

# Respect Life

## Resource Booklet

Diocese of Charlotte



DIocese of CHARLOTTE

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OFFICE OF FAMILY LIFE

*“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you.”*  
- Jeremiah 1:5

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*“Jesus has placed his love into our hearts, which moves us to share the Gospel of Life with our brothers and sisters who are hurt, crushed, left confused and in darkness because of the culture of abortion which has captured them.”*

*- Most Reverend Peter J. Jugis, Bishop of Charlotte*

## **Purpose of this Booklet**

The Respect Life Program of Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte exists to promote and protect life through the sharing of relevant resources. This booklet has been prepared as a Respect Life resource for parishes and parish groups. It is available for download and distributed upon request to parishes in the Diocese of Charlotte. We aim to work with every parish in our diocese following the Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities as directed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). We are here to support and collaborate with you on all matters incorporated in the Respect Life field - from conception until natural death. Christ calls us to love. A great display of Christ's love is the valuing of every human life. We must continue to educate ourselves on pro-life issues and work for "Life" as a community, a parish, and a diocese. This booklet's purpose is to act as a resource to help you and your parish start and/or grow your pro-life ministries. We pray that God will bless our work together and that we will be given the strength to proclaim and defend the sanctity of all human life.

## **Contact Information**

Office of Family Life | Diocese of Charlotte

[charlottediocese.org/faith-life](http://charlottediocese.org/faith-life)

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Please visit our website, at [charlottediocese.org](http://charlottediocese.org), to view our Respect Life Program page as well as the many other programs and services the Office of Family Life offers.

# Step-by-Step Guide for Parish Respect Life Ministries

1. Read the USCCB “Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities” (Find the link and a PDF at [charlottediocese.org/faith-life](http://charlottediocese.org/faith-life)).

2. Seek the support and input of your pastor.

3. Find a date on your parish calendar to host a Respect Life meeting/information session. Plan a few weeks in advance and advertise in your parish bulletin and from the pulpit.

*“We are the people of life,  
because God, in His  
unconditional love, has  
given us the Gospel of Life,  
and we are called to act  
accordingly.”*

*- Pope John Paul II*

4. At the meeting have a sign-in/sign-up sheet and gather contact information from those who attend (i.e., name, email, address).

5. Invite other representatives to your first meeting (i.e., Catholic Charities Diocesan Respect Life Director, Knights of Columbus Representative, and Parish Council Representative).

6. Let your parishioners who attend the group be your guides to setting a schedule for regular meetings (i.e., twice a month, once a month, every other month).

7. Start with one ministry or event (i.e., a January Roe v. Wade event or an October Respect Life month event).

8. Share your meeting highlights, upcoming events and Respect Life news in your bulletin.

# Respect Life Issues

Possible issues on which your ministry might focus include:

Abortion	Capital Punishment
Adoption	Disabilities
Partial Birth Abortion	End of Life Ethics
RU-486	Euthanasia
Post Abortion Healing	Faith Based Initiatives
Advance Directives for Health Care	Fetal Development
Assisted Suicide	Human Trafficking
Bioethics	Infertility/NaPro Technology
Contraception	Pre-Natal Diagnosis
Cloning	Natural Family Planning
Culture of Life	Pregnancy Support

## Collaborative Respect Life Ministries

The above listed Respect Life issues are addressed through the collaborative work of a variety of parish, diocesan and national Catholic ministries. In addition, these issues are also addressed by many other ministries in the Diocese of Charlotte. Examples of such Respect Life ministries are:

### **Carolina Family Coalition**

[www.defendthefamily.org](http://www.defendthefamily.org)

### **C-PLAN**

[www.prolifefcharlotte.org](http://www.prolifefcharlotte.org)

### **CHPC**

[www.catholichealthcharlotte.org](http://www.catholichealthcharlotte.org)

### **Charlotte Helpers**

[www.charlottehelpers.com](http://www.charlottehelpers.com)

### **Be Not Afraid**

[www.benotafraid.net](http://www.benotafraid.net)

### **Mary Garden Showers**

[www.marygardenshowers.org](http://www.marygardenshowers.org)

### **MiraVia**

[www.mira-via.org](http://www.mira-via.org)

### **Human Coalition**

[www.thewomens.clinic](http://www.thewomens.clinic)

### **Room at the Inn**

[www.roominn.org](http://www.roominn.org)

### **Ursus Institute**

[www.ursusinstitute.net](http://www.ursusinstitute.net)

## Goals of a Respect Life Ministry

The goals of a Respect Life ministry are never ending during this time when the very issue of life is devalued at so many levels. It can seem overwhelming to direct your group on issues about which your members are passionate. The following goals should provide a backbone for the one area or multiple areas your group chooses to focus on despite the size of your group.

