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# RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER



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

## Moving Forward After Issue 1

*By: Bob Wurzelbacher*

Issue 1, *The Right to Reproductive Freedom*, passed last month, about 57% to 43%. It is in many ways heartbreaking, especially of course for the lives that will be lost and the women who will continue to be misled to believe that abortion is their best and only choice, but we have no other option as Catholics than to get back up again and continue to spread the good news of the culture of life. If you have not yet seen it, please check out the video response **FROM ARCHBISHOP SCHNURE HERE.**



dozens of centers within our Archdiocese who offer a broad range of services for women facing unexpected pregnancies. On the justice side, the Ohio Catholic Conference has successfully advocated for a number of things that are in the current Ohio budget such as:

eliminating sales tax for baby products; investing more in housing for vulnerable pregnant women; extending Ohio Works First cash assistance eligibility for the full duration of a pregnancy; a new doula program to address infant and maternal mortality rates, especially among minorities; supporting pregnancy centers; expanding Medicaid for pregnant women; reforming Ohio adoption law and increasing the child tax credit.

I spoke to Peter Range, Executive Director of Ohio Right to Life more specifically about this loss and what it means for us in my latest **PODCAST**. One of the most significant

statistics he pointed out to me was that when you look at the age breakdown in this last election, we lost 82% to 18% among 18-29 year olds. We clearly have a lot of work to do to re-evangelize our youth not only on the dignity of all life, but also to be able to answer the tough questions on sexual assault and fetal abnormality, which the other side exploited so successfully in the closing weeks of the campaign. I will be working with the Catholic Schools Office and Students for Life to try to re-engage the high schools through their pro-life clubs, and ensure our young people are ready and equipped to answer those tougher questions that they are sure to encounter later in high school and college.

What should we all be doing as a result of this election? First, don't stop praying. It may seem like our prayers to defeat Issue 1 did nothing. We know, however, that we have a loving God who walks with us during trials, and will conquer evil in the end. One of the ways you can engage your parish in continued prayer is through our 9 Months With Christ in the Womb program, which you can read more about on page 3. *(continued on page 2)*

As a Church, we will continue to do what we have always done, which is support mothers and families in need in countless ways, not only with our words, but also through our actions. If you aren't aware of the myriad of ways in which we do just that, check out our website **WWW.CATHOLICAOC.ORG/FORLIFE** to learn about many of them, including the



# 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!

*Bob Wenzelbacher*

**December**

**08 - 09**

## National Prayer for Life

We traditionally gather on the Feasts of the Immaculate Conception and St. Juan Diego to spend time in adoration and pray the Rosary for the end of abortion. Invite your pastor to hold a holy hour sometime that evening. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information on how to participate.

## 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

**02-** Immaculate Conception

**03-** 9 Days for Life Novena

**04-** January Action Guide

*RADIATE  
CHRIST*

## Moving Forward

(continued from page 1)



Secondly, get involved in our efforts to help women in need. Whether it is at your local Right to Life organization or your local pregnancy center, find out who is closest to you at [WWW.CATHOLICAOC.ORG/FORLIFE](http://WWW.CATHOLICAOC.ORG/FORLIFE). Much in the same vein, actively work to bring [WALKING WITH MOMS IN NEED](#) to your parish family.

Third, get to know your neighbors. This is Catholic evangelization 101. Develop relationships with people who ought to be in your sphere of influence.

It takes time, but they will ask what you do in your spare time, and the Holy Spirit will lead you to the conversations you need to have with them. Once you are friends, you have a better chance of educating them on all we do to support life, influencing them about better respecting life at all stages, and reducing the vitriol so many who supported Issue 1 have toward us.

I will echo Archbishop Schnurr's words as he closed out his video message on the passage of Issue 1: "May the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, graciously help us build a culture of life and a civilization of love, to the praise and glory of God, the Creator of all".

