



St. Joseph, pray for us!

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RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER



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

Being Pro-life: The Need for Great Husbands and Fathers

By: Bob Wurzelbacher

I doubt this is much of a news flash to readers of this newsletter, but we are experiencing a crisis of fatherhood. According to a recent Pew study, **the US HAS THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF SINGLE-PARENT HOUSEHOLDS**, and **80% OF THEM ARE RAISED BY SINGLE MOMS**. Among fathers who live apart from their children, only **22% OF THEM SEE THEIR KIDS MORE THAN ONCE PER WEEK**. There are, of course, many reasons for this crisis, but the number one **GENERAL CAUSE IS DIVORCE**. Many articles have been written about the manifest problems with no-fault divorce and family court systems in this country, which often **ESTRANGE THE FATHER FROM CHILDREN WITHOUT EVIDENCE OF ANY ABUSE** and even incentivize **BREAKING UP MARRIAGES TO CREATE PARENTAL SUPPORT PAYMENTS**. The second most common cause of fatherless children is **OUT-OF-WEDLOCK BIRTHS**. Although it has thankfully gone down in the most recent decade, it is still in the range of nearly **40% OF ALL BIRTHS** in the US. The causes of this crisis are everything from accepted premarital sexual activity, presumption by men of abortion access, and a cultural view of fatherhood that has moved from the respected Ward Cleaver to the Homer Simpson model that seems to make the bumbling and idiot dad as the only socially acceptable form of comedy entertainment

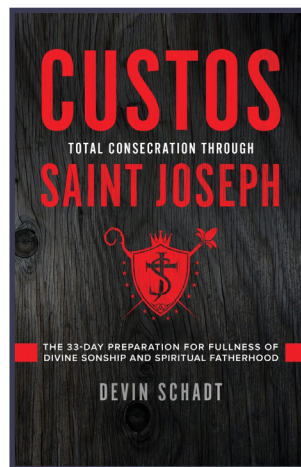
today. On top of all that, this is occurring at alarming rates despite the statistic that **NEARLY HALF OF ABORTIONS ARE REQUESTED BECAUSE THE WOMAN DOES NOT WANT TO BE A SINGLE MOTHER**.

Most of us are probably also aware of the devastating effects fatherlessness has on children. Just look at some of these statistics from the **NATIONAL FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE** that point out children raised in fatherless homes are more likely to:

- Have behavioral problems
- Go to prison
- Become a single-mom or an absent father
- Abuse drugs and alcohol
- Drop out of school

Often the best cure for a difficult problem is better role models. We certainly need more awesome dads, encouraging other men to do the same. We need more men to live authentic Christian lives of respecting women, respecting the marital act, and being good role models as husbands and fathers. If more men were good

role models for how men can and should be, then more men who do make the mistake of causing an unwanted pregnancy would do the right thing from there. Not only that, but the women in crisis pregnancies would have more hope that, even if the father of their child is not supportive, all men are not that way.



I recently came across a 2021 book called **CUSTOS: TOTAL CONSECRATION THROUGH SAINT JOSEPH** by Devin Schadt. Different from a similar book by **FR. DONALD CALLOWAY**, Custos is specifically for husbands and fathers, with a spiritual plan of permanent actions every father and husband can take that will transform their relationship with God, their wives and their

children, long after the 33-day consecration steps are completed. I encourage men to check this out, and women to give this to the fathers in their lives. Let's allow St. Joseph to bring us all to a better image of what fathers and husbands can be, and how we can help transform our culture today.

March 2023

|| respectlife@catholicaoc.org ||

Issue 36



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!

Director, Office for Respect Life Ministries

A Pro-Life Lent

Here we are, in the midst of another Lenten season. On Ash Wednesday, many of us received ashes on our foreheads to remind us of our mortality and need for repentance. In addition, we offer sacrifices or perhaps take on more positive activities during the entire season of Lent to help us grow closer to God. If you haven't yet thought through all of your ideas on what to do for Lent, here are some more thoughts on what you could consider to help make 2023 a Pro-Life Lent for you and your family:



- Sign up for an hour shift at **40 DAYS FOR LIFE** in either Cincinnati or Dayton
- Instead of your typical rosary, pray the USCCB **ROSARY FOR LIFE**
- Offer up your fasting that the ballot initiative to make **ABORTION A CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT IN OHIO FAILS**
- **SPIRITUALLY ADOPT A CHILD** in danger of abortion.
- If you have younger children, Holy Heroes has a free 9-month prayer adventure for you! Sign up online **HERE**

