



- 02** WELCOME
RL Gatherings
Coordinator's Corner
- 03** Special Needs Retreats
ASL Masses Resume
Catholics in Columbus
Being Pro Life
- 04** Pro Life Lent
Mental Wellness
Abortion Pill *(cont.)*
Contact Us

RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER



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

The Supreme Court and the Abortion Pill

By: Bob Wurzelbacher

The US Supreme court this month will again take up the case of the FDA approval of the abortion pill regimen, which currently is approved until 10 weeks gestation and to be dispensed by mail after a telemedicine appointment. Mifepristone, the first pill of the two-pill regimen, was originally approved by the FDA in 2000 for only up to 7 weeks of gestation, and required three in-person doctor visits. In 2016, the in-person follow-up visits were eliminated, the one visit no longer had to be a licensed physician, and its use extended to 10 weeks. Under the Biden administration, the in-person requirement was completely removed and now these pills can be dispensed after only one telemedicine visit with no followup.

In April of 2022, a Texas judge initially ruled that mifepristone should be taken off the market due an improper approval process. Higher courts have since ruled that the statute of limitations disallows that 2000 approval from being revoked, but have



supported re-instating the initial restrictions of 7 weeks and requiring in-person doctor visits. The Supreme Court has ruled that the current regulations remain in place until a final ruling is made, and they take up the case later this month.

Last year I wrote an article on the dangers of chemical abortion by telemedicine. Head to the [NEWSLETTER ARCHIVES](#) and check out the July 2023 issue to read that story. This month, I just want to point out that it should come as no surprise that the big news related to the upcoming court case is a study of how safe and effective telemedicine appointments are for dispensing chemical abortion drugs. There is no shortage of news stories on how thorough the study is of over 6,000 women, and its conclusion that medication abortions dispensed virtually had a success rate of 97.7% with no serious side effects. Of course I am not a researcher, but I did read the study [HERE](#), not just the plethora of articles

repeating how wonderful and conclusive it is. The first glaring problem with the study was that only 76% of the 6,034 women in the study responded to follow-up contact (4,454). So the status of 1,580 women is unknown. Apparently, that number is irrelevant. One can only wonder what the likelihood is of a person who does suffer severe complications to respond to a follow-up survey. Is it likely the non-responders have the same rate of non-complications as those who did respond? Or is it more likely that the vast majority of people with severe complications are the ones who don't respond? Another noteworthy point of the study is that this study involved patients who received what is called "synchronous care" (video) and "asynchronous care" (texting). Until I read this study, I didn't even know that making telemedicine an acceptable way to receive chemical abortion drugs meant that you could do all your interaction with the clinic simply via text. Over 70% of the women in the study received text-only care. The non-response rate from video appointments was about 15%. The non-response rate from the texters was double, 30%. So this 97.7%

(cont. on back page)



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. Wurzelbacher

2024 Respect Life Meetings



This month we invite parish respect life coordinators to join us for one of four training sessions which will serve to strengthen the respect life efforts taking place in our parishes. With the tragic passing of Issue One it's now more important than ever that our parishes be equipped to meet the needs of women in this critical time. These meetings will take place for 90 minutes from 7:00-8:30 PM on various dates and locations to accommodate as many people as possible. Our focus will be teaching you how to best implement the USCCB program Walking with Moms in Need. Additionally, we will have time for the sharing of best practices, hear updates and short presentations from the Office for Respect Life Ministries, including a short walkthrough of the updated 2024 Parish Coordinator Handbook. We will also hear a short presentation from Cincinnati or Dayton Right to Life representatives regarding their efforts and how your ministry can get involved. Join us on either Wed., March 6th at IHM (Cincinnati), Thurs., March 7th at St. Francis of Assisi (Centerville), Wed., March 13th at St. Ann (Groesbeck) or Wed., March 20th at Holy Angels (Sydney). Register [HERE](#).

March 40 Days Mid-Point Rally

8

Prayer warriors will gather in the middle of our Cincinnati 40 Days campaign to be inspired to continue the call to change hearts and minds. It is one of a few opportunities for everyone to unite in prayer for the intentions of the campaign. For more info click [HERE](#).

8-10

Project Rachel 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](#).

