

Diocese of Allentown

**Office of Pro-Life Activities and
Social Concerns**

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Bethlehem, PA 18017**

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Mission Statement

As a Parish Respect Life Coordinator, I am to witness to the sanctity of human life from conception until natural death, to uphold respect for it within this parish and community, and to work with others in building up the Culture of Life and Civilization of Love.



Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas and
Protectress of the Unborn,
Holy Mother of God, Pray of Us!

Dear Friend,

Mary said, “Yes.” And with her “Yes,” with the power of the Holy Spirit, she conceived our Lord Jesus, who was and is, fully God and fully human. This wonderful truth shows us when human life begins: at conception. If Jesus is fully human from his conception, then so too are we, and so too are all people. Therefore our work on the Sanctity of Life is not something on the fringe of the Church’s life; it is rooted in the Gospel. It is not a distraction from our job, it is our job. It does not detract from the message, it is central to its proclamation.

As the Parish Respect Life Coordinator, you have the task of working with your pastor and with the other members of your parish to speak the Gospel of Life in season and out. You will work with the Diocese of Allentown and through it, the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops so that thousands of hearts can speak with one voice. There is a lot to be said for that.

The Diocese asks three basic things of you as we work together- that you **witness** to the sanctity of all human life, that you **uphold** respect for that life and exhort and encourage others to do the same within your parish and your community, and that you **work together** with your fellow coordinators, and the Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns, and through us, the larger Church in building up the Culture of Life and a Civilization of Love.

These three simple tasks have four basic actions. **Educate**- share information and bring the truth to bear in this great endeavor. **Advocate**, for all life, even and especially the most vulnerable, from the children in the womb, and their frightened mothers, to the embryos seen merely as “parts” in research, to the ill and dying whose speedy demise would “relieve them from suffering” and society from a burden. **Serve** those vulnerable ones as well, in ways that fit the life of your parish and community. **Pray**- lift your voice and your heart, and those of the people around you. That’s what it all comes to.

Whether new or a veteran, this Resource Guide is for you, as is our office. If you have questions, if you have concerns, if you have suggestions, we want to hear from you. We are in this together, each working with the gift that the Holy Spirit has bestowed. St. Paul’s words in the twelfth chapter of 1 Corinthians ring out especially for us, speaking to us of our labor together and of those on whose behalf we do that labor:

...[A]s it is, there are many parts, yet one body... so that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy. [NAB]

Thank you for your dedication to this work. As we recall the Annunciation, let us consecrate ourselves and our work to Our Lady in thanks for the gift of Life we have through her Son.

In Christ’s Peace,

Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns
Diocese of Allentown

Activities Overview



A. Educate

A. Simple Steps in the Parish

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) puts out its annual Respect Life Resource Guide which is mailed directly to your parish. Check with your parish pastor about its arrival. If your parish has not received the mailing for this year, contact the Office of Pro-Life and Social Concerns and we will get one into your hands quickly. It is filled with good ideas and sample brochures and flyers for the parish.

1. Put a pro-life poster in every Religious Education classroom.

A suggested poster is the USCCB "The Child Before Birth" Poster, which is an image of an unborn child at 18 weeks' gestation with scriptural quote from Psalm 139: 13-14 (see Education Resource Section)

2. Make sure your parish has Respect Life information available in your narthex/gathering area. This includes not just anti-abortion literature, but also materials for

- USCCB Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities brochures
- Rachel's Vineyard and Project Rachel here in the Diocese.
- It can also include materials for programs like Mary's Shelter, or a Crisis Pregnancy center that you know to be reputable.
- Information on the Diocese of Allentown Prison Ministry.
- Information on the Diocese of Allentown Office for Ministry with Persons with Disabilities
- Information from the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference (PCC).

3. Start a Respect Life multi-media library (movies and books) for your Religious Education and Adult Faith Formation programs.

- Be sure to work with the pastor, principle, DRE and youth minister on this.

4. Parish bulletin

- Ask the pastor for regular space to place updates on what is happening.
- There are a number of resources from the USCCB to the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference (PCC) to our Diocese where you can cut and paste.
- Keep Life issues current with your parish.
- When writing for the parish bulletin, follow the guidelines in the Resource Section of the Manual.

5. Respect Life Resource Table for the Parish Ministry Fair

Many parishes have a ministry fair to encourage stewardship and to encourage parishioners to get involved in the many different ministries of the parish. Talk to your pastor about this.

6. White Ribbon for Life Campaign

- The White Ribbon for Life Campaign promotes respect for human life and opposes abortion on demand.

7. Outside Speakers

- Consult with the pastor and education team for ideas on outside speakers.
- A good speaker/topic is also good evangelism (see Education Resource Section for list of suggested speaker topics and Diocesan Policy guidelines)

8. Night at the Movies

- Use some of the resources you have collected. Pick a movie to show.
- Follow guidelines in Resource Section

9. The Knights of Columbus Annual Stand Up for Life Essay Contest

This event is sponsored throughout the Diocese in conjunction with the Knights of Columbus. There is a Junior Division for grades 7-8 and a Senior Division for grades 9-12. The event is always the weekend before the March for Life. Information about the event goes out to every Diocesan School and parish Director of Religious Education. While many people see this as a Catholic School event, it is open to all students, including those who go to public or charter or home schools. Help your parish publicize this event.

B. Communicating with Others

Media Contacts: If you are asked by the media what the Diocese of Allentown has to say on any matter, make sure to have the reporter contact the Office for External Affairs at 610-871-5200 or by email: mkerr@allentowndioocese.org

Finding and Passing Information: One of your chief tasks will be acting as the information nexus on Respect Life matters in the parish. That's just a fancy way of saying, "Imagine yourself, with respect to Respect Life information, like one of those old time telephone operators. Your job is to get the information from one place to another." And, on top of that, sometimes you will be called upon to sort by importance and source.

1. Almost all information and calls for action that come from the Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns originate from the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference (PCC) or the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Their web sites are located in the Resource section of the Resource Guide.
2. The PCC website is also useful because it allows you to go in and sign up to send e-mails to your respective elected officials based upon your address. Once you are registered, all you have to do is log in when it is time to write.
3. **It cannot be stressed enough that when it comes time to speak about political matters and elected officials, that the only materials that should be distributed in the parish are those from the Diocese, the PCC or the USCCB.** While others, from other pro-life organizations are fine for private use and information, it is only from the USCCB and the PCC we obtain information that can be handed out in the parish. Other organizations are not necessarily 501 (c) 3 organizations, and if they are, they are not necessarily writing in a way that takes into account the fullness of Catholic teaching or the Catholic Church's status as a tax exempt organization. **Do not distribute any information that has not been cleared with your pastor, who has the most up to date information from the Diocese on what is permissible.**

4. Another task you face will be sorting out the facts. **Do not distribute any information you receive from sources other than the Diocese, PCC or USCCB without validating it through the Office of Pro-Life and Social Concerns.**
5. Remember: the most effective weapon we have in advocating for the Gospel of Life is the Truth. We must always make sure that we speak the truth in love. Unless you know it for a verifiable fact, do not pass it on.
6. Many Pro-Life organizations are *ad hoc* and the Diocese may not know about start-ups in your area. If you know of people and organizations with whom the Office of Pro-Life and Social Concerns should meet, please share that information with this office so that we can be in touch.
7. People will also ask you “Why isn’t the Parish/Diocese/Church supporting this organization or event?” There are good reasons why the Diocese does not necessarily officially support or sponsor every pro-life organization or event. Keep in mind that some pro-life organizations may not be in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church. When events are being planned, the Church would need to know who was speaking and what was going to be said so that there is not a cause for misunderstanding or worse, scandal. Make sure that you understand, and that others who ask you understand, that there is a distinct difference between the Diocese not endorsing an event and the Diocese opposing an event. If the Diocese knows of an event in which participation by individual Catholics would not be appropriate, information to that effect will be shared.
8. If your parish or a Respect Life Group with which you are involved is planning an event, make sure you speak to the Office of Pro-Life and Social Concerns. There may be other Pro-Life and/or Diocesan events already in the works and this way you can avoid scheduling conflicts.

B. Advocate

As a Parish Respect Life Coordinator, you support the Church’s Social Teaching on issues that affect the life and dignity of the human person. Catholic social teaching is very clear on the need for Catholic laity to influence public policy on the local, state, and federal levels.

A. Advocacy Involvement on Legislation and Public Policy

At the **direction of the Diocesan Pro-Life Director and permission of pastor**, keep parishioners **informed**:

1. Support important legislation on all Dignity of Life Issues that provides morally acceptable alternatives to abortion: funding to expand education, health, nutrition, and other services for disadvantaged parents and their children. Many Bills in Congress and the State Legislature affect the life and dignity of the human person. Members of the Diocesan Legislative Advocacy Network (see Advocacy Resource Section) will receive Action Alerts generated from directives from the U.S. Catholic Bishops and/or Pennsylvania Catholic Conference. Advocates participate in political life by advocating for social justice in a very effective way through political responsibility. Join the Legislative Advocacy Network: Diocese of Allentown’s Website.