**09**

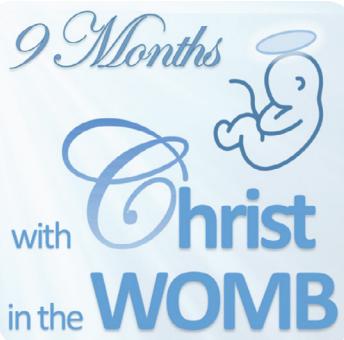
## Mass of Gratitude and Hope

Join Archbishop Schnurr for **11:30 AM MASS** at St. Peter in Chains Cathedral Basilica on the Feast of St. Juan Diego as we thank those who gave so much time to the defeat of Issue 1, and dedicate the future of our Respect Life efforts to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

## Respect Life Coordinator Resources

- 01** The month's **WORD OF LIFE** includes a special Advent reflection on how to support a woman who is **UNEXPECTEDLY EXPECTING**, intercessions for life, readings for the **SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**, and more! Available in [ENGLISH](#) and [SPANISH](#).
- 02** On December 8 we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is a Holy Day of Obligation. [CLICK HERE](#) to download a bulletin insert recognizing the importance of this feast day. You can also access Pope Francis' [PRAYER FOR THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION](#) or this [PRAYER FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY](#).
- 03** The **9 DAYS FOR LIFE NOVENA** is starting next month! This is a chance to prayerfully enter into January through Respect Life events that surround the anniversary of *Roe v Wade*. The program includes intentions and suggestions for fasts each day as we continue to pray for our state government. Follow our [FACEBOOK PAGE](#) for daily updates as well!
- 04** January is a busy time for Respect Life efforts across our nation. The USCCB ProLife Secretariat has created a wonderful [ACTION GUIDE](#) for Parish Respect Life Coordinators to use in planning events that focus on the issue of abortion. Our office can also help organize events this month!

## 9 Months with Christ in Womb



From March 25 (Feast of the Incarnation) to December 25 (Feast of Christ's Birth), we are encouraging all parishes to join us in our *9 Months with Christ in the Womb* prayer campaign, first introduced in 2015. Promoting a consistent ethic of life, this campaign offers short reflections to put in your parish bulletin each week, that prayerfully chart where Our Lord Jesus Christ was in his fetal development each week between these two beautiful feasts.

Additionally, we include 9 monthly reflections on a different biblical story during the earliest moments of Christ's time on earth. Each reflection will discuss the importance of a different social issue such as immigration, the death penalty, care for the elderly, concern for the disabled, and other issues. We also have a prayer you may use each day during the 9 month prayer campaign. We will put a website up next month to download the resources, but for now, if you would like to have the materials emailed to you, please contact our office at [RESPECTLIFE@CATHOLICAOC.ORG](mailto:RESPECTLIFE@CATHOLICAOC.ORG).

**December**

**Deaf Mass**

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Members of our Deaf Community gather for Mass and fellowship at St. Christopher in Vandalia, Ohio. Mass will be offered at 5PM with ASL interpretation, so all are welcome to attend. It is truly a gift to gather at the table with our hearing brothers and sisters.

## War in the Holy Land



We have all been devasted by the war going on in the Holy Land. The loss of life, trauma, and violence have been horrific, and we pray ardently for an end to the fighting and the safety for all people.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops have issued a couple of statements since the conflict started in October, and we wanted to share a bit of their words.

### FROM THEIR OCT. 8TH STATEMENT:

*The world is once again shocked and horrified by the outbreak of ferocious violence in the Holy Land... May all who love the Holy Land seek to bring about among all the parties engaged in the fighting a cessation of violence, respect for civilian populations and the release of hostages.*

### FROM THEIR OCT. 27TH STATEMENT:

*As Pope Francis reminds the world, 'War is always a defeat; it is a destruction of human fraternity.' "We continue to pray for the victims caught in this cycle of violence as well as the regional and international actors who are being drawn into the conflict. We must not grow weary of offering our prayers and support for peace and justice for all concerned. A lasting solution respecting the rights, needs, and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians remains essential to these ends.*

Please keep all of those affected by this awful situation in your prayers, and please do all you can do to bring peace into the world and into the lives of our neighbors.

## Mental Wellness Holiday Tips

A NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) study reported that 64% of people with mental illness report holiday seasons like Christmas make their conditions worse.

