



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



LOVE IN ACTION

A Principle of Beacons of Light

JANUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

A NEW YEAR OF POSSIBILITY

Welcome to 2026! I know it's trite, but it really is hard to believe that 2025 is over. Looking back, there were several high points:

- We got a new pope AND a new archbishop
- Tom Hollywood from CRS visited
- We had another impactful Catholics at the Capitol event in Columbus
- Successful Good Friday events in Dayton and Cincinnati
- Celebrated four new Laudato Si' communities and had another wonderful Laudato Si' conference
- So many fantastic pilgrimages, both Care for Creation and Anti-Racism
- Celebrated the Year of Mission in multiple ways
- Great Rural Life masses up north and out east (and a great fall retreat)
- Many new (and returning) CCHD and CRS grantees
- Solidarity with the Haitian community in Springfield and other migrant neighbors
- Multiple fantastic interfaith events

2025 was also not without its challenges, many of which persist into 2026. I pray that we were all filled up with love and joy over the holiday season (and found time to rest and rejuvenate) because there will be no shortage of fights for justice that we'll face over the next 12 months.

Thanks in advance for your prayers and support!

We humbly ask that you continue to pray for us. 2026 will 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 start to the new year, 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,
Catholic Social Action team



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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 14th
6:30 PM EST

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



Led by: Erin Shaw



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Praying in Solidarity

The Archdiocesan Immigration Task Force has developed a new initiative, an effort to peacefully and prayerfully stand in solidarity with our immigrant and refugee sisters and

brothers.

We are encouraging people to go and pray - either outside of the Butler County Jail (where ICE detainees are being held) or the ICE office in Blue Ash.

You can find all of the information on this webpage - **Praying in Solidarity** - but, simply put, this is an opportunity for groups - no matter the size, faith tradition, or frequency - to stand in witness to and solidarity with those who are being affected by the "climate of fear and anxiety around questions of profiling and immigration enforcement." *US Bishops Special Message on Immigration*.

This is prayer, not a protest, so no signs/posters. People will be standing together, witnessing and praying in solidarity.

On the webpage, you'll find forms to fill out if you're looking to organize an event, whether one-time or repeated, as well as one to give feedback after your event(s).

To kick this off, the ITF will be meeting on the **4th Monday of every month at 12:30pm outside of the Blue Ash ICE office**. All are welcome.

**Monday, Jan. 26, February 23, March 23, and so forth, 12:30pm
Blue Ash ICE Office - 9875 Redhill Dr., 45242**

If you have any questions, please let us know.

"We pray for an end to dehumanizing rhetoric and violence, whether directed at immigrants or at law enforcement. We pray that the Lord may guide the leaders of our nation..." -US Bishops Special Message on Immigration





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.



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.



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!

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

March for Life Details

As we begin 2026, the call to pray for and defend the dignity of every human life continues with renewed energy and opportunity. After several challenging years

following the 2021 COVID-19 restrictions, the Office for Respect Life Ministries is once again organizing a pilgrimage to the **NATIONAL MARCH FOR LIFE** in Washington, D.C., offering about 60 youth and chaperones the chance to participate in this powerful witness for life. We will depart on Thursday, January 22, attend the 53rd annual National March for Life on Friday, January 23, have some discussions about the experience on Friday evening, attend the Students for Life Conference on Saturday, January 24, and return home late that evening.

NATIONAL PRAYER VIGIL FOR LIFE

For those who **cannot attend in person**, the **National Prayer Vigil for Life** and other related events that offer opportunities for prayer and reflection are livestreamed from the Cathedral Basilica in Washington, DC on January 22. Check out the above webpage for information on that.

LOCAL EVENTS IN JANUARY

If you are staying closer to home in the **Archdiocese of Cincinnati**, here are some opportunities to participate locally in the culture-of-life movement:

PRO-LIFE ROSARY PROCESSIONAL AND RALLY

- **Saturday, January 17, 2026** — The Cincinnati ProLife Committee is organizing another rosary procession from City Hall to Fountain Square in downtown Cincinnati beginning at 10AM. This is a wonderful way for families and youth to engage in respectful, life-affirming community witness and prayer.

