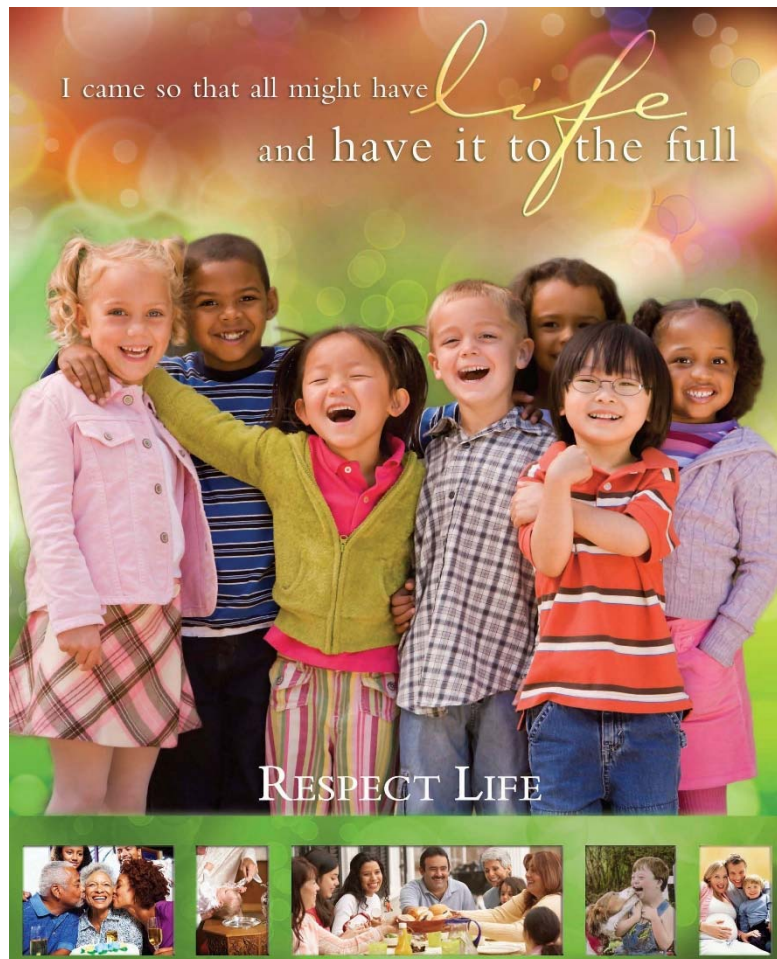


Parish Respect Life Resource Manual



**Secretariat of Lay Formation, Marriage and Family Life
Catholic Diocese of Raleigh**



Office of Human Life and Dignity
www.dioceseofraleigh.org/offices/respect-life

Respect Life Resource Manual

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Introduction

The Diocese of Raleigh Office of Human Life and Dignity has created this manual to assist the Parish Respect Life Coordinator in performing the task of spreading the Culture of Life throughout the parish and community.

The structure is based on the model of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities' document, *Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities, A Campaign in Support of Life*, developed in 1975 and revised in 2001. Also provided is a listing of specific responsibilities and duties to guide the coordinator and committee in carrying out this work in the parish.

The resources included in this manual have been developed over several years. Many include specific timelines and instructions for carrying out the initiatives. Projects have been included from the four pillars of Respect Life work as set out by the USCCB (see the first foundational document): education, advocacy, pastoral care, and prayer and worship.

Although an effort is made to provide updates when needed, it is possible that a link or other information included within this document could become outdated. Questions about outdated information should be directed to the Office of Human Life and Dignity at (919) 719-8267.

Education

The first three resources provide a simple path to putting on an education night in your parish, using videos created by the Diocese on bioethics topics. Alternatively, the Diocese has trained over 50 individuals representing 30 parishes to make presentations on Advance Directives. Contact the Office of Human Life and Dignity to schedule one of these speakers in your parish—or consider attending the next training session. A related educational resource is the compilation of End of Life resources available.

The Fetal Development of a Baby is a series of bulletin announcements that educate the faithful on the development of a baby from conception on March 25, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, through December 25, when the baby is born. Sample bulletin announcements on a variety of life topics are available upon request.

Advocacy

Each year, approximately 30 buses make the trip to the March for Life in Washington, DC, to advocate on behalf of the unborn. A guide and timeline for chartering a bus is included. Another means of advocacy is the Catholic Voice NC website, which gives the faithful the opportunity to sign up to receive alerts from the North Carolina Bishops on legislative matters that affect us as Catholics; many of these are life issues. A guideline is included here to take on a wonderful project for any Respect Life Committee—signing up parishioners to be part of the Catholic Voice NC network.

Pastoral Care

Each year, diapers for local pregnancy centers and Catholic Charities are donated at the Love my Life Youth Rally to assist those in crisis pregnancies. A guide to putting on a service project, as well as information about working directly with pregnancy care centers, is included. Gabriel Project is another opportunity to support women in crisis pregnancies. Contact the Office of Human Life and Dignity for more information about starting a Gabriel Project in your parish.

Prayer and Worship

The fourth pillar of prayer is supported through a liturgy guide for the *Rite of Blessing of the Child in the Womb*, an opportunity to encourage prayers for and provide recognition of the life of the developing child in the womb. Another opportunity to engage the entire parish in prayer is the USCCB's 5-part plan for Life Marriage and Religious Liberty. Regular parish-wide rosaries for life are encouraged and easy to schedule.

