



02 WELCOME  
No Taxpayer Abortion  
Coordinator's Corner

03 Pray for Our Bishops  
Ohio Death Penalty  
Saint Christina

04 Belonging  
End of Life Legislation  
Project Rachel  
Contact Us

# RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER



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

## Assisted Suicide Gains Momentum in 2021

*By: Bob Wurzelbacher*

Kristen received a phone call in May of 2014, that her husband, James, had suffered a seizure, which led to the discovery that James had brain cancer. They were told it was inoperable, and that they should just go home and enjoy the little time they had left.

This was the beginning of the couple's journey with terminal illness, leading them to become outspoken opponents of assisted suicide. They were in their early thirties with a one-year-old son at the time, and had never given it any thought before then. But living in a state where assisted suicide was not legal, they quickly realized how vulnerable a person would be in a similar situation, in a state where it is accepted.

This past June, New Mexico became the 9th state (plus D.C.) to pass a law legalizing medically assisted suicide (Joining California, Colorado, Hawaii, Maine, New Jersey, Oregon, Vermont and Washington). Thirteen other states have had new doctor-prescribed suicide bills introduced in 2021. Thankfully, Ohio is not one of them, but the movement is gaining momentum.

James started chemotherapy treatments, and he lived over three years beyond his initial diagnosis. It was a time when the family shared

countless beautiful moments that would have been lost if they agreed to assisted suicide. Of course, proponents do not argue that suicide should be forced on someone who does not want it. The issue, however, is not just about one person's choice. It is about other vulnerable people who it will impact.

First of all, when suicide becomes an acceptable treatment for illness—which is immensely less expensive than treatment to prolong life—the insurance industry will increasingly deny covering treatment. **This happens currently in states where assisted suicide is legal.** Even people with a disease that is only terminal without treatment, have been denied treatment by insurance companies in states with assisted suicide.

Secondly, concern to improve hospice and palliative care will decrease. When it was time to withdraw treatment for James because it was futile, it stopped. James spent his last 6 months with only palliative care, but those services will be less attended to when assisted suicide is viewed as a solution.

Proponents often use pain as a reason to legalize assisted suicide, but that doesn't make it into the top five reasons why people actually choose it. Fear of being a burden and loss of autonomy are among the top reasons, and these are obstacles that can be helped with a strong support system and other resources. Kristen was caring for an infant while caring for her husband at home in his final days. She had the same joy caring for her baby as she had for caring for James. She asks, "Why should it be any different?"



Everyday can be a gift, no matter the age.

If you want to get involved, [patientsrightsaction.org](https://patientsrightsaction.org) is a great place to start. You can view several videos from people negatively impacted by assisted suicide laws, access in-depth explanations about why assisted suicide laws are so dangerous, or contact your legislator about upcoming votes on bills.

To watch or listen to the full interview I had with Kristen, please go to [Being Pro Life Assisted Suicide 2 - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...).

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Issue 16



# 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

## No Tax Payer Abortion

By: Kara Ross

As we celebrate our country's Independence, it becomes clear that those involved in the prolife movement must continue working to ensure that all people have the right to life, liberty, and happiness. Congress is trying to force Americans to pay for abortion. The Hyde Amendment and similar laws have protected taxpayers from funding elective abortion for 45 years. Now, powerful members of Congress want to take away these laws that both Democrats and Republicans have supported for nearly half a century. Billions of taxpayer dollars could be used to pay for abortion.

It is critically important for Catholics to send a strong message before Congress moves forward to impose taxpayer-funded abortion. There is a national petition you can sign at [www.notaxpayerabortion.com](http://www.notaxpayerabortion.com). You can also contact your Senators and Representatives to ask them to oppose legislation that would abolish the Hyde amendment and other prolife legislation. You can find contact information for your congressional leaders [HERE](#). If you want more information on the Hyde Amendment and legislation like it, check out the episode of [Being Prolife](#) with Tom McClusky, the President of March for Life Action.

Please take action today, and pass the word on to everyone at your parish. You are the voice for our smallest brothers and sisters.



### JULY St. Maria Goretti Party

# 06

The Serenelli Project, a prison ministry within our Archdiocese, has St. Maria Goretti as one of their patrons. They will be celebrating her feast day at Our Lady of Perpetual Help (637 Steiner Ave) and online with prayer, refreshments, and fellowship. Find more details and RSVP [HERE](#).

### Rural-Urban Farm Mass

# 15

The Catholic Social Action Office is hosting their yearly Rural-Urban Farm Mass at 7:00pm in Coldwater at the farm of the Boeckmans, parishioners of Holy Trinity. Join us for Mass and festivities as we celebrate and share life with those in the Northern area of our Archdiocese. Check out the [FLYER](#) for more information.

