

Right to Life month

As Catholic Christians, we hold human life sacred, from conception to natural death. We engage in many activities to protect human life. We donate food, clothes and money to those in need. We have all kinds of specific collections throughout the year: boots, winter wear, Baby Bottle collection, collections for religious organizations, school supplies, etc. All of these things are deeply appreciated by the recipients of your generosity...and our cluster parishes are very generous. Most of these donations don't demand too much of us on a regular basis. Make a donation....done. However, our Catholic faith calls us to go deeper. Our values and dedication to protecting human life should demand a personal sacrifice. We must be fully engaged in the fight to care for all God's people. So what more can we do? Here are just a few ideas.

Pray. Pray that all people (including ourselves) uphold the sanctity of human life in all situations. But don't stop at praying. St. Ignatius said that we should *"pray as if everything depended on God, but work as if everything depended on you."*



Get personally involved by reaching out to others.

- Do you know a young woman or man who is dealing with an unexpected pregnancy? Engage them in conversation. Help them find resources to help them choose life. You CAN literally save the life of an unborn child by helping those who feel like they have no support to feel cared for and loved.
- Support all of our young people long before they get to the age where they might end up with an unexpected pregnancy. Compliment them, in private but also in front of others. A sense of self-value and dignity goes a long way. Young people who feel loved and supported make better value-based decisions. They are less likely to get pregnant, and less likely to get an abortion if they do get pregnant. They are also less likely to become involved with addictive behaviors.
- Instead of just donating food, clothing, etc., to those in need, make a commitment to deliver those items to organizations that help the needy. Ask questions of those who work there, learn what they do and meet some of their clients, if possible.



- Build personal relationships with people who are different than you, so that you can better understand their struggles.
- Be open-minded and listen. Someone once said there is a reason we have two ears and only one mouth. Actively listening to others not only portrays a sense of concern, you may also learn something new or gain a new perspective on an issue.
- Become a Foster or Adoptive Parent. Many children are looking for safe and loving homes.
- Write to someone you know who might be in jail or in prison. You could be a ray of hope to someone who is despairing.
- Personally volunteer your time at a food pantry, meal program or shelter for victims of domestic violence.
- Visit someone who is homebound, by phone if necessary. You can help them feel less lonely.
- Volunteer with a Habitat for Humanity project. You get to work with the family who will live in the house, learn some new skills and feel great about helping someone else.
- Read a book about immigration issues, racial justice, migrant working conditions, the Hmong community, etc. Educate yourself about issues that others deal with on a daily basis.
- Research more information about poverty in third world countries, the inequity of usage of the world's resources by first world countries, the locations of toxic waste dumps related to income of the local residents, causes of homelessness, mental illness, etc.
- Rake the leaves in the yard of an elderly neighbor. Or help them do some fall cleaning of their home, windows, etc.



Vote. Do some research and get to know all candidates running for public office. Then vote for the candidates that do the most to uphold the dignity of human life at all levels.

If we each make a commitment this fall to do at least one or two new things this year to support the sanctity of human life, imagine what a difference that would make in our world!