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RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER



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

Coming Soon From the Catholic Conference of Ohio

By: Bob Wurzelbacher

Last February, the Ohio bishops issued their **FIRST STATEMENT** informing us of the upcoming ballot initiative to expand and enshrine access to abortion for any reason into Ohio's Constitution. Last May, most parishes passed along a **FLYER** and **PRAYER CARDS** from the CCO on the ballot issue, and they also released the new website **PROTECT OHIO** with various resources to educate people on the dangers of the issue. We are also coalition members of **PROTECT WOMEN OHIO**, that exists to help defeat the initiative through commercials and other education pieces. Most recently, the Archbishop released his statement on Issue 1, which while not specifically about the abortion ballot issue, certainly has implications on the ease or difficulty proponents will have in passing it this November. What else can we expect from the Ohio Bishops in the coming weeks and months to help defeat this issue?



First, starting in August, pastors will be given guidance on how to incorporate the readings of the Sunday to points on Church teaching related to the dignity of life, and why we

ought to vote "No" in November. There will be two more Sundays in October and one in November. Pastors are always free to make different choices at their parishes, but the Ohio bishops are giving them the tools they need to talk about the issues at the pulpit in line with the readings of the day.

Secondly, a new flyer titled "Where Does It Say That?" will be sent to all parishes in mid-August, to be used in bulletins, websites and social media pages. As the title suggests, it specifically points out the places in the amendment language that leads to the claims we make about an end to parental rights, safety rules related to abortion, and a right to abortion in all 9 months of pregnancy. In September, a second flyer will be released on Frequently Asked Questions.

On September 15, a 54-day rosary novena will begin for all the faithful in Ohio. Every Catholic will be invited to pray one set of mysteries of the rosary each day until election day, to defeat the ballot initiative and in thanksgiving for its defeat. This will include the launch

of a novena website with specific prayers for each mystery. Easily sharable social media and bulletin announcements about this novena will come out in mid-August, ensuring everyone is aware and ready to begin on September 15.

High-quality, shareable videos will be produced locally from people with lived experience about the dangers of abortion and why we don't need this amendment to protect care for women who have a miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy.

Of course, there will be similar pushes to register to vote, information on how to vote early, and other related pieces throughout September and October. Once we have a proposition number, an official vote "No" logo will be designed and available to print on yard signs, put in bulletins and share on websites and social media.

I am not an election historian, but I cannot imagine that there has ever been an election in the state of Ohio with more dire consequences at stake. We must step outside of our like-minded friend bubbles and help our "pro-choice" friends and neighbors understand that this is not what they want either. Let us put our faith into action, and evangelize those with whom we come into contact, that by the grace of God we may defeat this amendment and save so many mothers, children and families from this culture of death.



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 we need are 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

Ohio Budget

By: Bob Wurzelbacher

Ohio's new budget was approved last month, and included several items supported by the Catholic Conference of Ohio (CCO) that help support pregnant women, children and families.

Perhaps the piece most are already aware of is the expansion of Ohio's EdChoice Scholarship Program, now available to all Ohioans who wish to send their children to a Catholic school. Most families can receive the full scholarship of \$6,165 for grade school and \$8,407 for high school. Full details can be found on the **OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION** website.

In addition to the EdChoice expansion, the approved budget included a number of family-friendly items which the CCO advocated for 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 woman's pregnancy; a new doula program to address infant and maternal mortality rates, especially in minority communities; supporting pregnancy resource centers; expanding Medicaid for pregnant women and children; reforming Ohio adoption law and increasing the child tax credit.

Check out my **INTERVIEW WITH WILL KUEHLNE OF THE OCC** for more details on some of the good things included in Ohio's new budget to support women and families in need.

August

Advocacy for Life Training

05

Join Cincinnati Right to Life and the Dearborn County Pro-Life Community on Saturday, August 5th from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Lawrence School Cafeteria, 545 Walnut St., Lawrenceburg, IN 47025. This is a FREE event. Workbooks, snacks and lunch are included! Check out more information **HERE**.

VOTE!

08

Trying to get to the polls on election day can be stressful for some, depending on work and family schedules. Know that early voting is already underway for the special August 8th election. You may vote today at your county board of elections, or even request a mail-in ballot at **VOTEOHIO.GOV**.

