning.cfm>  
[http://www.txcatholic.org/documents/policypapers/life\\_cloning.pdf](http://www.txcatholic.org/documents/policypapers/life_cloning.pdf)

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican)

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/bioethic/cloning/index.shtml>  
<http://www.catholicbishops.org/prolife/tdocs/cloning.shtml>

### Article:

McConchie, Daniel S. *Working for Cures, Not Clones: An Overview of Human Cloning and Embryonic Stem Cell Research*. Available at <http://dl.aul.org/bioethics/working-for-cures-not-clones-an-overview-of-human-cloning-and-stem-cell-research>.

### Fact Sheets

- [Stem Cell Research and Human Cloning: Questions and Answers June 13, 2008 \(En Espanol\)](#)
- [Research Cloning and "Fetus Farming": The Slippery Slope in Action](#)
- [Practical Obstacles to "Therapeutic" Cloning, February 23, 2006](#)
- [Human Cloning and Embryo Research: No Road to Biotechnology Growth](#)
- [Human Cloning Prohibition Act of 2003](#)
- [What is Human Cloning?](#)
- [Current State Laws on Human Cloning](#)
- [The Myth of "Therapeutic" Cloning](#)
- [Does Human Cloning Produce an Embryo?](#)
- [Would a Ban on Human Cloning Block Stem Cell Research?, April 20, 1998](#)
- [Human Cloning Debate Raises Pro-Life Issues, February 9, 1998](#)

## Stem Cell Research and Embryo & Fetal Research

“On the basis of a complete biological analysis, the living human embryo is – from the moment of the union of the gametes – a *human subject* with a well defined identity, which from that point begins its own *coordinated, continuous and gradual development*, such that at no later stage can it be considered as a simple mass of cells.” Pontifical Academy for Life, August 25, 2000.



“What is at stake is so important that, from the standpoint of moral obligation, the mere probability that a human person is involved would suffice to justify an absolutely clear prohibition of any intervention aimed at killing a human embryo.” *Evangelium Vitae* n. 50.

### Important Church Documents:

*Donum Vitae*, Instruction on Respect for Human Life in Its Origin and On the Dignity of Procreation, Replies to Certain Questions of the Day, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1987). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19870222\\_respect-for-human-life\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19870222_respect-for-human-life_en.html).

US Bishops' Statement on Embryonic Stem Cell Research, available at <http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/bioethic/bishopsESCRstmt.pdf>.

### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.catholicity.com/vote/bioethics.html> - on bioethics, references Catechism, *Evangelium Vitae*, and others  
[http://www.archbalt.org/news/Article.cfm?customel\\_datapageid\\_1265=18807](http://www.archbalt.org/news/Article.cfm?customel_datapageid_1265=18807)  
<http://www.americancatholic.org/NEWS/StemCell/default.asp>  
<http://www.nccbuscc.org/prolife/issues/bioethic/1202.htm>  
[http://www.charlottediocese.org/customers/101092709242178/filemanager/davidw/Combined\\_Catholic\\_teaching\\_on\\_Stem\\_Cell\\_Research.pdf](http://www.charlottediocese.org/customers/101092709242178/filemanager/davidw/Combined_Catholic_teaching_on_Stem_Cell_Research.pdf)

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican)

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/bioethic/bishopsESCRstmt.pdf>  
[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19870222\\_respect-for-human-life\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19870222_respect-for-human-life_en.html)

### Other Website:

Do No Harm: The Coalition of Americans for Research Ethics, available at <http://www.stemcellresearch.org/>

### Important Dates:

August 23, 2000 National Institutes of Health issues guidelines, supported by President Bill Clinton, that allow federal funding of embryonic stem cell research.

- August 9, 2001 President Bush limits federal funding of stem cell research to research on lines already created (embryos already destroyed).
- February 12, 2004 South Korean scientists report first cloned human embryo, created as a source for stem cells, in *Science*.
- 2004-2006 A series of states, including NJ, CT, CA, MO and IL pass legislation or voter initiatives allowing and funding for stem cell research, including embryonic stem cell research.
- April 6, 2006 Governor Robert Ehrlich signs Maryland Stem Cell Research Act, which allocates \$15 million for embryonic stem cell research grants.
- March 9, 2009 President Barack Obama signs executive order allowing federal funding of research that will require the killing of human embryos.



## Capital Punishment

If, instead, bloodless means are sufficient to defend against the aggressor and to protect the safety of persons, public authority should limit itself to such means, because they better correspond to the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in conformity to the dignity of the human person. Today, in fact, given the means at the State's disposal to effectively repress crime by rendering inoffensive the one who has committed it, without depriving him definitively of the possibility of redeeming himself, cases of absolute necessity for suppression of the offender 'today . . . are very rare, if not practically non-existent. CCC 2266-2267.



". . . the nature and extent of the punishment must be carefully evaluated and decided upon, and ought not to go to the extreme of executing the offender except in cases of absolute necessity; in other words, when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society. Today however, as a result of steady improvements in the organization of the penal system, such cases are very rare, if not practically non-existent." *Evangelium Vitae* n. 56.

God drove Cain into exile, but "put a mark on Cain, lest any who came upon him should kill him,"

Gen. 4:15; God "did not desire that a homicide be punished by the exaction of another act of homicide." St. Ambrose; *Evangelium Vitae* n. 9.

"Not even a murderer loses his personal dignity, and God himself pledges to guarantee this." *Evangelium Vitae* n. 9.

### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.catholicity.com/vote/death-penalty.html> - references Catechism and *Evangelium Vitae*

<http://www.americancatholic.org/news/deathpenalty/>

<http://priestsforlife.org/magisterium/indianadeathpenalty.htm>

<http://www.cacp.org/vaticandocuments.html>

<http://www.shc.edu/theolibrary/death.htm>

<http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/statement-catholic-bishops-texas-capital-punishment>

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican):

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/cappunish/index.shtml>

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/criminal/death/mt81.shtml>

## Articles and Publications

- Archbishop O'Brien's testimony to the Maryland Commission on the Death Penalty, August 19, 2008. Available at [http://www.archbalt.org/archbishop/homilies-talks/homilies-talks-item.cfm?customel\\_datapageid\\_2039=39829](http://www.archbalt.org/archbishop/homilies-talks/homilies-talks-item.cfm?customel_datapageid_2039=39829).
- Maryland Commission on the Death Penalty Report. Available at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/8948491/Maryland-Death-Penalty-Commission-Final-Report>.
- *Statement on the Death Penalty*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (1980). Available at <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/criminal/death/uscc80.shtml>.
- *Victim Advocates Against the Death Penalty*, by Andrew Rivas, 2006 (En Español)
- *Justice, Mercy and Capital Punishment* by Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., 2005 (En Español)
- *We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us*, by Maureen Kramlich, 2003 (En Español)
- *Living and Dying on Death Row: An Eyewitness Account*, by Joseph Ross, 2001 (En Español)
- *The Gospel of Life and the Sentence of Death: Catholic Teaching on Capital Punishment*, by Rev. Augustine Judd, 2000 (En Español)

## Important Dates:

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| March 26, 2009 | Maryland House of Delegates passes bill that severely restricts use of death penalty, making Maryland's death penalty law one of the strictest in the nation. |
| May 7, 2009    | Governor Martin O'Malley signs death penalty legislation, giving Maryland the most restrictive law of the 35 states that allow the death penalty.             |

## Human Trafficking

The seventh commandment forbids acts or enterprises that for any reason - selfish or ideological, commercial, or totalitarian—lead to the enslavement of human beings, to their being bought, sold and exchanged like merchandise, in disregard for their personal dignity. It is a sin against the dignity of persons and their fundamental rights to reduce them by violence to their productive value or to a source of profit. St. Paul directed a Christian master to treat his Christian slave “no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother . . . both in the flesh and in the Lord.” CCC 2414.