1. **Become informed** - about life issues using this booklet and the resources provided.
2. **Remain informed** - by visiting the USCCB and Human Life Action websites (included in this booklet).
3. **Inform others** - about the sanctity of human life, of the radical nature of the 1973 Supreme Court abortion decisions, and the consequent need to restore legal protection for all human life through protective legislation.
4. **Pray** - as a respect life group for the valuing of all human life.
5. **Educate** - within your parish on life issues.
6. **Support** - pro-life legislation at the state and national level. Use Catholic Voice NC and Human Life Action (see legislative advocacy websites on the next page).
7. **Work as a group** – to organize, recruit volunteers, respond to pro-life action alerts and raise funds for pro-life activities and local pregnancy centers.

8. **Use special months** – for focused action such as October (Respect Life month) and January (the Roe v. Wade Decision was handed down on January 22nd). Use these months to spend extra time praying for Respect Life and planning an event. These are great months to kick-start your new group.

## **Rachel's Vineyard Retreats**

Forgiveness and Healing Following Abortion



3 Retreats offered in the Diocese of Charlotte Annually

Please check [charlottediocese.org](http://charlottediocese.org) and [rachelvineyard.org](http://rachelvineyard.org) for listings of upcoming retreats in this diocese.

Additional retreats are offered in surrounding dioceses please check [charlottediocese.org/faith-life](http://charlottediocese.org/faith-life) for updates. **See page 15 for contact info.**

## **Organizations Promoting Respect Life Advocacy**

Catholic Voice NC [www.catholicvoicenc.org](http://www.catholicvoicenc.org)

Human Life Action [www.humanlifeaction.org](http://www.humanlifeaction.org)

March for Life (Washington, D.C.) [www.marchforlife.org](http://www.marchforlife.org)

March for Life Charlotte [www.marchforlifecharlotte.org](http://www.marchforlifecharlotte.org)

NC Right to Life [www.ncrtl.org](http://www.ncrtl.org)

## More about Catholic Voice North Carolina

([www.catholicvoicenc.org](http://www.catholicvoicenc.org))

Catholic Voice North Carolina (CVNC) is the non-partisan voice of the Diocese of Charlotte, North Carolina led by The Most Reverend Peter J. Jugis, Bishop of Charlotte. CVNC monitors legislation and other matters of public interest that intersect with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Under the guidance of Bishop Jugis, participants in CVNC are asked to contact legislators and government officials when important matters are under consideration.



## United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Respect Life Program

([usccb.org/respectlife](http://usccb.org/respectlife))



### What is the Respect Life Program of the USCCB?

**NEW** materials are produced each year to help Catholics understand, value and become engaged with supporting the dignity of the human person, and therefore the gift of every person's life. Materials are developed for use in parishes, schools, and faith-based ministries, but are also suitable for individual use. The program begins anew each October (Respect Life Month) and continues through the following September.



## USCCB Prayer and Worship Resources

<b>BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> USCCB WORD OF LIFE <a href="http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/word-of-life">www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/word-of-life</a>	<b>PRAYERS</b> USCCB PRO-LIFE PRAYERS <a href="http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/prolife-prayers">www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/prolife-prayers</a>
<b>LIFE ISSUES FORUM</b> USCCB LIFE ISSUES <a href="http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/life-issues-forum">www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/life-issues-forum</a>	<b>JANUARY ROE EVENTS</b> USCCB ROE EVENTS <a href="http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/january-roe-events">www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/january-roe-events</a>

### Sample Pro-Life Rosary Intentions

*(Source: [usccb.org/respectlife](http://usccb.org/respectlife))*

#### **The Joyful Mysteries**

*The Annunciation:*

For parents facing an unexpected pregnancy, that they lovingly accept the precious life God has entrusted to their care.

*The Visitation:*

That the family and friends of expectant parents might reach out and support them as they prepare to meet their child face to face.

*The Nativity:*

That the love of the Blessed Mother and the Christ Child may be a source of strength for every expectant mother, especially mothers living in poverty, and that they both will be surrounded by joy and love.

*The Presentation:*

That fathers of young children will model St. Joseph in devoutly practicing their faith, so that they lead their children to God by their words and example.

*The Finding of Jesus in the Temple:*

For all children who have been lost and forgotten, that they may be led to a place where they are treasured, protected and loved.

**Sample Intercessions for Life**

*(Source: [usccb.org/respectlife](http://usccb.org/respectlife))*

**For orphaned children throughout the world,**  
and especially those  
who are abused or neglected,  
that we might work to save them;  
**We pray to the Lord**

**For children who are unwanted by their parents,**  
that God's grace might send others to love  
and care for them;  
**We pray to the Lord**

**For the children of our country,**  
especially those who are forgotten or neglected,  
that their presence might remind us  
of the infinite value of human life;  
**We pray to the Lord**

**For every little child,**  
That we might accept and preserve each one  
as a sign of the infinite love of God for us;  
**We pray to the Lord**

**For all unborn children,**  
that our love for them may keep them safe  
until the joyous day of their birth;  
**We pray to the Lord**

**Sample Pro-Life Blessings**  
*(Source: [usccb.org/respectlife](http://usccb.org/respectlife))*

**Blessing of a Child in the Womb**

The "Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb" was crafted to support parents awaiting the birth of their child, to encourage parish prayers for -- and recognition of -- the precious gift of the child in the womb, and to foster respect for human life within society. It may be offered within the context of the Mass as well as outside of Mass.

