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RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER



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

January Events

In January 2021, due to COVID-19 restrictions placed on the streets of our nation's Capital, relatively few were able to attend that year's March for Life in Washington, DC. While many are now able to travel again, there are other reasons why it is more difficult to organize an overnight trip to the March for Life than it used to be. In light of this, the Office for Respect Life Ministry created a March for Life Toolkit to empower parishes, schools, and respect life groups to join in the vigil at home, and we focused our energies on our surrounding communities. Those materials are still available to you, whether you are attending or not, especially if you work with youth.

So, whether in conjunction with your planned trip to Washington, DC or perhaps especially for those unable to attend, we have created a **WEBSITE** with an abundance of resources ranging from **PRO-LIFE MOVIE NIGHT** options to **YOUTH MINISTRY LESSON PLANS** to **PRO-LIFE PRAYER SERVICES**

In addition, I want to let you know about some of the local events you can attend in January.

First, there is our annual Respect Life Mass with Archbishop Schnurr on Sunday, January 14th at the 11AM Mass at the St Peter in Chains Cathedral Basilica downtown. We will honor our 2023 Respect Life Award winners at that Mass.

Second, we will hold our annual Holy Hour and Rosary for Life on Thursday, January 18th at 7PM, also at the Cathedral Basilica downtown with Archbishop Schnurr.

On January 19th, if you are not heading to Washington, DC, please join **DAYTON RIGHT TO LIFE** on this day for a prayer service for all victims of Roe v Wade at the gravesite of Baby Fran at Woodland Cemetery (118 Woodland Ave., Dayton, OH) at 12 Noon. On Sunday, January 28th at 2PM, you may join **CINCINNATI RIGHT TO LIFE** for a peaceful



and prayerful event where we march beginning at Holy Name Church (2422 Auburn Ave) to Cincinnati Planned Parenthood's abortion headquarters with hundreds of other pro-life supporters.

Of course, you should surround all of these events with prayer, and one easy way to do that is by participating in the novena **9 DAYS FOR LIFE** for the protection of human life organized by the USCCB. Each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life. Click on the link above to learn more or sign up for daily reminders.

Regardless of whether you travel or stay home, let us also pray together for the countless women and men who are suffering from the consequences of their choice that they might find healing and forgiveness, and let us work ardently to create a culture of life.



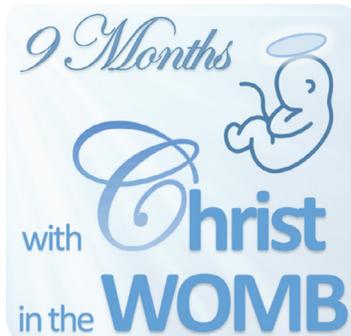
Welcome

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!

Bp. Wang

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.

January

Serving Grieving Families

11 & 17

Come to the St. Gertrude Parish gym Jan 11 (6543 Miami Ave.) or St. Bernard Jan 17 (7130 Harrison Ave.) at 7PM for an informational session on why and how to help families who are experiencing miscarriage and stillbirth, presented by Heaven's Gain Ministries.

Respect Life Award Mass

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

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- January Action Guide
- 03- Respect Life Coordinator Gatherings
- 04- March for Life Webpage



Respect Life Coordinator Resources

- 01 The month's **WORD OF LIFE** includes intercessions for life to be used each week, and a reflection on **LIVING OUT CHRISTMAS IN THE NEAR YEAR** for your bulletin. As always, there is also a **SPANISH VERSION** available.
- 02 January can be a big month for respect life efforts at your parish. Check out this month's **PARISH ACTION GUIDE** for sample bulletin announcements, pulpit announcements, and even Homily Helps for your pastor for January 22. The anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* falls on Sunday this year, so the official **DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF UNBORN CHILDREN** is celebrated on Monday, January 23. Please encourage your pastor to utilize the optional readings on this day and Homily Helps on this day.
- 03 **Mark your calendars** for Parish Respect Life Coordinators regional gatherings in March of 2024. We will have four offerings from 7-8:30 PM: Wed., March 6 (IHM-Cincinnati), Thurs., March 7 (St. Francis of Assisi-Kettering), Wed., March 13 (St. Anns, Groesbeck) or Wed., March 20 (Holy Angels, Sydney). Registration will open next month, but for now mark your calendar for the location and date most convenient for you!
- 04 Check out our **MARCH FOR LIFE** webpage for resources and local events to attend during and around the March for Life in Washington, DC. If your event is not listed on our page, let us know at RESPECTLIFE@CATHOLICAOC.ORG and we will add it.

