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RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER



Working together to spread the Gospel of Life across the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

The Role of Men & Fathers in the Pro-Life Movement

By: Bob Wurzelbacher

Our culture tells us that abortion is about “reproductive freedom” and “women’s rights”, and that men have no right to tell a woman what she can or cannot do with “her own body”. As Catholics, we know that abortion is really about the right to life of the unborn, and a culture that has transformed the meaning of pregnancy from a beautiful and purposeful outcome of the marital act to an unfortunate and unwanted side-effect. For my first March podcast, I interviewed Deacon Nathan Beiersdorfer, a teacher at Moeller High School and father of 3 young children, on the important role men should play in the pro-life movement.

Deacon Nathan tells us that first of all, just at a very basic level, saying that the decision to keep or abort a child is the woman’s decision will isolate the woman, at a time when being alone is the last thing she needs. (According to the Guttmacher institute, about ½ of women who have abortions cite single motherhood or relationship problems as a primary factor). Secondly, it very directly tells the man he needs not take any responsibility for the life he contributed in creating. Third,

it presumes this false idea that decisions we make do not affect other people. The truth is that when a woman has an abortion, it not only affects the woman and of course the child, but also the father, the grandparents, siblings, a future husband and family, and the ripple effect goes on. If men were simply encouraged to truly support women in a crisis pregnancy, that alone would greatly reduce abortions in this country.

In addition to that, Deacon Nathan tells us that all men can be active in the pro-life movement simply by being a model to others on how to be good husbands and fathers. If more men were good role models for how men can and should be, then more men would make the right decision of at least being truly supportive if they do make the mistake of putting a woman in the situation of being in a crisis pregnancy. Not only that, but the women in crisis pregnancies would have more hope that,



even if the father of their child is not supportive, all men are not that way. One way to be a role model is by being part of a men’s mentoring ministry at your local pregnancy center (find your nearest center by downloading the You Are Not Alone brochure at the bottom of our [Abortion Page](#)), or perhaps being a mentor through a Big

Brothers or similar program. Basically, the best way to combat the cultural message that women ought to be alone in making their decision about having an abortion is for more men to live authentic Christian lives of respecting women, respecting the marital act, and being good role models as husbands and fathers.

Listen to the podcast [HERE](#), or find the video on our [Being Pro Life YouTube channel](#). Changing this culture of death to a culture of life begins at home, and we need men to live that out in their daily lives, and be an example to all men as well.



Welcome

Thank you for your openness to God's call to foster respect for human life at all its stages, from conception to natural death. We live in a time when so many in our culture promote values contrary to human life itself. These include life issues such as abortion and euthanasia, and issues of human dignity such as advocacy for those with disabilities or victims of violent crime. It is a monumental task, but one worth pursuing. What is needed is people of love and humility, devoted to God, immersed in the Sacraments of Jesus Christ, and open to the direction of the Holy Spirit in helping others bring a greater respect for all human life to the lives of all.

May God bless you in this work. Know that I am truly grateful to work with you in this. Together, let us build a culture of life here in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati!

Director, Office for Respect Life Ministries

A Pro-Life Lent

By: Kara Ross

We are already almost halfway through the Lenten season. Many of us have given up indulgent snacks or distracting social media accounts. Some have added more prayer while others are finding ways to give back. The season of Lent is a gift for us to not only improve our own lives of faith, but also a chance for us to impact our local communities as we give of our talents and treasures. Below are a few ways that you can make a pro-life difference through your Lenten observance!



Pray a Rosary for the Unborn--Have you added time to your prayer time or added a daily devotion? During this extra prayer time, pray for the rights of the unborn and for the mothers and fathers facing an unplanned pregnancy. Prayer is the greatest weapon we have as we work to change hearts and minds.

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MARCH Pro-Life Future Campaign

02

There will be an informational meeting for students, pregnancy care centers, churches, community groups, etc. for anyone interested in joining the Pro-Life Future Campaign. The meeting will begin at 6:00pm. [CLICK HERE](#) to access the Zoom link for the meeting. There is more information available on [page 3](#).

04

Divine Mercy Action Guide

At 2:00pm on March 4, the USCCB will hold an introductory webinar for those who want to help their parish share Christ's message of mercy, especially with those who suffer from the wounds of abortion. [CLICK HERE](#) to register for this webinar.

Coordinator's Corner

This section is dedicated to providing seasonal resources for Parish Respect Life Coordinators. If there is a resource that you believe would be useful to include, please contact us at respectlife@catholicaoc.org.