2. Organize a non-partisan parish voter registration drive
 - a. Voting is our most effective tool in changing things on a local or national level.
 - b. If you host a voter registration drive, it cannot be done in conjunction with a particular issue (pro-life causes included) or a particular candidate. Please contact the diocese or the PCC for more information.
3. Organize Parish letter-writing when requested by the Diocese, PCC or USCCB.
4. Organize Parish postcard campaigns when requested by the Diocese, PCC or USCCB. In addition, support similar appropriate activities when important votes are expected

B. Advocacy Involvement Beyond Legislation and Public Policy

1. Support the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment (NCHLA). The organization's objectives include educating citizens, developing pro-life legislative networks, and offering programs in support of pro-life legislation. Among its various activities, NCHLA produces educational and program resources, communicates with leaders about legislative priorities, and presents legislative seminars throughout the year. In a special way, NCHLA assists dioceses, state Catholic conferences, and Catholic lay groups. The Committee also works closely with the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (see Advocacy Resource Section)
2. Maintain relationships with local pro-life groups; develop local respect life lobbying networks; share print and broadcast media's treatment of life issues with the Pro-Life Office.
3. Collaborate with other Respect Life Coordinators, in its efforts with other parishes, share resources, etc.
4. Cluster advertising revenue when possible.
5. Witness publicly (or help others to) by participation in events like the National March for Life in Washington, DC or in Prayer Vigils.
 - The Annual March for Life in Washington D.C. is held on or near January 22. It is a most effective means to increase commitment to Respect Life efforts.
 - The best way to get people from the parish to the March is by tour bus. This will call for some planning. (See Advocacy Resource Section for the general March information and for specifics from the Diocese on transportation and insurance.)
 - Locally: Two organizations with which a parish can coordinate for participation in Vigils are: The *Helpers of God's Precious Infants* and *40 Days for Life*. (see Contact Information Page)
 - The Helpers of God's Precious Infants meet outside the Allentown Women's Center on the second Saturday of every month. It begins with Mass at 8 AM at Notre Dame of Bethlehem (1861 Catasauqua Rd, Bethlehem) and then 15 decades of the Rosary at the Allentown Women's Center. The Helpers, while not an official Diocesan Ministry do have a chaplain assigned by the Bishop.
 - 40 Days for Life is a national organization that has two affiliates here on the territory of the Diocese. Twice a year, in the spring and the fall, they organize a period of 40 Days of witnessing. 40 Days actively seeks out parishes to commit to

a day, or several days. Many parishes that participate in this program take a day and cut it into eight 1 hour segments. As Respect Life Coordinator, your task would be to recruit people for the time slots.

- Consider someone from either of these two organizations as a speaker in your parish. Remember the Diocesan Speaker Policy (See Educational Resources Section)

Guide to the BASIC STEPS FOR A PARISH EVENT/CAMPAIGN (See Advocacy Resource Section)

Includes: *Promotion, Necessary Materials, Table Set-Up, Working the Table and Follow-Up*. Please note: adapt to the specific event/campaign, etc.

C. Serve

PASTORAL OUTREACH

A Parish Respect Life Coordinator has the task of helping the parish not only speak out for the most vulnerable in this current Culture of Death, but also to help them stand with those vulnerable people as well.

A. Ways to Help Develop a Community of Caring

- Coordinate parish implementation of annual Respect Life Program through organizations in the parish, schools and religious education programs which encourages parish discussion groups.
- Promote and assist pregnancy counseling and comprehensive maternity support services, as well as post-abortion counseling and reconciliation programs, and make these services well known in the parish and local community.
- Develop a parish-based ministry to pregnant women and their children.
- Support parishioners' involvement in services to help those who are chronically ill, disabled, or dying and their families.
- Foster awareness of the need to restore legal protection to the lives of unborn children and to safeguard in law the lives of those who are chronically ill, disabled, or dying (support efforts to prevent legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide). Support legislation that provides morally acceptable alternatives to abortion: funding to expand education, health, nutrition, and other services for disadvantaged parents and their children. In 2007 the U.S. Catholic Bishops issued the document, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility*. They stated, "In the Catholic tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue and participation in political life is a moral obligation." **Do not support or oppose candidates for political office when acting as the Respect Life Coordinator.**
- Support parents with pregnancy services especially when there is a pre-natal disability diagnosis. When parents choose "life" by giving birth to their baby with a disability, our pastoral response must be to become informed about disabilities and to offer ongoing support

to the family and welcome to the child. When a woman receives a poor pre-natal diagnosis of a disability, be sure to put them in contact with the diocesan Office for Ministry with Persons with Disabilities. (610-289-8900 x 42).

- Encourage and support a diocese-wide post-abortion ministry (Project Rachel and Rachel's Vineyard); local programs that provide care for the dying; coordinate programs of prayer and worship that focus on the sanctity of all human life. (Local Project Rachel Hotline: 866-3RACHEL)
- Care for those with a disability: awareness that parish liturgical celebrations/catechetical programs/meetings and workshops should be accessible to persons with disabilities and open to their full, active, and conscious participation according to their capacity.

B. Organizations with whom to partner (see Contact Information Pages)

1. Ask the pastor if there are any women or families in the parish who need material or financial support.
2. Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Allentown
3. Mary's Shelter – Residences for pregnant, homeless young women and teens located in Reading and Bethlehem
4. Project Rachel/Rachel's Vineyard – Post-abortion healing retreat weekend.
5. Within the Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns
 - Office for Ministry with Persons with Disabilities
 - Office of Prison Ministry

C. Parish Activities – Involvement- Building Community

1. Baby Bottle Fundraiser
 - Distribute baby bottles after each Mass to assist women at Mary's Shelter, a residence for pregnant, homeless young women and teens. Ask parishioners to fill the bottles with coins, cash or checks and return them as a donation to the shelter.
2. Spiritual Adoption Program
 - Participants in the Spiritual Adoption Program pledge to pray for nine months for a baby in danger of abortion. While this child will remain unknown to his or her 'spiritual parent', God knows who the child is. Many people have found that naming 'their child' helps to keep them focused on the reality that their prayers are helping to save a particular baby and mother from the harm of abortion. This can be done in a parish or school setting, with age appropriate materials.
3. Baby Shower
 - Collect baby clothes, layette items, baby formula, and disposable diapers to distribute to the parish Respect Life projects, including Catholic Charities and Mary's Shelter.
4. Blessing Blankets
 - A Baby Blessing Blanket can be made from soft flannel material and given to expectant mothers or mothers of newborns as a special gift to welcome her child into the world. Blessing blankets can be given to expectant mothers, mothers with newborns, to the parish

Respect Life projects, including Catholic Charities and Mary's Shelter.

5. Christmas Card and Religious Ornament Sale

- Combine fundraising with raising awareness by selling items with a religious theme or respect life message during the season of Advent in preparation for the birth of the baby Jesus. Christmas cards which have a religious theme and respect life message are beneficial to this goal. Christmas ornaments and other decorations with a religious theme are a good compliment along with the Christmas card sale. Seek permission of your pastor for sales.

6. Corporal Works of Mercy

- This activity involves the parish response to the Corporal Works of Mercy. Throughout Lent, parishioners are asked to bring an item each week to give to a charitable cause. A location in the Church will need to be designated for the collection of items before, during or after Mass. Volunteers will be needed to collect the items after each Mass on Sunday and to later deliver the items to the designated recipient. Consult with your pastor to decide on the logistics of this project for your parish.

7. Baby Crib Project

- This project can be done during the weeks after Easter and before Mother's Day. The items will then be given to the Mary's Shelter and/or Catholic Charities.

8. Tree of Hope

- Identify a needy organization within your community to be the recipient of items ranging in price from \$1 to \$15.00. Organizations to consider are the parish Respect Life projects, Mary's Shelter and Catholic Charities.

9. Remembering Those in Prison and on Death Row with Black Ribbons

- Purpose: To solemnly draw attention to those who are in prison and on death row during Holy Week and encourage prayer on their behalf.

D. Pray

The best single source for information on worship and pro-life work is the Liturgy Guide which is part of the USCCB Respect Life Resource Guide.

A. Prayer

The USCCB has this to say about prayer and pro-life work:

"Prayer is the foundation of all that we do in defense of human life." Say a Rosary, a short prayer or blessing. Meditate or ask God's intercession. Devote some time to pray a Holy Hour, or commit to a novena or Stations of the Cross. Special prayers are called for those who have lost a child due to miscarriage, abortion or other cause.

The U.S. Bishops called for pro-life petitions at every Mass in the ***"Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities."*** The USCCB **Word of Life** series is an easy way to do this.

Every January, thousands of pilgrims travel to Washington to pray together for an end to abortion at the National Prayer Vigil for Life. If you can't join us, consider holding your own vigil for the unborn.

There's even a new Mass of Thanksgiving for the Gift of Human Life in the Third Edition of the Roman Missal and a special day of penance on January 22.

“Everyone can find a way to praise and thank God for the gift of life and to ask for protection for each sacred human life.”

- Remember the unborn and their mothers with a daily Hail Mary.
- Fast – individually or as a group.

B. The Mass

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says about the Eucharist that it is “the source and summit of the Christian Life.” Every Sunday, as God’s People, we gather around this great Sacrament and offer up our cares and concerns, especially in our prayers. The Prayer of the Faithful is a wonderful opportunity every week to share these concerns.

The USCCB has a monthly publication, **Word of Life**, available for pastors as a downloadable PDF in both English and Spanish. The information is located in the Resource Section of the Resource Guide. Each month, he can download this resource and find:

- Prayer petitions for each Sunday appropriate for the day
 - Bulletin Quotes
 - Occasional Homily notes
1. Also, as mentioned above in **A. Prayer**, the Third Edition of the Roman Missal has a Mass of Thanksgiving for the Gift of Human Life. Talk with your pastor about times when this Mass can be celebrated in your parish.
 2. Sensitivity to persons with disabilities can show the true depth and meaning of the Gospel of Life. Remember, by reason of their Baptism, all Catholics are equal in dignity in the sight of God and have the same divine calling. Children with disabilities have the right to worship and the right to receive religious instruction in the hope of someday participating in the sacramental life of the Church. Consider including in Sunday intercessions a petition praying for persons with disabilities and recognizing/affirming their gifts.
 3. A red rose placed by the tabernacle or by a statue of Mary on weekends can serve as a reminder to all of greater respect for human life. Place a note in the bulletin to raise awareness.
 4. If the tabernacle candle at your parish burns in memory of loved ones, request that it burn in memory of those lives lost due to the Culture of Death (abortion, euthanasia, death penalty, etc.)
 5. Purchase flowers for the altar in memory of those lives lost due to the Culture of Death.

C. Holy Hour and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (see Liturgical Resource Section)

Devotion to Our Lord and to His consoling presence with us in the Blessed Sacrament can be an important source of strength for people. Talk with your pastor about opportunities to schedule these around the year for the Pro-Life cause.

Depending upon your parish size and location you may want to cluster these services and rotate locations among several parishes, each one taking a turn to host it.

