



- 02 WELCOME
Respect Life Award
Coordinator's Corner
- 03 Teen Dating Violence
Respect Life Award
Church & Immigration
Being Pro-Life
- 04 Talking about Abortion
Belonging- #IamChurch
Contact Us

RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER



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

Ending Abortion through Prayer & Fasting

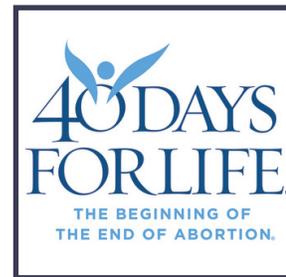
By: Bob Wurzelbacher

Beginning on March 2, people across the world will gather outside of abortion facilities to lift their voices in prayer for the women and men who enter, the workers who provide abortion services, and the innocent lives lost. People who commit to these 40 days of prayer and fasting, do so peacefully in the spirit of hope that someday we will see a world where the killing of unborn children is unthinkable.

Two years ago, I spoke with Shawn Carney, co-founder and President of Forty Days for Life, about this ministry. Forty Days for Life started in College Station, TX in 2004. It wasn't initially planned to be repeated, but nearby cities heard about it, and it was officially launched as a national event in 2007. Today, it is an international campaign that happens twice per year in 1,000 cities around the world. Forty Days for Life has celebrated saving over 20,000 lives, and closing over 100 abortion facilities (including the Sharonville location in this very Archdiocese). These campaigns aren't violent or confrontational. This is prayer and fasting, paving the way to hope on a day that is, for

most women there, a very dark and difficult day where they are making a choice they don't really want to make, but believe they don't really have a choice.

I also spoke with Abby Johnson, former Planned Parenthood clinic director turned pro-life advocate and author of *Unplanned*. As many people know, her conversion story began with the day she had to witness an abortion procedure, which led her to quit her job and join forces with the people who prayed outside her clinic. If you need some quick encouragement to join a local prayer vigil, Abby told me about a Planned Parenthood conference she attended in 2009, at a workshop called, 'Anti-Choice Harrassment'. In that session she was told that Planned Parenthood ran numbers and shared that the no-show rates of women who make appointments for an abortion can go as high as 75%, when someone is outside the center praying. So that should be some helpful encouragement for anyone who is thinking



about joining a local prayer vigil.

If you want to join in this life-saving ministry, it is easy to do. Just go to the website at

www.40daysforlife.com, search locations for **CINCINNATI** or **DAYTON** (or wherever you are) and you will find the contact information for our local leaders on how to sign up for the upcoming 40 Days prayer vigil, starting on Ash Wednesday March 2, and ending on Palm Sunday. And while you are praying and fasting,

continue to pray for a positive outcome for the Dobbs case currently before the Supreme Court, which could **overturn Roe V. Wade** this year! If this article isn't enough to motivate you, please watch the powerful video interviews from Shawn Carney, Abby Johnson and others on our **WEBSITE HERE**. It's a powerful way to put our faith into action and start off Lent, letting the beauty of prayer and fasting change hearts and minds and put an end to the scourge of abortion in our communities.



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!

See below for more...

Director, Office for Respect Life Ministries

Respect Life Award Winners



On Sunday, January 23 the Respect Life Award was presented to two very worthy candidates by Archbishop Dennis Schnurr. Both of the recipients have demonstrated an incredible example of what it means to consistently respect life from day to day.

Our first recipient, Mary Clark, has coordinated the Spring and Fall campaigns of 40 Days for Life in Cincinnati since 2009. She has brought awareness for the need to pray and witness the dignity of the unborn and to offer hope to those who visit the clinic. She is always ready to stand in herself when no one else volunteers. Mary has even brought together Catholics and Protestants to pray at the clinic, not only during the two campaigns, but throughout the year. She also does a tremendous amount of pro-life work at her own parish and at Cincinnati Right to Life. Sometimes we see the immediate fruits of a woman changing her mind about abortion while we pray outside of a clinic, but more often, we do not. Despite this, Mary remains unwavering in her commitment to the unborn, and the women who feel as if they have no better options.

Continued on Page 3

FEBRUARY World Marriage Week

07-14

The upcoming observances of National Marriage Week and World Marriage Day (**Sunday, February 13, 2022**) are opportunities to focus on building a culture of life and love by supporting and promoting marriage and the family. **CLICK HERE** for resources to celebrate marriage!

27

40 Days Kick-Off Rally

On Sunday, February 27 in both **DAYTON** and **CINCINNATI**, 40 Days for Life will host a Kick-Off Rally to begin 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. Dress warmly and join us for one of these rallies.