Here are a few tips from the National Alliance on Mental Illness:

- Accept your needs
- Manage your time and don't try to do too much
- Be realistic
- Set boundaries
- Self Care
- Practice Relaxation
- Exercise
- Eat well
- Sleep
- Volunteer
- Keep up or seek help if you need it



If you or someone you know is in crisis, call 988, The Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

**January**

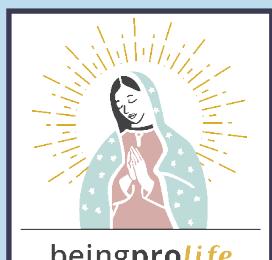
**11**

**Serving Grieving Families**

Come to the St. Gertrude Parish gym (6543 Miami Ave., Cincinnati) at 7PM for an informational session on why and how to help families in our parishes who are experiencing miscarriage and stillbirth, presented by Heaven's Gain Minstries.

## Being Pro-Life Peter Range

This month Bob talks with Peter Range, Executive Director of Ohio Right to Life on the passage of Issue 1 last month. While we are all disappointed in the results, there is always hope in Jesus and the future of the pro-life movement in this state and the country. He talks about what happened, what we may be able to look at legislatively moving forward to limit the effects of the amendment, and most importantly, how we should move forward in the pro-life movement by continuing to evangelize the people in our lives about the dignity of all human life and truly look forward toward a future where we truly respect women, babies and families. Check out the video at [BEING PRO LIFE](#) and be inspired to keep up the challenge to truly change hearts and minds to recognize the beauty of all human life.



# Bereavement Training



Did you know that 1 in 4 babies die in the first trimester of pregnancy, 1 in 33 die in the second trimester, and 1 in 160 are stillborn or die shortly after a premature birth? With this many families in need, is your parish reaching out to help these families as well as it should? Please attend our upcoming informational session on miscarriage and stillbirth to learn both why we need to serve these families, as well as how to get the training you and your volunteers need to set up a bereavement ministry in your parish to accomplish just that. This information session will be led by Donna Murphy, founder and Executive Director of Heaven's Gain Ministries, an organization that serves over 1500 families per year who are experiencing miscarriage and stillbirth. Donna is a Certified Baby Loss Family Advisor, has been a guest on numerous radio programs, and led classes for seminarians, priests and lay ministry leaders throughout the Archdiocese on this important ministry.

Join us on **January 11, 2023 at 7PM at St. Getrude Parish in Madiera**  
(6543 Miami Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45243).



On November 4th at St. Rita's School for the Deaf, our Deaf Community gathered for their annual retreat. Fr. Shawn Carey, a deaf priest from the Archdiocese of Boston, was the host. The theme of the retreat was the Sanctity of Life. Fr. Shawn talked about the Foundations of Marriage being permanent, exclusive, and open to procreation. He stressed that when a man and woman are joined in marriage, they must always be open

to life. If a woman conceives outside of marriage, life must never end through an abortion. His lecture opened discussions about Issue 1 and the importance of voting "No" on November 7th. He also discussed the sacrifice of the Mass and how it relates to the sacrifice of a mother's life for her child. He was referring to St. Gianna Beretta Molla's sacrifice of her life for her child, just like Jesus died for us.

It was a beautiful day to gather and grow in our faith together as a community. Our office is thankful for Fr. Shawn's willingness to travel and share the gospel with our Deaf Community.

## January Respect Life Award Mass

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The Respect Life Award Mass will be offered by Archbishop Dennis Schnurr on Sunday, January 14 at 11AM Mass at St. Peter in Chains Cathedral Basilica, for continued efforts to advance the culture of life. All are welcome to attend.

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## 9 Days for Life Novena

9 Days for Life is a novena for the protection of human life. Each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life. To learn more or sign up for daily reminders, click [HERE](#).



## Contact Us

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## Project Rachel retreat March

"Come Share the Spirit"  
retreat weekend  
**Cincinnati: March 8-10**  
To register, visit  
[ProjectRachelOhio.org](http://ProjectRachelOhio.org)  
or email us at  
[ProjectRachel@catholicaoc.org](mailto:ProjectRachel@catholicaoc.org)

If you would like the Project Rachel Ministry to come and speak at your school or parish, please contact **EMILY BRANSUM**. Feel free to contact us at: (513) 784-0531 or visit [PROJECTRACHELOHIO.ORG](http://PROJECTRACHELOHIO.ORG)