### Catholic Websites:

[http://www.lifeissues.net/writers/kra/kra\\_44churchfightstrafficking.html](http://www.lifeissues.net/writers/kra/kra_44churchfightstrafficking.html)  
<http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=658>  
[http://www.catholic.org/international/international\\_story.php?id=33831&wf=rsscol](http://www.catholic.org/international/international_story.php?id=33831&wf=rsscol)  
<http://www.ipjc.org/links/HumanTraffickingAndCST.pdf>  
<http://ncronline.org/node/1673>

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican):

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/migrants/pom2007-105/rc\\_pc\\_migrants\\_pom105\\_statement-human-barnes.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/pom2007-105/rc_pc_migrants_pom105_statement-human-barnes.html)  
<http://www.usccb.org/mrs/OnHumanTrafficking.pdf>

## Dignity of Persons with Disabilities

“Just as the Church must do all in its power to help ensure persons with disabilities a secure place in the human community, so it must reach out to welcome gratefully those who seek to participate in the ecclesial community.”

Pastoral Statement of the U.S. Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities

### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.catholicity.com/vote/health-care.html> - on health care, references Catechism

[http://www.catholicdisabilityteachings.com/social\\_justice.htm](http://www.catholicdisabilityteachings.com/social_justice.htm)

<http://www.ncpd.org/views-news-policy/policy/church/bishops/welcome-and-justice>

<http://www.ncpd.org/views-news-policy/policy/church/bishops/pastoral>

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican)

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/programs/rlp/04doerflinger.shtml>

### Additional Resources:

Video, *99 Balloons*: <http://www.ignitermedia.com/products/iv/singles/570/99-Balloons>.

“D-Pan Waiting for the World to Change”: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKnF9CCYQPQ>

“Respect” video produced by ARC of Virginia:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gM96e0yWjhI>

“Talk” produced in the UK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k3AeIFup1qY>

DVD “Through Deaf Eyes” produced by PBS:

<http://www.pbs.org/weta/throughdeafeyes/about/filmmakers.html>



## War and Just War Theory



Deliberate hatred is contrary to charity. Hatred of the neighbor is a sin when one deliberately wishes him evil. Hatred of the neighbor is a grave sin when one deliberately desires him grave harm. "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven."

Respect for and development of human life require peace. Peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of powers between adversaries. Peace

cannot be attained on earth without safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and the assiduous practice of fraternity. Peace is "the tranquility of order." Peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity. CCC 2303-4.

### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.catholicity.com/vote/war.html> - references Catechism

[http://www.catholic.com/library/Just\\_War\\_Doctrine\\_1.asp](http://www.catholic.com/library/Just_War_Doctrine_1.asp)

<http://www.americancatholic.org/news/justwar/justwar.asp>

[http://sfbayc.org/magazine/html/just\\_war.html](http://sfbayc.org/magazine/html/just_war.html)

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican):

<http://www.usccb.org/catechism/text/pt3sect2chpt2art5.shtml>

## Conservation and the Environment

St. Paul says of the Gentiles: For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made.

And St. Augustine issues this challenge: Question the beauty of the earth, question the beauty of the sea, question the beauty of the air distending and diffusing itself, question the beauty of the sky...question all these realities. All respond: "See, we are beautiful." Their beauty is a profession. These beauties are subject to change. Who made them if not the Beautiful One who is not subject to change? CCC 32.

“The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole.” *Caritas in Veritate* n.48.

*“The Church has a responsibility towards creation and she must assert this responsibility in the public sphere. In so doing, she must defend not only earth, water and air as gifts of creation that belong to everyone. She must above all protect mankind from self-destruction. There is need for what might be called a human ecology, correctly understood. The deterioration of nature is in fact closely connected to the culture that shapes human coexistence: when “human ecology” is respected within society, environmental ecology also benefits. Just as human virtues are interrelated, such that the weakening of one places others at risk, so the ecological system is based on respect for a plan that affects both the health of society and its good relationship with nature.*

In order to protect nature, it is not enough to intervene with economic incentives or deterrents; not even an apposite education is sufficient. These are important steps, but *the decisive issue is the overall moral tenor of society*. If there is a lack of respect for the right to life and to a natural death, if human conception, gestation and birth are made artificial, if human embryos are sacrificed to research, the conscience of society ends up losing the concept of human ecology and, along with it, that of environmental ecology. It is contradictory to insist that future generations respect the natural environment when our educational systems and laws do not help them to respect themselves. The book of nature is one and indivisible: it takes in not only the environment but also life, sexuality, marriage, the family, social relations: in a word, integral human development. Our duties towards the environment are linked to our duties towards the human person, considered in himself and in relation to others. It would be wrong to uphold one set of duties while trampling on the other. Herein lies a grave contradiction in our mentality and practice today: one which demeans the person, disrupts the environment and damages society.” *Caritas in Veritate* n. 51.

### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.catholicity.com/vote/environment.html> - references *Centesimus Annus and Renewing the Earth (USCCB)*

<http://conservation.catholic.org/background.htm>

<http://ncronline.org/node/1503>

[http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article\\_id=11600](http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article_id=11600)

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican)

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/efeb02.shtml>

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/globalclimate.shtml>

### Dates to Note

April 22 is considered Earth Day.

## Unemployment

*Unemployment* almost always wounds its victim's dignity and threatens the equilibrium of his life. Besides the harm done to him personally, it entails many risks for his family. CCC 2436.

“The dignity of the individual and the demands of justice require, particularly today, that economic choices do not cause disparities in wealth to increase in an excessive and morally unacceptable manner, and that we continue to *prioritize the goal of access to steady employment* for everyone.” *Caritas in Veritate* n. 32.

### Important Church Documents:

*Populorum Progressio*, Pope Paul VI (1967). Available at:

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_26031967\\_populorum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_26031967_populorum_en.html)

*Rerum Novarum*, Pope Leo XIII (1891). Available at:

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/leo\\_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_15051891\\_rerum-novarum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum_en.html)

### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.abc.net.au/pm/stories/s348387.htm>

[http://www.ad2000.com.au/articles/2000/nov2000p9\\_94.html](http://www.ad2000.com.au/articles/2000/nov2000p9_94.html)

## Homelessness

The *works of mercy* are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God:

He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none and he who has food must do likewise. But give for alms those things which are within; and behold, everything is clean for you. If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit? CCC 2447.