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March Heaven's Gain Training

09-10

Heaven's Gain Ministries will be presenting a 12-hour essential course to instruct advocates in non-medical methods to help families grieving a miscarriage or stillbirth. For more information or to sign up for this course, call (513) 607-6083, or email HEAVENSGAINMINISTRIES@GMAIL.COM

40 Days for Life Mid-Point

10

On Friday, March 10th, prayer warriors will gather to pray outside Planned Parenthood. It is one of the few opportunities during the campaign when we can gather as one to pray for all of the intentions of the campaign. This will begin at 7pm. Click **HERE** for more info.

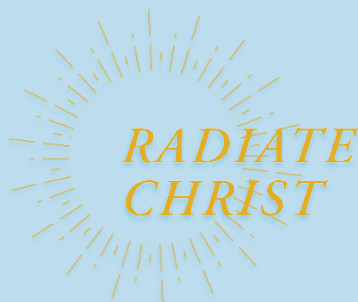
Coordinator's Corner

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.

- 01- Word of Life
- 02- March Action Guide
- 03- February Prayer Guide

Respect Life Coordinator Resources

- 01 The month's **WORD OF LIFE** includes a new **RESPECT LIFE ONLINE STORE**, which contains materials available for purchase. Also check out the intercessions for life to be used each week, materials for the **ST. JOSEPH NOVENA** and the **ANNUNCIATION**, and graphics for your bulletin. Available in **ENGLISH** and **SPANISH**.
- 02 The **MARCH ACTION GUIDE** features homily helps for the Feast of the Annunciation, intercessions, announcements, activities, and more! Take a look at the **SAMPLE ACTIVITY** featuring **BLESSING A CHILD IN THE WOMB**. This can be used in your family, school, parish, etc!
- 03 In case you missed it, the **FEBRUARY PRAYER GUIDE** features reflections for couples who are placing their trust in God's plan for the gift of new life. There is also an opportunity for an **AT HOME MARRIAGE RETREAT**, and information on **NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING** the Church's teachings regarding married love and contraception.



40 Days for Life



Prayer Warriors Still Needed!

Babies are still dying every day at the two abortion centers in Dayton and Cincinnati, where 40 Days for Life prayer vigils are taking place. Praying outside of one of these two centers is a beautiful sacrifice we can all make during Lent, for the lives of so many innocent babies, that their mothers receive the help they truly need, that the workers may have a change of heart, and that the public can truly

understand what is going on behind closed doors and join the chorus of voices to put an end to this tragedy once and for all. You may not see the fruits of your labor, but know that many women, upon seeing prayer warriors outside the clinic, choose not to come to their appointments. We are called to have courage and stand up for those who have no voice. If you are afraid, trust in Jesus' words and take courage (Matthew 10:26-33). Know also that no one is more afraid than the unborn child at the hands of the abortionist. Please go to www.40daysforlife.com, choose your closest campaign, and join others to come and pray. Better yet, call a friend and ask him or her to join you.

Beacons of Light



Beacons Roundtable is March 21

Join other parish leaders – priests, deacons, lay staff, and others – for Beacons Roundtable on Tuesday, March 21st from 1:30-3:00pm online. We'll continue focusing on leading change, creating and communicating vision, and self-care for parish ministers. We'll explore further how to lead from our strengths, and look closely at the annual planning report each Family of Parishes will submit this year. For more info and to RSVP, click [HERE](#).

March

Solemnity of St. Joseph

19

As we celebrate the wonderful life and example of St. Joseph, consider participating in the **ST. JOSEPH NOVENA FOR ADOPTION**. Additional resources can be found [HERE](#). *Since the 19th falls on a Sunday, the Feast Day is moved to Monday, March 20th.

24-26

Project Rachel Weekend Retreat

If you or someone you know is suffering post-abortive stress and would like to renew their lives in the healing and mercy of God, our Father, check out our weekend retreat in Cincinnati. For more information and to register, visit our events page [HERE](#).

Catholics at the State Capitol

Join us, Wednesday, April 26!

After several years away, we're finally bring Catholics from across Ohio back to Columbus to meet with our elected officials and advocate for policies that respect life, focus on the poor and vulnerable, and recognize families as the central institution of our society. Organize by the Catholic Conference of Ohio (the Bishops' conference), our advocacy day will focus primarily on provisions in the proposed state budget.