Times to consider:

1. *January 22* (or the day of the March for Life) There may be people whose hearts want to march, but whose feet must stay here in the Diocese because of work and family commitments. At the same time you are advertising to fill up the bus, make sure to publicize your Holy Hour for those who cannot go.
2. *March 25* (The Feast of the Annunciation). What better time to consider the wonder and mystery of our Savior who is fully God and fully human. If Jesus was fully human from the moment of His conception, then what else could we be?
3. *2nd Sunday following Pentecost* - Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
4. *June 15* - Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
5. *August 15* - Assumption
6. *September 14* - Exaltation of the Holy Cross
7. *September 15* - Our Lady of Sorrows
8. *November 21* - The Presentation of Mary
9. *December 12* - Our Lady of Guadalupe

Of course any day is a good day. This is a matter to discuss with your pastor. He may suggest a greater frequency, perhaps even once a month.

Preparing the Church for the Holy Hour

1. Ask your pastor if he'll need help preparing the worship space.
2. Place a table in the middle aisle with the program sheets or booklets (a copy is enclosed for your convenience) in sufficient quantity for people to use during the Holy Hour.
3. The use of music in the Holy Hour (hymns with life themes, etc.) depends upon the custom and availability of music in each parish.

A sample liturgy for the Holy Hour for Life from the USCCB is in the Resource section of the Resource Guide.

D. A Rosary for Life

Talk with your pastor about scheduling a regular monthly Rosary prayed on the same day and time each month for greater respect for all human life.

E. Blessings, Litanies and Prayers

Part of the gift of the Church is our overflowing treasury of worship and prayer. Below is a list of some different rites that can be used in your parish, with your pastor's permission and leadership. There may be others that you are already using. If so, please forward them to this office, so that we may share them with other parishes. The information for each of the liturgies listed below is found in the Resource Section of the Guide

- Blessings for the Family
- Litanies for Life from the USCCB
- Novenas from the USCCB

F. Diocesan Liturgies and Events

These events, organized on a Diocesan level, can be publicized within the parish. The descriptions can be found on the Diocesan Events Information Sheet in the Resource Section of the Manual

- Forever in Our Hearts Mass
- Nine Months in the Womb
- The Rosary for Life
- Day of Recollection for Prison Ministry
- Diocesan Solemnity of Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Monthly Mass for Persons with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities
- Diocesan Mass for Healing for victims of trauma

Getting Organized



A. Parish Respect Life Coordinator

POSITION DESCRIPTION

General Description

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities (PPPLA) specifically focuses on the issues of abortion, infanticide and euthanasia. The Parish Respect Life Coordinator (RLC) must understand and accept the Church's teaching on these issues. The RLC serves both the parish and the Diocese.

Specific Duties

As RLC for your parish, you have an important role in the overall implementation of the Pro-Life ministries in the Diocese of Allentown. Some key tasks for an RLC are to:

1. Be familiar with the Diocese of Allentown Parish Respect Life Coordinator Resource Guide.
2. Be familiar with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) PPPLA, reviewing it periodically if necessary. This provides the background behind the Church's teaching on the sanctity of human life and provides a blueprint for implementing the Pastoral Plan.
3. At the direction of the pastor, organize a parish committee or structure to help plan and implement specific Respect Life programs or projects. The size and formality will depend largely upon the size of the parish. Some coordinators (particularly in small parishes) may find it unnecessary to establish a formal committee. However, every parish should at least have a group of volunteers available to help implement programs/projects as needed.
4. Review with your pastor all Respect Life activities, programs or events that will be advertised or carried out at the parish before they take place. Make sure outside speakers are in compliance with the Diocese of Allentown Speakers' Policy in Resources section of the Resource Guide.
5. Try to initiate some Respect Life effort (no matter how small) at least once a month. Review and evaluate these goals periodically. Consult the Calendar in this Guide. For timely events and for program ideas, see the Resource section of the manual. Meet monthly with the parish Respect Life group.
6. Implement specific projects or requests sent from the Diocesan Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns or the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference (PCC) and the USCCB through the Diocesan Office. Sign up to be a member of the Pennsylvania Catholic Advocacy Network at www.pacatholic.org.
7. Remember that the RLC is at the service of the pastor. The pastor or the RLC may end this arrangement at any time after mutual conversation. If you step down from this position, please notify the Office of Pro-Life and Social Concerns.
8. Be sensitive to the public witness of all your actions in Respect Life work. The RLC may be involved in other Pro-Life organizations and promote other Respect Life events on the parish level, provided the pastor is informed and consents when those events are not under the sponsorship of the USCCB's Pastoral Plan or Diocese of Allentown.



B. Your Relationship with the Pastor and the Community

When your goal is to engage a community, relationships are vital to your effectiveness. More importantly, we cannot expect to build a Culture of Life if we do not first uphold the dignity of every person we encounter and treat them with the same respect and reverence as those lives in danger in our society. Please keep the following in mind as you work to build a Culture of Life in your parish and your community:

1. Your spiritual life is an important part of your effectiveness. If you are a person of prayer, a person who is faith-filled, the Spirit will work through you to build up the kingdom. Let prayer be the foundation and source of your ongoing strength and hope. Be open to the Holy Spirit both through personal prayer and through the voice of those you work with.
2. Your involvement in various aspects of parish life is important. Your participation in liturgical ministries will give you visibility. Your involvement in parish meetings, religious education, parish festivals, etc. will give you credibility as a concerned, committed, responsible leader in the parish community. If you help others, they in turn will help you to work on your projects and activities.
3. Be a team person. Delegate. To accomplish your goals and activities you will need the cooperation of many other people. Involve others in your planning and implementation. You can make a greater difference if you work as a team person, and you will also make an impact on the hearts of those you work with.
4. How does the pastor perceive you? Are you perceived as the type of person mentioned above? Are you well organized? Do you have a track record of “having followed through”? Are the planned activities going to be more work for the pastor? Or are you and others assuming the responsibility of implementing the plans in cooperation with the pastor? Are you a parishioner who gives of his/her time, talent and treasure?
5. Being committed includes an ongoing commitment to read and be informed of life issues as well as Catholic Church teachings and current events of importance. It is imperative to stay informed of the latest news on life issues and where the Church stands and to educate the parish on these issues.
6. Work with existing groups, committees and ministries within the parish. If planning a liturgy, work with the liturgy committee if your parish has one. Advance planning is crucial. Surprises generally do not work when it comes to liturgical events. Many members of the parish, such as the Knights of Columbus, the youth or those preparing for Confirmation, are eager to participate in Respect Life activities when the opportunity is provided. Utilize these groups to communicate with the entire parish.
7. Funding of Activities. If the parish has an annual budget, request a reasonable amount to cover the cost of planned activities. Fund raising activities that do not conflict with parish activities also give parishioners the opportunity to support pro-life efforts. Parish organizations such as the Knights of Columbus are often willing to help contribute toward expenses.

Calendar

Holydays, Feast Days and Special Observances

January

January 1	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God <i>Blessing of Mothers</i> Feast of the Presentation <i>Blessing of Infants</i> Feast of the Epiphany <i>Baby Shower</i> <i>Holy Hour</i>
January 22	Roe v. Wade Anniversary <i>White Ribbon Campaign</i> <i>Banquet - Diocesan Stand-Up for Life Contest</i> Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus

February

February 14	Valentine's Day
Lent	<i>Corporal Works of Mercy</i>

March and April

March 19	Feast of St. Joseph <i>Blessing of Fathers</i>
March 25	Feast of the Annunciation <i>Blessing of Pregnancy</i> <i>Holy Hour</i>
Good Friday	<i>Black Ribbon Campaign</i>
Easter Sunday	<i>Life theme</i>

May

Mother's Day	<i>Blessing of Mothers</i>
May 31	Feast of the Visitation <i>Holy Hour</i>

June

2 nd Sunday after Pentecost	Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
June 15	Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
Father's Day	<i>Blessing of Fathers</i> <i>Blessing of Families</i>

July

July 4	Independence Day <i>Prayer for those denied a right to life</i>
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August

August 15 Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Rosary for Life
Holy Hour

September

Labor Day *Blessing the fruits of our labors*
Letters to Schools/PREP for Diocesan Stand-Up for Life
Contest, Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus

September 14 Exaltation of the Holy Cross
September 15 Our Lady of Sorrows

October

Respect Life Sunday
Respect Life Month
October 7 *Respect Life Pastoral Plan – sent to Parishes*
Feast of the Holy Rosary
Importance of Prayer
March for Life- begin plans for reserving bus/busses

November

November 1 All Saints
Living a life of prayer and in service to others

November 21 Presentation of Mary
Holy Hour
Thanksgiving for life

Thanksgiving

December

Advent *Tree of Hope*
Christmas Card and Religious Ornament Sale
Blessing of Child in the Womb

December 8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception
Essay Judging, Diocesan Stand-Up for Life Contest,
Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus

December 12 Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
Prayer for the Unborn

December 25 Christmas
The gift of a child

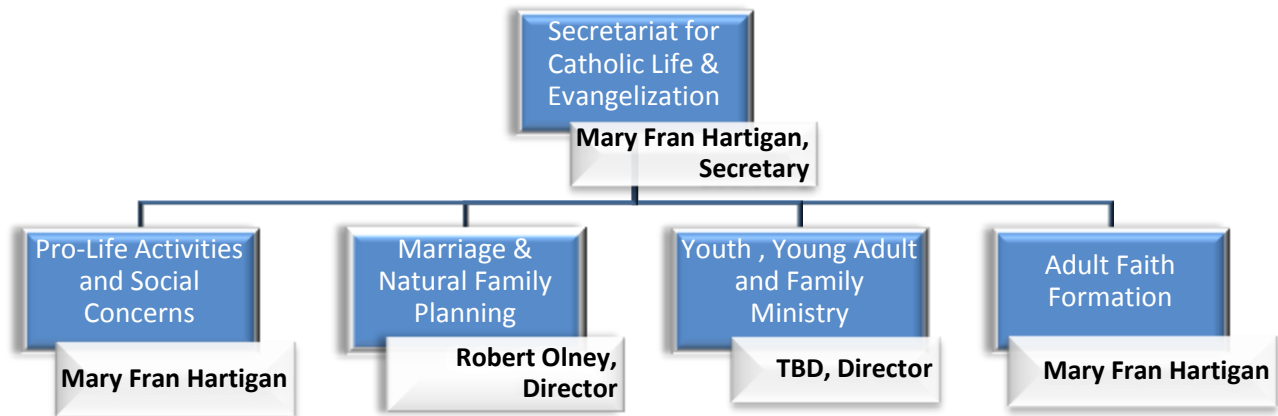
December 28 Feast of the Holy Innocents
December 30 Feast of the Holy Family

Your Partners in Ministry

C. The Deaneries of the Diocese of Allentown

The Diocese of Allentown is divided into 5 Deaneries, corresponding to the 5 counties that comprise the Diocesan territory. Each of our 84 parishes is part of a Deanery. For further information on the Deaneries and constituent parishes, consult the Official Catholic Directory of the Diocese of Allentown.

D. Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization



E. Appreciation Dinner for Parish Respect Life Volunteers

A yearly appreciation dinner or party for those who volunteer for the parish Respect Life Committee is a great way to boost morale and strengthen bonds among volunteers.

Consider the following in planning your appreciation event:

Who: Who will be invited? May the entire family come? Don't forget to consult your pastor's schedule first so that he can be there.

What: What kind of a gathering will it be: a dinner, picnic, bar-b-q, party, brunch? Will it be structured or casual?

Where: Where will the event be held? Can you use parish facilities or someone's home?

When: Choose a time most convenient for all so that there will be 100% participation

Other ideas for consideration:

1. Is there someone who deserves recognition?
2. Will there be a small gift for each guest? (little feet pins, a rose)
3. Have a set time to begin and end.
4. Delegate the work.
5. Will there be decorations?
6. Make it very clear that this is not going to include a meeting.
7. Consult with the pastor to see if he's willing to help finance the meal.

F. How to Fund Your Respect Life Projects/Programs

As a Respect Life Coordinator, you will encounter the need for money to pay for miscellaneous expenses such as copying, postage, purchasing educational items, etc. Please speak with your pastor to see if funds are available for these programs. If the parish cannot cover all costs, below are several ideas for funding:

Source 1:

Parish organizations such as the Knights of Columbus, Altar Society, Catholic Daughters, Holy Name Society, etc., are often very willing to help contribute toward these expenses.

Source 2:

Individual parishioners or businesses who may not have the time to volunteer may be willing to donate towards these expenses. When you are soliciting funds, make sure that you have transparency. Have a specific project and a financial goal in mind. Also, consider soliciting pro-life businesses to donate goods and/or services, (copying/printing, flowers for Mother's Day, food for a parish event, etc.)

Source 3:

Fund raising projects such as a bake sale, parish breakfast, aluminum recycling, selling roses or corsages on Mother's Day

In all instances, only proceed after you have obtained your pastor's approval.

Resources

Education

Advocacy and Public Policy

Service and Pastoral Outreach

Prayer and Worship



Education

Simple Steps in the Parish

1. Respect Life Multi-Media Library (*Besides selections from the USCCB*)

Bella

Bloodmoney

Books (*Besides selections from the USCCB*)

Unplanned, Abby Johnson

A Civilization of Love: What Every Catholic Can Do to Transform the World,

Carl Anderson

Humane Vitae, Pope Paul VI

Evangelium Vitae, Bl. John Paul II

Welcome and Justice for Persons with Disabilities, USCCB 1998

2. How to plan a Movie Night

- Make sure that the parish pastor approves the idea.
- Publicize. Publicize early and often. Allow at least a month ahead of time, and keep the publicity up through all the four weeks. It takes 7 “hits” to have an idea register with someone, so bulletin announcements, posters, emails, notices on the parish website, Facebook page and verbal announcements where permissible are what you need.
- Make sure that you are keeping within the letter and spirit of copyright laws.
- Make sure that all the audiovisual equipment necessary is set up and operating well before “showtime.” Make sure you have made any necessary requisitions from the parish office.

3. How to write for your Parish Bulletin

- Ask in what format the editor wants copy and give it to him/her that way.
- Meet the deadline for copy. Ask about length and keep within limits.
- As RLC your concern is not only abortion, but also issues such as euthanasia, the death penalty, reproductive technologies, stem cell research and post-abortive healing along with other matters. There is plenty about which to write or to share over 12 months, so “switch it up” on occasion.
- Express your thought or idea as clearly and concisely as possible.
- State the facts as they are, not as you would like them to be and be prepared to document all your facts if necessary.
- Do not hesitate to use a personal experience to illustrate a point, especially when dealing with abortion. When rightly told, it can be very persuasive.

4. How to set up a Respect Life Resource Table for the Parish Ministry Fair

Having visual items that draw attention are always good to draw a crowd:

- A colored table cloth
- A theme cake for you to cut up for everyone to eat. You could have the same cake duplicated for a door prize at the end of the fair.
- Candy on your table
- Something that was handmade to raffle off or a nice Respect Life item
- Educational materials available for parishioners to take, but have more available under the table. Try to display materials that cover a variety of life issues. This will help you to attract a variety of people with different gifts and passions.
- Pictures that were taken during the year of the events that your Respect Life Committee has initiated, helped with or sponsored. Have a tri-fold board so that you can display some of your events.
- Brochures that describe the Respect Life work at your parish, what you do at your particular parish and who to contact for more information.

The Office of Pro-Life Activities has many items, documents, tri-fold brochures and information that you have access to just by calling or emailing the Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns at (610) 289-8900 ext. 26, Prolife&SocialConcerns@allentowndiocese.org.

5. How to organize the White Ribbon for Life Campaign

- Seek the permission of your pastor.
- Under the direction of your pastor, select a particular weekend in January to promote the White Ribbon for Life Campaign.
- Small white ribbon loops can be made using white ribbon and small safety pins. Seek the help of the parish Respect Life group, other volunteers and youth to help make the small ribbons. Plan a time convenient for most to get together and do this. You will need white ribbon, scissors and small safety pins. Make a few sample ones ahead of time so that those helping will know how long to cut the ribbon and where to place the pin. This will help insure quality control.
- Obtain volunteers and small children to help hand out the ribbons (which can be placed in small baskets) at the end of all the weekend Masses. Each volunteer should wear one, and inform people that the ribbon signifies their *respect for life from conception to natural death*.
- An announcement can be placed in the bulletin in advance along with an announcement from the pulpit that particular weekend.

6. How to organize an Outside Speaker

- A. Use the Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activity as a source for topics. But some to consider would be:
 - a. Euthanasia and end of life decision making

- b. The need for effective and compassionate care for persons with disabilities.
 - c. The Catholic Church and capital punishment
 - d. Advances in the biological sciences and how they reinforce the Church's teaching on life and humanity
 - e. Reproductive technologies and infertility
 - f. Stem cell research
 - g. How a Catholic makes a political decision
 - h. Representatives from outside Pro-Life organizations. Remember, we have a speaker policy that can be found in the resource section of the Resource Guide.
 - i. Ministry with persons with disabilities here in the Diocese of Allentown
 - j. Prison ministry here in the Diocese of Allentown
- B. If you have any questions about speakers or topics, please feel free to contact the Office of Pro-Life and Social Concerns.
- C. In determining topics and speakers, you should have a joint meeting with the pastor and Director/Coordinator of Religious Education at least once a year to determine if speakers and topics can coordinate with the educational and formational goals of the parish in the upcoming year.
- D. When it comes time to have a speaker at your parish, keep these rules in mind:
- a. Obtain your pastor's approval
 - b. Submit a Request for Speaker Approval to the Secretary for Catholic Life and Evangelization. (<http://www.allentowndiocese.org/the-diocese/youth-protection/policy-for-speakers/>). It can take at least a month for this process. Keep in mind the speaker will need, if she/he does not already have it, a diocesan national criminal background check.
 - c. Publicize. Publicize early and often. Allow at least a month ahead of time, and keep the publicity up through all the four weeks. It takes 7 "hits" to have an idea register with someone, so bulletin announcements, posters, e-mails, notices on the parish website, Facebook page and verbal announcements where permissible are effective ways to publicize.
 - d. Plan ahead. With both the speaker policy and the need for publicity, you will need at least three months to ensure that everything is in order. Even more time would be better.
 - e. Ask ahead of time what his/her requirements will be regarding audiovisual equipment, chalkboard, whiteboard, etc.
 - f. Make sure that all the audiovisual equipment necessary is set up and operating well before hand. Make sure you have made any necessary requisitions from the parish office. Also, a glass or bottle of water on or near the podium is a nice hospitable touch.

- g. If there is an honorarium involved, make sure the person responsible for preparing the check has done so ahead of time so that you can give it to the speaker at the end of the presentation.
- h. Political candidates may not speak on parish premises.

