



NINE DAYS OF PRAYER, PENANCE, & PILGRIMAGE

January 19-27, 2013

Marking the 40th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade



Day 1: Saturday, January 19, 2013

Intercession:

For the mother who awakens each morning with the memory of abortion fresh in her mind: that the Lord may still the terror in her heart and lead her gently to the well-spring of his love and mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. May she, and all who've been involved in an abortion decision, find healing and hope through Project Rachel Ministry.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Acts of Reparation

(choose one):

- Take time to write a handwritten note to someone who is lonely or needing encouragement.
- Pray for your deceased relatives and those who have no one to pray for them.
- “Spiritually adopt” a baby by saying this prayer every day:
“Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I love you very much. I beg you to spare the life of [baby’s name], the unborn baby that I have spiritually adopted who is in danger of abortion.”
– Prayer of Archbishop Fulton

Reflection:

Today’s Gospel reading from Mark recounts Jesus dining with tax collectors and sinners. When the Pharisees question Jesus about this, he responds, “Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners.” In a society where millions of people have fallen prey to the false promises of the culture of death, let us witness to the mercy of Jesus and invite all who’ve been harmed to experience his abundant love and healing.

Did you know?

Women who’ve had an abortion have a 138% higher risk of mental health problems compared to women who’ve given birth, according to a 2011 article in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* that analyzed 22 major studies on women’s mental health following abortion. Together, the studies involved over 800,000 women. Visit HopeAfterAbortion.org for more information on abortion’s aftermath and where to find help. . .

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Day 2: Sunday, January 20, 2013

Intercession:

For the father whose child died with his cooperation and consent: that the Lord grant him the grace to repent and be reconciled with God.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Acts of Reparation

(choose one):

- When others are speaking uncharitably about someone else, change the conversation, leave, or offer a counter opinion that is kind and charitable.
- Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet for mothers and fathers who've lost a child through abortion, asking that they find the courage to seek Reconciliation and counseling through Project Rachel Ministry.
- Read about the life of a modern (19th or 20th century) saint. You might be surprised by how much you have in common with them.

Reflection:

Today's memorial of St. Sebastian, the famous martyr and patron of athletes, lived his faith courageously in the midst of intense Roman persecution. St. Sebastian's life reminds us that even in the midst of threats to the faith, a life lived and died in Christ is the ultimate witness—one that changes others. The wedding feast at Cana, described in today's Gospel, recounts the first miracle Christ performs, changing six stone jars of water into wine. At the request of his mother, Jesus takes up the ordinary substance of water and turns it into something extraordinary—choice wine for the wedding guests. Our life, too, is changed into something extraordinary when given over to Christ. We trust that He always gives us what we need. Today we bring to him our desire to uphold human life, and entrust everything to him, through the intercession of his mother. We can be certain that he will bless all our efforts with success.

Did you know?

Four out of ten men whose partners had an abortion experienced chronic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms, occurring on average 15 years after the abortion. Among these men, 88% had feelings of grief and sadness, 82% had guilt, 77% felt anger, 64% anxiety and 68% isolation. The full article is here: <http://old.usccb.org/prolife/>

[pro-](http://old.usccb.org/prolife/)

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Day 3: Monday, January 21, 2013

Intercession:

For the parents who influenced their child's choice to abort their grandchild: that they may have the humility and wisdom to see the wrong they've done and to seek forgiveness from God and from their child.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Acts of Reparation

(choose one):

- It's easy to put our headphones on and ignore our siblings or parents in the car. Instead, enjoy the opportunity you have to talk to them, ask them how they are doing.
- Smile. Ask God today for the grace to be extra joyful and share your love for Christ with those who need that encouragement the most today. "Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing." –Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta
- We can sometimes forget how blessed we are to have many of our daily comforts. Give up sleeping with your pillow to-night.