### Catholic Websites:

<http://www.shc.edu/theolibrary/resources/homeless.htm>

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican):

[http://www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/edcenter/612\\_activity.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/edcenter/612_activity.shtml)



## Contraception, Morning After Pill, IVF, and Reproductive Technology

Periodic continence, that is, the methods of birth regulation based on self-observation and the use of infertile periods, is in conformity with the objective criteria of morality. These methods respect the bodies of the spouses, encourage tenderness between them, and favor the education of an authentic freedom. In contrast, "every action which, whether in anticipation of the conjugal act, or in its accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible" is intrinsically evil:

Thus the innate language that expresses the total reciprocal self-giving of husband and wife is overlaid, through contraception, by an objectively contradictory language, namely, that of not giving oneself totally to the other. This leads not only to a positive refusal to be open to life but also to a falsification of the inner truth of conjugal love, which is called upon to give itself in personal totality. . . . The difference, both anthropological and moral, between contraception and recourse to the rhythm of the cycle . . . involves in the final analysis two irreconcilable concepts of the human person and of human sexuality. CCC 2370.



“[D]espite their differences of nature and moral gravity, contraception and abortion are often closely connected, as fruits of the same tree.”  
*Evangelium Vitae* n. 13.

### Important Church Documents:

*Humanae Vitae*, Pope Paul VI (1968). Available at  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_25071968\\_humanae-vitae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.html).

### Catholic Websites:

[http://catholicinsight.com/online/bioethics/article\\_908.shtml](http://catholicinsight.com/online/bioethics/article_908.shtml)  
<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/132975.php>  
<http://www.illinoisrighttolife.org/Issues.htm#contra>

### Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican):

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/contraception/morningafterpill.shtml>  
<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/ivf/index.shtml>

### Articles:

Helen Alvare, “Assisted Reproductive Technologies and the Family.” Available at  
<http://www.catholicbishops.org/prolife/programs/rlp/Alvare.pdf>.

Janet Smith, “Contraception: Why Not?” Available at  
<http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/sexuality/se0002.html>.

Archbishop O'Brien, "*Humanae Vitae* Part I," published in the *Catholic Review* August 21, 2008. Available at [http://www.archbalt.org/archbishop/article-item.cfm?customel\\_datapageid\\_1265=40337](http://www.archbalt.org/archbishop/article-item.cfm?customel_datapageid_1265=40337).

Archbishop O'Brien, "*Humanae Vitae* Part II," published in the *Catholic Review* August 28, 2008. Available at [http://www.archbalt.org/archbishop/article-item.cfm?customel\\_datapageid\\_1265=40339](http://www.archbalt.org/archbishop/article-item.cfm?customel_datapageid_1265=40339).

Archbishop O'Brien, "*Humanae Vitae* Part III," published in the *Catholic Review* September 4, 2008. Available at [http://www.archbalt.org/archbishop/article-item.cfm?customel\\_datapageid\\_1265=40521](http://www.archbalt.org/archbishop/article-item.cfm?customel_datapageid_1265=40521).

**Dates to Note:**

Natural Family Planning Awareness Week Falls in July each year.

## **Nuclear Arms**

The use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition" CCC 2309.

### **Catholic Websites:**

<http://www.nccbuscc.org/sdwp/international/nuclear.shtml>

[http://www.gsinsitute.org/mpi/docs/Roche\\_CatholicBishopsNuclearWeapons.pdf](http://www.gsinsitute.org/mpi/docs/Roche_CatholicBishopsNuclearWeapons.pdf)

[http://www.ccnr.org/pax\\_christi.html](http://www.ccnr.org/pax_christi.html)

[http://www.archbalt.org/archbishop/homilies-talks/homilies-talks-item.cfm?customel\\_datapageid\\_2039=54183](http://www.archbalt.org/archbishop/homilies-talks/homilies-talks-item.cfm?customel_datapageid_2039=54183)

### **Ecclesial Documents (Bishop/ Vatican)**

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/nuclearlandmines.shtml>

### **Dates to Note**

August 6 and August 9 were the dates that Atomic Bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

***Roe v. Wade:***  
**Building a Culture of Life**  
**in the Face of a Culture of Death**  
 (for use on and/or around January 22)

**OPENING PRAYER***5 minutes*

Our Lady of Guadalupe, we turn to you who are the protectress of unborn children and ask that you intercede for us, so that we may more firmly resolve to join you in protecting all human life.

Let our prayers be united to your perpetual motherly intercession on behalf of those whose lives are threatened, be they in the womb of their mother, on the bed of infirmity, or in the latter years of their life.

May our prayers also be coupled with peaceful action which witnesses to the goodness and dignity of all human life, so that our firmness of purpose may give courage to those who are fearful and bring light to those who are blinded by sin.

Encourage those who will be involved in the March for Life; help them to walk closely with God and to give voice to the cry of the oppressed, in order to remind our nation of its commitment to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all people.

O Virgin Mother of God, present our petitions to your Son and ask Him to bless us with abundant life.

Amen.

(from USCCB Office for Pro-life Activities)

A Reading from the Book of Jeremiah 1:5

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.

**OBJECTIVE**

Make students aware of the spiritual, social and cultural damage resulting from *Roe v. Wade*.

***Learning Objectives***

During this presentation it is essential to communicate the following points:

- Each and every human life is valuable from the moment of conception.
- *Roe v. Wade* legalized the killing of the unborn in the United States at any time for any reason.

- Since *Roe*, roughly 50 million unborn Americans have been killed<sup>2</sup> and their parents forever harmed. That decision and its ramifications are part of the culture of death.
- We are all responsible for building a culture of life.

## LECTURE (w/VIDEOS)

25 minutes

- Every human being is valuable from conception
  - Review of basic fetal development facts<sup>3</sup>
    - From the moment of conception, all 46 chromosomes are present, gender is determined, and a new unrepeatable human being comes into the world.
    - By the third week, the heart begins to beat.
    - Brain waves can be recorded in the second month.
    - By eight weeks, all body systems are present.
  - Video suggestions
    - There is probably only time for one. Consider using the one you did not use in the fall, or replaying the one you did for reinforcement.
    - 4 ½ minute YouTube Video on fetal development (no narration, images with music): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RS1ti23SUSw>
    - 5 minute American Life League's *Baby Steps* video (narrated ultrasound images): <http://babystepsdvd.com/>
- History of Abortion in the United States
  - In the decade before *Roe*, a few state legislatures began passing laws legalizing abortion in limited circumstances.
  - *Roe v. Wade* (1973)
    - With this decision and its companion case, the Supreme Court found a right to privacy in the Constitution that includes a right to abortion at any stage in pregnancy for essentially any reason whatsoever.<sup>4</sup>
    - First, the Court limited this right, allowing states to put certain restrictions on abortion, to protect the health of the woman and to protect the life of the unborn.<sup>5</sup> According to the Court, the state has the right to regulate or proscribe abortion "except where it is necessary, in appropriate medical judgment, for the preservation of the life or health of the mother."<sup>6</sup>
    - Then the Court so broadly defined "health" to functionally defeat this limitation. Health is defined in *Roe*'s companion case, *Doe v. Bolton* to be "that the medical judgment may be exercised in the light of all factors - physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the woman's age - relevant to the wellbeing of the

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<sup>2</sup> Alan Guttmacher Institute, *Facts on Induced Abortion in the United States*, [http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb\\_induced\\_abortion.html](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html).

<sup>3</sup> *Watch Me Grow*, Little One Sweet Publishing (2004).

<sup>4</sup> *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 152-3 (1973).

<sup>5</sup> *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 162-4 (1973).