Advocacy Actions

A. National March for Life in Washington, DC

I. Participation Plan

1. Fall is a good time to try to estimate the number of people you can encourage to attend the March for Life in DC. Be reasonable and realistic. You do not have to get 100%, at least on your first few efforts.
2. If you are looking at low numbers, coordinate with your neighboring parish Respect Life Coordinators. If you do not know who the RLCs are in your neighboring parishes, contact the Office of Pro-Life and Social Concerns and we will get you connected.
3. Contact a coach bus company in November to determine pricing. The cost is approximately \$1500 for the day.
4. When renting a bus, there are some important insurance matters to keep in mind that deserve a separate page. Please see Resources Section for Information regarding transportation from the Diocesan Office of Real Estate and Insurance.
5. Since money is involved, now would be a good time to coordinate with your pastor to determine how this is to be handled.
6. You may want to reduce costs. A number of the parishes that already do this have received support in underwriting the bus costs from organizations like the Knights of Columbus, the parish Altar and Rosary Society and Pennsylvanians for Human Life.
7. Keep in mind that the March for Life in Washington, DC comes in mid-January, and much of the planning for it will occur during Advent and Christmas at a time when many people's minds will be elsewhere. It will be your job to maintain the focus on the March.
8. Determine how much it will cost per person. Start in early December to fill the bus. Coordinate with your pastor to have announcements in the bulletin, as well as posters throughout the parish buildings.
9. Collect money for the bus. Make sure that all checks are made payable to the parish and that all monies, cash or check, are deposited promptly into the designated parish account so that the check to the bus company can be prepared in a timely manner.
10. Have a check list of who said they were coming and who has paid. Names/Addresses/Phone/Email are all useful information to have at hand. If you can get working cell numbers, even better.
11. Coordinate with the bus company so that you will know:
 - a. when and where you will board the bus
 - b. when and where you will disembark in Washington, DC

- c. when and where you will board the bus for the return trip
 - d. when and where you will stop for dinner.
12. Plan for a place to stop for dinner. Choose a place that is close to the highway and can handle a large number of people. It can be good to have a place to sit and get warm and to share impressions about the day. Share this information and the price range as well.
 13. Arrange with the pastor to have a traveler's Mass or some type of prayer and blessing before you go. It will depend upon what time you have to board. Some parishes do this the night before.
 14. Remind people to dress appropriately and to pack a "goodie" bag for their use. Suggested items are bottled water, Kleenex, granola bars, peanut butter crackers, etc.
 15. Prepare a map/agenda for those on your bus. Include on it your cell number in case someone gets lost or separated. The March for Life Website has a map on it. Print it out and mark it so people will know:
 - a. when and where you will disembark in Washington, DC
 - b. when and where you will gather as a group for the March
 - c. when and where you will board the bus for the return trip.
 16. About a week prior to the March, start following weather forecasts and plan accordingly.

II. On the day of the March (usually, but not always January 22), there will be a number of key things you will need to do.

1. At the parish or pick up site, be ready to check people in as they arrive.
2. On board the bus, you can always say the Rosary or watch an appropriate motion picture (*this would be a good time to use some of the Media resources you have collected.*)
3. Review with your group all pertinent information - use your map so they know where they will be getting off, where you will be rendezvousing to march and where you will get back on board the bus.
4. Walk to your rally point.
5. Wait until it is time to march. Review information - especially what you will do after the March.
6. During the March, try to stay together. That can be surprisingly difficult. This is where having cell phones will come in handy.
7. If already planned upon, go to dinner location.
8. Return to starting place and thank everyone for their participation.
9. Within 24 hours compile a list of what worked and what did not. Keep those notes for next year.

III. Information Regarding Transportation from the Diocesan Office of Real Estate and Insurance.

1. Commercial carrier or contracted transportation is the most desirable method to be used for trips and, whenever possible, this mode of transportation should be provided.
2. **The use of private passenger vehicles is discouraged and should be avoided if at all possible.**
3. If commercial carriers are used (i.e. commercial airlines, trains, or buses), no further information is required.
4. If transportation is contracted, signed contracts should be executed with an appropriate hold harmless agreement, protecting the parish/school and the Diocese of Allentown.
5. Contracts should be submitted to Catholic Mutual Group for review prior to signing.
6. Contracted carriers should provide proof of insurance with minimum limits of liability of \$2,000,000 CSL (Combined Single Limit) and name the Diocese of Allentown, Most Reverend John O. Barres, S.T.D., J.C.L., D.D., the location and the pastor, principal and or administrator as Additional Insureds.
7. **The Certificate should be forwarded to Catholic Mutual Group for review and approval at least 10 days prior to the trip.**

B. National Committee for a Human Life Amendment

The National Committee for a Human Life Amendment (NCHLA)'s objectives include educating citizens, developing pro-life legislative networks, and offering programs in support of pro-life legislation. Among its various activities, NCHLA produces educational and program resources, communicates with leaders about legislative priorities, and presents legislative seminars throughout the year. In a special way, NCHLA assists dioceses, state Catholic Conferences, and Catholic lay groups. The Committee also works closely with the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

For more information, see the Contact Information Section.

C. Legislative and Public Policy: Outreach for Advocacy Involvement

Many bills in the state and federal legislatures affect the life and dignity of the human person and as a Respect Life Coordinator, you will receive Action Alerts from the USCCB and/or PCC. Advocates participate in political life by advocating for social justice in a very effective way through political responsibility.

1. Plan to develop an active list of advocates to join the Diocese of Allentown's Legislative Advocacy Network and Pennsylvania Catholic Conference.
 - a. Hold an event after Sunday Mass, perhaps in conjunction with a Parish Social Justice Committee. Set-up a sign-up table for interested parishioners to join the Legislative Advocacy Network. Contact the Office of Pro-Life and Social Concerns for a copy of the

Legislative Advocacy Form to copy or go to the Diocesan website:

www.allentowndiocese.org.

- b. Send form and/or list to the Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns
 - c. With the Pastor's permission, ask people if they would share e-mails and/or phone numbers so that you have a list of people to contact when there is an issue.
2. Go to the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference: Another way to receive legislative information is to enroll and receive the latest action Alerts on the legislative issues that matter to you most. visit www.pacatholic.org and click "Take Action."
 3. At the direction of the Pro-Life and Social Concerns Office and permission of pastor,
 - a. Keep parishioners informed of upcoming important legislation on all Dignity of Life Issues via:
 - i. Bulletin Insert
 - ii. Phone/E-Mail Tree (developed from the Advocacy Network Drive-see above)
 - b. Organize event/campaign:
 - i. Parish Voter Registration drive (see Resource Section Organize Parish Voter Registration Sunday)

D. Organize Parish Voter Registration Sunday

In order to be successful in carrying out our mission of renewing the face of the earth, we must be equipped to carry out the most basic act that a citizen can perform - voting. Polling has shown that fewer than 50% of self-identified Christians are registered to vote, and only half of those who are registered actually vote on Election Day. If we are to continue to thrive as a political force in this country, and if we expect our issues to be addressed in the public arena, then we must be capable of turning out in force when the polls are open. Obviously this is impossible if Christians are not registered to vote.

Each State has its own laws about who may register and vote. All States require that you be a United States citizen by birth or naturalization to register to vote in federal and State elections.

Federal law makes it illegal to falsely claim U.S. citizenship to register to vote in any federal, State, or local election. Moreover, you cannot be registered to vote in more than one place at a time.

To register to vote in Pennsylvania, you must be:

1. A citizen of the United States for at least one month before the next primary, special, municipal, or general election.
2. A resident of Pennsylvania and the election district in which you want to register and vote for at least 30 days before the next primary, special, municipal, or general election.
3. At least 18 years of age on or before the day of the next primary, special, municipal, or general election.

Once you have registered to vote, you are not required to register again unless you change your residence, name, or political party affiliation.

Voter Registration Sunday is a non-partisan voter registration effort conducted in churches all across our country. The Voter Registration Drive cannot endorse or oppose a particular candidate or issue. For

example, you could not post signs that say “Vote Pro-Life.” To make it a success, it is vital that your church participates in a non-partisan fashion and ensures that all its members are registered to vote.

*In anticipation of conducting a Voter Registration drive in your church, or in other churches, you **should first gain the pastor's approval**. If your parish has a Faithful Citizenship Committee or other legislative advocacy organization, a collaborative effort with these groups should be pursued. After you've done that, follow the steps as listed below.

Promotion

- Place an announcement in your church bulletin several Sundays in advance. If your church has an announcement board or video screen, use this method as well. Whatever needs to be done for your church to be aware of Voter Registration Sunday should be done.
- Have the pastor make an announcement from the pulpit that Sunday as well. If a layperson or other staff member makes the announcement, it won't have as much influence.
- Have the pastor give directions as to where the registration table is located.

Necessary Materials

- Registration forms can be obtained from your local voter registration county office. You can also check your phone book under voter registration or call your county Courthouse for additional information. More information can be found at www.votespa.com.
- Please note: the registration forms cannot be copied for any reason and must be returned within 5-7 days.
- Make sure to get enough copies of the voter registration forms for your church. A good number would be enough for half of your church's membership.

Set Up the Table

- When setting up your registration table, make sure to place it in an area with heavy traffic. You may want to use multiple locations if there are several exits. If you have posters, hang them behind your table so that people will know why you are there.
- Spread the registration forms on your table.

Work the Table

- When working the table, do not sit down. Rather, stand in front of it. Engage people in conversation as they pass, asking them if they are registered to vote. You must be pro-active or nothing will happen.
- When a person takes a form, have them fill it out immediately at your table. Don't give them any opportunity to take it with them and then forget. Tell them you will be responsible for taking all completed forms to the voter registration office.
- If an individual comes up to the table and says (s)he is not sure whether (s)he is already registered to vote, have him/her fill out the registration form.
- Be sure to remain completely non-partisan in your interactions and do not engage in issue-related conversations (do not mention the need to vote pro-life, pro-school choice, etc.). This is a strictly non-partisan effort and must remain so.

The Follow Up

- After you have collected all the new registration forms take them to the Voter Registrar's office in your county.

- Be sure to send a "thank you" note to the pastor and other leaders in the church who helped make the project possible. Express your appreciation for their help and the importance of the duty of voting. This helps you to build a trusting relationship with your pastor so when you plan your next project or event, you will have access to the members of the church.

Pastoral Outreach

A. Project Rachel and Rachel's Vineyard Post-Abortion Healing Diocese of Allentown

What Is Post-Abortion Trauma?

- Both women and men suffer emotionally and spiritually because of an abortion.
- Some common feelings which signal a need for counseling include: grief, guilt, sadness, and anger surrounding the abortion. Many individuals also experience eating or sleeping problems, difficulty concentrating, nightmares, and relationship problems, bouts of crying, and nagging feelings of self-blame and self-destructive behavior.
- These feelings may be denied and suppressed, only to surface one, five, or several years after the abortion.

What Is Project Rachel?