Reflection:

Today we honor the life of St. Agnes, a 12-year-old girl martyred in Rome in 304 AD during the Diocletian persecution. Agnes never wavered in her commitment to remain a virgin and to give her whole life to the Lord, refusing proposals to marry. Her innocence and heroism facing death helped bring an end to the persecution of Christians in Rome. Following the example of St. Agnes, let us remain steadfast in recognizing Christ, who is Love Incarnate, as the source and summit of our lives. May his love give us the determination and courage to live for him and for others, especially the most vulnerable among us.

Did you know?

When an unborn baby girl is at just 19 weeks' gestation in her mother's womb, her tiny ovaries already contain all the eggs she will have in her lifetime, to one day have babies of her own. Visit www.ehd.org for amazing facts on embryonic and fetal development.

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Day 4: Tuesday, January 22, 2013

Intercession:

For the doctors, nurses and counselors who now know they were wrong in cooperating with abortion: may God grant them the courage to renounce their involvement in the abortion industry and open their hearts to doing his will from now on.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Go to an abortion clinic and pray, or set aside an hour today to pray for those who are struggling with a decision of life or death for their unborn child.
- Pray the Rosary today for someone who has hurt or disappointed you, and ask for the grace to forgive that person.
- Instead of donating "old clothes," offer to buy a new piece of clothing or item a charity is seeking.

Reflection:

Today, on this 40th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, we consider the past four decades in which our society has legally permitted abortion, wandering far from God. Instead of accepting children in joy and hope, our culture is lost in a barren place marked by rejection of others, sorrow and despair. Yet, like Abraham, whom we hear about in today's first reading, Christians must "hold fast to the hope that lies before us," trusting in faith that Christ makes all things new. With Mary's intercession, let us pray that our nation becomes a place where every child is welcomed with joy, as an irreplaceable gift from our

Did you know?

Planned Parenthood personnel have aborted over 5,300,000 children since 1970. That's equal to the entire population of Colorado. In 2009, 97.6 percent of Planned Parenthood's "services" for pregnant women involved killing their children, and only 2.4 percent involved prenatal care or adoption referral. http://www.americanthinker.com/2011/04/things_planned_parenthoods_tru.html

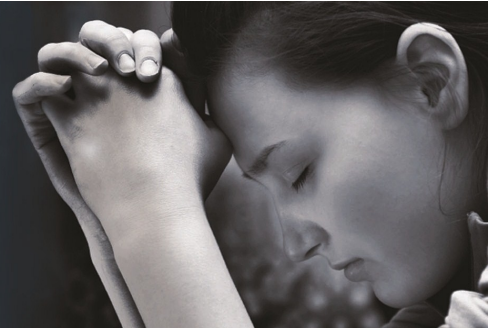
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Day 5: Wednesday, January 23, 2013

Intercession:

For scientists and pharmaceutical employees who help create and manufacture contraceptive and abortifacient drugs: that the Lord will open their eyes to the moral danger and health risks these drugs pose for women and prompt them to work only on medications that benefit human life.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Gratitude helps us love God and neighbor. Today try to not complain or be negative. Say a prayer of thanksgiving instead.
- Sometimes we forget to quiet ourselves and spend quality time with God. Fast from Facebook or Twitter today. Spend that extra time meditating on a Gospel passage.
- Don't push the snooze button. Get right out of bed and offer your day in prayer to God. "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light" (Ephesians 5:14).

Reflection:

In today's Gospel, we hear how Jesus grieved the hardness of heart of the Pharisees, as he heals the man with the withered hand. Let us open our hearts in faith, entrusting our culture to the healing power of Christ, the One who has overcome sin and the power of evil. We recall the words of Pope Benedict XVI, having faith that "this God exists, and hence that this power to 'take away the sin of the world' (*Jn 1:29*) is present in the world" — (*Saved in Hope [Spe Salvi*

Did you know?

More than 360 young women using the patch, contraceptive ring or Yaz/Yasmin pills have died in recent years due to heart attacks, strokes or pulmonary embolisms associated with these drugs and devices. The World Health Organization declared that the estrogen in contraceptives can cause cancer in humans. See "[Life Matters: Contraceptives and Women's Well-Being](#)," and [here](#).