A parish leader or committee will not have the ability do everything each year, and coordinators and committees are encouraged to be creative and initiate other projects in support of the dignity of the human person. Please contact the Office of Human Life and Dignity to share any projects that can be replicated to other parishes.

The most important duty of the Parish Respect Life Coordinator is the collaboration with your Pastor. Projects should be undertaken only with his express approval and support.

Thank you for your witness and for all you do for the Diocese of Raleigh, for your parishes, and most especially for the most vulnerable among us.

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Parish Respect Life Committee

Office of Human Life and Dignity, Catholic Diocese of Raleigh

(Adapted from USCCB model)

Structure:

It is recommended that two parish co-coordinators be appointed by the pastor. The co-coordinators will invite others to join the Parish Respect Life Committee. The co-coordinators will chair the committee. The committee membership should include representatives of both adult and youth parish groups, those responsible for education and pastoral care and members of service organizations such as the Knights of Columbus and others that represent minorities and those with disabilities. Parish committees would be mindful of the need for renewal from time to time with regard to membership, talent and interest.

Leadership:

The parish committee relies on the Diocesan Coordinator of Respect Life and Social Concerns for information and guidance.

Role:

The committee should play a vital role in parish life creating and supporting programs that promote the life and dignity of the human person. It is vital the committee receive leadership and strong support of parish priests and other key personnel. The committee should seek opportunities to collaborate with other parish ministries or educational programs to advocate for the protection of all human life, from conception to natural death in accordance of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Responsibilities:

Develop a Respect Life program at your parish around the four major areas as established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:

- **Information and Education** to deepen understanding of the gift and sanctity of human life and the humanity of unborn children; and the mission of the Church to witness to and serve all human life.
- **Public Policy and Advocacy** 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 provide morally acceptable alternatives to abortion and assisted suicide.
- **Pastoral Care** for women with problems related to pregnancy; for those who are vulnerable, 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.
- **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 love and life.

Objectives:

- Coordinate parish implementation of the annual Respect Life Program, promoting it to agencies and organizations in the parish, especially the schools and religious education programs and encourage parish groups to use the program as a basis for discussion.
- Promote and assist pregnancy counseling and comprehensive maternity support services as well as post-abortion counseling and reconciliation programs, and make those well known in the parish.
- Develop or adopt, if feasible, a parish based ministry to aid pregnant women and their families (ex. Gabriel Project).
- Encourage and support parishioners' involvement in services to help those who are chronically ill, disabled or dying and their families (ex. Nursing home visitation).
- Sponsor programs of prayer in the parish to pray for mothers, fathers and their unborn children, for those who are dying and for those who are disabled, for prisoners on death row and for those that have been harmed, and indeed for all that are in need, that an increased respect for life from conception to natural death will be created.
- Foster awareness of the need to restore legal protection to the lives of unborn children to the maximum degree possible and to safeguard in the law the lives of those who are chronically ill, disabled or dying.
- Keep parishioners informed of upcoming important legislation; and at the direction of the Diocesan Coordinator of Respect Life and Social Concerns; organize letter-writing, postcard campaigns or similar appropriate activities when important votes are expected. It should be noted that the Catholic Church does not engage in partisan politics. Rather, it fosters the responsibility of every Catholic to exercise his or her citizenship faithfully by being well informed on issues and it recognizes the right to vote as a privilege and a civic responsibility.

May the “people of life” constantly grow in number and may a new culture of love and solidarity develop for the true good of the whole of human society.

-Pope John Paul II, the Gospel of Life, no. 101

Parish Respect Life Coordinator Position Description

Goal of the Parish Respect Life Coordinator:

To actively evangelize every person in your parish about Respect Life issues, and to reach out to various ministries to raise awareness—ultimately to make Respect Life issues visible and real to the parish and to facilitate an environment to fosters Respect Life action in the community. You are building a Culture of Life.

Responsibilities of the Parish Respect Life Coordinator:

- Develop or maintain a solid, consistent prayer life and frequent the sacraments. If you don't stay close to Christ, it is impossible to do His work.
- Be familiar with church teaching on life issues found in Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the USCCB Plan for Pro-Life Activities – including the four pillars of the Respect Life Plan.
- Develop a relationship with your pastor to learn about his intentions for the parish.
- Act in accord with Christ's will in obedience to your pastor, the Bishop and the Church.
- At all times, speak the truth in charity.
- Know yourself, your strengths and weaknesses. Pray for the humility and courage to have the knowledge you need. Christ has called you to this work, and He will equip you to do it, if you allow Him to do so.
- Know your parish, its strengths and weaknesses so that you may see the unique gift that your parish is, and call upon others who have unique gifts to offer. You are both a servant and a leader.

Duties of the Parish Respect Life Coordinator:

- Serve as liaison between the Diocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity and the parish.
- Organize a parish committee, or at least have a group of volunteers available to help plan and implement programs and projects as needed.
- Educate and inform the parish on Respect Life issues under the guidance of the Office of Human Life and Dignity of the Diocese.
- Implement the annual Respect Life Program from the USCCB each year in the parish.
- Create a Respect Life presence in the parish—a designated space such as a table, pamphlet rack or bulletin board, so that parishioners have a frequent, visible reminder.
- Review with your pastor any Respect Life activities, programs, or events that will be advertised or carried out in the parish before they take place.
- Initiate specific Respect Life efforts (no matter how small) at least once a month. Review and evaluate these efforts at least twice a year.
- Support your pastor and priests in making Respect Life prayer and activity visible and viable at the parish level.
- Communicate with the Respect Life Coordinators in your Deanery and in the Diocese.
- Call upon the Office of Human Life and Dignity as needed for information and support.