If you are interested in joining us, please email TAMMIE and let her know. There's no cost to attend, lunch will be provided, and - if we have enough people interested - we'll provide transportation. (If we're a smaller number, we'll arrange carpooling.)

Being Pro-Life

Remembering Terri Schiavo

This month will be the anniversary of the death of Terri Schiavo, who was killed from the removal of her feeding tube after years of legal battles between Terri's family and her husband. Fifteen years earlier, she suffered a cardiac



arrest for undetermined reasons, and her subsequent collapse and lack of oxygen caused significant brain damage, necessitating that she receive assisted hydration and nutrition. There is disagreement as to how significant the brain damage was, but no disagreement that she was not in the process of dying. In honor of the anniversary of her hastened death, and of Serious Brain Injury Awareness Month, listen to Bobby Schindler, Terri's brother, recount her story on a **BEING PRO LIFE EPISODE FROM SEPTEMBER OF 2020**.

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- Donate needed items to your **LOCAL PREGNANCY CARE CENTER** or to other social agencies that provide direct assistance to people in difficult situations
- **SUPPORT PROJECT RACHEL** to help fund advertising and keep retreat costs down for post-abortive women
- Take some time to **VOLUNTEER** with our prison ministries
- Watch an episode of *The Chosen* with your family each week



Archdiocese of Cincinnati Deaf Community Upcoming events

22
APRIL
Retreat:
Columbus Deaf
Community with
Fr. Mike Depcik
Details TBA

28
APRIL
Life in Me Retreat
with Fr. Dave Pivonka,
TOR

23
APRIL
Mass with
Fr. Mike Depcik
St. Christopher-Vandalia
1:30 Reconciliation
3:00 Mass

6-11
AUGUST
Jesus' Deaf Crew
Weekend retreat

For questions, please email **LISA AVERION**

March National Men's Conference

25

Join thousands of men as they come together for the annual Men's Conference to strengthen their relationship with Jesus. This one-day conference is packed with faith-based inspiration, fellowship and growth with a TED Talk style pace. For more information and to purchase tickets, click [HERE](#).

April 40 Days Closing Rally

02

Join fellow pro-life warriors as we peacefully pray in **CINCINNATI**, where Laura Strietmann, Director of Cincinnati Right to Life, will update us on issues at hand in Ohio, and in **DAYTON**, where Representative Candice Keller will discuss Ohio legislature. To find a vigil near you click [HERE](#).



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CINCINNATI

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Groups Aim to Enshrine Access to Abortion in Ohio

Just last week, two pro-abortion groups, *Ohioans for Reproductive Freedom* and *Ohio United for Reproductive Rights*, released the language for an amendment to the Ohio constitution to enshrine a "right" to abortion. If passed by voters in the November election later this year, it would remove existing restrictions that the vast majority of people actually agree with, such as parental notification laws and basic safety standards. Of course, it would also nullify any abortion restrictions like the Heartbeat Bill, which restricts abortion upon detection of a heartbeat.

If these groups act like the same groups who passed a similar amendment in Michigan last November, they will spend a lot of money selling this ballot initiative to voters under the guise that it is necessary to protect access to treatment for ectopic pregnancy and miscarriage, or to have an abortion when necessary to save the life of a mother. **TREATMENT FOR ECTOPIC PREGNANCY OR MISCARRIAGE IS NOT AN ABORTION, and NO PRO-LIFE LAW IN THE COUNTRY MAKES EITHER OF THOSE TREATMENTS ILLEGAL IN THEIR RESTRICTIONS ABOUT ABORTION.** Also, contrary to what some may believe, **THE ACT OF KILLING AN UNBORN CHILD IS NEVER NECESSARY TO SAVE THE LIFE OF A MOTHER.** Yet, putting in an exception to abortion into the Ohio constitution for reasons of "health", which this amendment does, will potentially make abortion legal for any reason for all 9 months, when "health" gets defined not only as physical health, but mental, emotional or even financial "health".

The Ohio Catholic bishops have released an initial statement on the ballot initiative [HERE](#). They are making all the faithful aware of this dangerous initiative coming to Ohio, inviting us to pray and fast, and asking us all to be on the lookout for further information on how to mobilize to oppose the proposed amendment later this year. May our voices be one with theirs as we pray:

God our loving Father, grant wisdom to those who govern us, compassion and courage to those who work to defend human life, and safety and care to every human being. For you alone who formed us in our mothers' wombs, and who call us home to heaven, are God, for ever and ever. Amen