

Requiescet in pace. Pope Benedict, pray for us!



(AP Photo/Andrew Medichini, File)

"If in my life I fail completely to heed others, solely out of a desire to be 'devout' and to perform my 'religious duties,' then my relationship with God will also grow arid. It becomes merely 'proper,' but loveless. Only my readiness to encounter my neighbor and to show him love makes me sensitive to God as well. Only if I serve my neighbor can my eyes be opened to what God does for me and how much he loves me."

-Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, 2005

"The fundamental human right, the presupposition of every other right, is the right to life itself. This is true of life from the moment of conception until its natural end. Abortion, consequently, cannot be a human right -- it is the very opposite."

-Pope Benedict XVI

The Ongoing Call to Respect Life

This month marks the 50th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion throughout the U.S. During the past half-century, tens of millions of babies have been aborted in this country.

While the *Dobbs v. Jackson* case last year held that the Constitution does not confer a right to abortion, which permitted individual states to adopt their own laws, abortion is still legal in most states.

As people who believe in the sanctity of each and every human life, we still have much work to do to save the lives of children in utero, and to support women in need. The [Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities](#), created by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, is a very helpful guide that highlights four areas for parishes to pursue to protect unborn babies as well as other vulnerable people:

- ◆ **Public Information and Education** to deepen understanding of the sanctity of human life and the humanity of unborn children, the moral evil of intentionally killing innocent human beings—whether at the beginning of life or at its end—and the mission of the Church to witness to and serve all human life.
- ◆ **Pastoral Care** for women with problems related to pregnancy; for all who have been involved in abortion; for those who are disabled, sick, and dying, and their families and caregivers; for those who have lost loved ones to violent crime; and for those in prison sentenced to death.
- ◆ **Public Policy** efforts directed to restoring legal protection to the lives of unborn children and those vulnerable to pressures to end their lives by assisted suicide, and to providing morally acceptable alternatives to abortion and assisted suicide.
- ◆ **Prayer and Worship** directed to participation in the sacramental life of the Church and in programs of communal and individual prayer, that the culture of death that surrounds us today will be replaced by a culture of life and love.

Now is a good time to prayerfully consider how your parish could be more deeply involved in [Project Rachel](#), [Walking with Moms in Need](#), and the advocacy and outreach efforts of our [Diocesan Office of Life Issues](#).

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People of
Life



9 Days for Life! From January 19 through January 27, join Catholics around the U.S. in praying this beautiful, annual novena for the protection of life. Each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life. Participants can download the novena or sign up to receive the daily prayers via email or text message. Go to 9DaysforLife.com for more information.

Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children Monday January 23, 2023

While this special day of remembrance is usually commemorated on January 22, the anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision, this year it will be held the next day, since January 22 is a Sunday this year.

"The Church sets today aside as day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life. It is also a day of penance for all violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion... As individuals, we are each called to observe this day through the penitential practices of prayer, fasting and/or almsgiving."



**On January 20, join the
annual March for Life
in Washington DC**

Buses leave from Webster the evening of January 19. Visit march4life.gmsander.info or contact Gerry Sander at 585.503.3256 or webstercommitteeforlife@gmail.com to register

VICTORY FOR WOMEN AND UNBORN BABIES

In 2022, Catholics around the country joined with the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Catholic Labor Network and other workers' rights advocates in calling for the passage of the **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act**. Unexpectedly, it was included in the omnibus budget bill that passed in late December!

The Catholic Labor Network explains that the bill "will close a gap in our nation's civil rights law and ensure millions of pregnant workers and working moms can receive reasonable accommodations like light duty, additional breaks, transfers, and time off to recover from childbirth, to prevent serious health complications and keep their jobs." CLN told this newsletter that "Without you **New Yorkers leaning on (Sen.) Schumer** it's unlikely it would have happened." THANK YOU for being a voice for pro-life workplace policies!



Justice & Peace Ministry Staff of Catholic Charities:

Monroe: Marcus Ebenhoe 585-546-7220 ext. 6202 Marcus.Ebenhoe@fcscharities.org;

Chemung/Schuyler/Tioga: Kathy Dubel 607-734-9784 ext. 2135; Kathy.Dubel@dor.org

Cayuga/Ontario/Seneca/Yates/Wayne: Robert Vona 315-789-2235 ext. 112; Robert.Vona@dor.org

Livingston/Steuben: Leigh Shepard (585) 658-4466 ext. 11; Leigh.Shepard@dor.org

Tompkins: Laurie Konwinski 607-272-5062 ext. 12; Laurie.Konwinski@dor.org

Diocesan Life Issues Coordinator: Shannon Kilbridge 585-328-3228 ext. 1218 Shannon.Loughlin@dor.org