- Project Rachel is a ministry to help those who suffer emotionally or spiritually, because of an abortion. By working through their pain, those involved come to recognize and experience God's healing grace.
- Project Rachel offers an opportunity through loving, caring, and understanding counseling to move toward reconciliation -- with their unborn child, their family, the Church, and God.
- Project Rachel is available to anyone suffering because of an abortion experience. This includes women who have had an abortion, the father of the aborted child, grandparents, other family members and friends.

What Has God Called Us to Be?

- Project Rachel emphasizes the Catholic Church's teaching regarding the sacredness of all human life while stressing the endless mercy of God.
- Project Rachel proclaims the eternal Truth that there is nothing greater than the Lord's capacity to forgive.
- If someone has been touched by the trauma of abortion, we want them to know that our Church understands and cares about them. We want them to know that we are willing to help with the healing process.

What Are the First Steps for a Loving Church?

- Each parish should have Project Rachel information available to parishioners. Project Rachel brochures and posters are available for promoting this ministry in your parish.
- If you have a special interest in this ministry and would like to get involved, please call the Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns (610-289-8900).

What Are the Healing Opportunities We Offer?

Several healing opportunities are available. Individuals may choose the one that works best for him or her. When calling the Project Rachel phone number, there is the possibility of speaking with a counselor, or leaving a message on a confidential voice mail.

That number is **1-866-3RACHEL (1-866-372-2435)**.

- If the individual requests to speak to a priest, they will be given the name of a priest in the Diocese who has been trained in Post-Abortion healing.
- The opportunity to participate in Project Rachel Counseling can be offered to the individual. In the Diocese of Allentown, Project Rachel is twelve individual counseling sessions that are provided either at a Catholic Charities office in the Diocese, or at a Parish that is confidential and convenient to the individual who makes the call. The sessions are held with a Masters Level Therapist and there is no charge to the individual. Project Rachel affords the individual and opportunity to express the grief associated with an abortion in the safety of a counseling environment. Individuals are encouraged to mourn the loss of their child, and to make use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation if the individual so desires.
- An additional experience for Post Abortion Healing is the opportunity to attend a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat. The retreat is offered worldwide and the individual can choose to attend wherever it is convenient. The Diocese of Allentown offers the retreat in a private location twice a year. The retreat does have a cost attached to it, but no one is refused due to financial reasons. More information about the retreat can be found at www.rachelsvineyard.org.

B. Basic Steps for a Parish Event/Campaign

Here is some useful information for setting up a general information table. There are a variety of times and places for you consider doing this. As always, the first step is to obtain your pastor's permission. But consider:

- The Parish Mission Fair
- The Parish Carnival
- Christmas/Holiday Fairs

Just keep in mind the people to whom you will be reaching out. Materials that can alienate or hurt have no place in your presentation.

Promotion

- Place an announcement in your church bulletin several Sundays in advance. If your church has an announcement board or video screen, use this method as well. Whatever needs to be done for your church to be aware of an event should be done.
- Have the pastor make an announcement from the pulpit that Sunday as well. If a layperson or other staff member makes the announcement, it won't have as much influence. The pastor should mention this during the Mass and give directions as to where the table is located.

Necessary Materials

Determined accordingly by the purpose of the event/campaign

Set Up the Table

- When setting up your table, make sure to place it in an area with heavy traffic. You may want to use multiple locations if there are several exits. If you have posters, hang them behind your table so that people will know why you are there.
- Spread forms on your table.

Work the Table

- When working the table, do not sit down. Rather, stand in front of it. Engage people in conversation as they pass. You must be proactive or nothing will happen.
- When a person takes a form, have them fill it out immediately at your table.

The Follow Up

- After you have collected necessary information and/or forms, proceed to follow-up with the main goal of the event accordingly.
- Be sure to send a "thank you" note to the pastor and other leaders in the church who helped make the project possible. Express your appreciation for their help. This helps you to build a trusting relationship with your pastor so when you plan your next project or event, you will have access to the members of the church.

C. Baby Bottle Fundraiser

To benefit Mary's Shelter:

- Description: Distribute baby bottles after each Mass to assist women at Mary's Shelter – a residence for pregnant, homeless young women and teens. (See Other Programs, Services and/or Organizations for contact information)
- How: Place a Bulletin Announcement two weeks before the campaign to let parishioners know of the upcoming fundraiser.
 - Include which organization/ministry is sponsoring, where the funds will be donated, and for what purpose.
 - Include the timeframe of 1 month to distribute and collect the bottles.
 - The Respect Life Committee will be responsible to distribute the baby bottles and collect them upon return.
- To do: Purchase baby bottles. Suggestion: Label and decorate baby bottles with ribbon (perhaps a service project for children).

LABEL:

Mary's Shelter

*Providing help and hope
to pregnant, homeless
young women
since 1995.
In a nurturing, secure
and loving environment
they provide training and
guidance which fosters
independence
and strengthens
families.*

*Your support will
change lives*

TAG:

Please help us change lives!

D. Spiritual Adoption Program

The Spiritual Adoption Program was begun and is spearheaded by the Archdiocese of Baltimore Respect Life Office. Additional information and resources can be found at <http://www.archbalt.org/respect-life/spiritual-adoption/>

If you need any assistance in accessing these resources, please contact the Diocese of Allentown Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns at 610-289-8900 x 225.

Participants in the Spiritual Adoption Program pledge to pray for nine months for a baby in danger of abortion. While this child will remain unknown to his or her 'spiritual parent', God knows who the child is. Many people have found that naming 'their child' helps to keep them focused on the reality that their prayers are helping to save a particular baby and mother from the harm of abortion. This can be done in a parish or school setting, with age appropriate materials.

The Purpose of the Spiritual Adoption Program is threefold:

1. Encourage prayer for those contemplating abortion that they will respond to God's grace and welcome their child into life.
2. Educate adults and children about the development of the pre-born child.
3. Provide mothers in need with a 'baby shower' of donated baby gifts, or simply celebrate with a 'birthday party' at the conclusion of the program. In one school a crib was bought with monetary gifts and the students filled a crib with gifts for expectant mothers.

At the beginning of the program a brief announcement asking the students or parishioners to pray is made at the school or parish. If desired, prayer cards can be distributed to all involved in the program. It is advisable to have the participants give their baby a name. The prayer can be recited each morning. For the following nine months one poster is displayed per month in a prominent place. Resources for the Spiritual Adoption Program can be found at <http://www.archbalt.org/respect-life/spiritual-adoption/resources/index.cfm>. This includes color posters for display each month of the program, a letter to teachers, ideas for school, "Thank You" notes from the unborn child, prayer cards, sample pulpit and bulletin announcements, a pledge card and a Certificate of Spiritual Adoption.

At the end of the program a 'baby shower' or 'birthday party' can be held and gifts of baby items donated given to Mary's Shelter and/or Catholic Charities.

This is a great project for Catholic Confirmation preparation classes as it involves prayer, education and community service.

While it is not always possible to see the particular effects of prayer, we know through Scripture that God wants us to pray, and we know by faith that He answers all prayers. The educational aspect of the program is beneficial to people of all ages, including children. Churches and schools are encouraged to display the very gentle and appealing full color posters that both depict and describe in words the baby's development each month. There is no mention of abortion on the posters. Some schools obtain enough sets of posters for each classroom and/or entrance or exit to the school.

Where can posters and precious feet pins be purchased?

The poster series is available for order online from the Respect Life Office of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Visit the online form <http://www.archbalt.org/respect-life/posters/order.cfm> or simply phone in your order: 410-547-5537. Precious feet pins (or precious hand pins) can be ordered through the Heritage House Catalog: 919 S. Main Street, Snowflake, AZ 85937. Phone: 1-800-858-3040 Fax: 1-928-536-7785. Heritage House also has an online catalog: www.heritagehouse76.com.

E. Baby Shower

Collect baby clothes, layette items, baby formula, and disposable diapers to distribute to the parish respect life projects, including Catholic Charities and Mary's Shelter. (see Contact Information)

Directions

Two weeks before the Baby Shower:

- Create flyers and display them around the church about the upcoming event.
- Place an announcement in the bulletin about the Baby Shower to run for two weekends prior to the event, as follows:

Epiphany Baby Shower

As the three Magi celebrated the birth of the Christ child by showering him with generous gifts, you are asked to be a modern day Magi and bring a gift for a baby to the Church on the Feast of the Epiphany. These gifts will be used to help needy babies through (name of organization). All items may be placed near the nativity scene. Please do not wrap your gift. Used items are acceptable, but must be safe, clean and functional. Gift ideas are listed below:

Baby Clothes (0 to 12 months)
Baby Formula

Layette Items
Disposable Diapers

The week of the Baby Shower:

- Have the celebrant remind people to place their item by the nativity scene and thank those who so generously gave to those who are less fortunate.
- Pick up the items after the Masses and distribute them to the recipients.

The week after the Baby Shower:

- Write a thank you note in the bulletin thanking those who gave to the Baby Shower.

F. Blessing Blankets

A Baby Blessing Blanket can be made from soft flannel material and given to expectant mothers or mothers of newborns as a special gift to welcome her child into the world.

For this project you will need:

- Volunteers - consider asking the Ladies Club, a Senior's Club, a sewing group, a school group, etc. to make some of the blankets as a project, have an annual baby blanket sewing party
- Fabric, thread and possibly other sewing notions - ask for donations of fabric, thread, ruffles or other supplies (children's flannel sheets work wonderfully)
- Sewing machine
- A Blessing Blanket card - These can be handmade with a colored drawing by a child and attached to the blanket. The script of the card reads as follows:

Blessing Blanket

May your baby be wrapped in the love of our heavenly Father, as you wrap your baby lovingly with this blanket. This Blanket was made with love and prayers for your baby by (Name).

Pattern

The blankets need to be the size of a receiving blanket. This would be 2-½ feet by 2-½ feet with ¾ inch extra added to the length and width for a seam. Cut a pattern in the shape of a square with a 30-¾ inch length and 30-¾ inch width.

Instructions

- Cut the material in the shape of the pattern.
- With matching thread turn the edges in two times and sew them down.
- One may also wish to use seam binding or ruffles around the edges of the blanket.
- Attach the Blessing Blanket Card

Optional Idea: A kit can be made with pre-cut material and instructions so that individuals can take them home to work on.