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

02- Building a Culture of Life

03- August 8th Election

04- Ohio Budget

Respect Life Coordinator Resources

01 This month's **WORD OF LIFE** features items for the Feast of the Assumption. There are also bulletin inserts, graphics, and intercessions for life for the month of August. Also available in **SPANISH**.

02 Check out the USCCB flyer on "**HOW TO BUILD A CULTURE OF LIFE**." This is a great piece to continue establishing the Walking With Moms in Need initiative within your parish! There are **BULLETIN INSERTS**, and even just the text for you to include in your **COMMUNICATIONS**.

03 As we make our way closer to the August 8th election you can find more clarity on and the language of the ballot **HERE**. You can also find an explanation of Issue 1 **HERE**. Be sure to make a plan to get out and vote on or before August 8th!

04 Check out the approved budget (**HB 33**) which included a number of items that the CCO advocated for to invest in pregnant women, children, and other vulnerable Ohioans. Click **HERE** to see the CCO flyer about Ohio public policy!



Walking With Moms in Need

By: Chris Tonnis



Last summer, our parish family, Mary Queen of Heaven, began to explore the USCCB **WALKING WITH MOMS IN NEED** initiative. The early stages of this initiative calls for identifying "gaps" or missing elements in

helping those in need within our community. A few of the major gaps we discovered are accompaniment after childbirth, childcare financial assistance, and knowing that there are resources available and how to access them. In the process, we also were made aware that dads in unusual circumstances and parents receiving a poor perinatal diagnosis have needs as well.

Upon identifying these gaps we were able to share resources with parishes and high schools, connect with local ministries, and train volunteers as advocates at Heaven's Gain Ministry. Our parish family is also exploring a national baby shower program modeling how a parish provides a baby shower for a woman and her family. In collaboration with St. Ignatius Parish, MQH will host their first baby shower in October 2023!

Ongoing programs are also in development including "Angel Friends" to accompany moms, a spiritual adoption campaign for the parishes/schools launching on August 15, as well as an advertising campaign to help moms in need find resources that already exist. A long-term goal is to find a way to assist moms in need with child care expenses, a major stated need for women with unexpected pregnancies.

Mater Filius

By: Mikki Doerger



Are you called to live a life on mission? Join the first group of mission staff that MFQC has entrusted to serve at our home. We are seeking three young women with a passion for the Catholic faith, as well as a conviction for service and justice within the Pro-life movement to live alongside the mothers and babies in our home, assisting with house operations and fostering a joy-filled community life that allows mothers in need the space to heal, grow, and feel empowered in their ability to create a good life for their children.

In addition to daily prayer for our missionaries, we have been gifted with the presence of the Eucharist in the chapel at our home. Our missionaries will help to maintain our chapel, receive spiritual direction, and participate in two missionary retreats throughout the year. In serving a year with us, you can be sure that your faith will be fostered and that your faith will be put into action daily. If you have a heart for the Pro-Life mission and are interested in joining our first missionary team, please contact us at MFQCITY@GMAIL.COM or complete our online application [HERE](#).

August

Conf on Eucharistic Miracles

11-13

The Conference offers an in depth opportunity to grow deeper in our faith in God thru what he has revealed to us in the Holy Eucharist. It will be held at Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Center in Norwood, OH. For more information click [HERE](#).

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Deaf Mass and Meeting

Join us on at 5:00pm for a Deaf Mass and meeting at St. Christopher Church (435 E. National Rd., Vandalia, Ohio).

ASL interpreters will be interpreting Mass, followed by a meeting and fellowship.

Festival of Faiths

By: Andrew Musgrave



The Archdiocesan Interfaith & Ecumenical Office partners with different groups throughout the year to both support our sisters and brothers of other faiths and to present a united faith-inspired front on issues that face our society. Pope Francis wrote in Fratelli Tutti, "The Church esteems the ways in which God works in other religions, and rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions" (#277). Thus, one of the most important functions of this office (run through Catholic Social Action) is to build relationships and come to know all that is "true, good and just" (Gaudium et spes #42).

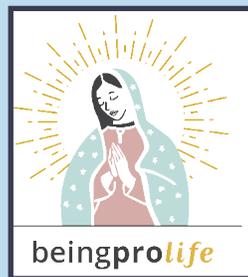
One of the greatest and most accessible ways you can take part in this wonderful ministry is to attend the Festival of Faiths, an annual event sponsored by EquaSion which the Archdiocese strongly supports.