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Day 6: Thursday, January 24, 2013

Intercession:

For those who work involves promoting abortion and contraceptive use: may God help them understand that the casual sex they foster undermines the capacity for the self-giving, faithful, and enduring love that is the longing of every heart.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Learn how to pray the [Angelus](#) prayer and get into the habit of saying it every day—at noon or 6 pm or on awakening (or all three times).
- Today ignore your sweet tooth. Make healthy eating choices.
- Clean a room in your house without being asked or without telling anyone. Pray for your family members while you clean “and your Father who sees in secret will repay you” (Matthew 6:6).

Reflection:

On this feast of St. Francis de Sales, let us consider these words of the great saint: “All that we do must be motivated by love and not force. We must love to obey rather than fear to disobey.” St. Francis reminds us that all of our actions must be borne of a spirit of love, and that we find our freedom in living the truth. As we defend the dignity of human life, let us ask St. Francis to pray for us so that everything we say and do for unborn children and their grieving parents is imbued with both compassion and truth.

Did you know?

Surveys shows that most young adults want to be married one day, but contraceptive use encourages self-centeredness rather than self-control and long-term commitment. The percentage of adults who are married has fallen from over 72% in 1960 to only 52% in 2009, and many men are no longer willing to marry the mother of their children. Single women have 83% of abortions. Currently 41% of births in the U.S. are to single moms, up from 17% three decades ago. Cohabiting and single-parent families are 3 times more likely to be poor and face higher risks (compared to married families) of physical and mental abuse, dissatisfaction with life and depression. Citations are found in the [2012 contraception article](#).

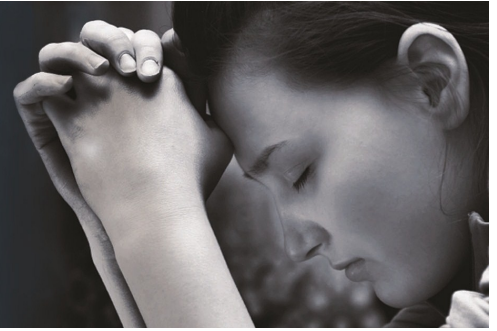
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Day 7: Friday, January 25, 2013

Intercession:

For elected leaders who oppose any restriction on the abortion license: may God allow them to grasp the brutal violence of abortion and the reality of post-abortion suffering experienced by countless women and men.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Acts of Reparation

(choose one):

- Go to Confession—today, if possible—or during this week.
- Fast from snacking today. Eat three meals only.
- Today, go visit an adoration chapel and spend an hour with Jesus.

Reflection:

Today's reading from Acts tells the story of St. Paul's conversion. Before, he was "breathing murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord." After encountering Christ, Paul became a "chosen instrument," filled with the Holy Spirit, and ready to suffer for Jesus' name. There is absolutely nothing and no one outside of the power of God's loving embrace. Today we remember the children, the mothers, fathers, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles and all those who have been involved in or affected by abortion. We entrust them to the unfathomable healing mercy of God, recalling the words of Jesus to St. Faustina: "The greater the misery of a soul, the greater its right to My mercy" (*Diary*,

Did you know?

The barbaric abortion procedure called partial-birth abortion first became known in 1993. In this mid- and late-term procedure, an abortionist delivers a live baby feet-first up to his neck, plunges surgical scissors into the base of his skull, sucks out his brains and then removes the lifeless baby's body from the birth canal. Because of the reluctance of some politicians to put any restrictions on abortion, it was not until 2007 that a federal ban on partial-birth abortion finally went into effect. See our [partial-birth abortion page](#) to learn more.

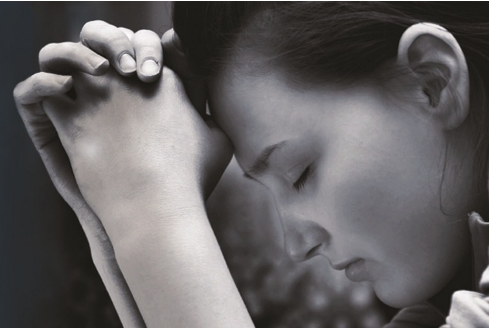
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Day 8: Saturday, January 26, 2013

Intercession:

For an end to legal abortion in our nation and for the conversion of all hearts, so that the inherent rights of every human being—especially those most at risk of abuse and rejection—will be upheld.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Acts of Reparation

(choose one):

- Read about a Church teaching you don't understand in the [Catechism](#).
- Make an honest assessment of your "giving finances" – are you giving too little? Make a resolution to give a set weekly or monthly donation to your parish or favorite local charity.
- Do you love your cup of tea or coffee in the morning? Fast from caffeine today or try your coffee black.