- 01- Word of Life & Pray for Life
- 02- USCCB Parish Webinar
- 03- Religious Freedom & the Unborn
- 04- Roe v. Wade the Movie



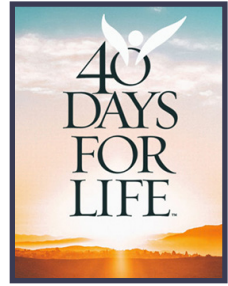
Respect Life Coordinator Resources

- 01 The month's Word of Life includes resources for the Solemnity of the Annunciation and the anniversary of *Evangelium vitae*. (PDF: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)) You can also find the [PRAY FOR LIFE](#) page that includes monthly prayers for moms in need written in both English and Spanish.
- 02 Learn how you can highlight the gift of human life through your parish's celebration of the Solemnity of the Annunciation, the anniversary of Pope St. John Paul II's encyclical, *Evangelium vitae* (The Gospel of Life), and ongoing efforts to serve moms in need. These resources and tools can also be adapted for a variety of settings, such as Catholic education, ministries, in the home, and more. [CLICK HERE](#) to watch a webinar hosted by the USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities staff as they walk through the website and latest ready-to-go tools.
- 03 Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. The Equality Act in many ways does the opposite. This bill has passed the House of Representatives and is now being voted on by the Senate. Instead of respecting differences in beliefs about marriage and sexuality, the Equality Act would discriminate against people of faith. Please [TAKE ACTION](#) right away to oppose this bill and urge other to as well! And check out these [RESOURCES](#) about the Equality Act.
- 04 [ROE V. WADE](#), the film, will be premiering in April, but you can host an advanced screening both virtually or in theaters in March. This movie portrays the case from a pro-life perspective and reveals the manipulation that took place during the movement to legalize abortion. For more information on how to host a screening [CLICK HERE](#).

40 Days for Life

By: Kara Ross

The prayers of hundreds continue to rain down on Cincinnati and Dayton through the work of the 40 Days for Life Vigils. We know that hearts and minds are changed by the prayerful witness of those who pray on the sidewalks in every kind of weather and in spite of a pandemic. If you want to get daily updates regarding the campaigns occurring around the world, you can always check out the [40 Days for Life Blog](#). It is never too late to join the campaign. Two years ago, Meg DeBlase witnessed a baby saved as she was lifting her voice in prayer with others in front of Planned Parenthood in Cincinnati. [CLICK HERE](#) to check out her reaction to God's work through the power of prayer. If you have never prayed outside of an abortion clinic, attend one of the upcoming vigils to raise your voice to God with others.



If you have previously attended a vigil, consider signing up for a shift or two outside of the clinic to cover those inside with prayer.

To learn more about 40 Days for Life in both the Dayton and Cincinnati regions, check out our [Being Pro-Life Podcast](#) specifically devoted to the topic. Listen to stories from area leaders, Shawn Carney, and Abby Johnson, and access the webpages for the [Dayton](#) and [Cincinnati](#) chapters. Click the name of the chapter above for a downloadable flyer.

The Pro-Life Future Campaign

Students for Life has started a new initiative called Pro-Life Future. We all know that young people are vital to the success of social movements throughout history. Students for Life is starting Pro-Life Future in order to keep young people engaged as they graduate from college and move into the next chapter of their lives.

Part of this campaign is for different Churches to be partners with Pro-Life Future as beacons for young people who want to stay involved in the prolife movement as young professionals. By becoming a partner, you have access to resource kits that include bulletin inserts, meeting guides and more! If your parish would be interested in being a part of Pro-Life Future you can [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more or contact Jordan Moorman at jmoorman@studentsforlife.org.

Pro-Life Poster Contest

It is time for the Cincinnati Right to Life Pro-Life Poster Contest! Students from kindergarten to 8th grade are welcome to submit posters for cash prizes! This is a great way to get kids involved in the prolife movement. Past winners have highlighted the lives of unborn children, the dignity of those with disabilities, and the goal of our Church to spread love through the Gospel of Life. [CLICK HERE](#) for full rules and forms. Please share in church bulletins as well! Posters are due by **April 16th**.

MARCH 40 Days Midpoint Rally

07

There will be a midpoint 40 Days for Life Rally in front of Women's Med Center in Kettering at 2:00pm on Sunday, March 7. Join us for prayer, music, and guest speaker Fr. Anthony Angelo. [CLICK HERE](#) for an event flyer.

10-18

Novena to St. Joseph

Join us in a novena for those who choose adoption! Use these sample [ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GRAPHICS](#) to invite parishioners to sign up for a novena March 10-18 asking St. Joseph's intercession for all who travel upon the path of adoption.

A Pro-Life Lent (cont'd)

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Make a Meal--Do you know someone who has COVID? Who is homebound? Who recently had a baby? Who recently suffered a loss? Do you live near a food pantry? Consider making a meal for your neighbor who may be struggling to cook or get groceries right now. Or donate non perishables to the food pantry. Leaving a meal on the porch and sending an encouraging text can make the world much brighter for folks feeling isolated.