Networking

Ten ways to involve other groups in Respect Life ministry

1. Request to attend your Parish Council meeting and introduce yourself / bring a flyer or handout on some of the Respect Life initiatives in your parish.
2. Ask to speak prior to a Knights of Columbus meeting. Request that they appoint a liaison to come to your meetings and keep the Knights apprised of Respect Life initiatives and ways they can help. Sometimes Knights Councils will sponsor buses or provide other financial help.
3. Meet with your Youth Minister or Director of Faith Formation and ask them to appoint a youth member of the Respect Life committee to serve as liaison with the youth. Offer to make presentations or show Pro-Life movies such as *October Baby* or *Bella* at Youth Group meetings.
4. Invite a bilingual friend, and set up a table outside of your Hispanic mass with Respect Life materials and an invitation to participate in activities.
5. Does your parish have a Gabriel Project or other Respect Life ministry that operates independently of your committee? Be sure their leaders are invited to your meetings!
6. Meet with the director of your Nursing Home ministry or ministry to sick and shut-ins to offer support. It is appropriate to ask them to ask for prayers for life from the people they visit. This also avoids duplication of efforts. (If there is no such ministry in your parish, consider starting one.)
7. If your parish has a school, meet with the principal and offer to make presentations to the students. Ask if s/he can include an intention or a prayer for life in daily prayers. If they already have a Respect Life curriculum, offer additional resources.
8. Make sure you have regular Respect Life announcements in the parish bulletin. Many parishes have a Respect Life corner that is always reserved for quotes, upcoming events, and other Respect Life activities.
9. Do you have regular Deanery meetings? Consider being a Deanery leader and networking with the other Coordinators in your Deanery.
10. Do you know Pro-Life people who are not Catholic? Can you invite them and others in their church to participate with you on Respect Life initiatives such as 40 Days for Life?

Using your Respect Life Packet after Respect Life Month

Each year, the Diocese of Raleigh provides each Parish Respect Life Coordinator with the USCCB Respect Life Program Packet, filled with resources. Here are some ways to use them:

1. Display the poster on a bulletin board in the gathering space
OR: mount it on a poster board so it can be put on an easel and put up and taken down as appropriate.
2. Run the bulletin inserts in your bulletin – once each month for seven months or for seven weeks in December and January leading up to the March for Life. Visit <http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program/> to print 8 ½ by 11 bulletin insert copies of the brochures included in the packet.
3. Set up a meeting with your pastor prior to January and deliver the liturgy guide document to him. Share the homily notes, the Intercessions for life, and the other features included for that year. If he is open, suggest he ask for a parish-wide novena for life in January.
4. Bring one of the brochures to each of your monthly Respect Life meetings and share it with your Committee members.

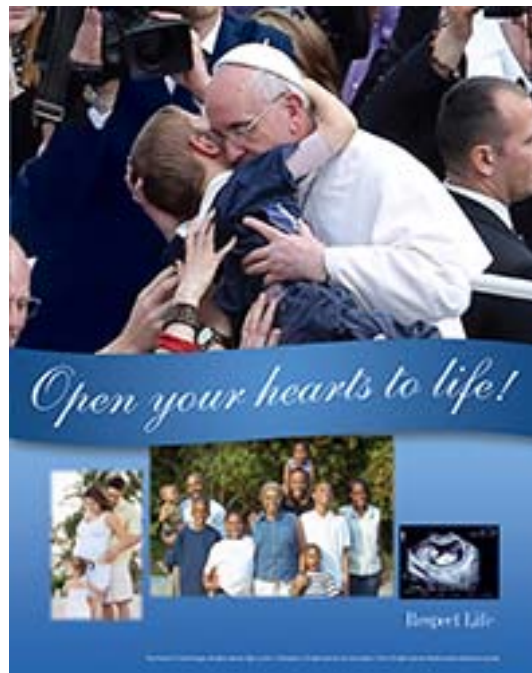
For more resources visit:

<http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/pastoral-plan-prolife-activities.cfm>

<http://www.dioceseofraleigh.org/how/pro-life/>

<http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/index.cfm>

<http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program/>



How to Put On an Education Night in Your Parish

Three Months in Advance:

- Obtain permission and support from the pastor, school principal/leaders
- Set the date and time; decide where to meet and reserve hall
- Line up speaker (if applicable)
- Plan publicity – Church bulletins, monthly publication, posters, invitations/notices, local newspapers, television, pro-life banner/poster for the church
- Send Publicity to Respect Life Office of Diocese and possibly NC Catholics magazine

Two months in advance:

- Estimate your expenses and the number of helpers needed
- Decide if food or beverages will be served; make a signup sheet for volunteers, or choose caterer
- Consider decorations
- Publish statements in church bulletin to raise awareness on the topic you will address
- Begin school/faith formation poster-making project

Six weeks in advance:

- Publicize your event in parish publications until deadline date if reservations are required

Three weeks in advance:

- Ask your pastor to include a pro-life petition on the Sunday preceding the event
- Prepare and make copies of a take-home flyer for your church and school
- Prepare and make copies of an evaluation form

Two weeks in advance:

- Request a pulpit announcement of your event
- Insert publicity flyers in your church bulletin
- Plan necessary equipment (recorder, laptop, extension cord, song books, photographer, etc.)
- Order beverages or food, if planned, or make sure your volunteer signup is completed
- Obtain ice, cups, napkins, serving utensils, trash bags

One week in advance:

- Contact your speaker for final confirmation and directions
- Have supplies ready – name tags, marking pens, literature, attendance sheet, beverage supplies, volunteer cards, and pencils; microphone or extension cord?
- Confirm with photographer

Day of Event:

- Pause to relax and pray

Agenda for Speaker/Movie Program

- Start the program on time
- Welcome participants and say a prayer
- Briefly give the purpose of the gathering
- Introduce speaker/slides/film
- Suggest a plan of action; don't leave with a sense of helplessness
- Close with a prayer
- Include time for refreshments and socializing

Follow-Up

- Send a thank-you note to your speaker
- Thank your pastor and helpers

Educational Resources

The Office of Human Life and Dignity has been offering trainings on Advance Directives for Priests, Deacons, staff members and others in parishes throughout the Diocese. Check with the Office of Human Life and Dignity or your Pastor to see if someone has been trained in your Parish, then help them put on an education night to disseminate this important information.

Bioethics Video Series

Ethics is the effect that morals have on human behavior. Bioethics, then, specifically deals with those patterns of human behavior as applied to the medical field. This encompasses medical research, patient treatments and other general medical issues. These are areas that touch all of our lives in a personal and sometimes emotional way. The Diocese of Raleigh has released a series of bioethics videos to educate the faithful on the ethical components of often-complicated biological and medical situations. This series of talks on Catholic bioethics attempts to bring these issues to light in the fullness of Catholic teaching.



Conscience Formation

This video describes the role of the conscience in moral decision making. Moral Theologian Rob Agnelli lays the foundation for the ethical considerations in future talks. In today's moral climate, the possibility of truth, especially in the realm of morality, is often dismissed. This video shows how divine revelation and the teachings of the Church can help us discover what is truly good and live in harmony with God.

Abortion

In this talk, Moral Theologian Rob Agnelli shows how opposition to abortion is not purely a religious argument, but is based on natural law and reason. This talk gives us concrete ways to refute the "pro-choice" argument.



Embryonic Stem Cell Research

This talk describes how embryonic stem cell research has so far been unsuccessful in medical research, and also describes the advances that have been made using adult stem cells, which can be harvested with no harm to human life. Retired Cardiologist Dr. Jacques Mistrot gives this talk. Dr. Mistrot is certified by the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Health Care Ethics.

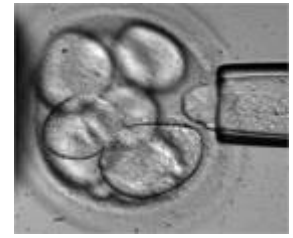
Theology of the Body



Dr. Patrick O'Connell, MD, explores Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body, which enlightens us to make intelligent assessments of the many aspects of medical care that address human sexuality. Dr. O'Connell is certified by the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Health Care Ethics.

Infertility

Dr. O’Connell also offers this talk, which provides a pragmatic approach to assessing medical options for treating infertility, drawing from the Theology of the Body and the encyclical, *Donum Vitae*.



Living Out The Gift

- In this talk, Jackie Bonk, formerly the Director of Pro-Life for the Diocese of Raleigh and currently certified by the Theology of the Body Institute, unpacks the idea expressed by St. John Paul II that man cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself.

Prenatal Screening & Catholic Teaching

This video explains the field of prenatal testing from a Catholic perspective. It describes the tests which are usually offered to expectant parents, including a new non-invasive DNA blood test. Are these prenatal screenings necessary? Are they safe to the mother and to the baby? Are they really considered to be diagnostic? This presentation will help empower expectant couples to know what to expect and what to choose when they go to their doctor for prenatal visits.



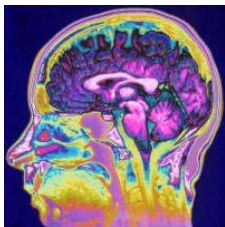
End of Life Medical Care



Dr. Jacques Mistrot provides practical assistance in this video in preparing for the end of life, exploring medical situations such as palliative care and ordinary and extraordinary measures of preserving life, in light of the dignity of the human person.

Legal Documents in End of Life Planning

Dr. Patrick O’Connell reviews the documents often used in End of Life planning, including Living Wills, Advance Directives, Health Care Power of Attorney forms, and Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment, the “MOST” form, and makes recommendations on the best way to create an Advance Directive document.



Death by Neurological Criteria and Organ Donation

This talk by Dr. Jacques Mistrot explores the theological and neurological criteria for determining death, and the ethics of organ donation.

Visit the Bioethics section of Diocese of Raleigh website for a link to the videos and a summary document with discussion questions for use in your parish when putting on an Education Night.

