



— ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI —  
**CATHOLIC SOCIAL  
ACTION OFFICE**



## **LOVE IN ACTION**

*A Principle of Beacons of Light*

## **DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER**

### **A TIME OF ANTICIPATION**

December has arrived, and along with it the season of Advent. Like the start of every Church year, we begin with a time of preparation - readying ourselves for the arrival of Jesus, our savior. Along with the reading of scripture and participation in the sacraments, what are you doing to prepare your heart for this joyous occasion? After a year that has been immensely difficult, how are you taking care of yourself and your people? At church yesterday, the pastor talked about considering forgiveness for others (and yourself) as a way of opening up space in your heart for Christ. I invite you to prayerfully consider what hurts you're holding onto (and what hurts you might have caused) and how you might - empowered by God's love - move toward forgiveness, letting go of bitterness, pettiness, and grudges so that you can enter this beautiful time of Advent with a heart that has a little more space for Jesus. I'll pray for you, and I ask that you pray for me too.

Regardless of the liturgical season, many of our neighbors (and especially our migrant sisters and brothers) continue to suffer. Please keep an eye out for opportunities to offer support, compassion, and empathy to those who are struggling - whether locally, across the country, or around the world.

Thanks to all who participated in our Nov. 13 prayer services for immigrants and refugees, attended our Fair Trade sale, and contributed to the CCHD collection. (If

you didn't have a chance to contribute, don't worry - you still can. [Click here](#) to donate online.)

Thanks in advance for your prayers and support!

We humbly ask that you continue to pray for us. 2025 continues to be a challenging year, and your prayers - and engagement! - will make our success possible. God help us!

If there's anything that we can do to support the work happening in your community, please let us know. We're trying to be more present to families of parishes, especially during the Beacons of Light process, and we'd love to (re)connect with you and work to build up God's kingdom of peace, justice, and kinship in your corner of the kingdom.

We will continue to send out Action Alerts encouraging everyone to bring their voice and power to bear on important issues.

We wish you a wonderful December (including the Feast of the Assumption, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and Christmas (and a Happy Hanukkah to our Jewish sisters and brothers)), and - as always - we look forward to seeing you soon as we continue to stand up for justice, solidarity, and equity.

Peace and all good,  
Tammie, Sr. Christine, Jill, Glen, & Andrew



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# FAITH & LABOR

*A CATHOLIC VISION FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE*

A 4-Session Series on:  
Catholic Social Teaching,  
Economic History, and the  
Dignity of Work

SESSION I:  
The Moral Foundation of  
Catholic Social Teaching

**WHEN:**  
Wednesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 PM EST

**WHERE:**  
A Virtual Presentation:  
[Http://tinyurl.com/faithandlabor](http://tinyurl.com/faithandlabor)



*Led by: Erin Shaw*



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**A Vision for Love in Action:**

# Becoming Communities of Salt & Light

Is your family of parishes ready to take your visioning for Love in Action to the next level? The Department of Life, Dignity, & Charity is offering a 3-part series **Love in Action** opportunity 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 (along with your 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 how he might work with the other pastors and families in his deanery to bring it to fruition.

If you would like more information, please contact Mary Anne Bressler at [mbressler@ccswoh.org](mailto:mbressler@ccswoh.org).



## Food Drive for the Eucharistic Year of Mission

As we conclude the Eucharistic Year of Mission, we'd like to encourage all families of parishes and schools to join the Food for All Campaign and hold a food drive during the holiday season. We know that many of you already do food collection during this time, and we'd like to ask folks to this year connect the collection to our Eucharistic Year of Mission and Food for All Campaign.

[Click here](#) for more information. You can also contact Jillian Foster at [jfoster@catholicaoc.org](mailto:jfoster@catholicaoc.org) with any questions.



## Business Canvassing for Immigrant Rights

If you're interested in being proactive in supporting our immigrant and refugee community members, here's an opportunity.

Folks will be trained to go out into the community and encourage small and medium businesses to stand in solidarity - in legal ways - with their refugee and migrant employees, customers, and neighbors.