Reflection:

On this memorial of Saints Timothy and Titus, we hear St. Paul's words to them: "do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord." These words ring true for us today, especially as we speak the truth that life is worth living, and that every person, without exception, deserves the chance to live his or her life, and experience its beauty and goodness. Blessed John Paul II reminds us that our first step in giving our testimony is to have an outlook of wonder on the beauty of life, "discovering in all things the reflection of the Creator and seeing in every

Did you know?

In 1995, Pope John Paul II wrote a great encyclical called the [Gospel of Life \(Evangelium Vitae\)](#). He describes how when a culture accepts the killing of one group of people (unborn children, for example) it's not long before other people are seen as expendable. Today, doctor-assisted suicide is legal in two states. Many have come to accept euthanasia of the elderly or dying by refusing to provide them with food and water. Many Americans support embryonic stem cell research in the search for cures for diseases and conditions that had been thought incurable, even though such research entails destroying these embryos. Persons with disabilities and their families often have to fight to receive life-saving treatments that routinely would be given to patients who do not have a disability. Where will it end?

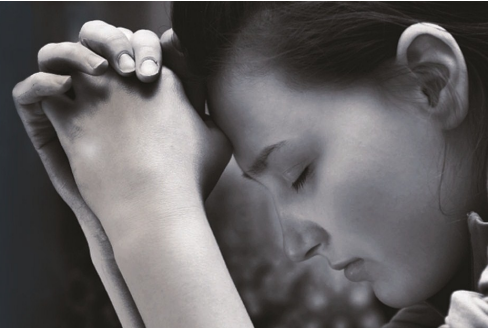
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Day 9: Sunday, January 26, 2013

Intercession:

For repentance, healing and peace, in every heart and every nation.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Spend quality time with a family member or friend; ask them if they would like to help out at a local charity with you.
- Say three Hail Mary's for your parish priest. Without our priests, we could not have the sacraments.
- Make a "quiet hour" today, turning off all electronic devices (cell phone, iPod, computer, television, radio, video game system) and retreat to your room.

Reflection:

Today is the memorial of St. Angela Merici, foundress of the religious community now known as the Ursuline nuns. Living in northern Italy in the early 1500s, she was moved by the needs of young girls in the community, who were poor and uneducated. She responded to the girls' needs by educating them in the Gospel. Her example reminds us that to share Christ with those in need is to share news of great joy. "...for today is holy to our LORD. Do not be saddened this day, for rejoicing in the LORD must be your strength!" (Nehemiah 8:10) We hear these words proclaimed in today's first reading. The message of the Gospel of Life is one of great joy! Our call to live this Gospel is not marked with sadness and despair, but with hope, expectation and exuberant joy. "It is up to you, young followers of Christ, to show the world that faith brings happiness and a joy which is true, full and enduring.... The Gospel is the "good news" that God loves us and that each of us is important to him. Show the world that this is true!" (Pope Benedict XVI, *Message for the 27th World Youth Day*, March 15, 2012).

Did you know?

Pope Benedict XVI [recently linked respect for life with peace](#): *"The path to the attainment of the common good and to peace is above all that of respect for human life in all its many aspects, beginning with its conception, through its development and up to its natural end. True peacemakers, then, are those who love, defend and promote human life in all its dimensions, personal, communitarian and transcendent. Life in its fullness is the height of peace. Anyone who loves peace cannot tolerate attacks and crimes against life."* It's up to you—through your prayers and actions—to help create a culture of life and peace. May God bless you for your dedication and sacrifices for life!

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