Blessing blankets can be given to expectant mothers, mothers with newborns, to the parish respect life projects, including Catholic Charities and Mary's Shelter. (see Other Programs, Services and/or Organizations for contact information)

G. Christmas Card and Religious Ornament Sale

Combine fundraising with raising awareness by selling items with a religious theme or respect life message during the season of Advent in preparation for the birth of the baby Jesus. Christmas cards which have a religious theme and pro-life message are beneficial to this goal. Christmas ornaments and other decorations with a religious theme are a good compliment along with the Christmas card sale.

A catalog from Autom, Inc., a religious articles company, may be ordered by simply calling their toll free phone number (800) 341-2350. You can also browse and order online at <http://www.autom.com/>. This company sells a variety of religious Christmas cards, decorations and items in quantity at reasonable prices.

Schedule the fundraiser for at least two consecutive weekends during Advent. Place an announcement in the parish bulletin a week before the Christmas card and ornament sale, and then also for the following weekends of the sale. Prepare a pulpit announcement for the weekends of the sales.

A sample bulletin and pulpit announcement follows:

Christmas Card and Ornament Sale

Beautiful, colorful religious Christmas cards will be available after all Masses on the weekends of (dates) and (dates). All Christmas cards will have a respect life message. Christmas decorations with a religious theme will also be on sale. All proceeds will go towards (name of respect life organization). Please stop by the table located (location) and support the parish respect life efforts.

After the sale, place a thank you in the parish bulletin to those who bought items at the sale.

H. Corporal Works of Mercy

This particular activity involves the Corporal Works of Mercy and a parish response. Parishioners are asked to bring an item each week to give to a charitable cause throughout Lent. A location in the Church will need to be designated for the collection of items before, during or after Mass. Volunteers will be needed to collect the items after each Mass on Sunday and to later deliver the items to the designated recipient. Consult with your pastor to decide on the logistics of this project for your parish.

The following may be used as a bulletin announcement and/or pulpit announcement:

During the five weeks of Lent, let us all join together in living out the Corporal Works of Mercy based on the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 25:

"I was hungry and you gave me to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you cared for me, I was in prison and you visited me."

- Each week you will be asked to bring a gift pertaining to the scriptural verse and work of mercy for that week.
- These gifts will be given to various organizations whose calling is to help the less fortunate.
- Please pray the prayer with your family for the organization of that week.
- Together, as a family, decide how you will help this organization. A list of suggestions is available.
- Bring your gift to church with you. Keep your gift with you until Father calls you forward. (Or, please leave your gift at (location) in the Church)
- If you forget your gift on the appropriate Sunday, please feel free to leave it at the parish office during the week or bring it the next week.
- Thank you for your prayers and participation during this holy time.

Corporal Works of Mercy for Each Week of Lent

❖ First Week of Lent

Matthew 25:35 – *"For I was hungry and you gave me food"*

Recipient: St. Vincent de Paul Society 570-622-6289 or parish based St. Vincent de Paul Society

Dear God, giver of all that is good, may we never forget that all that we have comes from you. We thank you for what you have given us and we pray we will always be generous with others, especially those less fortunate. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Suggested gifts:

canned goods, boxed dinners (Rice-a-Roni™, macaroni & cheese, etc.), dry beans, rice, soups, etc.

❖ Second Week of Lent

Matthew 25:35— *"I was thirsty and you gave me drink"*

Recipient: Catholic Charities Ecumenical Kitchen 610-866-8660

Blessed are you, Lord of Hospitality. You feel the needs of your people and reach out to them. Help us to identify more with those in need, especially in our own neighborhoods, and to do our part to ease their burdens. Lord, hear us and keep us in your love. Amen.

Suggested gifts: Fruit juices, orange juice, sport drinks, bottled water, powdered milk.

❖ Third Week of Lent

Matthew 25:35—*"I was... a stranger and you welcomed me"*

Recipient: Catholic Charities Pregnancy Support Services 1-800-458-5505

Heavenly Creator, Lord of Life, You treasure each and every one of us. Give us the desire and sensitivity to reach out to all in need of support, especially those who will soon be born and their parents. Help us grow during our Lenten journey in our commitment and care for all your creation. Thank you for the gift of life. Amen

Suggested gifts:

diapers & outfits (0 - 6 months), Baby Shampoo, Baby Lotion, Desitin™, blankets, towels, crib sheets, etc.

❖ **Fourth Week of Lent**

Matthew 25:36—*"I was...naked and you clothed me"*

Recipient: Mary's Shelter (Reading) 610-376-1973 and/or Cay Galgan Center (Mary's Shelter, Bethlehem) 610-867-9546, Your local emergency clothes closet.

Dear Heavenly Father. You provide us with all that we need in our lives. Give us generous hearts and make us willing to share all that we have with your people who are in need. We thank you for all that you give us. In Jesus precious name we pray, Amen.

Suggested gifts:

clothing for adults and older children, especially underwear and socks.

clothing for infants, babies and toddlers of all sizes, socks, baby t-shirts, maternity clothing, blankets, baby towels, and diapers.

❖ **Fifth Week of Lent**

Matthew 25:36—*"I was...ill and you cared for me"*

Recipient: Sacred Heart Hospital's Parish Nursing – Community Outreach Dept., Allentown 610-871-5888; Sacred Heart Hospital OB GYN Services, Allentown, 610-776-5101 or 610-776-4758 and/or St. Joseph Hospital's Family Women's Care, Reading 610-378-3569.

Blessed are you, Lord of Compassion. You feel the pain of those in need and take their suffering upon yourself. Help us to realize that as Catholic Christians we too are called to care for those who are suffering in any way. Lord, hear us and answer our prayers. Amen.

Suggested gifts:

Band-Aids™, children's cold medicines, cough medicines, pain relievers, personal hygiene items, thermometer, aspirin, etc.

❖ **Good Friday**

Matthew 25:36—*"I was...in prison and you visited me"*

Recipient: Diocesan Prison Ministry

Fast from judging others...
Fast from bitterness or jealousy...
Feast on forgiveness and acceptance!
Fast from harsh or mean words...
Feast on words that encourage & support!
Fast from discouragement
Feast on Hope!

Suggested gifts:

Catholic devotional literature - will need approval by the facility director, please contact the Diocesan Coordinator for Prison Ministry for suggestions for allowable devotional literature. Information is on the Contact Information page.

I. Baby Crib Project

- Contact Mary's Shelter and/or Catholic Charities and ask them for particular items on their "wish list" for infants and babies. A list may include cloth diapers, disposable diapers, undershirts, one piece underwear, rubber pants, diaper pins, socks, Desitin™, baby powder, and baby lotion.
- Purchase or borrow a small crib or bassinette. Find a special place to show the crib off in the vestibule of the church.
- Create hearts out of different pastel shades of paper and write one of the items on each of the hearts. Laminate all of the hearts before cutting them out. Punch holes in some of the hearts and use yarn to hang them from the crib to decorate it. Put all the rest of the hearts inside of the crib.
- The following announcement can be placed in the bulletin and also announced from the pulpit:

The Crib will be in the main entry of the church during the weeks before Mother's Day. Paper hearts labeled with baby items are in the crib and decorate it. Each heart will have an item written on it that can be used by mothers and babies. Please take home a heart, obtain the item on it, and return the item with the heart by placing it inside the crib. The items will then be given to Mary's Shelter and/or Catholic Charities. (see Other Programs, Services and/or Organizations for contact information)

- Afterwards, submit a short note in the bulletin thanking those who gave items to Crib Project.
- For reasons of liability, the crib is just a prop and is not available for donation, sale or to be given away.

J. Tree of Hope

- Identify a needy organization within your community (Catholic Charities, Mary's Shelter, etc.,) to be the recipient of items ranging in price from \$1 to \$15.00.
- Contact the organization about your project and ask them for particular items on their "wish list". Usually these are items that cannot be bought with food stamps.

A list for adults –
soap, shampoo, tooth brush/tooth
paste, deodorant, razors, lotion and
personal items

cloth diapers, disposable diapers,
undershirts, one piece under- wear, rubber
pants, diaper pins, socks, Desitin™, baby
powder, baby lotion

A list for babies –

A list for all recipients
clothes, winter hats and gloves

small but personal "gift" items - a book
snacks, small games, etc.

- Make stars out of purple and pink paper (advent colors). On one side print the message:

The Joy of Hope
The joy in Life is found in loving, in giving, in serving,
In being a strong hand in the dark to another in the time of need;
In being a cup of strength to any soul in a crisis of weakness.
Like a star, let us radiate our joy to others. Through this, our joy, we bring HOPE.

- Print an item on the reverse side and then laminate the stars.
- Punch a hole at the top of the star and string a piece of purple or pink yarn through the hole for hanging purposes.
- Place a pine or fir tree (a nice artificial tree will give you multi-year usage) in a noticeable and prominent location at your church.
- Make a sign that says "Tree of Hope" and hang it close to the top of the tree.
- Decorate the tree with the stars. Be sure to make more stars than will cover the tree, so that you may replace them as they are picked off.
- Announce the Tree of Hope with an announcement from the pulpit and in the bulletin. A sample:

A Tree of Hope

A tree of hope, tagged with stars, will be in the main entry of the church during the season of Advent.

Each star will have an item that can be used by mothers or their children. You may take home a star, obtain the item, and return the item with the tag to be placed under the tree. Organizations which your donation will benefit are parish respect life projects, Mary's Shelter and Catholic Charities. During the season in which we joyously anticipate the coming of the Christ Child, let us offer hope to those living without hope.

- Have a volunteer in charge of collecting the returning gifts and getting them to the chosen charity.
- Afterwards, submit a short note in the bulletin thanking those who gave items to the Tree of Hope.

K. Remembering Those in Prison and on Death Row with Black Ribbons

- Make black ribbons (see White Ribbon Campaign in this handbook) with small safety pins.
- Have volunteers hand them out to those who visit the Church on Good Friday for prayer time, for the Stations of the Cross and the Veneration of the Cross. The volunteer can inform the ribbon recipient that the ribbon is a reminder to all to remember those in prisons and on death row in our prayers today.
- These ribbons can also be distributed before a scheduled execution in Pennsylvania.

