

Celebrate Respect Life Month!

Across the nation, Catholics celebrate Respect Life Month every October

Please consider how you can support the sacredness of human life... by praying, volunteering, participating in events, and/or making a financial or material donation.

The Catholic Church affirms the intrinsic dignity of each human person from conception to natural death. As Catholics, we are called to witness to this truth and, in a special and intentional way, to cherish, defend, and protect those who are most vulnerable.

Each October, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops has called on Catholics to celebrate *Respect Life Month* and observe the first Sunday as *Respect Life Sunday*.

Following are some ways to support and participate locally in the call to Respect Life:

If you have questions or suggestions about any of the Respect Life Ministry committee's activities, please call the Parish Office, or call or text Kathie at 216-5765.

Learn More about Issues: Display/Information Tables, October 1-31

Information is available to help clarify many issues related to our call to treasure and protect life, as well as resources available to help those in need. ***You're welcome to take pamphlets, information sheets and prayer cards to help your pro-life journey.***

Pray for Our Nation/Culture of Life: Saturday, October 3, 12n-12:30pm

Year-round, members of the parish pray for our nation and for a pro-life culture by meeting in front of Our Lady of Mercy in LeRoy on the first Saturday of every month. All are welcome!

Pray with us: National Life Chain: Sunday, October 4, 2-3 pm

Each year on Respect Life Sunday, Catholics line streets to form "life chains" of people standing several feet apart but joined in a silent public prayerful witness to the dignity of life.

Our "link" in this chain will once again be in Batavia. Rain or shine, we will meet up with others from our Family of Parishes at St. Joseph's Church (303 E. Main Street) to spend one hour as witnesses to the dignity of life, praying for all who are vulnerable.

Participants of all ages are invited to stand or sit with us, simply praying quietly while holding a sign with a positive pro-life slogan for those passing by to see. All signs are provided, with a variety to choose from. Feel free to bring a water bottle, Rosary, prayer booklet, and chair if desired - but please refrain from bringing anything that may distract from the solemn witness.

Participate in Miscarriage/Infant Loss Memorial & Healing Mass: Wednesday, October 7, 6:30 p.m., at Our Lady of Mercy Church

No matter how long ago your loss occurred or the circumstances of your loss, this Mass of healing and remembrance is for all - including extended family members and friends - who have been impacted by miscarriage/infant loss.

Attend Respect Life Ministry committee meeting; October 15, 7-8 pm

We meet monthly in the Parish Center. This month it's Thursday, October 15, 7-8 p.m.

Participate in Praying a Respect Life Novena, October 22-30

Catholics nationwide will pray a novena for the protection of human life from conception to natural death from Thursday, October 22, to Friday, October 30. It's available online at respectlife.org/celebrate or <https://www.usccb.org/respect-life-novena>. Each day of the includes a prayer, the day's special intentions, a suggested sacrifice, and a brief reflection.

In addition, a shorter novena will be said after all Masses during this timeframe.

More Ways to... Celebrate Respect Life Month!

Donate Items for the Diocesan Mother Teresa Home; October 1-31

Our Diocese operates the Mother Teresa Home in Buffalo that provides shelter and programs for displaced pregnant and new mothers. Their programs and referrals run the gamut in responding to the women's needs – helping them learn or improve parenting, self-care, home, and life skills, and providing the supportive environment for them to gain competence and confidence for success when they move on from the Home.

Donations of baby items, women and child toiletries, and housecleaning supplies are welcome.

Donate Funds to One or Both Collections for Pro-Life Ministries

There are two collections in support of Respect Life ministries – one for the Diocese and one for our parish. Parishioners can contribute to one or both by placing the respective envelope(s) in the regular Mass Offertory collection.

- **Diocesan Collection**

The packet of offertory envelopes that are mailed to parishioners who use the envelope system include one for Respect Life Sunday. That envelope is intended to collect money for the eight St. Gianna Pregnancy Outreach Centers opened by the Diocesan Pro-Life Office over the past 15 years. Although sponsorship was transferred in 2025 to Our Lady of Victory Charities, the outreach centers remain as the beneficiary of the annual collection.

Continuing the life-affirming work that the Diocese began, this ministry provides material, emotional, and spiritual support to mothers, fathers, and young families in need during and after pregnancy. The centers – in Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Fredonia, Cheektowaga, Lackawanna, Olean, Holley and Attica - build on the legacies of St. Gianna and Venerable Nelson Baker in respecting, protecting and cherishing all human life as a precious gift from God.

- **Parish Respect Life Ministry Collection**

For donations specifically for our parish's Respect Life Ministry, a different envelope will be placed in the pews during October as well as made available on the Respect Life display tables in the back of the Church.

From the time the Respect Life committee came together in 2023, we have worked to inform our fellow Catholics about current issues pertaining to respecting life. We have purchased educational materials (such as those currently available on the tables), printed and distributed car magnets and yard signs that advertise www.OptionLine.org (which provides access to an international network of pro-life pregnancy counseling centers), participated in fundraising and "gift-raising" for area pregnancy outreach centers, hosted March for Life open houses for parishioners who are interested in the annual March but are unable to travel to Washington to participate, invited speakers to explain the Catholic perspective on such topics as infertility care, issues related to end-of-life care and decisions, and the consequences of legalizing assisted suicide. In addition, we work to coordinate activities between ours and others in our Diocesan Family of Parishes.

Donations will enable the committee to continue and expand on these activities.

Participate in 40 Days for Life; September 2 - November 1

With the goal of ending abortion, this international organization coordinates 40-day campaigns of prayer and fasting, community outreach, and peaceful all-day vigils in front of abortion businesses. While prayers and fasting can take place anywhere, two abortion facilities – one in Buffalo and one in Rochester – are on the 40 Days for Life list of places for all-day vigils. The organization requires several people to be present for any vigil time slot, and that is tracked through the website and visible to all who log on to sign up: <https://www.40daysforlife.com/en/>.