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- 9 Months with Christ



Respect Life Coordinator Resources

- 01 The month's **WORD OF LIFE** includes intercessions for life to be used each week, materials for the **ST. JOSEPH NOVENA** and an action guide for the Feast of the **ANNUNCIATION**, along with graphics for your bulletin. Available in **ENGLISH** and **SPANISH**.
- 02 The **MARCH ACTION GUIDE** highlights the Solemnity of the Annunciation, with homily helps, intercessions, pulpit and bulletin 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! It also features **THREE OPTIONAL TWO PAGE SUMMARIES** of Pope St. John Paul II's prophetic encyclical The Gospel of Life, which was published on the Solemnity of the Annunciation as well.
- 03 We invite all parishes to participate in our nine month meditation on the fetal life of Christ from March 25 to December 25, entitled *9 Months With Christ in the Womb*. This campaign offers short reflections for your parish bulletin each week from March 25 to Christmas morning, during which we prayerfully chart where Our Lord Jesus Christ is in his fetal development. It also includes 9 monthly reflections on a different biblical story during the earliest moments of Christ's time on earth, discussing the importance of a different social issue such as immigration, the death penalty, and concern for those with disabilities. Additionally, prayer cards are available for you to order and hand out to your parishioners. Everything is available in both English and Spanish. All the resources can be downloaded [HERE](#).

Retreats for Adults with Special Needs



All persons with disabilities have the capacity to proclaim the Gospel and to be living witnesses to its truth within the community of faith and offer valuable gifts. Their involvement enriches every aspect of Church life. (National Directory for Catechesis, 2005)

The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD) will host a retreat for adults with special needs this spring in the northern and southern parts of the Archdiocese. The NET (**NATIONAL EVANGELIZATION TEAM**) will share the gospel through words, music, and skits. The theme of this year's retreat is "Free Indeed", and parents and caregivers are invited to share the day and attend the closing Mass. Both retreats are 9:00 to 1:00, cost is \$25 but scholarships are available. Registration is now open!

NORTH
 March 23, 2024
 St. Paul Church, 1000 W. Wenger Rd
 Englewood, OH 45322
 Celebrant Fr. Kyle Schnippel
***REGISTER HERE**

SOUTH
 April 27, 2024
 St. Ignatius of Loyola, 5222 N. Bend Rd,
 Cincinnati, OH 45247
 Celebrant TBA
***REGISTER HERE**

To learn more about the upcoming retreats, please email **LISA AVERION**.

Weekly ASL Masses Resume

Sunday, February 18, 2024, was a memorable day in the lives of the Deaf in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. It was the day our new Chaplain for the Deaf, Fr. Charles Onumaegbu, officially celebrated his first ASL Mass at St. Rita School for the Deaf in Cincinnati.



Following the death of Fr. Bill Wysong in 2021, Deaf ministry in the Archdiocese suffered a setback. Fr. Wysong (lovingly called Fr. "Y" by those he served) dedicated the greater part of his priestly life to St. Rita School for the Deaf. The vacuum created by his demise left the Deaf stranded in their spiritual journey, especially without access to even Reconciliation.

Although we brought in priests a few times per year to offer Mass, Reconciliation and retreats, Archbishop Schnurr knew we needed a more permanent solution to the needs of the Deaf in this Archdiocese. Fr. Charles arrived from Rome on January 24, the feast day of St. Francis De Sales (patron saint of the Deaf). Learn more of that story on our **PODCAST**. ASL masses are now being celebrated at St. Christopher, Vandalia every Saturday at 3 PM with catechism and confession and also, every Sunday at 11 AM at St. Rita School for the Deaf. We wish Fr. Charles a happy Deaf ministry in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

March

St. Joseph Novena

10-18

The Solemnity of St. Joseph is celebrated on March 19. It is an opportunity to highlight the gift of adoption and seek St. Joseph's intercession. Sign up for the novena, and find additional resources like bulletin and pulpit announcements to use at your parish **HERE**.

23

Special Needs Retreat

The Office for Persons with Disabilities is teaming up again with NET Ministries for two regional retreats for adults with special needs. Our Northern area retreat is March 23, followed by a Cincinnati area retreat in April. **CONTACT LISA AVERION** for more info.

Ohio Catholics at the Capitol

By: Andrew Musgrave



Every year, thousands of pieces of legislation are proposed, debated, and voted on in state houses around the country. Some of this legislation is mundane, but a lot of it has a direct and significant impact on people's lives. (We saw this very clearly in Ohio last year.) As Catholics, we are called to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit and work in different ways to create God's kingdom on Earth, a community where everyone's dignity is honored and each person is respected and given the opportunity to thrive. One of the those ways is through advocacy with our elected officials.

On Tuesday, April 9, Catholics from around the state will gather in Columbus to advocate for legislation that respects life, cares for the poor, and protects all of God's creation. Co-sponsored by the Catholic Conference of Ohio and the different Respect Life and Catholic Social Action offices from around the state, this is an opportunity to speak with those women and men we elected and hold them accountable to what matters to us, their constituents. The day will start with a bit of training, every visit will be done with partners, and lunch will be provided.

If you're interested in attending or have any questions about this event, please email Tammie Mers at **TMERS@CATHOLICAOC.ORG**.

Please join us to stand up for life and dignity.