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



## **Pro-Life Prayer Resources**

### **Prayer for the Unborn**

Heavenly Father, in Your love for us, protect against the wickedness of the devil, those helpless little ones to whom You have given the gift of life.

Touch with pity the hearts of those women pregnant in our world today who are not thinking of motherhood.

Help them to see that the child they carry is made in Your image - as well as theirs - made for eternal life.

Dispel their fear and selfishness and give them true womanly hearts to love their babies and give them birth and all the needed care that a mother can give.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever. Amen.

*(Source: evtn.com)*

### **A Prayer for Life**

Father and maker of all, you adorn all creation with splendor and beauty, and fashion human lives in your image and likeness. Awaken in every heart reverence for the work of your hands, and renew among your people a readiness to nurture and sustain your precious gift of life.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, you Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*(Source: usccb.org/respectlife)*

# Appendix

## Parish Implementation Worksheet

<b>Parish Needs</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
<b>Spiritual</b>				
<b>Educational</b>				
<b>Caring Services</b>				
<b>Advocacy</b>				

*(Source: [uscgb.org/respectlife](http://uscgb.org/respectlife))*

# Sample Parish Respect Life Ministry Calendar

January						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
			6:30 PM Pro-life Rosary 7:00 PM Monthly Respect Life Parish Meeting			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
			6:30 PM Pro-life Rosary		March for Life Charlotte	Raleigh Rally & March
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
			6:30 PM Pro-life Rosary		March for Life-Washington, D.C.	
	9 Days for Life	9 Days for Life	9 Days for Life	9 Days for Life	9 Days for Life	9 Days for Life
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Roe V. Wade Anniversary		6:30 PM Pro-life Rosary			
9 Days for Life	9 Days for Life	9 Days for Life				
27	28	29	30	31		

## Annual Family Life Conference

The Office of Family Life hosts an annual Conference on Life, Family and Marriage topics in the Diocese of Charlotte. The conference provides professional speakers to educate on a variety of pro-life issues. The conference takes place at different locations throughout the diocese. Visit [charlottediocese.org/faith-life](http://charlottediocese.org/faith-life) for detailed information on this year's conference.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Does the Diocese of Charlotte...1) help women who are pregnant? 2) help couples practice morally licit means to plan births and family size?**

The Diocese of Charlotte's Catholic Charities, helps women who are pregnant facing unmet needs and, when requested, assists in the choice for adoption. Sharon Davis, MSW, Director, can be contacted at 704-370-3218 and/or [SWDavis@ccdoc.org](mailto:SWDavis@ccdoc.org). Additionally, *Walking with Mom's in Need* is a comprehensive program that accompanies mothers who are pregnant or parenting in their vocation. Please contact [walkingwithmoms@rcdoc.org](mailto:walkingwithmoms@rcdoc.org) or your local parish group. Couples seeking information on Natural Family Planning (NFP) should contact NFP Director, Batrice Adcock at 704-370-3230 or [bnadcock@rcdoc.org](mailto:bnadcock@rcdoc.org)

**Are Post-Abortion Healing Ministries in the Diocese of Charlotte?**

The Office of Family Life annually sponsors a few Rachel's Vineyard Post-Abortion healing retreats in the Diocese of Charlotte (see p. 7 for 2019 retreat locations). Rachel's Vineyard contacts in the Diocese of Charlotte are: Jackie Childers at 980-241-0251 or [jackie.childers1@gmail.com](mailto:jackie.childers1@gmail.com) and Jessica Grabowski at 704-370-3229 or [jgrabowski@rcdoc.org](mailto:jgrabowski@rcdoc.org).

**Do parishes in the Diocese of Charlotte work together in Respect Life programs and events?**

Historically, parishes in the Diocese of Charlotte have come together to plan and attend events and work together on Respect Life issues. There is currently an organization, C-PLAN (Carolina Pro-Life Action Network), comprised of Respect Life representatives drawn primarily from parishes located in the Asheville, Charlotte and Greensboro regions. You can find more information about C-PLAN at [www.prolifearcharlotte.org](http://www.prolifearcharlotte.org) and you can contact the group directly at [info@prolifearcharlotte.org](mailto:info@prolifearcharlotte.org) or by contacting [jgrabowski@charlottediocese.org](mailto:jgrabowski@charlottediocese.org) for additional regional and contact information.

“All life has inestimable value, even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.” – *Pope Francis*



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