## 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](mailto:respectlife@catholicaoc.org).

- 01- Word of Life & Pray for Life
- 02- Catholic Current
- 03- Walking with Moms
- 04- NFP Awareness



## Respect Life Coordinator Resources

- 01 This month's Word of Life includes resources for Walking with Moms in Need and intercessions to share with your pastor. (PDF: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)) You can also check out the [PRAY FOR LIFE](#) page that includes monthly prayers for moms in need written in both English and Spanish.
- 02 Looking for new content to share with your parish? Check out this month's issue of [CATHOLIC CURRENT](#) and consider signing up for monthly updates of different feast days and articles to help your parish ministry. This fantastic resource provides a monthly summary of important dates and suggestions for Catholic Ministry.
- 03 Has your parish began a year of service for local mothers? [THESE](#) resources can help you begin your parish inventory and find connections with community resources in your area to become a hub for mothers who need support as they welcome a child. If you need help, contact us at [respectlife@catholicaoc.org](mailto:respectlife@catholicaoc.org).
- 04 As we celebrate National NFP Week, the USCCB has shared many [RESOURCES](#) to help spread awareness of methods that respect the fertility of couples while also helping them to responsibly discern their openness to life.

# Pray for Our Bishops

By: Kara Ross



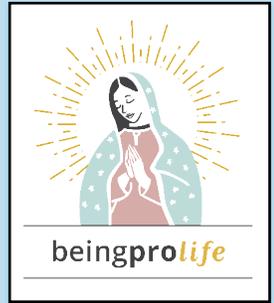
saying they are working on drafting a Pastoral Statement on the meaning of the Eucharist in the life of the Church.

The upcoming pastoral is not only in response to the current political climate but is also in response to studies that attest that many Catholics do not believe in the true presence nor do they understand the solemnity of the Mass. Archbishop Schnurr has asked that we all keep our Bishops in prayer as they work to draft a document that expresses God's great love for us and that teaches the faithful how to approach the Eucharist with reverence. We especially pray that as they address areas of sin and hurt that we all deal with, they can pastorally share both God's truth and His mercy. Read Archbishop Schnurr's letter [HERE](#).

# Being Pro-Life

Helping People Overcome Drug Addiction

According to a report by the American Addiction Center, 38% of adults battled an illicit drug abuse disorder in 2017, and drug addiction cost American society more than \$740 billion annually in lost workplace productivity, healthcare expense and crime-related costs. This is a huge problem in our society today, and we need a better understanding of how people get caught up in the cycle of drug addiction, as well as how to help them recover and live fruitful lives. Check out this month's podcasts at [www.catholicaoc.org/beingprolife](http://www.catholicaoc.org/beingprolife) on the problem overall, and how it intersects with two big pro-life issues today.



July 6: Preventing Drug Addiction

July 13: Ohio Rep. Plummer on Legislative solutions to the drug problem

July 20: Post-abortion trauma and substance abuse

July 27: Sex trafficking and drug abuse

Aug 3: A Catholic Recovery Process

[CLICK HERE](#) to listen to the full podcasts or watch the video interviews on our Being Pro-Life [YouTube Channel](#).

## JULY Pro-Life Future Campaign

# 17

Each month, Students For Life does a community outreach event during which people knock on doors and share the prolife message. Young people have the chance to change hearts and minds while alerting our neighbors to the dangers of the abortion industry [https://ncpd.org/resources\\_and\\_toolkits/journey-faith-](https://ncpd.org/resources_and_toolkits/journey-faith-)

# 30

## 40 Days for Life Interim Vigil

Join us at 7:00pm as we witness to the community and pray. Families are welcome. Parking is available at Holy Name Church, 2422 Auburn Ave., (two blocks from Planned Parenthood). Contact Mary Clark at (513) 791-4039 or [cincy40days@fuse.net](mailto:cincy40days@fuse.net) about additional parking. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

# Is Capital Punishment Ending in Ohio?

Catholic Social Action

By: Andrew Musgrave



For many decades, the Catholic Church has strongly discouraged the use of the death penalty as a means to protect citizens. It is an assault on human dignity and violates our belief in the value of all life. Dating back to the 1970s, the U.S. Bishops have stood in opposition to the death penalty. Popes Saint John Paul II (the death penalty is "cruel and unusual"), Benedict XVI (we "must make every effort to eliminate the death penalty"), and Francis ("unacceptable" and "cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment") have all written in opposition to the use of the death penalty. Ultimately, in 2018 the Catechism was updated and called for the abolition of the death penalty (#2267). Likewise, the Ohio bishops have, since the '70s, encouraged state law makers to end the use of the death penalty in Ohio. Just this past year, the Ohio bishops thanked Gov. DeWine for the multiple reprieves he has granted. Sadly, despite multiple attempts, it still remains legal in Ohio.

