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# RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER



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

## The Time is Now to Prepare for a Post-Roe State

*By: Bob Wurzelbacher*

The state of Texas banned abortion in September of 2021 at the detection of a heartbeat, and statistics about the effects of that law came out last month. The number of abortions in Texas dropped from 5,404 in August of 2021 to 2,197 in September. That is a drop of approximately 60%. While that news is certainly heartening to all of us in the pro-life movement, it also means that the need to care for mothers in a crisis pregnancy is growing rapidly as well.

In just a few months, depending on the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the Dobbs case, it is quite possible we will find ourselves in a state where abortion is much more restricted than it has been for nearly 50 years. While, on the one hand, that is a day for which many of us have been praying for virtually all of our lives, it is also a day we may not be as prepared for as we realize. While legal abortion may thankfully at least become much more difficult to obtain, the plight of women in difficult or crisis pregnancies will only continue. It is a critical time to show the world that we are pro-life not only in word, but also in action. We must commit ourselves

to a society that cares for women, children, and families, such that no one ever feels like the life of one's own child could become a necessary choice.

Here are some ideas on how we can help prepare for a post-Roe state:

- Continue to pray and fast for a positive outcome in the Dobbs case. To that end, continue to make your parish aware of the resources available at [www.prayfordobbs.com](http://www.prayfordobbs.com).
- Keep abreast of **CURRENT LEGISLATION IN OUR STATE**, such as the **HUMAN LIFE PROTECTION ACT**. In addition, contact your local senator and representative to encourage them to vote for life, as well as other services that support families and those in need.
- Learn about where the existing service agencies nearest your parish are, including **PREGNANCY CARE CENTERS, MATERNITY**



**HOMES**, and **SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES**, so that you can quickly and easily refer someone in need. It isn't always simply about helping a mom choose life, but helping them to continue to care for the children they already have.

- Organize a fund drive, clothing drive, food drive or any other appropriate collection at your parish to support these local agencies, as well as the **RESPECT LIFE FUND**.

- Learn more about **PROJECT RACHEL**, our post-abortive healing ministry, and encourage widespread awareness through bulletin, pulpit, and social media announcements.

For more on what the U.S. Bishops have to say about the matter, see their recently issued statement, **STANDING WITH MOMS IN NEED**, that helps give us more direction. May we all renew our commitment to creating a world where abortion is not just illegal, but unthinkable for all.

**April 2022**

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

**Issue 25**



# 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 Wurzelbacher*

Director, Office for Respect Life Ministries

## Assisted Suicide is not Healthcare

By: Bob Wurzelbacher

What is wrong with physician-assisted suicide? Proponents argue that it is only for terminally ill patients who wish to end their suffering. Why deny them of that right? Putting aside the breadth of Catholic teaching on the dignity of all life, let's just focus on how such laws effect those who do not want it.

First of all, when suicide becomes an acceptable treatment for illness—which is immensely less expensive than actual treatment—the insurance industry will more commonly deny covering treatment. Even people with a disease that is only terminal without treatment, have been denied treatment by insurance companies in states with assisted suicide.

Secondly, when assisted suicide is seen as a treatment option for the dying, concern for improving hospice and palliative care services decrease.

People presume assisted suicide is primarily for people who are in great pain, but that doesn't make it into the top five reasons why people choose it. Fear of being a burden and loss of autonomy are among the top reasons, and these concerns can be addressed with resources. Every day can be a gift, no matter the personal abilities.

For more information on the topic, check out our [WEBPAGE](#). For statistics that back up the claims I made above, see the USCCB document on the topic [HERE](#). Together, we can help those who might be susceptible to assisted suicide laws, and work to ensure this doesn't happen in Ohio.

**APRIL**

### Heartbeat for Life 5K

09

Cincinnati Right to Life is relaunching their annual **Heartbeats for Life 5K** and they hope you can make it! Join them on Saturday, April 9 at Lunken Playfield. Registration begins at 8:30am. They will be hosting entertainment, food trucks, and a CASH basket raffle, be sure to register today and join the fun! [CLICK HERE](#) to register!

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### 40 Days Closing Rally

On Sunday, April 10 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 more info.

## 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-** Divine Mercy Action Guide

**03-** Walking with Moms in Need

**04-** Prepare for a Post-Roe Ministry

**RADIATE  
CHRIST**

## Respect Life Coordinator Resources

**01** The month's Word of Life focuses around healing after an abortion. (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** The Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities has created a [DIVINE MERCY ACTION GUIDE](#) that focuses around healing for people who have experienced abortion. Many inaccurately feel that abortion is "the unforgivable sin." They need to hear that God forgives every sin of a repentant heart, even the sin of abortion. This Action Guide includes a sample timeline, simple steps, sample announcements, and an activity to help you bring Christ's message of mercy to your parish community. Project Rachel resources are also always available through our office. Contact us at [projectrachel@catholicaoc.org](mailto:projectrachel@catholicaoc.org).