Share the Being Prolife Podcast--Our Being Prolife podcast is a great tool to educate parishes about multiple prolife issues that we need to be aware of. Share the videos and content on your social media and in your parish bulletin. Pick one topic to become more expert over during these remaining days of Lent so you can share the Gospel of Life!

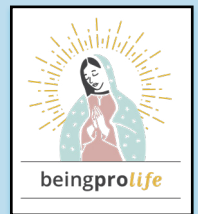
Fast for a Prolife Intention--As you abstain from meat or certain snacks or sweets, pick a specific intention for the day or the week. When you are reminded how much you would like that cup of coffee or that after dinner sweet, pray for unborn children, victims of domestic violence, the elderly, those who are isolated, those suffering from mental illness, or for a general conversation in our country to a prolife culture.

Chastity and Strong Marriages: Check out these two special episodes on the Being Pro-Life Podcast! Bob talks with international speaker Jason Evert on his message of how he felt called to go from sidewalk counseling to teaching young people the beauty and freedom of chastity. He also talks with local marriage expert, Greg Schutte, Director of Marriage Works, Ohio, on how Marriage Works can help your marriage if you are having problems, or even if you just want a good marriage to be great. Both are up right now at <https://being-pro-life.buzzsprout.com/>.

Being Pro-Life

COVID-19 and the Elderly

We all have likely heard some of the statistics about how COVID19 has disproportionately affected the elderly. [According to the CDC](#), as of February 2021, of the nearly 500,000 deaths attributed to COVID in the United States, 81% were age 65 or older, and according to a [NY Times article](#), about 34% of COVID deaths are linked to nursing homes and long-term care facilities. While those are some dire statistics that tell us how at risk our elderly are, we need to look beyond just mortality rates. We need to remember how isolated so many of them are now. While I still come home to lots of hugs from my family, so many people living alone or in communal facilities haven't had that kind of personal interaction for nearly a year now. Make it a point to reach out to family members, neighbors, those from your Church community and anyone you know who may be more isolated and help them feel more connected. Finally, [CLICK HERE](#) to check out some of March's podcasts on this and related topics on our webpage.



Pregnancy Loss Care Packages

By: Steve Wirick

Approximately 1 in 4 pregnancies end with a miscarriage or still birth. Even at the earliest of stages, this can be a devastating event for a family. For the expectant mother in particular, it can also be a loss that leaves her feeling isolated and misunderstood. The St. Christopher Respect Life Committee from St Chris church in Vandalia has assembled a care package for women who have experienced such a loss in order to bring them some comfort, knowing they are not alone.

The care package includes a tote bag, a journal, a holy card, a rosary ring, a small reflection/poem card with a hand cross, and there is also a small blanket. If you know of someone suffering the loss of a child, no matter the circumstances, there are some care packages available. For one of these care packages, please contact the Respect Life Office at respectlife@catholicaoc.org or (937) 281-4128, or Steve Wirick at Stchrisforlife@outlook.com



If your parish is interested in creating similar packages for parishioners experiencing such a loss, you could also use the above contacts for suggestions or advice.

belonging

Ministry with Persons with Disabilities

The Office for Persons with Disabilities works to establish a culture of inclusion and meaningful participation for persons with disabilities and their families in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. If you have any questions or need any assistance, you can contact our office at opd@catholicaoc.org.

Have you ever considered providing resources for parishioners with blindness or vision loss? There are a variety of free resources available ranging from large print missals to religious books in braille and audio recording. There are even Lectionaries available that would assist clergy or a lector with blindness or vision loss. These resources can be found through [Xavier Society for the Blind](#). We have samples of their products available in our office, but they offer a huge array of materials. If you are interested in learning more, you can contact our office or [CLICK HERE](#) to watch an interview that reviews these resources. This is an important means of accessibility for many parishioners, and these materials are a very simple step in the direction towards creating a culture of inclusion.

MAR Feast of the Annunciation

25

The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord commemorates the visit of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary to inform her that she was to be the mother of our Savior. It is also a perfect opportunity to highlight the sanctity of human life. Check Coordinator's Corner for information about the Annunciation Action Guide.

MAR 40 Days Closing Rally

28

On Sunday, March 28 in both **DAYTON** and **CINCINNATI**, 40 Days for Life will have a rally to close the prayer campaign for an end to abortion. Both events will take place at 2:00pm and each will feature a speaker, music, and prayer. Join us for one of these rallies as we lift our voices in prayer. Click the location above for a flyer.



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

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Do you have something that you would like to share in our upcoming issue?
Contact us at respectlife@catholicaoc.org or (937)281-4128.