<sup>6</sup> *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 164-5 (1973).

patient. All these factors may relate to health. This allows the attending physician the room he needs to make his best medical judgment.”<sup>7</sup>

- The result – by Court order, abortion is legal through all nine months of pregnancy, for virtually any reason.
- 1 minute video of Norma McCorvey, Roe in *Roe v. Wade*, describing how she has since come to regret her involvement in the case:  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_MUUvcvjEg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_MUUvcvjEg)
- Subsequent developments
  - Over the last 35 years, courts and legislatures have wrestled with various protections for women and the unborn, including fetal pain legislation, restrictions on certain types of abortions, requirements of notification to a minor’s parents before abortion, requirements that certain information be provided to a woman seeking an abortion, and others.
- Situation today
  - Well over one million abortions are performed each year across the country. Millions more are committed throughout the world.
  - Planned Parenthood
    - Nation’s largest abortion provider, providing 24% of abortions in the United States in 2006<sup>8</sup>
    - Margaret Sanger, foundress of Planned Parenthood
      - "More children from the fit, less from the unfit -- that is the chief aim of birth control."<sup>9</sup>
  - New methods of abortion have been created that further deny the humanity of the unborn, including the morning after pill, RU-486, and abortifacient contraceptives. All of these are legal and end the life of a human being. Most are marketed as contraception.
- Effects of *Roe*
  - On unborn children
    - Some scientists have discovered that the unborn feel pain. At 5 weeks, pain receptors are found around the mouth. By 18 weeks, they are present throughout the body.<sup>10</sup>
    - Facts based on 2003 statistics<sup>11</sup> (which should be roughly accurate today)
      - There were over 3,500 abortions per day in 2003, 146 per hour, about one every 25 seconds.
      - For every 1,000 live births, there were 312 abortions in 2003.
      - There were more than 148,000 second and third trimester abortions in 2003.

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<sup>7</sup> *Doe v. Bolton*, 410 U.S. 179, 192 (1973).

<sup>8</sup> National Right to Life, *Planned Parenthood*, <http://www.nrlc.org/Factsheets/PPabortionFSrev.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> *Birth Control Review*, May 1919, p. 12

<sup>10</sup> National Right to Life, *Pain of the Unborn*, [http://www.nrlc.org/abortion/Fetal\\_Pain/FetalPain091604.pdf](http://www.nrlc.org/abortion/Fetal_Pain/FetalPain091604.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> National Right to Life, *Abortion in the United States-Statistics*, <http://www.nrlc.org/ABORTION/facts/abortionstats2.html>.

- In 2003, more children died from abortion than Americans died in the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World Wars I and II, the Korean, Vietnam and Gulf Wars combined.
    - Less than 1% of abortions are committed in cases of rape and incest.<sup>12</sup>
    - 40 second video, “Imagine the Potential”:  
[www.catholicvote.org/index.php?/site/viewVideo/&videoId=V2CaBR3z85c](http://www.catholicvote.org/index.php?/site/viewVideo/&videoId=V2CaBR3z85c)
  - On women, men, and families
    - ½ of all abortions are committed on women under 25 years old<sup>13</sup>
    - 43% of women will have at least 1 abortion by the age of 45<sup>14</sup>
    - 70% of women choosing abortion believe that abortion is morally wrong. They are choosing against their consciences because of some pressure, from others or circumstances, which make them feel they have no other choice<sup>15</sup>
    - Symptoms of post-abortion stress include:
      - Bouts of crying
      - Depression
      - Guilt
      - Inability to forgive oneself
      - Intense grief / sadness
      - Anger / rage
      - Emotional numbness
      - Sexual problems or promiscuity
      - Eating disorders
      - Lowered self esteem
      - Drug and alcohol abuse
      - Nightmares and sleep disturbances
      - Suicidal urges
      - Difficulty with relationships
      - Difficulty bonding with subsequent children
      - Anxiety and panic attacks
      - Flashbacks
      - Multiple abortions
      - Pattern of repeat crisis pregnancy
      - Discomfort around babies or pregnant women
      - Fear / ambivalence of pregnancy
    - Watching their parents experience these symptoms affect parents’ born children as well.

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<sup>12</sup> National Right to Life, *Why to Women Have Abortions?*,  
<http://www.nrlc.org/ABORTION/facts/reasonsabortions.html>.

<sup>13</sup> Alan Guttmacher Institute, *Facts on Induced Abortion in the United States*,  
[http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb\\_induced\\_abortion.html](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html).

<sup>14</sup> *The Jericho Plan: Breaking Down the Walls Which Prevent Post-Abortion Healing*, by David C. Reardon.  
Springfield, IL: Acorn Books, 1996

<sup>15</sup> *The Jericho Plan: Breaking Down the Walls Which Prevent Post-Abortion Healing*, by David C. Reardon.  
Springfield, IL: Acorn Books, 1996

- 4 ½ or 7 minute Rachel's Vineyard video:  
<http://www.rachelsvineyard.org/video/index.aspx>. Scroll down to "How to Save a Life." If you are running low on time, stop the video after the first song. The second plays during testimonies of post-abortion healing.

## SHORT ACTIVITY

*5 minutes*

Brainstorm 3 ways in which you personally have been affected by *Roe v. Wade* and 3 ways you can respond, building a culture of life.

Invite students to share with the class if they wish.

## LECTURE

*5 minutes*

### Reiterate essential lessons

- Value of every human from conception
- *Roe v. Wade* legalized the killing of the unborn at any time for any reason.
- You are all responsible for building a culture of life.

## QUESTIONS

*5 minutes*

## CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer of Reparation (from Priests for Life)

God and Father of Life,  
You have created every human person,  
And have opened the way for each to have eternal life.

We live in the shadow of death.  
Tens of millions of your children have been killed  
Thanks to the *Roe vs. Wade* decision legalizing abortion.

Father, have mercy on us.  
Heal our land  
And accept our offering of prayer and penance.  
In your love for us,  
Turn back the scourge of abortion.

May each of us exult in hearts full of hope  
And hands full of mercy  
And work together to build a culture of life.

We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.



# Defending the Truth: A Lesson in Respect Life Apologetics

## OPENING PRAYER

*5 minutes*

O Mary,  
 bright dawn of the new world,  
 Mother of the living,  
 to you do we entrust the cause of life.  
 Look down, O Mother,  
 upon the vast numbers  
 of babies not allowed to be born,  
 of the poor whose lives are made difficult,  
 of men and women  
 who are victims of brutal violence,  
 of the elderly and the sick killed  
 by indifference or out of misguided mercy.  
 Grant that all who believe in Your Son  
 may proclaim the Gospel of life  
 with honesty and love  
 to the people of our time.  
 Obtain for them the grace  
 to accept that Gospel  
 as a gift ever new,  
 the joy of celebrating it with gratitude  
 throughout their lives  
 and the courage to bear witness to it  
 resolutely, in order to build,  
 together with all people of good will,  
 the civilization of truth and love,  
 to the praise and glory of God,  
 the Creator and lover of life.  
*Evangelium Vitae* n. 105

A Reading from Letter to the Ephesians 6:10-20.

Finally, draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power. Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil. For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens. Therefore, put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground. So stand fast with your loins girded in truth, clothed with righteousness as a breastplate, and your feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace. In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all (the) flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the

helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the Spirit. To that end, be watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the holy ones and also for me, that speech may be given me to open my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in chains, so that I may have the courage to speak as I must.