Retreat for Adults w/Special Needs



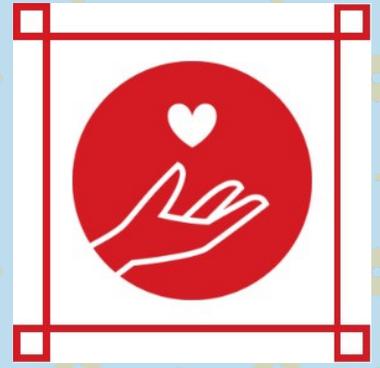
Last spring the Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD) hosted the first retreat for adults with special needs. The NET (National Evangelization Team, WWW.NETUSA.ORG) shared the gospel through words, music, and skits. Fr. Kyle Schnipple listened to confessions and celebrated Mass with those who attended. It was a beautiful day for our friends and family who attended. Due to the wonderful response and needs of our adult friends with special needs

throughout the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, we will be hosting two NET retreats in 2024. Save the date for our northern NET Retreat on **March 23rd** (location and time TBA) and southern NET Retreat on **April 27th** (location and time TBA). Fr. Kyle Schnipple will be the celebrant again this year.

If you would like to learn more about the upcoming retreats, please email Lisa Averion LAVERION@CATHOLICAOC.ORG to receive updates on time, location, and registration. Registration will open on Feb. 1st.

Salt and Light Series

Is your parish ready to take your visioning for Love in Action to the next level? The Department of Life, Dignity and Charity is offering a 3 part series on the Beacons of Life Love in Action series, to help your parish family Love in Action team understand why this vision is important, how this vision has developed in the history of the Church, what are the larger and small local organizations with which your parish can cooperate, and how to build on what you already have going on in your parishes to one that shares resources of time, talent and treasure to create a growing vision of Love in Action in your parish family.



This series is only offered on the deanery level, so we invite you to ask your pastor if he is interested in bringing this series to your deanery and if so, work with the other pastors and families in his deanery. If you would like more information about the series, please contact Mary Anne Bressler at mbressler@ccswoh.org.

January

9 Days for Life Novena

16-24

9 Days for Life is a novena for the protection of human life organized by the USCCB. 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](#).

Holy Hour for Life

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On the eve of the March for Life in Washington, DC, for those staying local this year, Archbishop Schnurr will lead us in a Pro-Life Rosary and Holy Hour at The Cathedral Basilica St. Peter in Chains at 7 PM.

War in the Holy Land

By: Andrew Musgrave



At the end of last year, there was much debate about whether the U.S. should continue to provide humanitarian aid (e.g. support for Ukraine and Israel) and at what levels. As the discussions continued, the debate became tied to the issue of immigration, asylum, and our southern border. In the end, there were elected officials who attempted to weaken support for those seeking asylum in exchange for support of humanitarian aid.

The USCCB came out in clear opposition to this position. In a statement on 12/12/23, they said, "Recent policy proposals that would undermine respect for the sanctity of human life, including that of the humble migrant seeking asylum at our border, remind us of the perils of our own culture, in which hope and unity collide with an abundance of fear and division, often yielding indifference to our shared humanity." In a letter to Congress on 12/15/23, they pointed out that "Our immigration system is broken... (and) (l)egislative solutions have been proposed, but achieving a comprehensive solution has repeatedly eluded Congress." They went on to say, "... attempting to resolve complex migration-related challenges that have festered for decades in the time-sensitive context of emergency funding is not conducive to prudent policymaking."

As we enter 2024, we pray that our elected officials "seek just legislation that advances the common good and upholds the God-given dignity of each person... from the pre-born child, to the suffering in our own country and abroad, to the family fleeing persecution." (USCCB Letter to Congress, 12/15/23)

Being Pro-Life Mark Houck

This month Bob talks with Mark Houck. Most of us are probably familiar with his story. He was arrested like a violent criminal at his home in front of his wife and young children by over twenty armed FBI agents for allegedly



violating the Federal FACE (Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances) Act as well as supposedly physically assaulting a clinic escort who was verbally harassing his son. Even if you know the story, you probably have not heard him tell the story of his trial from the perspective of each of the Stations of the Cross. Listen to him tell his heartfelt story of his walk with Jesus on Calvary during his own trial by checking 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