Thankfully, there is a real possibility that we can abolish the death penalty in Ohio this year. Two key pieces of legislation – SB 108 and HB 183 – have been introduced that would abolish the death penalty. The Ohio bishops collectively and Archbishop Schnurr individually have issued statements supporting this legislation, and their voices join a growing state-wide coalition working to end the death penalty. We encourage all Catholics in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati to join in the effort to end this state-sanctioned violence and respect all life, from womb to tomb.

# Saint Christina

The Astonishing Patroness of Mental Health



This month, we celebrate the Feast of Saint Christina the Astonishing, a mystic of the 12th century. Christina lived a fantastic life that God used in order to call His people to His mercy and truth. Christina

became a notable character in Belgium when she had apparently died because of a seizure disorder. Christina was not dead and sat up in the middle of her own funeral mass. According to some reports, she did more than sit up. She floated to the rafters to escape the smell of the sins of those in attendance. Thus began her astonishing career. You can read more about Christina [HERE](#).

Christina is a patron of those who suffer from mental illness and for mental health workers. She faced dire circumstances in her life, but she lived a heroic life of virtue by relying on God in all things. May she help us to welcome and love those who are suffering.

# No Assisted Suicide by Telehealth

By: Kara Ross

We are all thankful that we have made great strides in facing the COVID-19 pandemic over the last year and a half. Many beautiful stories of people helping their friends and neighbors have been shared, and human resiliency has been highlighted in many ways. However, we have also seen how we still need to face new challenges with prudence and discernment. The increased use of telehealth is a blessing for many, but we have to advocate for legislation that ensures that those who need an in-person visit with their doctor can still receive that care. In May of this year, US Senate Bill S. 1512 and Congress Bill H.R. 2903 were introduced nationally to expand telehealth after the COVID-19 pandemic. The legislation has some strong points; however, imprecise language in Section 101 and 102 of the bills means that telehealth could be used to request and receive assisted suicide. Similar to how we must not let abortion become something a person could request without a physical examination, neither can we allow persons who may be suffering mentally as well as physically the opportunity to end their lives without seeking in-person medical help. The Euthanasia Prevention Coalition provides more details and ways to take action on their [WEBSITE](#). Help us make sure that people get proper medical care instead of too easy access to life-ending prescriptions.



# belonging

Ministry with Persons with Disabilities

This month we celebrate the 31st Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act which has served to provide accommodations and accessibility to persons with disabilities throughout our nation. While religious organizations such as the Catholic Church are technically exempt from required implementation of this act, it is our call as disciples of Christ to work even more diligently to provide opportunities for meaningful participation for persons with disabilities and their families. The ADA provides us with a baseline for accommodation and accessibility. We should certainly strive to meet these basic requirements. We also have a deeper call as Catholics to provide for the communal and spiritual needs of every one of God's children.

The National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities has created a wonderful resource to assess the level of accessibility within parishes. The **LAMB Assessment Tool** can be used independently by parish staff, pastoral council, or a committee to evaluate what barriers exist in a church and to create an action plan to become more accessible to all. LAMB is an acronym for Language, Accessibility, Meaningful Participation and Belonging, so it thoroughly addresses all barriers that persons with disabilities might encounter. The Office for Persons with Disabilities is happy to assist parishes in this evaluation process. Please contact us at [opd@catholicaoc.org](mailto:opd@catholicaoc.org) for more information.

## JULY National NFP Week

25-31

This week, we are celebrating the blessing of Natural Family planning in the lives of those called to the vocation of marriage. This week (July 26) is also the Feast of Saints Anne and Joachim, the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary. May God bless our domestic churches. Check out these **RESOURCES** for the week!

## AUG Project Rachel DoR (Cincinnati)

14

The Day of Reflection is designed for ANY PERSON affected by an abortion experience. All are welcome: mothers, fathers, siblings, grandparents, friends. Anyone mourning the loss of a child to abortion can find hope and healing at this day-long retreat. There is no cost. **CLICK HERE** for more information.



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Do you have something that you would like to share in our upcoming issue?

Contact us at [respectlife@catholicaoc.org](mailto:respectlife@catholicaoc.org) or (937)281-4128.