## **OBJECTIVE**

There is objective truth; and it is our responsibility to speak it, and to speak it with compassion.

### *Learning Objectives / Essential Lessons*

During this presentation it is essential to communicate the following points:

- There is objective truth. This truth includes that abortion, euthanasia, and assisted suicide are grave evils.
- The source of this truth and our strength to speak it is Jesus Christ.
- Speak the truth with compassion.
- You are responsible for building the culture of life.

## **LECTURE**

*15 minutes*

- Pray First
  - Invite the Holy Spirit to speak through you.
  - Pray for the wisdom to most effectively build the culture of life and love your neighbor.
  - We are most effective when we speak with the love of Christ.
  - Pray before, during, and after.
  - If you stumble on words, remember that you are speaking the truth, you are speaking with the help of the Holy Spirit, and Christ will work through you.
- Know your audience/your neighbor
  - Keep it compassionate.
  - Your peers and your community may also suffer post-abortion grief, struggle with end-of-life issues regarding a relative or friend, or be in a crisis pregnancy.
  - Argumentation and condemnation bring arguments and instill distrust. The respect life message is one of hope and of love. Speak the truth with compassion.
- Know your facts
  - Keep it simple.
  - Your peers and your community suffer from misinformation about these evils.
  - The truth about abortion is not relative. Either the unborn are distinct human beings and killing them is evil or they are not human and there should be no restrictions on what a woman does to her body alone.
  - Moral neutrality is not possible.
    - Over 1 million abortions are performed each year in the United States.
    - Statement: “I have no position on abortion. It’s complicated.”

- By failing to oppose abortion, you tacitly support it. What would you say to those Americans who did nothing to oppose slavery or Germans who did nothing to oppose concentration camps?
  - Statement: “I am personally one who “respects life”, but I do not want to impose my beliefs on others.”
    - This means you personally believe that the unborn are human and that abortion kills the unborn, but that you will not tell others not to kill other humans. Will you then refrain from imposing your beliefs about theft, rape, etc on others?
- Review basic fetal development facts<sup>16</sup>
  - From the moment of conception, all 46 chromosomes are present.
  - The heart is beating by the third week.
  - Brain function has been recorded in the 2<sup>nd</sup> month.
- Hand out list of where to find valuable pro-life information
- *Respect Life 101*, adapted from Scott Klusendorf. *The Case for Life*. Crossway Books: Wheaton, IL (2009). This book is an invaluable reference and will provide answers to any question that might be raised. It is available at amazon.com.
  - There is only ONE essential question in the abortion debate: What are the unborn?
    - Other issues like teen pregnancy, rape, fear, single parenthood, etc. are not unimportant. They must be addressed with kindness, compassion, and support.
    - Each individual woman or man has unique needs, concerns, and circumstances. Each should be treated with the love of Christ.
    - However, none of these issues warrants taking the life of the unborn.
    - These can distract from the central issue in the abortion debate. They assume the unborn are not human.
    - To illustrate, “trot out the toddler.”
      - eg. Imagine I have a 2 year old in front of me (hold out your hand to a toddler height to illustrate). If the issue is privacy, may I kill him in the privacy of a bedroom or clinic? If the issue is poverty, and I have a large family on the brink of bankruptcy, may I kill the youngest member to ease my financial burdens? If the issue is rape, we must ask ourselves how we choose to treat those people who remind us of painful events in our lives.
  - Is the unborn human?
    - Embryology teaches us that at the moment of fertilization, each embryo is a distinct, living, and whole human being.
    - None of us came *from* an embryo. Each of us *was* an embryo. Just as each of us was a fetus, and an infant, and a toddler, and a child.
    - The only difference between that zygote or embryo and you today is
      - Size
        - Are large people more valuable than small people?
      - Level of development

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<sup>16</sup> *Watch Me Grow*, Little One Sweet Publishing (2004).

- Are infants or 4 year olds less valuable than adults?
- Environment
  - Does changing location make someone valuable?
- Degree of dependency
  - Are those who depend on insulin or feeding tubes less valuable than others? Since infants cannot survive without relying on others for food, are they less valuable than children?
- Review these simple questions and answers. They should be memorized.
- This is up to you
  - If not you, who? If not now, when?
  - “The revelation of the *Gospel of life* is given to us as a good to be shared with all people. . . . Our own joy would not be complete if we failed to share this Gospel with others but kept it only for ourselves.” *Evangelium Vitae* n. 101.

## ACTIVITY

15 minutes

### Compassionate Truth

Invite students to brainstorm statements or questions they have heard and have had trouble responding to. Suggest a few below as examples. Ask them to write their ideas down and hand them in.

Invite groups of 3-4 students to brainstorm compassionate, but honest responses to some or all of the following statements (read or post only the statements, not the suggested answers). Also include some of the student suggestions from the previous activity. Ask students to imagine a friend or classmate brings up each topic and to decide how best to respond. After each group has had a chance to choose the best response (or 2) to each statement, invite a spokesperson for each group to present to the whole group their answer. Take each statement in turn. After each group has presented on a statement, suggest the responses below. Advise students how not to answer as well.

- “It’s just a blob of tissue”
  - You could be speaking to a woman discerning abortion or to a woman who may one day consider abortion. ALWAYS refer to the help available.
  - Cite fetal development facts
  - At the moment of conception, there is a distinct, living, and whole human being.
  - The only difference between that zygote or embryo and you is: size, level of development, environment, degree of dependency. Do any of these invalidate the right to life?
- “I had an abortion. It was my choice and it was the right thing for me.”
  - First – 43% of women (and presumably 43% of men) have experienced abortion personally before the age of 45. Remember when you talk about abortion that every person you talk to could be post abortive. Speak the truth, but speak it with compassion.
  - I am so sorry. I know that must have been a very difficult decision.
  - Refer them to Rachel’s Vineyard for help.
- “What about rape and incest?”
  - Because the unborn are human beings, the more important question is this: how do we treat other humans that remind us of a painful event?

- It is estimated that these constitute less than 1 % of all abortions.
- “What if the mother’s life is at stake?”
  - Clarify Church teaching on this issue.

While students brainstorm in small groups, select a few of the student responses that were submitted before the activity. After each statement above and responses have been discussed, read aloud the student submissions you have selected and ask the group to brainstorm aloud with responses.

## LECTURE

*5 minutes*

### Reiterate essential lessons

- There is objective truth.
- This truth includes that abortion, euthanasia, and assisted suicide are grave evils.
- Your peers and your community suffer from misinformation about these evils. They may also suffer post-abortion grief, struggle with end-of-life issues regarding a relative or friend, or be in a crisis pregnancy.
- Speak the truth with heartfelt compassion. Compassion (com-passio) means to “suffer with” the other.
- You are responsible for building the culture of life. If not you, who? If not now, when?