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- Death Penalty Legislation
- 03- Continue to Pray for Dobbs
- 04- Human Life Protection Act



Respect Life Coordinator Resources

- 01 The month's Word of Life includes resources for **National Marriage Week** which will take place from February 7 - 14 and **World Marriage Day** on Sunday, February 13. (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 We continue advocacy in support of House and Senate bills to abolish the death penalty. The Catholic opposition to the death penalty is ultimately rooted in mercy and is eminently pro-life. Ohio's Bishops affirm there is a better way to carry out justice and mercy. Take action in the House by asking your **REPRESENTATIVE** to support **HB 183**. Take action in the Senate by asking your **SENATOR** to support **SB 103**.
- 03 Please continue to **PRAY FOR DOBBS!** Sign up for continuing updates and use these resources to invite others to pray and fast until the decision (likely in late June 2022). Let us all lift our voices together in continuous vigil as we pray for guidance for our justices.
- 04 Support the Human Life Protection Act! This past fall, the Conference **TESTIFIED** in support of **SB 123**, the Human Life Protection Act. If passed, the legislation would ban abortions in Ohio if **Roe v. Wade** is overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court. Take action in the Senate by asking your **SENATOR** to support **SB 123**.

Teen Dating Violence Is Real

By: Becky Schoenfeld

Teen Dating Violence
AWARENESS MONTH

Tips for Parents

To suspect or discover that your child may be in an unhealthy and potentially abusive relationship can be shocking and frightening. Listed below are some tips to consider if you're trying to help your child who is experiencing dating violence.

LISTEN AND PROVIDE SUPPORT

Teens may fear that if they tell their parents about any type of abuse in their relationship, they will overreact and blame them or confront their partner. It's important to be supportive of your child and ask how you can support them.

ACCEPT WHAT YOUR CHILD IS TELLING YOU

Showing skepticism or disbelief can make your child feel unsupported and alone. Believe them when they decide to share their experience with you.

TALK ABOUT THE BEHAVIORS, NOT THE PERSON

Change the way you discuss the abuse. Instead of focusing on the person, focus on how it makes your child feel.

DECIDE ON NEXT STEPS TOGETHER

Ultimately, decisions regarding next steps need to come from your child, but you can still play an integral role in helping them identify safe options.

DES

Dating is hard. It's even harder when you're a teen trying to navigate a new romantic relationship. It's important for our teens to recognize that the purpose of dating is to discover and discern their vocation in life. Often, unhealthy and unbalanced relationships can lead to emotional and/or physical abuse. 1 in 3 young people will be in an unhealthy or abusive relationship. 33% of adolescents fall victim to emotional, physical, sexual, or verbal dating abuse (dosomething.org).

Make sure the teen in your life knows these important rules so that they can have healthy and God-centered relationship.

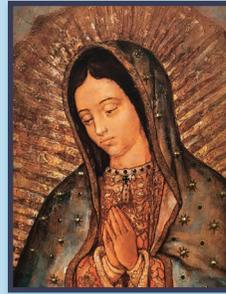
1. Boundaries. Set boundaries for your teen and have your teen set boundaries for themselves such as: curfew, where they are permitted to be together (family room, not bedroom), who will be joining them, etc.

2. Space. It's important for your teen to give themselves space from their person of interest. In

Continued on Page 4

Respect Life Award Winners

Continued from Page 2



Our second recipient, Judi MacLeod, tragically passed away this past fall but left a huge legacy of love and support for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Judi devoted her entire life to Ministry with Persons with Disabilities. She founded the Cuvili Program at Chaminade Julienne High School in Dayton which provides the opportunity for students with disabilities to attend Catholic School with their peers. This work was more than a job for her- it was her vocation.

She had a special gift of knowing how to use both compassion and discipline to help her students succeed outside of the classroom, and she was much loved by everyone in the school. Judi also spent hours volunteering at her parish and devoted a significant amount of time to the Belonging Task Force of the Office for Persons with Disabilities of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. The award was received by her husband, Don, in her honor. To read more about Judi and her ministry, [CLICK HERE](#), to see a beautifully written tribute from Chaminade Julienne.

FEBRUARY

Rare Disease Day

28

Rare Disease Day is a worldwide celebration for raising awareness and generating change for the 300 million people worldwide living with a rare disease, their families and their caregivers. The Office for Persons with Disabilities will be running a campaign leading up to this day to provide resources for parish involvement.

MARCH

Day of Reflection (Cincinnati)

05

Project Rachel invites anyone affected by an abortion experience to a day of healing and hope. This event is open to men and women. Please [REGISTER HERE](#) today.

U.S. Catholic Church on Immigration Reform

By: Andrew Musgrave

For many years, the Catholic Church – both domestically and internationally – has spoken out in support of immigrants, refugees, and those seeking asylum. These statements are, of course, all rooted in our belief in the dignity of all people, the sanctity of all life. Unfortunately, many issues around immigration have been politicized and lose focus on the very people who so desperately need support and compassion. Fortunately, there are many ideas, proposed legislation, and executive policies that can provide some level of relief.

Almost everyone agrees that our immigration system is long overdue for updates, but there is great division on how to do that. When it comes to any proposed changes, it's important to know how the Church evaluates potential updates. There are five principles that help guide the Church's approach to migration.

- I. Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.
- II. Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.
- III. Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.
- IV. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.
- V. The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.

These ideas are based in the document **Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope**, a joint letter from the U.S. and Mexican Catholic Bishops.

