

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: Get his approval to pursue one or two initiatives that you will promote in your parish. Particularly encourage the holy hours and specific intentions for the prayers of the faithful.

Step 3: Meet with the person who does bulletin announcements in your parish about publicizing the initiative that was decided. This should be in the bulletin every week until the end of the program using the Sample Bulletin Announcement below. Suggest that they use the USCCB resource, “Word of Life,” which suggests pro-life prayers each month. Visit <http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/word-of-life/index.cfm> to sign up for these prayer 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. Parishes are encouraged to hold a **Eucharistic Holy Hour for Life, Marriage, and Religious Liberty** each Sunday.
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, the **Prayers of the Faithful** should 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, at home and abroad.
4. **Abstinence** from meat and **fasting** on Fridays is 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 conscience protection in a particular way in the face of the potential Supreme Court rulings on the HSS Mandate during this time.

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

Please join us for a Holy Hour on Sunday, November 24 and every last Sunday of the month through next November 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 strategy by the Bishops of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, prompted by the rapid social movements and policy changes such as the mandate by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that forces employers to pay for sterilizations, abortion-inducing drugs and contraceptives, as well as increased efforts to redefine 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 bulletin insert and a 90-second video from the USCCB is available at: <http://www.migrate.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/year-of-faith/life-marriage-liberty.cfm>