### Quote

“First they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew. Then they came for the Communists, and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak out for me.” - Rev. Martin Niemöller

## QUESTIONS

*5 minutes*

## CLOSING PRAYER

God has no body on earth but your body.... no hands but yours.... no feet but yours.  
 Your eyes are the eyes that must see the beautiful baby hidden in the womb.  
 Your eyes are the eyes that must see the precious child even at the moment of fertilization.  
 Your ears are the ears that must hear the silent cry for help of the unborn baby.  
 Your ears are the ears to hear the insults you will bear for standing for life.  
 Your mouth is the mouth that must plead for the life of the defenseless unborn child.  
 Your mouth is the mouth that must speak the truth about the sacredness of all life.  
 Your heart is the heart that must burn with the love of Christ for all life.  
 Your heart is the heart that must burn with the love of Christ for all who support the culture of death.  
 Your feet are the feet with which to carry Christ to frightened women facing unplanned pregnancies.  
 Your feet are the feet to stand in prayer on the sidewalk or counsel those entering the abortion clinic and to stand in public witness to the value of the babies being aborted.  
 Your hands are the hands with which to cast your ballots for pro-life politicians and judges.  
 Your hands are the hands that Christ has chosen to help build a culture of life.

*Adapted from a Prayer of St. Teresa of Avila by the Archdiocese of Kansas City*

## Guidelines and Reflections in Preparation for the March for Life

### Theological Principles

#### *The Dignity of the Human Person*

Our starting point must be the Dignity of the Human Person. From the very beginning of creation, the human person was set apart from the rest of created reality according to the divine plan. In Genesis chapters 1-3 we see that Man and Woman were created in the divine image, i.e. in the image and likeness of God, Genesis 1:26-27. The teaching of the Church has been consistent in regard to these chapters of Genesis. A brief summation of the teaching would include:

- God is the source of all that is and every created thing is good.
- Human beings are created in the image and likeness of God and have a special dignity and vocation as a result.
- God gave Man dominion over the rest of the creation
- Woman and man are equal partners and are complementary beings called to live in loving relationship
- Men and women were to be fruitful and multiply and ‘subdue’ the earth; as a result the goodness and beauty of sexual relationships within marriage is established and recognized
- Human beings were given the gift of free will and commanded to use it in accordance with the divine will.
- From the beginning human beings acted contrary to the divine will and sinned causing a rupture in the relationship between God and humanity and humanity and the rest of creation.
- God promised that despite the sin of Adam and Eve redemption would still be offered to the human race.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* addresses the Judeo-Christian teaching on the sacredness of all life and the dignity of the human person in Part Three, Section One, Chapter One, especially Articles 1-3, paragraphs 1700-1748.

Among the more salient points are:

- The dignity of the human person is rooted in the creation of humankind in the image and likeness of God. (1700)
- The human vocation is directed to divine beatitude and to freely strive for this fulfillment. (1700)
- The divine image is present in every person (1702)
- Every human person is endowed with a spiritual and immortal soul (1703)
- The human person participates in the life of the Divine Spirit and can understand
- The order of things established by the Creator and by free will direct himself toward his true good.

In Section Two, Chapter Two, Article 5, paragraphs 270-2275, the Catechism takes up the issue of abortion. It should be pointed out that abortion is treated under the Article dealing with the 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment. It is clear from this brief section that abortion is a great moral evil:

- Human life is to be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of creation (2270)

- From the first moments of existence a human being must be accorded the rights of a person (2270)
- The church's teaching on the evil of abortion dates from the first century and is unchangeable (2271)
- Participation in abortion is a grave offense (2272)
- The inalienable right to life of every innocent human being is a constitutive element of civil society
- If the state deprives a category of human beings such protection, it is denying the equality of all before the law.

Finally, Pope John Paul's *Theology of the Body* clearly establishes the dignity of the human person, the sacredness of sex within marriage, the sacredness of life in all its stages, and the centrality of the family as the foundation for understanding the Christian vocation in the modern world.

### **The History of Legalized Abortion in the United States**

Prior to the *Roe v Wade* decision of January 22, 1973 by the Supreme Court, the immorality and illegality of abortion was generally accepted. Unfortunately, there have always been those who would resort to abortion prior to its legalization. But, until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such practice was prohibited in every state of the Union and considered a violation of medical ethics and the practices of civil society. A few states began to legalize abortion in limited circumstances in the years prior to *Roe*, which made it legal in every state overnight despite state laws protecting the unborn.

While it was understood that women in difficult circumstances might resort to abortion in dealing with an unwanted or 'shameful' pregnancy, such action was usually hidden from the public view because of the strong moral and civil sanctions associated with it. There are and have been many reasons why abortion was and is seen as an alternative by some. Poverty, violence against women, and fear of disease or physical abnormality of the child have often played in the decisions of some in choosing to terminate a pregnancy through abortion. While such reasons can never be seen as any kind of justification for abortion, desperate people often resort to desperate measures. The compassion of Christ and the pastoral care of the Church must always be afforded to those people in such circumstance. But with the Supreme Court decision in 1973, there was a major shift in both the interpretation of the Constitution and rights of the individual person that signaled a break with both the moral and civil traditions of American society and culture.

The Supreme Court decision in *Roe v Wade* overturned the laws of all 50 states and the District of Columbia in one fell swoop. It established a legal right to abortion for any reason and changed social norms dramatically as well. Abortion for the sake of convenience or as a method of birth control could now be factored into the decision to terminate a pregnancy. Such a decision has become a watershed event, one that has marked a major shift in societal perception. This shift is particularly evident, as the term 'pro choice' has come to be exclusively associated with the so-called right to abortion. Both pop culture and the media use this term as a rallying cry and denigrate any individual or group who opposes abortion on demand as anti-choice.

In the thirty-seven years since *Roe v Wade* there have been millions of abortions in the United States. It is both tragic and sad that because of a judicial fiat, such social policy and practice has become perceived as a constitutional “right” accorded every woman as part of routine health care.

### **Roman Catholic Response to *Roe v. Wade***

So how are we to respond? There is still much controversy among the citizens of this country around whether or not abortion should be something that is seen as a right under the constitution. Even among people of faith, within different beliefs and denominations, there is not universal agreement.

Some people feel that the decision regarding abortion is a private matter and that religious prohibitions against it cannot be imposed on others.

In a similar vein, some would hold that abortion is a matter for State as opposed to Federal jurisdiction.

Others claim that until viability exists (the fetus can survive on its own), it is not a person and has no rights under the law.

Many proclaim that abortion is evil and undesirable, but have no stomach for its recriminalization and reverting abortion to a ‘back alley industry’ again.

Still others claim that the prohibition against abortion is not simply a religious belief, but something that is rooted in the Natural Law established by God for universal adherence.

Most everyone agrees that abortion on demand is terrible social policy. The majority of Americans would like to see the ‘need’ for an abortion such that the practice itself would be rare.

For Catholics the course of action should be clear. Abortion is a grave moral evil, one that is both contrary to divine and civil law. Pope John Paul II and the bishops of the world have consistently called for an end to abortion around the world. Each person is called to do everything in his or her power to bring an end to the tragedy of abortion. As for particular means to accomplish this task, there is again much difference of opinion. Some clearly want to have a Constitutional Amendment to prohibit abortion and thus overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Others point out that the battle to end abortion is a matter of winning hearts and minds and that legislation banning abortion will not put an end to its practice and, in fact, may create even more complex problems while doing very little to decrease the number of abortions. Wherever one lines up in this debate some particular actions have been recommended by the bishops of the United States.

**Prayer-** Each Catholic is called to pray for an end to abortion. They are also called to pray for:

- all the victims of abortion,
- those who have had or performed abortions,
- for the unborn and all pregnant women, and



for politicians and judges

**Learn-** The bishops of the US have called for Catholics to educate themselves about the issue of abortion and church teaching on the Dignity of the Human Person and why the church is a consistent and stalwart opponent of the so-called right to abortion.

