

Walking with Moms in Need



If a woman asks you where to find assistance with her unplanned pregnancy, would you have a response?

Challenges can be immense for women with an unexpected pregnancy. Concerns for material and financial resources, lack of a support network, and fear of the unknown often lead women to believe that abortion is their only choice. These pregnant and parenting moms in need are in our parishes and in our neighborhoods.

Walking with Moms in Need is a parish level, year-long process designed to identify resources and increase a church's outreach to pregnant and parenting women who need assistance. Going through this process equips churches to be a place where women facing difficult pregnancies can find help. It also meets St. Pope John Paul II's challenge, in *Evangelium Vitae* (*Gospel of Life*), to assess our efforts in building a Culture of Life.

Abortion is often seen as a partisan and political issue that deters churches from participating in pro-life initiatives and activities. However, a parish focusing on helping pregnant and parenting moms can be unifying. Parishes are uniquely positioned to encourage a collaboration of resources at the local level and increase awareness of help available to mothers and families in need. For information on how start the process in your parish contact me, Donna Moore, at (217) 321-1161.

Everyone in a parish community should know where to refer a pregnant woman in need. In doing so our parishes will become "islands of mercy in the midst of a sea of indifference" (Pope Francis). Perhaps this effort will move us closer to the day when pregnant mothers in need know where to turn for help, making abortion unthinkable.

Donna Moore is director for Pro-Life, Missions, and Special Ministries for the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.



A PRAYER FOR PREGNANT MOTHERS

O Blessed Mother, you received the good news of the incarnation of Christ, your Son, with faith and trust. Grant your protection to all pregnant mothers facing difficulties.

Guide us as we strive to make our parish communities places of welcome and assistance for mothers in need. Help us become instruments of God's love and compassion.

Mary, Mother of the Church, graciously help us build a culture of life and a civilization of love, together with all people of good will, to the praise and glory of God,



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Equal rights (to life) for all humans

By THOMAS WIEWEL
Seventh Grade
St. Francis Solanus, Quincy

“The right to life is the first among human rights.”

—Pope Francis

We have many rights and life is the most important right. All humans deserve to have life whether they are born or unborn. We have a right not to be killed for any reason. We also have a right when we are elderly or handicapped, to be treated respectfully too.

It has been reported that close to 18 percent of all pregnancies end in abortion in the United States. In one year, in the United States, there were 862,320 abortions performed. That ends up to be close to 2,363 abortions per day. Those are lots of lives lost. I think maybe one of those lives could have been a star athlete, or a doctor who might have a cure for a bad disease, or a future president, or even a great teacher. I think adoption should always be an option for people too. There are families that are willing to adopt children and make a good life for them.

Another human right is the right to live without fear of being killed. Homicide is a terrible problem that people should not have to worry about. One in 10 homicides are in the group of people 19 or younger. A city in our state, Chicago, is one of the leading cities for homicides. I have relatives living in Chicago, and I worry something could happen to them. I think we need to teach people how to talk things through instead of hurting others. Children should learn how to get along when they are at home, and it should be taught in school too.

Elder rights and the rights of the handicapped are also important. When people are older, they should be able to live with dignity and security and without discrimination. Elderly people should be able to make their own decisions, if possi-

ble. In many countries, elderly people are treated with honor. In our country, they are sometimes treated in a bad way.

Handicapped people should also be able to live with dignity and without discrimination. Handicapped people want to live and be treated like any other person.

Although some people would agree with abortion, or hurting others, or being disrespectful to the elderly or handicapped, I believe it is wrong. I have learned that people should treat others as they would like to be treated. God also gave us the Sixth Commandment that we should not kill.

A question might be, can a boy who is 12 years old make a difference when it comes to equal rights? I say yes. I could get

respect
life called
to serve
moms
in need

May our merciful
Lord calm the fears
of all expectant
mothers, fill them
with His peace,
and provide for
every need.

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involved in Right to Life. I could tell people to get counseling or learn to work out differences instead of going straight to violence. I could show others how to treat elderly people and handicapped people with respect and help them feel useful. Henry George said, "Let no man imagine that he has no influence." Even though I am not an adult, I can do things that are positive and work to change things.



Arguing for life, being a voice for the unborn

By LAUREN MILLER
Eighth Grade
St. Francis Solanus School, Quincy

What constitutes life?

How would you feel if your life was taken from you before you had the chance to live to the fullest? How do you think God feels when a child of His, that He took the time to make perfect, had a distinct plan for, knew them before He even formed them, and that He loves unconditionally is just destroyed within a few minutes? Every single person should have a chance at life and to fulfill God's purpose for them. If you think otherwise, maybe these arguments will change your mind.

At the very moment of conception, the unique DNA of a human being is already being created. When the baby is conceived every physical trait, such as gender, hair color, and eye color have already been determined. Most women don't know they are even pregnant, but by 22 days, there is a heartbeat. By week 3, eyes and ears are developed, and three weeks after that so are fingers and toes. This human being grows 5 times in size between 6 and 11 weeks. In the second month of pregnancy, the unborn infant can smile and frown, wiggle fingers and toes, and is able to suck their thumb. They are even able to distinguish between their left and right thumb once they suck their thumb for the first time.

In the womb, the fetus moves 50 times or more in an hour. The baby boy or girl can hear vibrations, outside sounds like conversations, loud noises, and music, and they are comforted by the sound of their mother's heartbeat, all by the 13th week of pregnancy. Three and a half months into the baby's development, the infant is capable of opening and closing his or her

eyes, and has its own fingerprints. Before the baby is born, they experience R.E.M. sleep, which are dreams. At weeks 18 to 21, the mother and father are able to find out the sex of the baby they are going to bring into the world. After 6 months, everything has developed and functions as a full-grown baby will. At 38 to 42 weeks, the infant is ready to see the outside world.