If you're interested, please contact [Andrew](#). We will be scheduling training sessions in the coming months.



## Service Opportunity for Young Adults

Our friend Tom Hollywood, formerly of Catholic Relief Services, has shared information about a great service opportunity for young adults:

Good Shepherd Volunteers (GSV)

GSV offers a transformative year of service for young adults passionate about uplifting families and communities. Our work is focused on improving the well-being of marginalized women, youth, and children and is rooted in our 4 core tenets – community, spirituality, social justice, and simplicity.

If you'd like to learn more, [www.gsvolunteers.org](http://www.gsvolunteers.org) or 917-832-7870.



## Advocacy Opportunities

### Proposed Legislation to Prohibit State-Funded Death: HB 72 & SB 134

Legislation has been introduced into both Ohio chambers which would prohibit state funding of intentional termination of human life at any stage and circumstance in Ohio. This first-of-its-kind legislation reinforces current law banning state funding for abortion, abolishes the death penalty, and expands protections against assisted suicide by linking these prohibitions together in Ohio Revised Code.

Click the bill numbers below for summaries and status updates on each bill:

- **House Bill 72:** sponsored by [Representative Adam Mathews](#) (R-Lebanon) and [Representative Jean Schmidt](#) (R-Loveland)
- **Senate Bill 134:** sponsored by [Minority Leader Nickie Antonio](#) (D-Lakewood) and [Senator Steve Huffman](#) (R-Tipp City)

Click [here](#) to read the letter from the OH bishops to all OH legislators advocating for support for these bills.

Reach out to your legislators and encourage them to support these bills!

## Support Religious Workers and the Communities They Serve

**An increasing number of priests, religious sisters and brothers, and others serving the Church throughout the United States will be forced to abandon their ministries if policymakers do not act soon. Unfortunately, many parishes, schools, and other Catholic institutions have already had to part with men and women who served them for years because of challenges with the Religious Worker Visa Program.**

The bipartisan [Religious Workforce Protection Act \(RWPA\)](#) (S. 1298/H.R. 2672), recently introduced in both chambers of Congress, would provide relief for religious workers in this situation and further the free exercise of religion in the United States for the benefit of all Americans.

[Act now!!](#)

## Help Communities Affected by Climate Change

**Urge Congress to support the Green Climate Fund and Development Assistance.**

[Urge Congress](#) to address the impact of climate change by providing robust funding for poverty-reducing international assistance programs in the fiscal year 2024 budget, especially for the Green Climate Fund and Development Assistance.



**From the Respect Life Office**

***Bob Wurzelbacher, Director of Respect Life Ministries***

## Abortion Pill Access Needs to Restore Safeguards

When recent U.S. cases come into focus, the argument for restoring stronger safeguards around the abortion pill is no longer abstract — it becomes urgent and practical. There have been at least three disturbing incidents in 2024 alone — a [Toledo doctor](#) accused of secretly administering mifepristone and misoprostol to his girlfriend, a [North Texas man](#) charged with allegedly slipping “Plan C” into a partner’s drink, and a [Massachusetts man](#) accused of misleading a woman into taking pills that ended her pregnancy— show how easy it can be for a third party to obtain abortion pills and give to a woman unknowingly or by force. The Toledo matter, because it happened in our state and involves a physician alleged to have misused medical access and personal data, is particularly stark.

These cases share a common and avoidable mechanism: someone other than the pregnant woman obtains abortion medication — most likely online or through mail-order channels — and then administers it to her without informed consent or by force. Easy access and anonymity can combine to make such wrongdoing feasible: online teleprescribing, shipment by mail, and the removal of in-person requirements that once guaranteed a direct patient-provider encounter.

Policy choices have made a difference. Mifepristone was first approved with a REMS (Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy) that included strict dispensing controls. Over the last decade, however, [those safeguards were relaxed](#) (most notably the in-person follow-up in 2016 and the in-person dispensing requirement in 2021) — changes the FDA said were based on safety data and access concerns. Those same policy shifts expanded the pathways by which medication can be obtained remotely and delivered, creating more opportunities for misuse. In 2025, the [FDA no longer recommends the ability to access mifepristone online](#), but that has not yet changed the laws.