<http://dioceseofraleigh.org/offices/respect-life/beginning-of-life-initiatives>

The summary document with discussion questions is found at this link:

<http://dioceseofraleigh.org/sites/default/files/files/bioethics-booklet-2017.pdf>

End of Life Resources

Video and Audio Resources

From the USCCB

Maggie's Story – a woman with terminal brain cancer lives her last days with dignity (3:14)

Jeanette's Story – a woman who sought euthanasia is grateful 15 years later for a doctor who encouraged her to seek treatment, instead. (2:54)

Luke's Story – Every suicide is tragic. “You don’t discourage suicide by assisting suicide,” says Luke Maxwell, 19, who survived an attempt to take his own life. (3:29)

John's Story – Born without arms, John Foppe speaks of a beautiful life of inter-dependence. Assisted suicide sells everyone short, he says. (4:08)

From the Diocese of Raleigh

Video and Audio

Planning for an Advance Directive – Msgr. David Brockman and Dr. Jacques Mistrot share the spiritual and medical decisions involved in creating an advance directive (12:32)

Medical End of Life Issues – Dr. Jacques Mistrot discusses some of the medical concerns surrounding end of life. (42:05)

Legal Documents in End of Life Planning – Dr. Patrick O’Connell describes some of the documents commonly used, and makes recommendations. (53:26)

Death by Neurological Criteria – Dr. Mistrot describes some of the moral and ethical situations surrounding organ donation from a Catholic perspective. (47:37)

How to Show True Compassion in the face of a Terminal diagnosis – Audio podcast from Office of Human Life and Dignity Director Jackie Bonk, who shares her family’s journey of negotiating her mother’s last days. (31:04)

Print Documents

Advance Directive Document (18 pp., including a legal instrument prepared for North Carolina)

All of these resources can be found on the End of Life Page of the Office of Human Life and Dignity website: <http://dioceseofraleigh.org/offices/respect-life/end-of-life-initiatives>

Pro-Life Bulletin Announcements – The Fetal Development of a Baby

Tradition teaches us Christ was conceived on the Feast of the Annunciation. We watch the parallel development of “Thomas” (name will change each year) in the womb beginning on March 24 (Feast of the Annunciation) until December 25. The Office of Human Life and Dignity has made available a series of bulletin messages describing the fetal development of “Thomas.” Each week we will send out the messages to the parishes. Please consider inserting these messages in the bulletin for the upcoming weeks and each week through December 25.

March 26 (week 1)

The Miracle of Life. At conception the gender of the child is determined by the father’s sperm. We are going to name this tiny new human being “Thomas.” Thomas has not yet implanted into the wall of the uterus so no one but God knows of his existence. God has known us and loved us from all eternity.

"Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature." (Genesis 2:7)

April 2 (week 2)

Thomas has implanted in the wall of his mother’s uterus which typically takes place about 6 days after conception. Immediately, physical changes start taking place with the mother. The placenta starts to form. The placenta protects the child and provides nutrients to the new baby. The mother’s uterus will increase its capacity by 1000 times during pregnancy.

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,” (Jer. 1: 5)

April 9 (week 3)

Multiplying and developing rapidly, Thomas’s cells are separating into those that will form his body and organ systems. Before the second week is over, his cells have separated into those that will give rise to the brain, the nervous system, skin, digestive system, muscles, bones, and circulatory system.

“I praise you, so wonderfully you made me . . . my bones were not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, fashioned as in the depths of the earth.” (Psalm 139)

April 16 (week 4)

Thomas’s heart started beating 18 days after conception. Thomas may have a different blood type than his mother’s. Already Thomas has the foundation for thought, senses, feeling and more. The amniotic sac is now formed and the fluid will cushion Thomas throughout the pregnancy. Thomas has a yolk sac which supplies blood and nutrients until the placenta has developed and is ready to take over.

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation...all things were created through him and for him.” (Colossians 1:15-16)

April 23 (week 5)

Thomas’s heart is now pumping blood. All four chambers of the heart are working. The lungs start to appear along with the brain. Arm and leg buds appear. Soon Thomas will be doing somersaults in the spacious world of the womb. His mother is probably tired and may experience morning sickness as her body adjusts to the baby.

"You did form my inward parts, you did knit me together in my mother 's womb. I praise you, for you are fearful and wonderful. Wonderful are your works! You know me right well" (Ps 139[138]: 13-14)

April 30 (week 6)

Thomas is now 10,000 times larger than the original fertilized egg and he is developing rapidly. His heart is pumping increasing quantities of blood through his body. The placenta forms a unique barrier between mother and her baby. The baby likely has a different blood type, different DNA and is not part of the mother's body.

"Even the hairs of your head have all been counted. Do not be afraid. You are worth more than many sparrows." (Luke 12:7)

May 7 (Week 7)

Thomas's brain waves can now be detected. Over the next few months his brain will develop over 100 billion neurons. The brain begins to control movement of muscles and organs. His nose is also developing. His mother probably has confirmed she is pregnant.

"Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

May 14 (week 8)

Baby Thomas begins to move. At eight weeks his arms are bending and flexing. Fingers are developing and Thomas is now swimming. He may be practicing for the 2032 Olympics.

Happy Mother's Day!

"How sweet to my tongue is your promise, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Psalm 119:103)

May 21 (week 9)

Thomas is nine weeks old and just under an inch long. His name now changes from embryo to fetus. Everything is now present that will be found in a fully developed adult. If Thomas continued to grow all nine months as fast as he has the second month, he would be born as large as two overfed elephants. Thankfully, development slows down.