There are several pieces of legislation which align with these principles and for which the U.S. Bishops have voiced support, including the **U.S. Citizenship Act of 2021**, the **American Dream and Promise Act**, and the **Farm Workforce Modernization Act**. If you'd like to find more resources from the USCCB on all things related to immigrants, check out justiceforimmigrants.org.

Being Pro-Life

Domestic Violence

Carol was happily married, until she became pregnant with her first child. She then started getting hit for a variety of reasons such as being ugly, or not doing things quickly enough.

One night she was beaten so badly she ended up in the hospital. He visited her in the hospital once, then never came back.



Why don't people in abusive relationships just leave? Abusers are often so controlling that the victim doesn't have the means to go anywhere else, or they even fear for their lives. Whatever the reasons, it is important to just recognize it is not as easy as it sounds.

Over 20,000 calls are made to domestic violence hotlines in the U.S. each day, and the Catholic Church recognizes this as a serious problem. [Check out our video and parish resources](#), and learn how to help those experiencing Domestic Violence.

Teen Dating Violence Is Real

Continued from Page 3

those early years, a new relationship can be intoxicating and seems like all our time is spent pining over this particular individual. Have a night for just family where you play games and spend time reconnecting with your loved ones in your home. It's all about balance!

3. Group outings. Dating in a group setting is much safer than only dating in a one-on-one environment. Do things as a family and invite your teen and their boyfriend/girlfriend along. Attend events at your church and share your community and faith life with them. Find a fun activity for your teen and their group of friends to do. Putt-putt, bowling, rollerblading in the park, and other public activities are a great way to make sure everyone is having fun while also allowing them to get to know one another.

4. Open Communication. Keep the communication open with your teen and don't be afraid of the hard or awkward conversations. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and understanding as you navigate through these years with them. Talk to them about healthy relationships and about God's intent for marriage if that is their vocation.

Teens might hesitate to speak out on their experiences because they don't want to be exposed and they do not know the laws regarding domestic violence. Talk to your teen about healthy dating habits. Pray with them daily for their vocations and allow them to pray for their future spouse if they feel marriage is their calling. Assure them they deserve a happy, healthy relationship that would be pleasing to the Father.

belonging



Ministry with Persons with Disabilities

#IAMCHURCH

As part of a campaign to bring about awareness for persons with disabilities, the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life is launching the #IamChurch campaign. ([CLICK HERE](#) to learn more). The Office for Persons with Disabilities will be actively

participating in this campaign on **SOCIAL MEDIA** in the coming months and we are calling everyone to join us in this campaign. Being differently abled does not limit someone from being a "fully-fledged member of the ecclesial community". Pope Francis reminded us of this when he said that Baptism gives everyone, "without exclusion or discrimination", the possibility to exclaim: "I am Church!". You can participate by posting a photo or video of yourself proclaiming "I am Church" on our **SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES**. We will also be celebrating **RARE DISEASE DAY** on February 28. Millions of people across the world are diagnosed with diseases that are not commonly known or understood. As a way to recognize all of these diagnoses, we will be providing some prayers and bulletin/Mass Announcements that could be used over the next several weeks. Help us to spread awareness, so that we can make our Church a true place of Belonging.

MARCH 40 Days for Life Vigil Begins

02

Through the months of March and April, people across the world will gather outside of abortion facilities to lift their voices in prayer for the women and men who enter, the workers who provide abortion services, and the innocent lives lost. Consider joining the movement of prayer and fasting in both **DAYTON** and **CINCINNATI**.

MARCH 40 Days Midpoint Rally

20

Mark your calendars for the Midpoint Rally of the 40 Days for Life Campaign. More information will be available in our next issue!



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

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Talking about Abortion By: Becky Schoenfeld

With so much happening in our country in relation to Roe v Wade, it's important for us to know how to handle a conversation on abortion without alienating those who have been affected by abortion. When talking about abortion, always include a message about healing and forgiveness. Though we may believe we are talking to a group of like-minded individuals, it is important to remember that even people among our family members or close friends may be holding some unknown secrets. 1 in 3 women has had an abortion by age 45, and 31-37% of women who have had abortions are Catholic. We may have a

family member or friend that is suffering from post-abortive stress syndrome. Let us be mindful of the words we use in reference to the mothers and fathers who are suffering the loss of their baby. Our words could tear them down and push them farther away or allow them to feel welcomed and seek forgiveness. In the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, we have **PROJECT RACHEL MINISTRY** that is dedicated to help post-abortive women and men seek forgiveness and reconciliation with themselves and with God.

Banners for this ministry should be present in every church where the white crosses are displayed. While each cross represents the number of children lost to abortion, behind each of those crosses is a parent who is suffering. It's important to recognize they made a decision that they felt was their only solution at the time. Whether they were coerced by family or friends, or the abortion clinic staff assured them that their "problem" would be "taken care of", it is our duty as Christians to help them find hope and healing through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

As tensions continue to rise to see Roe overturned, let's also remember the women and men who have suffered for years, or even decades, in silence. When we talk about the evils of abortion, we should bring forward the narrative of hope and healing through the ministry of **PROJECT RACHEL**. Call/text the confidential helpline at (513) 784-0531.