Beyond the criminal episodes, there is evidence that pressure and coercion in abortion decisions are common. Large surveys and analyses — [including work compiled by the Lozier Institute](#) — report that nearly 70% of women who have abortions felt pressured or coerced, and that such pressure correlates with worse emotional and mental-health outcomes later on. That research does not prove causation in any given case, but it does show that coercion is not rare and must be taken seriously when designing safeguards.

From a Catholic moral perspective, abortion is a grave wrong because it ends an innocent human life. Even leaving that conviction aside, any policy must at least prioritize the safety of women. Restoring key elements of the original REMS — including an in-person clinician assessment or other robust verification that the patient is consenting and informed, and tighter controls on who may obtain and dispense mifepristone — would reduce the practical ability of bad actors to weaponize medication against women and their unborn children. It is the least we can do to protect the vulnerable, to limit opportunities for abuse, and to ensure that every woman’s choice is truly hers.

We cannot know how many cases were never reported and presumed to be miscarriages, but it seems likely there were many. Still, the known incidents alone should be enough to prompt a cautious public-health posture: when a drug can be used covertly to end a pregnancy, it makes sense to require clearer verification, closer clinician contact, and more careful tracking of dispensing. Restoring sensible REMS protections is not an attack on women’s rights; it is a sensible step to ensure safety, consent, and the protection of life.



## From the Office for Persons with Disabilities

*Lisa Averion, Associate Director, Persons with Disabilities*

### Ministry of Hope Conference: International Catholic Forum on Mental Wellbeing

In November, I participated in the Ministry of Hope Conference in Rome, a landmark international Catholic gathering focused on pastoral care and mental well-being. The event, organized by the International Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers under the patronage of the Pontifical Academy for Life, brought together clergy, lay leaders, and professionals from across the globe to strengthen the Church's mission of hope and healing.

This conference affirmed my commitment to integrating pastoral formation with mental health awareness. The Ministry of Hope Conference unfolded in two parts: a public opening on November 5th, including Mass and a pastoral roundtable, followed by two days of invitation-only sessions dedicated to peer exchange, formation, and shared reflection. Participants addressed pressing challenges such as isolation, suicide, and the need to uphold human dignity in pastoral care.

Pope Leo XIV offered a statement emphasizing that the Church must speak tenderly and courageously about mental health, reminding participants that "your voices, your ideas, your faith matter right now." His words resonated deeply with the conference's theme of hope, affirming the role of both clergy and laity in accompanying those who suffer.

The Pope's prayer intention for November 2025 was especially poignant: *for the prevention of suicide*. He invited the faithful worldwide to pray that those struggling with despair might find support, care, and love in their communities, and rediscover the beauty of life. This intention was woven into the conference's liturgies and discussions, underscoring the urgency of compassionate pastoral responses.

The International Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers played a central role, fostering collaboration among dioceses and parishes to overcome stigma and provide spiritual accompaniment for those facing mental illness. This conference was both a professional and spiritual milestone, affirming my mission to empower seminarians, clergy, and laity with practical skills for holistic pastoral care and to accompany our brothers and sisters back to the table.



## Our Team

**Andrew Musgrave**

*Cincinnati | Director*

**Jill Foster**

*Dayton | Regional Director*

**Glen Glenn**

*Program Coordinator | CRS, CCHD*

**Tammie Mers**

*Administrative Assistant*

**Sr. Christine Pratt**

*Eastern Area Coordinator*

[csa@catholicaoc.org](mailto:csa@catholicaoc.org) | 513-263-6690

<https://resources.catholicaoc.org/offices/catholic-social-action>

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**CATHOLIC SOCIAL  
ACTION OFFICE**

Catholic Social Action Office | 100 East Eighth Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Sent to: [amusgrave@catholicaoc.org](mailto:amusgrave@catholicaoc.org)

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Archdiocese of Cincinnati, 100 E 8th St, Cincinnati, OH 45202, United States