**03** Want to learn more about Walking with Moms in Need? You can check out the most recent [NEWSLETTER](#), full of motivational stories about what is happening around out nation! We encourage all families of parishes to prayerfully consider joining this movement to better support moms in need.

**04** It is possible that in a few months we may be doing our ministry in a country where *Roe V Wade* has been overturned. We have been praying for this for nearly 50 years, but are we ready to counteract the culture's message that we are trying to trample on "reproductive rights"? Are we ready to show our communities how our parishes are prepared to help women in crisis pregnancies? [SIGN UP](#) for one of our four local meetings (one of them is also virtual) and let's talk about how to prepare for a changing world!



# Abortion Free Cities

By: Jordan Moorman, Students for Life Coordinator

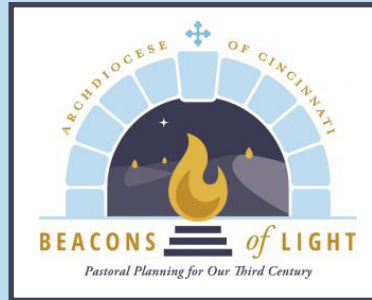


**STUDENTS  
FOR LIFE**  
OF AMERICA®

Did you know that 73% of our neighbors are unaware of their local Pregnancy Help Center? There is a serious disparity in our community and work

to be done. The Campaign for Abortion Free Cities is actively recruiting volunteers and leaders within Cincinnati to change culture and connect women to life-affirming resources. The Campaign for Abortion Free Cities is a cutting-edge, grassroots strategy that exists to make abortion unavailable and unthinkable. We must serve in our community and within the walls of our own churches to ensure that no woman stands alone during pregnancy and beyond. We develop church partnerships, implement our door-to-door ministry, and pray outside the local abortion facility. Please consider joining our mission by becoming a church partner and participating in our door-to-door ministry to serve women and families in the Cincinnati area. Together, with your help we can truly be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ, sign up at <https://abortionfreecities.org/volunteer/>

# Don't Miss Warmup Days Beacons of Light Pathways



Join other parish leaders – clergy and staff – to get warmed up for pastoral planning. We'll check in on how Phase 0 is going, provide an orientation to the Pastoral Planning Pathway and the online platform for planning resources, and make sure you are up to speed before Phase 1 of Beacons of Light.

We'll also focus on the importance of good leadership in the pastoral planning process and developing essential leadership skills. It will also be a great opportunity to meet parish leaders from other Families. Click here for more information and to register: <https://pathway.catholicaoc.org/phase-0-prepare/warmup-day>

*Beacons of Light is a multi-year process of pastoral planning for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Groupings of parishes will come together as one faith community. These new "Families of Parishes" will be stronger, with the resources to focus more on mission than on maintenance.*

**APRIL**

## Sex and Labor Trafficking

21

Misinformation about human trafficking in Ohio abounds. Learn what is happening in Ohio with this issue, how to recognize, respond and keep your loved ones safe. Join speaker Tanya Folks on Thursday, April 21 at 7:00pm at St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish in the Gym. [CLICK HERE](#) to register for this event.

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## Sunday of Divine Mercy

On the Second Sunday of Easter, the Church celebrates the Sunday of Divine Mercy. It provides an important opportunity to share Christ's message of mercy, especially with those who have been wounded by participation in abortion. Learn more about the **DIVINE MERCY ACTION GUIDE** in Coordinator's Corner.

## Braver Angels

By: Andrew Musgrave

During the 2016 election season, several offices in the Archdiocese partnered together to launch a program – **CIVILIZE IT** – that called on both the principles of USCCB's Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship and our faith's demand that we recognize and honor the dignity of every person. (Prior to the 2020 election, the USCCB adopted this program as part of their national initiative to call for charity, clarity, and creativity in our politics.) At the same time...

In the wake of the very divisive 2016 election, a new organization – Braver Angels – was formed to heal the division that was tearing us apart. The founders harkened back to President Lincoln's call for us to appeal to our "better angels" to guide us towards reconciliation, peace, and civility. (Since that time, **BRAVER ANGELS** has grown into a national organization with coordinators in all 50 states.)

In recent months, the Respect Life and Social Action offices have been working with Braver Angels to bring these two programs together: using the ideals and values of Civilize It and the proven practices of Braver Angels. The overlap of the ideas of the two programs is overwhelming, and the synergy that has been created has been significant.

We are proud to now be able to offer the first fruits of this work. The primary workshop of Braver Angels is the Red-Blue Workshop, and we are offering, for the first time, the Red-Blue Workshop – Catholic version. We'll share more about the content of the workshop next month, but here are details to save on your calendar: the workshop will take place on two successive Thursdays – June 2nd and 9th from 6:00-9:00pm over Zoom. There are a limited number of spots available so we'll have registration for the program, and we'll be sure to have an equal number of people who tend to lean red and tend to lean blue.

If you have any questions, please contact [Andrew Musgrave](#).

Don't forget to save the dates, and look for more information next month.