- A basket filled with the black ribbons may also be placed at the church entry with a sign that reads:

Please take a black ribbon and wear it as a reminder to pray for those who are in prison and on death row.
May God have mercy on the souls of prisoners and may our laws be truly just and fair in protecting society, in administering punishment and in aiding rehabilitation.

N.B.: With all of the outlined programs for raising funds and/or gathering in supplies for those women or families in need, it is always appropriate to start with asking the pastor if there is a woman or family in need in the parish.

Liturgical Resources

A. Mass for the Gift of Human Life

A special Mass for families and their unborn children draws attention to the joy and anticipation of families and unborn life. Use the Mass for the Gift of Human Life found in the Third Edition of the Roman Missal.

Instructions

1. Talk to your pastor about the special Mass. Secure his permission and a day and time from him to schedule the Mass.
2. Reserve the parish hall for a reception after the Mass and ask a parish organization to help with the reception.
3. Plan and implement the promotion of the Mass. Bulletin announcements, bulletin inserts, posters, and pulpit announcements are some ways to promote this within the parish. Start the promotion at least 3 weeks before the scheduled event. A sample:

Mass for the Gift of Human Life

Are you expecting the birth of a new baby in your family? Our parish wants to celebrate with you the wondrous gift of life given to you by God. This special celebration will be on (date) at (time) in the church. A reception will follow for all parishioners in the parish hall. Please call (Name) at (phone number) for more details. All are invited to attend and share in this joyous time of anticipation with the families and their unborn child.

4. Decide on a special gift for the mothers of the families, e.g. a medal, a holy card, a flower. Send a written invitation to families who signed up to come.
5. Put together a booklet for the Mass with the help of your pastor or liturgical minister after the music and readings have been selected. Ask for the help of the choir and organist.
6. Share the suggested prayers and blessings following these instructions with your pastor for possible use during the Mass.

On the Day of the Mass

1. Have some volunteers prepare, set up and decorate the church and the parish hall before the Mass.
2. Designate someone to seat the expectant families in specially marked and reserved pews. Designate someone else to hand out the booklets near the entrance.
3. Ask one of the families to be the gift bearers.
4. Have your pastor bless the special gifts during the Mass and distribute them to the families at a time he suggests during the Mass. At this time your pastor may also give the expectant families a special blessing.
5. Have your pastor remind families about the reception to follow and thank everyone present for attending the event.

B. Holy Hours

From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has on its website, two liturgies that are available for your parish's use.

They are located at:

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/devotionals/holy-hours/holy-hour-for-life.cfm>

and

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/devotionals/holy-hours/holy-hour-for-life-prayers-before-the-blessed-sacrament.cfm>

C. Blessings for Families, Parents and Children

From the *Book of Blessings* (Liturgical Press)

- Chapter 1 I. **Order for the Blessing of a Family**
IV. **Order for the Blessing of Children**
V. **Order for the Blessings of Sons and Daughters**
VII. **Order for the Blessing of Parents before Childbirth**
VIII. **Order for the Blessing of a Mother before Childbirth**
Chapter 55 **Order for the Blessing of Mothers on Mother's Day**
Chapter 56 **Order for the Blessing of Fathers on Father's Day**

From the USCCB Website

Rite for the Blessing of a 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>

Discuss with your pastor and worship leaders as to the appropriate times to schedule these blessings.

D. Litanies for Life

From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

The USCCB has four useful Litanies for Life as well.

- Litany for Life
- Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Litany for Life to Good Saint Joseph
- An Old Testament Litany for Life

The full texts can be found at: <http://old.usccb.org/prolife/liturgy/litanies.shtml>

E. Novenas for Life

From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Many people and parishes find the Novena a very useful and effective devotional. The USCCB has five Novenas that may be used for Pro-Life purposes:

- A Novena for the Feast of the Annunciation
- A Novena for Life
- A Novena to Our Lady of Sorrows: 9 Days of Life
- A Novena to Saints Anne and Joachim
- A Novena to Three American Saints for Life

They can be found here: <http://old.usccb.org/prolife/liturgy/novenas.shtml>

F. Diocesan Liturgies and Events

- **Forever in Our Hearts Mass**
Twice a year, in the spring and the fall, the Office of Pro-Life and Social Concerns celebrates a Mass on Sunday afternoon for people who have experienced a pre- or peri-natal loss. Anyone who has lost a child to miscarriage, SIDS, illness or abortion is invited to attend. Publicity for this event will be in the AD Times, the Diocesan weekly parish newsletter, the Diocesan website and in emails to all RLCs.
- **Nine Months in the Womb**
This is a monthly rosary novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe for the building of the Civilization of Love. It begins on March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation, and ends on December 25, Christmas Day, celebrating the nine months Jesus spent in the womb of His Mother. Booklets containing the novena prayers are available through the Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns. Consider having your parish participate and request booklets from our office.
- **Rosary for Life**
This bilingual Rosary is held every Tuesday, from 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM at Immaculate Conception Church, 501 Ridge Ave, Allentown 18102. All are invited to attend. This, too, is an event worth considering as a parish or respect life field trip.
- **Day of Recollection for Prison Ministry**
The Coordinator for Prison Ministry schedules an annual Day of Recollection for people who are involved with, or are interested in becoming part of this ministry of the Diocese. Here is an opportunity to see what this important ministry is all about. Publicity for this event will be in the AD Times, the Diocesan weekly parish newsletter, the Diocesan website and in emails to the all RLCs.
- **Diocesan Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe**
Each year on December 12, the Diocese celebrates a Mass in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe. She is the patroness of the Americas and Protectress of the unborn. This might be a good time to plan a parish or respect life field trip. Publicity for this Mass will be in the AD Times, the Diocesan weekly parish newsletter, the Diocesan website and in emails to all RLCs.

- **Mass for Persons with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities**
This Mass for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities is held on the 2nd Sunday of each month at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Chapel, Bethlehem, at 3:00 PM.
- **Mass of Healing**
Held three times each year, this Mass with the Bishop is offered for those who have experienced trauma.

Contact Information for Church Related Organizations

A. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

3211 Fourth Street NE
Washington DC 20017
202-541-3000

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

Child Before Birth poster (item #8904) \$3.25/each USCCB Pro-Life Secretariat by calling
(866) 582- 0943

B. The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference

223 North Street, PO Box 2835, Harrisburg, PA 17105
717-238-9613 Fax: 717-238-1473

<http://www.pacatholic.org/>

Catholic Advocacy Link (Contact Legislators): www.votervoice.net/PACC/Address

C. National Committee for a Human Life Amendment

1500 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 24
Washington, DC 20005
202.393.0703 (tel) 202.347.1383 (fax)

Info@nchla.org

www.nchla.org

D. Archdiocese of Baltimore

320 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
Phone: 410-547-5537

Spiritual Adoption Information: <http://www.archbalt.org/family-life/respect-life/spiritual-adoption/index.cfm>

E. Diocese of Allentown Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization

Mary Fran Hartigan, Secretary

2145 Madison Ave.

Bethlehem, PA 18017

610-289-8900 ext. 26

<http://www.allentowndioocese.org>

<http://www.facebook.com/ProLifeandSocialConcerns>

<http://www.facebook.com/DiooceseofAllentown>

Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns

Mary Fran Hartigan, M.A.

610-228-8900 ext. 26

mhartigan@allentowndioocese.org

Office for Ministry with Persons with
Disabilities

Sr. Janice Marie Johnson, RSM

610-289-8900 ext. 42

jjohnson@allentowndioocese.org

Office of Prison Ministry

610-289-8900 ext. 33

F. Respect Life Organizations in the Diocese of Allentown

Organizations that support Crisis Pregnancies:

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Allentown Administrative Offices: 610-435-1541

Berks Office

234 Grace St.

Reading, PA 19611

610-376-7144

Lehigh-Northampton

Office

900 S. Woodward St.

Allentown, PA 18103-4179

610-435-1541

Schuylkill-Carbon Office

13 Westwood Center

Pottsville, PA 17901-1800

570-628-0466

Catholic Charities Pregnancy Support Services

1-800-458-5505

Project Rachel Hotline: 1-866-3RACHEL (1-866-372-2435) (includes Rachel's Vineyard Post-abortion healing retreat weekend.)

Mary's Shelter – Residences for pregnant homeless young women and teens located in Reading and Bethlehem:

Mary's Shelter

325 S. 12th St.

Reading, PA 19602

610-376-1973

Cay Galgon Center

714 W. Broad St.

Bethlehem, PA 18018

610-867-9546

Mary's Home

736 Upland Ave.

Reading, PA 19607

610-603-8010

Organizations with whom to connect for public witnessing:

Helpers of God's Precious Infants
Coordinator: Mary Vigilante
E-mail: Schedule40df@gmail.com

40 Days for Life Team
Director: Theresa Shemanski 610-704-6935
E-mail: Theresa4597@hotmail.com
Vigil Coordinator: Mary Vigilante
Schedule40df@gmail.com
P.H.L. 40 Days for Life
P. O. Box 1622
Allentown, PA 18105

G. Real Alternatives

Real Alternatives is a state run pro-life information referral service
1-888-LIFE-AID (543-3243)
<http://www.realalternatives.org/>

And finally...

The beginning and end of all that we do programmatically for the sake of the Gospel of Life is rooted in one important document. That is the USCCB's ***Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities: A Campaign in Support of Life***. Take some time. Go and read it. See how you are part of a large and important ministry:

- **Pastoral Plan and other important Resources can be found:**
<http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/pastoral-plan-prolife-activities.cfm>

"We hold in high esteem all who proclaim and serve the Gospel of life.

Through their peaceful activism, education, prayer, and service, they witness to God's truth and embody our Lord's command to love one another as he loves us.

We assure them of our continuing prayers.

And we renew our appeal to all in the Catholic community to join with them and with us in building a 'culture of life'."

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities, 2011