**Communicate-** While it is important to learn about abortion it is also important to be able to speak in an informed and reasonable way about it. Catholics are called to share the teaching of the church about the sacredness of all life at all its stages.

**Serve-** The Christian community should reach out to those who are contemplating abortion and work to put an end to the situations and circumstances that compel women to opt for abortion. Adoption alternatives are important for women who, for whatever reason, feel that they are unable to care for a child once it is born. Help for unwed mothers or women caught in poverty is essential. Many women need assistance in order to be able to make informed and moral choices that provide for their own welfare and the welfare of their children.

**Organize-** Participate in community and religious groups that actively seek to work for an end to abortion. Participation in political lobbying, grassroots organizations that promote pre and post natal care, and church groups who give witness to the Sacredness of Life are all ways to stand for life and work for an end to abortion on demand.

## **Attending the March**

Every year around the anniversary of the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, right to life organizations conduct a March for Life on the Mall in Washington, D.C. calling on the President, the Congress, and the Supreme Court to bring an end to abortion in the United States. The Catholic Church plays a prominent role in the March as Bishops from around the country along with thousands of priests, religious, and lay people protest peacefully and march on behalf of life and the unborn. Speakers from various faiths, from Congress, and from the right to life movement itself call for a true conversion for America that it might reject the false choices associated with abortion on demand and might turn again to Respect for Life in all its stages. Every year a powerful witness gathers to draw attention to the national tragedy that has been abortion since *Roe v. Wade*.

In recent years youth from around the country have gathered as well to lend their witness and to speak for life. The youth program actually begins a few hours before the main rally on the mall. There is a youth mass and rally (this year at the Verizon Center) that calls the young church of America to march for life and demonstrate to the nation that many young people in America are indeed pro-life and opposed to abortion.

As outlined above, a summary of the church's teaching on the Dignity of the Human Person and the church position on the right to life as well as the sacredness of life in all its stages should be presented. It is also advisable to give a brief overview of the history of *Roe v. Wade* and to have a frank discussion about their beliefs and feelings on abortion and other life issues.

It has become apparent in recent years that our young people are often bombarded by the 'cultural message' that abortion is just part and parcel of American freedoms and rights. To challenge them to critical thinking and an ever deepening awareness of Biblical and church teaching on life is essential as part of our continuing ministry to evangelize and catechize.

It is also important to remind the young person that while this is a youth ministry trip it should not be simply understood as another opportunity for fun and fellowship. In effect, the trip to the Mall is a pilgrimage, a faith journey that gives witness to our call to live and proclaim the Gospel. It is also a legitimate form of social protest that falls within Catholic guidelines for such protest. Social protest in certain forms can be both illegitimate and, in fact, immoral. For example, the bombing of abortion clinics or violence perpetrated against abortion providers is definitely a form of social protest. Such means, however, are clearly immoral and not in line with the values of our faith. Social protest of the kind at the March for Life is legitimate and also legal.

In addition, as you prepare for participation in the Rally and March the normal safety precautions should be strictly adhered to: parental permission forms are required along with sufficient supervision by parents and other adults. The young people should be reminded that while we want to offer a strong witness for life and against abortion, that there is never a reason to be judgmental, rude, or violent. Even in the face of 'counter protesters', the love and compassion of Christ needs to be the standard for behavior and conversation.

### **Going Prepared: Pastoral Care for Our Young People**

It is also very important to prepare the young people for what they will see at the March. The March for Life is a peaceful, prayerful, and uplifting experience. However, some people associated with the Respect Life movement believe it is necessary to bring the brutal and violent nature of abortion to public attention. Student might see some printed signs and posters that graphically depict or describe abortion procedures.

Whether or not you prepare them by showing such displays is entirely up to you, they should be forewarned about the possibility. Parents should also be made aware of this reality.

Should one or more of your young people become emotionally upset, some immediate things to do are:

- Be prepared to take them away from any disturbing images or pictures. The presence of other chaperones, therefore, is absolutely essential.
- Assure them that their reaction is not inappropriate and is quite understandable given the graphic nature of what they have just seen.
- Allow them plenty of time to regain their composure and to vent or ask any questions they might have.
- Be ready to explain that many people feel that the best way to bring an end to abortion is to graphically present the realities of the procedure to individuals and groups who look upon abortion as some sterile medical procedure far removed from the public eye.
- Discern whether or not they are capable of returning to the March.
- Make a follow up call to parents or guardians informing them of their son or daughters reactions to what they saw and experienced.

It is also imperative that there be a least some short debriefing of the experience with the entire group of young people who participated in the March for Life. Ample opportunity for discussion and questions should be allowed. Parents could also be invited to this discussion. Such a gathering should begin and end in prayer.

### **Conclusion**

Participation at the Youth Rally and the March for Life on the Mall in Washington is certainly a worthwhile activity for our young people. Our call to stand for the Gospel of Life and to bring about an end to abortion is part of our call to be disciples in our day. With the proper preparation and follow-up, such participation can be a powerful experience that will have a positive effect in the lives our young people.

For further information about the March for Life and Youth Rally please call the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry. For further information concerning Pastoral Care please call Kristin Witte also at the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

**January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010**  
**Culture of Life Day**  
**Archdiocese of Baltimore Catholic Schools**  
**Junior High and High School Curriculum**

*A model schedule  
to be adapted to the needs to each school  
to educate those students unable to attend the March for Life  
on Respect Life issues*

- 8:30 Respect Life Mass
- 9:45 *Thine Eyes: A Witness to the March for Life*  
Available for preview and purchase at <http://www.thineeyes.org/>.
- 10:30 Break
- 10:45 Lesson Plan: *Roe v. Wade*
- 11:30 Lunch
- 12:15 Rosary for Life
- 12:45 Lesson Plan: *Defending the Truth*
- 1:30 Break
- 1:45 Ask students to write a reflection, a letter to the editor, a letter to a woman considering abortion, or a letter to his elected representatives.
- 2:15 Video
- Window to the Womb* (50 minutes)  
<http://www.unborn.com/>
- Eyewitness 2: The Next Generation* (20 minutes)  
<http://www.unborn.com/pdf/SWI4DFlier.pdf>
- Compassion Revealed* (15 minutes)  
<http://www.mdcathcon.org/>

## **Suggested Respect Life Activities**

### **RESPECT LIFE MASS**

“It is from the blood of Christ that all draw *the strength to commit themselves to promoting life*. It is precisely this blood that is *the most powerful source of hope, indeed it is the foundation of the absolute certitude that in God’s plan life will be victorious.*” *Gospel of Life* n. 25.

Celebrate a school-wide Respect Life Mass or incorporate respect life themes at daily Mass.

Invite pregnant moms to participate in the Mass by bringing up the gifts.

For the USCCB Word of Life Series (including prayer intentions, bulletin information, and homily notes):  
<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/liturgy/wolarchive.shtml>.

### **ROSARY FOR LIFE**

“[A] *great prayer for life is urgently needed, a prayer which will rise up throughout the world.*” *Gospel of Life* n. 100.

Archbishop O’Brien encourages all classes to pray one decade of the rosary each day for one week. The Joyful Mysteries are suggested.