As in past years, the event will take place at the Cintas Center on Xavier University's campus. It runs from 12:00-5:00pm on Sunday, August 27. Dozens of faith traditions and faith-related organizations will be there to share, listen, learn, and celebrate the beautiful religious tapestry that is Cincinnati. In addition, in the days following the in-person event there will be engaging and interesting online sessions, and on Thurs. 8/31 at 7:00pm there will be a Peace Walk at Ault Park. All are encouraged to come!

Being Pro-Life

New Life Through Death

Victoria was a beautiful high school girl who loved volleyball, games and arm-wrestling her brother. Just two weeks after her 15th birthday she woke-up with a headache and passed out. She was eventually diagnosed with a malignant form of brain cancer known as Glioblastoma, which took her life 14 months later. While it was easy to see what was so wonderful about Victoria while she was healthy, it was in death that what was most beautiful about Victoria was made so apparent. When brain cancer whittled away at so many of her abilities, what was never taken away was her immense sense of gratitude, her faith, and her concern for those most in need. Check out her story on our Being Pro Life channel [HERE](#).



Thank You, Birthmoms

By: *Becky Schoenfeld*



Since the beginning of our adoption journey, my husband and I always made it a point to pray for the woman who would eventually be our child's birthmother. As a past volunteer at a local pregnancy center, I knew the fear she must be feeling, as I saw it frequently in the women I would meet. I prayed that God would put the right people in her life to help her through this difficult journey.

Elena's birthmom gave us the greatest gift of our lives. She was the answer to our prayers, just as much as we were the answer to hers.

She is such an important part of how our family came to be.

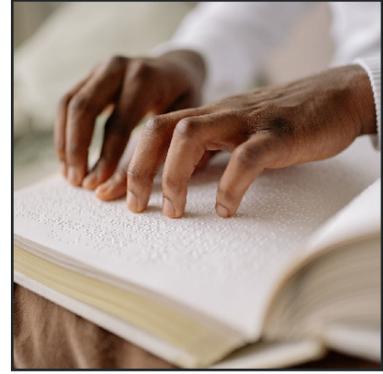
If you are a birthmom or know a birthmom, please know how incredibly loved you are for the gift that is YOU. Because of your love and selflessness, you gave life to your baby and also gave someone the gift of family. Thank you.

I challenge all of us to truly pray for the women in unplanned pregnancies, that through the Holy Spirit, they are met with the love and support that they need to choose life for their babies whether through parenting, adoption, kinship care, co-parenting, etc. As mentioned in the article on page 3, **WALKING WITH MOMS IN NEED** is a great way to encourage prayer and action in our parishes. You may never know how your prayers and support can change someone's life and save another.

OPD Inclusion

By: *Lisa Averion*

Thirty-three years ago, on July 26th the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law. The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all places that are open to the general public. This changed the course of life for so many! As a church, we are legally exempted from that law in many instances, but at the same time, we should be reaching out and going above and beyond what the law requires.



The Office for Persons with Disabilities advocates for those who benefit from this important law in your parish. How accessible is your parish for those who are blind, deaf, hard of hearing, or have a cognitive or intellectual disability? Do you offer braille missiles and support for the blind, ASL for the Deaf Community, FM or Loop devices for the hard of hearing, and Sensory Friendly Mass for those with autism, dementia, or Alzheimer's? We must serve everyone in our parish, and we want to create a culture of belonging for all! Contact our office if you need help! Lisa Averion, **LAVERION@CATHOLICAOC.ORG**

August 40 Days for Life Interim

25

Please join us on the last Friday of each month in front of Planned Parenthood on Auburn Ave. in Cincinnati at 7:00pm for our monthly interim prayer vigil. The focus of prayer in the coming months is on our upcoming August and November elections.

September Coffee and Conversation

16

Join the Office for Persons with Disabilities for Coffee and Conversation from 9:00am-11:30am.

Where: Our Lady of Sorrows 330 Lebanon St. Monroe, OH 45050

For more information contact **LISA AVERION**.



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Project Rachel Corner

Project Rachel Ministry

"Come Share the Spirit"
retreat weekend

Dayton: September 15-17

To register, visit
ProjectRachelOhio.org
or email us at

ProjectRachel@catholicaoc.org