Being Pro-Life Our Chaplain for Deaf Ministry

This month Bob talks with our new Chaplain for Deaf Ministry, Fr. Charles Onumaegbu. Fr. Charles was born in Nigeria as the youngest of 11 children, but spent time in the Phillipines as well as Rome, becoming fluent in Tagalog, Italian, American Sign Language and even Italian Sign Language (ISL). Including his native Nigerian language and English, he is fluent in 5 languages! Hear more about his story and share in the excitement of having a priest in our Archdiocese who can directly serve the deaf community. Look for the beingprolife podcast on your favorite podcast player, or the video should be posted by Tuesday, March 5 at **BEING PRO LIFE**.



A Pro-Life Lent

By: Emily Branscum



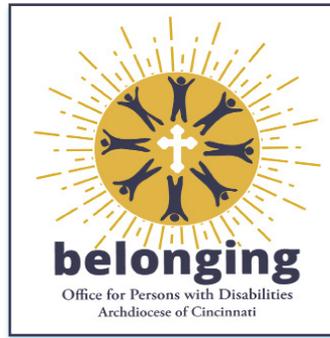
We are a few weeks into Lent now and hopefully our practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving have been successful. Now is the perfect time to assess the fruitfulness of those practices and perhaps take on some new ones.

There are certainly many worthy Pro-Life efforts that warrant our immediate attention and there is no better time to build these Pro-Life activities into our lives than

during Lent. **40 DAYS FOR LIFE** is still in great need of volunteers to join in prayer outside the abortion clinics. What a powerful Lenten practice this would be; time spent praying for the unborn, fasting from the leisure activities we'd normally be doing, and making a gift of our very selves in this small sacrifice of time. Sign up for hours in **CINCINNATI** or **DAYTON**. Additional Pro-Life Lenten activities can include: Praying the **USCCB ROSARY FOR LIFE**, **SPIRITUALLY ADOPTING A CHILD** in danger of abortion, donating needed items to your **LOCAL PREGNANCY CARE CENTER**, or taking time to **VOLUNTEER** with our prison ministries. Take the time to consider how you can make this a Pro-Life Lent for you!

Belonging

By: Lisa Averion



Our Mental Wellness Ministry pilot parishes are working diligently to kick off ministry in their Family of Parishes. The Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers supports our pilot ministry through training and resources. Our desire to expand this ministry throughout the Archdiocese after this pilot period remains in our prayers. Please pray for the volunteers, all those who live with mental illness, and those who support them.

This month the Pope asks us to pray for the new martyrs. Some saints who were martyred lived with a mental illness. Examples are Saint Oscar Romero who lived with obsessive compulsive disorder, Blessed Rutilio Grande who lived with schizophrenia, and Saint Mark Ji Tianxiang who lived with addiction. These martyrs demonstrate that mental illness does not prevent a person from living a life of great holiness and heroic love of God and neighbor. We pray that these saints inspire us to, in the words of Pope Francis, "Never tire of bearing witness to the Gospel, even in times of tribulation". (Check out the Pope's prayer for Mental Health Ministry at WWW.CATHOLICMHM.ORG/CLICK-TO-PRAY.)

March 40 Days Closing

24

Join us at 2PM in any of our three locations as we gather to close out our Spring 40 Days for Life campaigns and rejoice in the work He has done. For more information on our local efforts, check out the calendar for **CINCINNATI**, **DAYTON** or **HAMILTON**.

Chrism Mass

26

The annual Chrism Mass, where the Archbishop consecrates all the holy oils that are used throughout the Archdiocese for the year, is at 3PM at the Cathedral Basilica. This year, the Mass will include ASL interpretation. We invite all the faithful to participate in this beautiful tradition.



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

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The Abortion Pill (cont. from page 1)



effectiveness rate is based entirely on self-reporting, with a significant lack of follow-up contact, especially from the texting group, which is the vast majority. How can we trust these results? A woman receiving chemical abortion drugs by telemedicine is likely hiding her abortion from others in her life. If she experiences complications, she likely suffers them silently, and if she does have to go to the hospital (since it isn't with the original provider), she is not likely to be honest with the doctors about what brought her there. If she isn't honest with the hospital, she can't be honest with the follow-up surveys if she even responds. More likely, she wants nothing to do with the people who gave her these pills and told her they were completely safe, and will fail to respond to follow-up texts. Is that not at least a strong possibility? One interesting point the researchers also noted was that among the 4,454 who reported back, not even one of them was determined to have been beyond 10 weeks of pregnancy. Is it likely that no one underestimated their gestational age? Or is it much more likely that everyone who underestimated their gestational age by telemedicine and expelled a sizable fetus was afraid to admit it because they were afraid of the consequences of lying about their gestational age? This even brings into question the veracity of the 74%. Admitting complications opens up more questions and more intrusion, and most of these women want to move on and never talk about it again. If we want good research on the effects of the abortion pill, it seems to me we must have in-person followups with a doctor who prescribed the pills, where the patient feels safe to disclose any ill-effects. This is the best way to come closer to knowing the truth.