By: Emily Branscum



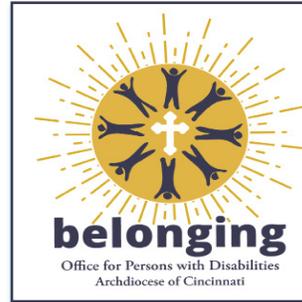
I recently had the privilege of attending the Advocate for Parents of Perinatal loss training with Heaven's Gain Ministries last month. Miscarriages are one of the most painful but common experiences of loss, yet they are so often ignored or swept under the rug. I can speak for example of my own experience of miscarriage in my family. Unsure of what to do, certain members of my family advised us to simply move on.

"We don't talk about Christopher" was the response I was often given. Every person who experiences this grief will experience it in a unique way. It is our duty to equip ourselves with the appropriate tools so that we can meet each grief-stricken person in the right way and at the right time, and in doing so uphold the dignity of those children who were lost but not forgotten. I cannot stress enough the importance of Donna's upcoming bereavement training. Please consider attending so that you can become empowered to meet your friends and family in their most desperate moments, witnessing to a culture of life and solidarity in Christ.

Check out the calendar bar for two upcoming dates on January 11 & 17, or email HEAVENSGAINMINISTRIES@GMAIL.COM for more info.

Mental Wellness Ministry

By: Lisa Averion



In November, the OPD and CCSWO hosted an information night for Mental Wellness Ministry for two pilot parish families. Ministry teams from the Our Lady of Hope and St. Gregory the Great Parish Families attended a training to learn more about the requirements for this important ministry, graciously funded through a \$30,000 grant by the Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers. The Mental Wellness

Ministry teams will be completing required training prior to "kicking off" the ministry in their parish families. They will work to break the stigma associated with mental illness through education and other opportunities for everyone to nourish their spiritual well-being in order to recognize the presence of God in their lives.

Saint Pope John Paul II wrote: "Christ took all human suffering on himself; even mental illness . . . whoever suffers from mental illness 'always' bears God's image and likeness in himself, as does every human being. In addition, he 'always' has the inalienable right not only to be considered as an image of God and therefore as a person, but also to be treated as such."

January Dayton Prayer Service

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Please join Dayton Right to Life on this day for a prayer service for all victims of Roe v Wade at the gravesite of Baby Fran at Woodland Cemetery (118 Woodland Ave., Dayton, OH) at 12 Noon.

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Cincinnati Mini March 4 Life

Join **CINCINNATI RIGHT TO LIFE** for a peaceful and prayerful event where we march beginning at Holy Name Church (2422 Auburn Auburn Ave) to Cincinnati Planned Parenthood's abortion headquarters with hundreds of other pro-life supporters



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Contact Us

BOB WURZELBACHER
Director, Respect Life & Disabilities
bwurzelbacher@catholicaoc.org
(513) 263-6674

EMILY BRANSCUM
Associate Director, Respect Life
ebranscum@catholicaoc.org
(513) 281-3366

LISA AVERION
Associate Director, Persons with Disabilities
laverion@catholicaoc.org
(937) 281-4128

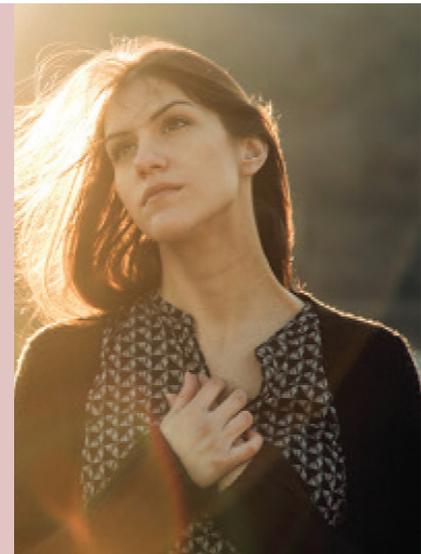
Project Rachel March Retreat



WEEKEND RETREAT

MARCH 8 to MARCH 10

Our weekend retreats are designed for mothers affected by an abortion experience and have served over 500 women. These retreats are a way to grow in your 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 in a personal way.



For more information or to register, visit PROJECTRACHELOHIO.ORG or call us at: (513) 784-0531. To invite someone to come and speak at your school or parish, please contact **EMILY BRANSCUM**.