"Every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights." James 1:17a

May 28 (week 10)

Thomas has fingerprints at ten weeks. The fingers can curve around an object placed in the palm. Thomas can now feel pain. He is having a wonderful time shifting, dancing and playing in the womb. His mother is coping with many changes as well; nurturing a baby is hard work.

"Behold, children are a gift of the Lord; the fruit of the womb is a reward." Psalm 127:3

June 4 (week 11)

The most critical part of Thomas's development is now complete. Thomas enters into a period of rapid growth. His eyelids fuse close and will not open again until about 26 weeks. His eye color is already determined and Thomas can squint and even swallow. Thomas is over an inch long and is moving around in his home, the womb. The mother's uterus will increase its capacity by 1000 times during pregnancy.

"For nothing will be impossible for God." (Luke 1:37)

For the complete set of bulletin announcements through December 25, please visit the Diocese of Raleigh Respect Life website at the following link:

<http://dioceseofraleigh.org/sites/default/files/files/Fetal-Development-of-Gabriela.pdf>

Organizing a Trip to The March for Life in Washington, DC



Follow these step-by-step instructions for renting and filling a bus. It is also encouraged to recruit and bring youth from your parish for an experience they will never forget.

Mid-October

- Contact the Diocese to find out Mass time at the Basilica, and meeting location for the Diocese group to March together.
- Figure out departure time from NC to arrive in VA for short break in order to arrive to DC for the NC Mass at the Basilica 11:30 am. Determine what time to depart DC to arrive back in Raleigh (or same locations) by 11:00 pm
- Call the Bus Company and get pricing. Reserve the number of buses you think you may need. (You can always reserve more than you need with Holiday, but will need to give them a final figure in December.) Find out how many seats are in each bus to determine cost per seat. Send in deposit if applicable. Find out when the final payment is due.
Holiday Tours will get bus permits at Union Station and parking spots for buses and this is included in Bus Pricing

November

- Decide on departure location.
- Send Bulletin Announcements to parish bulletin coordinators and Diocese for Centralized Mail – include deadline date and ask for posting in their bulletin through January.
- Get in touch with the Diocese about a meeting with NC Congressional Reps/Senator. Often they will have a reception at their offices at approximately 3:00 pm. Get addresses for their offices for the Day's Itinerary.
- Make up a spread sheet with names, addresses; continue to add information as it comes in.
- Send invitation email out to those with email from previous year's trip.
- Time Permitting - phone calls to those without email that attended previously.

December

- Confirm how many buses you need based on RSVP's you receive, coordinate with Bus Company where and when the stop will be in Virginia, and where the buses will drop off for Mass and pick up after Mass to take the bus to the start of March.
- Continue to advertise for the March in your bulletin, and with posters in your gathering space, if permitted.
- Order Decals from Office of Human Life and Dignity for the number of seats on your bus
- Finalize Bus Captain announcements for upcoming trip. Contact the Office of Human Life and Dignity for a sample document: *Bus Captain Announcements*.

January

- Email out – last call for reservations
- Continue to take reservations up until all buses are full
- Continue to update Spread sheet with names, addresses, etc., add information to spreadsheet as it comes in.
- Final Payment to Bus Company

Mid-January:

- Make an Agenda/Timeline of the day for attendees
- Make listing of attendees for bus captains – keep updating. Bus Captain should make 1-2 extra copies once the roster is finalized.
- Work on Signature Pages for day of March (see sample, file name: signature page). Each bus captain should have 3-4 extra copies to pass out on the bus trip. These signature pages usually go to our representatives as proof we were there.
- Make a Roll Call Sheet with names of people who will be on the bus. Include cell phone numbers. Suggest passing one copy around to bus attendees to add cell numbers not already received
- Make copies of Prayer Sheets, Maps, Itinerary sheets, and any other handouts. (You can get a map from the March for Life website.)
- Buy supplies. (You can usually purchase bottled water and snacks with any leftover funds).

1/20 (or a few days before March)

- Talk to Bus Company regarding any last minute details.
- Send out an email with last minute details to those on email; call those that aren't on email
- Finalize listing of attendees for Signatures on Day of March and copies.
- Last minute calls if needed.

1/22- Board the buses and head to Washington, DC

Contact information

HOLIDAY TOURS, 336-449-5907;

Gene Van Note: cell 336-260-5694; gene449@earthlink.net



Love My Life Youth Rally and March for Life Service Project
A guide to having a Diaper Drive in your parish



Timeline:

1. Meet with your youth leader, social ministry leaders, school staff, faith formation leaders, or others who may be interested to do some initial planning for the collection (August).
2. Arrange for transportation of diapers on collection day (January XX) and on the day of the Love My Life Youth Rally event (January XX).
3. Get permission from the church office to set up collection tables in your gathering space.
4. Turn in bulletin announcement requesting participation by the first of November.
5. Run bulletin announcement for the months of November, December and January.
6. Use other methods of publicity, if appropriate, such as placing an announcement on your church website, social media, or adding it to e-communications.
7. Get permission to have a pulpit announcement the week before the collection.
8. Arrange for volunteers from your Respect Life Committee, AAMEN group (if applicable), youth group and other appropriate groups in your parish to be at the tables on the week of the collection before and after each Mass to collect the diapers.
9. Contact the Office of Human Life and Dignity or AAMEN Office of the Diocese for more information about options for delivery of diapers as the event gets closer.