## Being Pro-Life

### Autism Acceptance

*We felt like we had two choices. We could either stay home, or we could go to Church, and try to do the best we could. So we would go, stand in the back, and just try not to be stared at or interfere with other people's quiet worship.*



People on the autism spectrum may exhibit a variety of behaviors such as covering ears, rocking, and unexpected verbal outbursts. It should come as no surprise that if their parents take them to Mass, they are often greeted with stares of condemnation and uncharitable comments. Yes, they are aware that their child's behavior makes it more difficult for you to focus on your prayer. You don't need to remind them. Parents of children with autism already struggle. Let's not add attending Mass.

For a better perspective on what it is like and what you can do to help, check out our [VIDEO PODCAST](#).

## Helping Those in the Ukraine

By: Becky Schoenfeld

Imagine your home, family, and belongings suddenly ripped out from underneath you. Imagine trying to care and provide for your family when neighborhoods, hospitals, and lives are being destroyed. This has become the reality for the people of Ukraine.

You can help by donating to Catholic organizations that are striving each day to provide refugees with necessary items to stay safe and healthy.

The Knights of Columbus Councils in Poland, along with Latin and Greek Catholic Churches in Ukraine have been working tirelessly to provide shelter, food, clothing, and medical support to the growing refugee crisis. 100% of the donations will go to supporting the humanitarian aid in Ukraine. You can [DONATE HERE](#).

Catholic Relief Services is an international humanitarian agency that responds to major crises working with local, national, and international Catholic organizations to serve the poor and vulnerable. They are currently supporting Catholic organizations in Ukraine to assist those in need. You can make a [DONATION HERE](#).

As members of the Body of Christ, we are called to help those in need and mend the parts that are broken. Any donation, big or small, will help provide life-saving care to those who have lost so much in the midst of this war. Thank you for your consideration and generosity.

## Autism Acceptance Month!

By: Noelle Collis-DeVito



April is Autism Acceptance Month! This month, the Office for Persons with Disabilities invites you to work to raise awareness and acceptance of persons with autism in your parishes. Autism is often referred to as an “invisible disorder,” so there are often not any outward indicators that a person is autistic. Neurodiversity is something to celebrate. Persons who are autistic have a unique perspective through which they see the world and have a great deal to contribute to our church.

Your parish can help to spread this message by promoting awareness this month in a variety of ways. Check out our Autism [RESOURCE PAGE](#) that will be growing over the course of the month. The NCPD has also created some excellent resources that could be incorporated into bulletins or liturgy including a [BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT](#), [PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL](#), a printable [BULLETIN INSERT](#), and an [AWARENESS PRAYER](#). Finally, if you have active parish Social Media pages, follow the [OFFICE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES](#) and share some of our upcoming posts to highlight persons with developmental disabilities in our very own Archdiocese of Cincinnati! The first step towards creating a culture of inclusion and meaningful participation in our Church is to provide opportunities for awareness and acceptance. Let us all work together to establish a sense of belonging in our parishes, Archdiocese, and universal Church.

### APRIL/MAY Project Rachel Retreat (Dayton)

29-01

The [PROJECT RACHEL RETREAT](#) is designed for mothers affected by an abortion experience. These retreats are a way to grow in one's healing journey with other women who have shared a similar experience. The weekend offers a loving and confidential environment where participants can experience the love and mercy of God.

### MAY Mother's Day

08

Mother's Day is a wonderful opportunity to highlight the beautiful vocation of motherhood and the gift of life. It calls us to cherish the gift of life that we receive from our mothers and to pray for all women to whom God has entrusted life in a very special way. [CLICK HERE](#) for ideas to promote a pro-life message on this special day!



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## Project Rachel

By: Becky Schoenfeld

Our ministry has some exciting news: We have recently redesigned our website! Check it out at [projectrachelohio.org](http://projectrachelohio.org). On this new site, individuals will be able to find information and register for upcoming Retreats, Days of Reflection, and even information on how to talk to a friend dealing with Post-Abortion Syndrome. There are also additional resources for parishes and organizations that can be utilized and distributed as needed.

Our next Weekend Retreat is coming up on April 29<sup>th</sup> - May 1<sup>st</sup>. Participants can register online through our new website, or by [CLICKING HERE](#).

Parishes may use the following for a bulletin insert:

### Project Rachel Ministry

“...Children who are no more...there is hope for your future in Ramah.” (Jeremiah 31:15-17)

Since 1994 Project Rachel has ministered to women and men who have lost a child through abortion. Knowing what we know now, there are relatives, friends, partners, and others involved in the experience who are also suffering the loss of that unborn child. All involved in an abortion experience need to honor the child and have an opportunity to heal while grieving and mourning their loss.

The Office for Respect Life Ministries is offering a retreat for mothers April 29<sup>th</sup>- May 1<sup>st</sup>, as well as a Day of Reflection for any affected by abortion in October. We invite you to: “Look into your heart, listen to the voice of God. Help yourself by accepting His love and forgiveness.” For more information or registration call the Project Rachel Helpline at (513)784-0531.