People might say that a baby in the womb is just a "clump of cells." If we look from their perspective, it's basically saying we all can just be killed, and it's all fine. But every human that is walking the earth is made up of cells and according to scientists, cells are in fact alive. And after you die, it only takes a few minutes for your cells to die because they need oxygen to keep functioning. And how is the fetus not alive if it has a heartbeat just like you and me?

In the Bible God makes it clear that taking the life of an innocent human being is wrong. In Exodus 20:13 it states, "You shall not murder" — this is a part of one of the Ten Commandments and also occurs multiple times in Scripture such as verses Matthew 19:18 and Romans 13:9.



"The fetus, though enclosed in the womb of his mother, is already a human being, and it's a crime to rob it of life which it has not yet begun to enjoy," says John Calvin, a French theologian and pastor. Many women use abortion as an after-the-fact birth control. If people take more sexual responsibility and obey God's mandates for sexual purity, "Flee from sexual

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immorality” (1 Corinthians 6:18), it would eliminate most of the situations that women “need” an abortion.

Ultimately, everyone deserves to live. I don't think people actually know what happens when a fetus develops from the size of a pomegranate seed to the size of a watermelon, along with all the unique traits, abilities, and other growth that happens in the womb. Not only that but our perfect God made abortion immoral and therefore it is wrong. In today's world it is easy to be afraid to stand up for what is right and justice, so you aren't judged by society. Can you be the voice for those who won't or can't speak?

God has a specific plan for each of our lives

By ELI LARSON
Seventh Grade
St. Peter School, Quincy

All humans deserve to live and love, no matter their age, race, religion, or ethnicity.

All humans deserve to experience life and what it has to offer. All humans deserve to make memories with the loved ones they have in their lives. There are 7.7 billion people on earth. Each person is special in their own way and each person has the right to share their talents with the world.

When God creates us, He gives each of us an original soul. God also has a specific plan for each of our lives. It is for this plan that we are to use our God-given talents. When we take a life, we are disrupting the plan that God has for that person and thus going against His will.

God places such importance on life and its experiences that He sent His only son, Jesus, to live and experience life as we do. Throughout His life, Jesus loved others and received love. He showed us how to love one another, and He showed us how to use our talents. He accepted and loved all ages, all races, all religions, and all sinners.

Furthermore, Jesus suffered and died on the cross to save us from our sins. When we take a life, especially through abortion, it makes His suffering in vain. If He came and saved us so that we all could live in Heaven, then shouldn't every human person have the right to live like God wanted us to? Shouldn't every person be able to speak for themselves and make their own decision using the free will God has given us?



So, in conclusion, life is precious. Every life is precious. Every life. Not just the popular ones, or the “right” skin color, or the “right” religion. Not just the “good” ones and not just those who were planned to be conceived. God put each of us here for a reason. We have no right to take that away.

Adams County students stand up for life



Variety shows thru in Right to Life posters

On pages 12-14, you read three winning submissions for the annual Right to Life of Adams County essay contest — and featured on this page are six outstanding posters submitted to its annual poster contest. This year's theme was "Equal Rights (to Life) for All Humans." Approximately 500 students from seven schools and PSR programs participated with 63 posters and 16 essays forwarded to Right to Life of Adams County for the final judging. All grade levels listed reflect the students' grades in the spring of 2022.



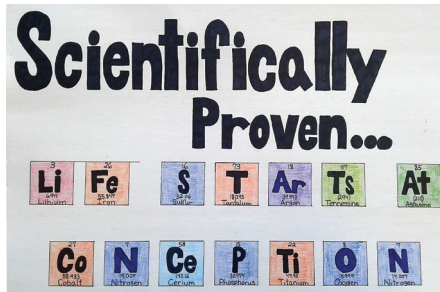
Ida Hermsmeier
5th grade
St. Peter School, Quincy



Cora Argabright
3rd grade
Blessed Sacrament School, Quincy



Blakleigh Haubrich
4th grade
Blessed Sacrament School,
Quincy



Lauren Miller
8th grade
St. Francis Solanus, Quincy



Haelie Schmitz
8th grade
St. Francis Solanus, Quincy



Rowan Stegeman
6th grade
St. Peter School, Quincy

Providing a way to move forward



When the angel Gabriel first appeared to Mary, she was troubled and confused at the unexpected news, yet faithfully embraced God's plan for her life. As a young, unmarried, pregnant woman, Mary would face many challenges. Today, mothers facing an unexpected pregnancy may have trouble recognizing the great gift God has given them. Concerns about a lack of material and financial resources, as well as physical and emotional support systems often crowd their minds and their hearts. Fear and anxiety can push women to believe that abortion is their only option. As Catholics, we know that abortion is never the answer for a woman in need. During challenging periods in our lives, we all need the care and support of others. For a pregnant woman in need, the real, tangible support of others can allow her to see a way forward. Knowing she is not alone can allow her to open her heart to God's plan and choose life.



Taken from USCCB, *Parish Action Guide*

respect
life *called
to serve
moms
in need*



DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ABORTED CHILDREN — More than 60 pro-life community members gathered for a memorial service on Sept. 10 at the Memorial to the Unborn at the Teutopolis Knights of Columbus in front of the Seminary Chapel Tower. Americans throughout the country gathered on this day at gravesites and memorial sites dedicated to honor aborted babies for the 10th annual National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children. Prayer services at these sites commemorated the more than 63 million children who have lost their lives to legal abortion since 1973, and to remind our society of the humanity of the unborn child.

Submitted photo