For rosaries, including very inexpensive “cord” rosaries      [www.Autom.com](http://www.Autom.com)  
For children, about the rosary:      [www.cptryon.org/prayer/child/rosary/index.html](http://www.cptryon.org/prayer/child/rosary/index.html)  
For children, the Joyful Mysteries:      [www.cptryon.org/prayer/child/rosary/intro-joy.html](http://www.cptryon.org/prayer/child/rosary/intro-joy.html)

### **ROSARY FOR LIFE – JOYFUL MYSTERIES RECOMMENDED**

#### **INTENTIONS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

First decade      Let us pray this decade of the Rosary for all pre-born babies and their families.

Second decade      Let us pray this decade of the Rosary that those who are ill or disabled will receive respect, love and comfort from everyone around them – because each person is made in the image of God.

Third decade Let us pray this decade of the Rosary for the elderly, that they will be treated with love, compassion and respect, and that they will have trust in God's care for them.

Fourth decade Let us pray this decade of the Rosary for those who have not always acted in ways that respect God's plan for life and love, that they will find forgiveness and hope through reconciliation with God.

Fifth decade Let us pray this decade of the Rosary for families to model God's pure and unconditional love.

### **INTENTIONS FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS**

First decade We pray for any unborn baby in danger of abortion.

Second decade We pray that God will give any mother in crisis the help and strength she needs to carry her child to birth.

Third decade We pray for those who have not acted in ways that respect God's plan for life and love, that they will not give in to discouragement but will turn to God who will comfort and forgive them, and give them a future full of hope.

Fourth decade We pray that God will change the hearts of legislators who vote for abortion, of judges who rule for abortion, of doctors who perform abortion, and that He will give courage to doctors, nurses, legislators and judges who work to protect the lives of pre-born children and other vulnerable people.

Fifth decade We pray that God will protect the lives of the elderly and the handicapped from the danger of euthanasia.

### **SPIRITUAL ADOPTION**

It is very simple. Participants in the Spiritual Adoption Program pledge to pray for nine months for a baby in danger of abortion. While this child will remain unknown to his or her 'spiritual parent', God knows who the child is. Many people have found that naming 'their child' helps to keep them focused on the reality that their prayers are helping to save a particular baby from the harm of abortion.

This is also a wonderful opportunity to teach children about fetal development and the miracle of life. The Little One Sweet Poster Series is an invaluable resource. It is available free of charge to schools and parishes of the Archdiocese of Baltimore from their Respect Life Office at 410-547-5537 or [life@archbalt.org](mailto:life@archbalt.org).

The school year is very well-suited to conducting Spiritual Adoption. If children “adopt” a child in September, they can track their child’s development and pray for 9 months for that child in danger of abortion. Prayer cards, pledge cares, name bracelets activities can be found at the websites below.

Post developmental landmarks as your adopted babies develop. For a school-wide program, place posters in the cafeteria; for a classroom adoption, post in the classroom. Brochures using the same illustrations and text as the posters are also available at a discount through the Respect Life office. 410-547-5537

In May, throw a baby shower for the spiritually adopted children and donate items to a local pregnancy center. Students should be encouraged to purchase the items with money they have earned or from their allowance. For a list of pregnancy centers or to adopt a pregnancy center as a school, please contact the Respect Life Office at [life@archbalt.org](mailto:life@archbalt.org).

For more resources: <http://www.archbalt.org/respect-life/spiritual-adoption/>  
<http://www.archbalt.org/respect-life/posters/>

### **BABY BOTTLE DRIVE**

Place baby bottles at cash registers in the cafeteria for loose change. Next to baby bottle, put information about a local or sponsored pregnancy center. Donate proceeds to that center.

### **MARCH FOR LIFE**

Organize students to attend the Marches for Life in DC and Annapolis.

### **ESSAY/POETRY/ART CONTEST**

Hold a school wide contest on a specific respect life theme. Post winning entries prominently on a bulletin board and recognize students.

## TIPS FOR CREATING A RESPECT LIFE SETTING

- Teach current events lessons on specific life issues.
- Hold a debate on a respect life topic.
- Ask students/participants to write their own prayer for life. Pray each young person's prayer as a class throughout the year.
- Infuse the respect life in all lessons, when appropriate.
- Create a bulletin board with a respect life theme. If you need resources, please contact [life@archbalt.org](mailto:life@archbalt.org).
- Plan a retreat around a respect life theme.
- Designate a writing assignment with a respect life theme.
  - Op-ed on a current life issue
  - Letters to government officials asking for their support for pro-life legislation
- Provide students/participants with and invite them to wear precious feet pins.
- Hang Little One Sweet Poster for Spiritual Adoption in the classroom.
- Show a DVD that focuses on a respect life issue. Be sure to preview for age and content. For suggestions, please contact [life@archbalt.org](mailto:life@archbalt.org).
- Invite a respect life speaker to class/youth group. For suggestions, please contact [life@archbalt.org](mailto:life@archbalt.org).
- Plan fundraisers for a local pregnancy center or to put up a pro-life billboard in your community.
- Organize a field trip to a local nursing home to visit the elderly.



**Everyday Respect Life: What I Can Do in My Daily Life**  
(adapted from *Diocese of New Orleans* website)

- BECOME INFORMED about the issue and share your knowledge with classmates, teammates, relatives, friends, and neighbors.
- When you are assigned a paper or project, CHOOSE A RESPECT-LIFE TOPIC whenever possible, especially if the project involves a class presentation.
- Arrange a RESPECT-LIFE PRESENTATION for your Catholic group (Pro-life Group, Youth Group, etc.). Ask your respect life parish coordinator to assist you in finding a speaker or call your diocesan Respect-Life Office.
- Don't walk away from discussions about abortion and euthanasia at school or where family and acquaintances gather. BE INFORMED AND DISCUSS THE ISSUES.
- GIVE RESPECT LIFE BOOKS and brochures to your high school or college library.
- WRITE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR of your local newspapers in response to articles and opinion pieces that endorse an anti-life position. Take every opportunity to propose the Respect Life position.
- Join your parish RESPECT-LIFE COMMITTEE.
- Start or join a RESPECT-LIFE GROUP at your school.
- DONATE baby clothes, formula, and disposable diapers to your local Crisis Pregnancy Center.
- VISIT the elderly in a local nursing home.
- VOLUNTEER ONE EVENING a week with your local Crisis Pregnancy Center or nursing home. Consider spending some time during your summer with a camp for children with disabilities.
- Put a respect life BUMPER STICKER on your car.
- Wear a "PRECIOUS FEET PIN" - a great introduction to defend the unborn – on your backpack.
- Say the SPIRITUAL ADOPTION Prayer with greater fervor. Introduce at least one friend to the prayer.
- Hold a “Wash for Life” carwash and donate proceeds to a life offering cause such as Camp GLOW, a residential summer camp for adults with developmental disabilities.
- Next time you hear of someone's pregnancy, BE REAFFIRMING and give support to God's gift of new life.
- PRAY at an abortion clinic.
- FAST one day a month in reparation for sins against human life.
- Pray a ROSARY or NOVENA for 9 consecutive days to pray for an end to threats against human life.
- PRAY for our political leaders, that they may have the courage to protect life.
- Grab every possible opportunity to SPEAK UP for the unborn, handicapped and elderly that can't defend themselves.