Working with Pregnancy Care Centers

The Diocese of Raleigh includes within its boundaries only one Catholic Pregnancy Care Center, BirthChoice, located in Raleigh. The Diocese supports BirthChoice by participating in a Run for Life in August and the Benefit for Life Gala in October. For those outside of the Triangle area, relationships have been made with other centers, usually run by evangelical Christians. Care must be taken when developing these relationships because many require a volunteer to sign a statement of faith which contradicts our Catholic teaching. However, many centers will allow a Catholic to affirm their faith in the Apostle's Creed instead, or to strike the word "only" from the statement that the Bible is believed to be the only inspired Word of God. Sadly, some Centers do not welcome Catholic volunteers at all. **Contact the Respect Life and Social Concerns office for guidance if you have questions about these relationships.**

We encourage efforts to collaborate with these pregnancy care centers and further the good work that they do to bring a culture of life and love to a world that often has misguided ideas about how to care for young women in crisis.

The list of centers below with whom we have working relationships is a work in progress and open to additions. Please be aware that this list is developed based on current relationships, but management and policies can change.

Non-Catholic Pregnancy Care Centers in the Diocese of Raleigh by Town and Deanery

A Heart's Cry, Inc	Graham	Piedmont
Agape Pregnancy Care Center	Fayetteville	Fayetteville
Alamance Pregnancy Services	Burlington	Piedmont
Albemarle Pregnancy Resource Center	Elizabeth City	Albemarle
Birthchoice	Raleigh	Raleigh
Carolina Pregnancy Center	Greenville	Tar River
Coastal Pregnancy Care Center	Morehead City	New Bern
Coastal Pregnancy Center	Washington	New Bern
Creative Choices Pregnancy Care Center	Nags Head	Albemarle
EPIC	New Bern	New Bern
First Choice Pregnancy Care Center	Wake Forest	Raleigh
Havelock Pregnancy Resource Center	Havelock	New Bern
In His Hands Pregnancy Care Center	Smithfield	Newton Grove
Kelly House (for pregnant mothers with addictions)	Wilmington	Cape Fear
Life Care Pregnancy Center	Carthage	Fayetteville
Life Choices	Roxboro	Piedmont
Onslow Pregnancy Resource Center	Jacksonville	New Bern
Pregnancy Care Center of Ahoskie	Ahoskie	Albemarle
Pregnancy Care Center of Rocky Mount	Rocky Mount	Tar River
Royal Homes	Falcon	Newton Grove
Wayne Pregnancy Care Center	Goldsboro	Newton Grove
Wilson Pregnancy Center	Wilson	Tar River

The Rite of Blessing of the Child in the Womb **A Guide to having a Ceremony within Mass**

Timeline:

1. Meet with your Pastor at least two months prior to the date requested to discuss the program and get his approval to hold the ceremony (See guidelines below).
2. Turn in bulletin announcement (see attached) at least one month ahead of the date.
3. Run this bulletin announcement for at least 3 weeks, inviting expectant mothers and their families to attend this mass.
4. Use other methods of publicity, if appropriate, such as placing an announcement and invitation on your church website or adding it to e-communications.

Your committee may wish to organize a reception following the mass, to further honor these parents. Some parishes have given out flowers or the lovely little booklet, *Gift of Joy*, by Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz and Msgr. J. Brian Bransfield.

Appropriate dates to have this ceremony include the Feast of the Annunciation at the end of March, Mother's Day in mid-May, the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the end of May and the Feast of the Holy Family at the end of December.

Guidelines for Ceremony (to be discussed with Pastor):

1. It is suggested that the blessing follows the Prayers of the Faithful within the mass.

Please refer to the USCCB document at this link. Suggested prayers of the faithful can be found beginning on page 5 in the document, followed by the blessing on page 6 for one family:

<http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/prayers/upload/Rite-for-the-Blessing-of-a-Child-in-the-Womb.pdf>

The text below can be found on pages 20 and 21 (using the plural form, if multiple mothers will be present). There is also a Spanish version, immediately following the English version, beginning on page 22.

2. Ask your Pastor to review and approve the bulletin announcement (see next page).

Summary of Blessing:

Immediately following the Prayers of the Faithful, the mothers are invited to come forward, along with fathers and other family members who are present. With hands extended, the celebrant blesses the children in the womb and all those present, in these words:

Blessing of the Child in the Womb:

God, author of all life, bless, we pray, these unborn children;
give them constant protection and grant them a healthy birth
that is the sign of our rebirth one day into the eternal rejoicing of heaven.
Lord, who have brought to these women the wondrous joy of motherhood,
grant them comfort in all anxiety and make them determined
to lead their children along the ways of salvation.

[For the fathers:

Lord of the ages, who have singled out these men to know the grace and pride of
fatherhood,
grant them courage in this new responsibility, and make them examples of justice and truth
for these children.]

[For the family:

Lord, endow these families with sincere and enduring love as they prepare to welcome these
children into their midst.]

Lord, you have put into the hearts of all men and women of good will a great awe and
wonder at the gift of new life;
fill this (parish) community with faithfulness to the teachings of the Gospel and new resolve
to share in the spiritual formation of these children in Christ our Savior, who lives and
reigns forever and ever.

R/. Amen.