RESPECT LIFE MASS

- **Sunday, January 18, 2026** — Join Archbishop Casey for the annual **Respect Life Mass** at **St. Peter in Chains Cathedral Basilica** downtown. This will occur during the regular 10AM Mass, and will celebrate the gift of life and honor our local respect-life award recipient. All are welcome.

CINCINNATI RIGHT TO LIFE MINI-MARCH FOR LIFE

- **Saturday, January 31** — Join **Cincinnati Right to Life** for a peaceful, prayerful march from **Holy Name Church** to the local Planned Parenthood facility. This prayer walk draws hundreds of pro-life supporters and offers a powerful witness in our community. [Mini March for Life 2026 – Cincinnati Right to Life](#)

PRAYER RESOURCES AND THE 9 DAYS FOR LIFE NOVENA

Whether you travel to Washington or remain in your parish or home, prayer is central to building a culture of life.

9 DAYS FOR LIFE (JANUARY 16–24, 2026)

This annual **novena for the protection of human life** offers daily intentions, short reflections, and suggested actions to help Catholics pray and act for a culture of life. Sign-ups for daily reminders (by email or text) and printable resources are available through the Respect Life website linked above.

MARCH FOR LIFE TOOLKIT

Office for Respect Life Ministries created a March for Life Toolkit of **YOUTH MINISTRY LESSON PLANS**, **PRO-LIFE MOVIE NIGHTS**, and **PRO-LIFE PRAYER SERVICES** to empower parishes, schools, and respect life groups to join in the vigil from home, and those materials are still available to you, 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, click on the links above and check them out.

A Final Prayerful Invitation

Regardless of where you are — in Washington, DC, at your parish, or at home — we invite you to join in prayer for all mothers, fathers, and families affected by the heartbreak of abortion, that they might find **healing and forgiveness**, and to work together in service of a genuine culture of life throughout our communities.



From the Office for Persons with Disabilities

Lisa Averion, Associate Director, Persons with Disabilities

The Sanctity of Life: a Look at Disability Statistics, Catholic Teaching, and Societal Views

The issue of abortion, particularly following a prenatal diagnosis of a disability, remains a deeply contentious topic, intertwining medical statistics, ethical considerations, and profound moral beliefs. In the U.S., studies estimate that as many as 67% of pregnancies with a Down syndrome diagnosis are terminated, with some sources putting the figure between 60% and 90%. Similarly, the abortion rate for anencephaly is estimated at 83% and for spina bifida at 63%(NIH.gov). These statistics highlight the significant pressure and complex decisions facing expectant parents.

The Catholic Church maintains an unwavering stance on the sanctity of life, teaching that human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. St. John Paul II, in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life), famously condemned the “culture of death” where a life requiring greater care is often considered an “intolerable burden”. Pope Francis has echoed this sentiment, describing abortion as part of a “throwaway culture” and likening it to “hiring a hitman to resolve a problem,” while also emphasizing the Church’s call for compassionate spiritual accompaniment and forgiveness for women who have had abortions.

In 2023, a Marist Poll found that a majority of Americans (60%) oppose abortion if the child is diagnosed with Down syndrome, even as the debate over abortion access continues at state and federal levels. This reflects a tension between personal choice and a growing recognition of the dignity and potential of individuals with disabilities.

Advocacy for the pro-life perspective in the public square continues, with the annual March for Life event in Washington, D.C., scheduled for Friday, January 23, 2026. The 2026 theme is “Life is a Gift,” emphasizing the inherent value of every human life regardless of circumstances.

To learn how our office can support your community through Disability Ministry, please contact Lisa Averion, laverion@catholicaoc.org.



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