Suggested Bulletin Announcement:

Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb



Expectant parents in the Diocese of Raleigh are invited to participate in a
ceremony to bless their child in the womb, which will be held on Sunday, XX,
at [all masses . . . the 11:00 mass. . . other?]

This ceremony during Mass not only provides the opportunity for God's blessing
for expectant parents and their child in the womb, but also for effective witness to
the sanctity of human life from the first moment of conception.

The Committee on Divine Worship of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
(USCCB) crafted the booklet to support parents awaiting the birth of their child, to
encourage parish prayers for—and recognition of—the precious gift of the child in
the womb, and to foster respect for human life within society.

*God, author of all life,
bless, we pray, this unborn child;
give constant protection and grant a healthy birth
that is the sign of our rebirth one day
into the eternal rejoicing of heaven...*

- excerpt from "[Rite for the Blessing](#) of the Child in the Womb."

Call to Prayer for Life, Marriage and Religious Liberty

Step 1: Meet with your pastor and share the 5-point plan (outlined below).

Step 2: Obtain his approval to pursue one or two of the initiatives that you will promote in your parish. Particularly encourage him to schedule the holy hours and add specific intentions to the prayers of the faithful.

Step 3: Meet with your parish secretary or the person who does bulletin announcements about publicizing the initiative that was decided. This should be in the bulletin every week until the end of the program. Suggest that they use the USCCB resource, “Word of Life,” which suggests pro-life bulletin announcements and intercessory prayers each month. Visit <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/resources-for-the-eucharist/word-of-life/> to sign up for these updates.

Step 4: You may also use other methods of promotion such as placing information on your church website or adding to e-communications.

The five-part strategy is as follows:

1. Starting with the last Sunday in November and continuing on or near the last Sunday of every month, parishes are encouraged to hold a **Eucharistic Holy Hour for Life, Marriage, and Religious Liberty**.
2. Families and individuals are encouraged to pray a **daily Rosary**, especially for the preservation of Life, Marriage, and Religious Liberty in the nation.
3. At Sunday and daily Masses, it is encouraged that the **Prayers of the Faithful** include specific intentions for respect for all human life from conception to natural death, the strengthening of marriage and family life, and the preservation of religious liberty at all levels of government, both at home and abroad.
4. **Abstinence** from meat and **fasting** on Fridays are encouraged for the intention of the protection of Life, Marriage, and Religious Liberty, recognizing the importance of spiritual and bodily sacrifice in the life of the Church.
5. The celebration of a **Fortnight for Freedom** at the end of June and the beginning of July is being planned. This Fortnight would continue to emphasize faith and marriage in a particular way, emphasizing the need for conscience protection in this area and in other areas, such as immigration, adoption, and humanitarian services.

Sample Bulletin Announcement (this can be adapted to suit the preferences of your pastor):

Please join us for a Holy Hour on Sunday, November XX and every last Sunday of the month through November of the following year, to continue to pray for rebuilding a culture favorable to life and marriage and for increased protections of religious liberty. This initiative is part of a five-part Call to Prayer by the Bishops of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, prompted by the rapid social movements and policy changes that affect our religious freedom, as well as our ability to uphold traditional marriage. You are also encouraged to pray the rosary as a family at least once a week for these intentions and to consider fasting and abstinence on Fridays for these intentions. A website with more information and resources, including a 90-second video from the USCCB is available at: <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/year-of-faith/call-to-prayer.cfm>

Diocese of Raleigh Resources

Advance Directive Document suitable for use in North Carolina

<http://dioceseofraleigh.org/sites/default/files/files/AD-Final-2017-Zarama.pdf>

Bioethics Video Series Summary Document with Questions for Discussion

<http://dioceseofraleigh.org/sites/default/files/files/bioethics-booklet.pdf>

The Fetal Development of a baby, complete set of bulletin announcements

<http://dioceseofraleigh.org/sites/default/files/files/Fetal-Development-of-Gabriela.pdf>

USCCB Resources

Rite of Blessing of the Child in the Womb

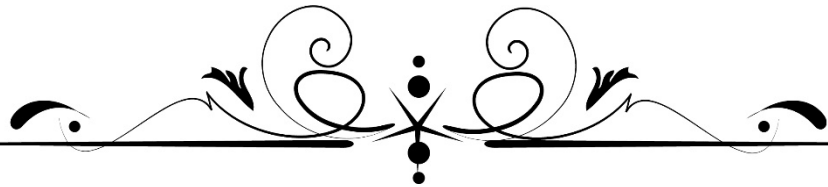
<http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/prayers/upload/Rite-for-the-Blessing-of-a-Child-in-the-Womb.pdf>

Call to Prayer for Life, Marriage and Religious Liberty

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/take-action-now/call-to-prayer/index.cfm>

Word of Life Bulletin Briefs

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/resources-for-the-eucharist/word-of-life/>



When the time comes, as it surely will, when we face that awesome moment, the final judgment, I've often thought, as Fulton Sheen wrote, that it is a terrible moment of loneliness. You have no advocates, you are there alone standing before God -- and a terror will rip your soul like nothing you can imagine. But I really think that those in the pro-life movement will not be alone. I think there'll be a chorus of voices that have never been heard in this world but are heard beautifully and clearly in the next world -- and they will plead for everyone who has been in this movement. They will say to God, 'Spare him, because he loved us!'"

- Congressman Henry Hyde

