

St. Mary Catholic Church Pro-Life Ministry



Respect Life Reflection

Christ Our Hope: In Every Season of Life

From the time we are knit together in our mothers' wombs until we take our final breaths, each moment of our lives is a gift from God. While every season of life brings its own challenges and trials, each season also gives us new opportunities to grow in our relationship with God.

Today the gift of life is threatened in countless ways. Those who are most vulnerable, rather than receiving the protection they deserve, are all too often seen as a burden and as expendable. As new attacks on human life continue to emerge, we can be tempted to despair, but Christ instead offers us unfailing hope.

Hope is not false optimism or empty positivity. Christian hope is something much more profound and goes to the very depths of our identity as followers of Christ.

Hope is the virtue “by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit” (CCC, 1817). Like us, Christ entered the world through the womb of a woman. He willingly experienced the fullness of human suffering. He breathed his last on the Cross at Calvary in order that He might save us. Therefore, “God is the foundation of hope: not any god, but the God who has a human face and who has loved us to the end” (*Spe salvi* 31).

Christians know “they have a future: it is not that they know the details of what awaits them, but they know in general terms that their life will not end in emptiness” (SS 2).

For this reason, a woman experiencing a difficult pregnancy can find the strength to welcome her precious child into the world. A man facing a terminal diagnosis can see that the end of his earthly life is only the beginning of eternal life with Christ.

The Church teaches us that “the one who has hope lives differently” (SS 2). Christ’s promise of salvation does not mean that we will be spared from suffering. Rather, the promise of salvation ensures that even in the darkest moments of our lives, we will be given the strength to persevere. By virtue of this Christian hope, we can face any challenge or trial. When the seas of life swell and we are battered by the waves, hope allows us to remain anchored in the heart of God. May we hold fast to Christ our hope, from the beginning of life to its very end.



Jesus, Mary and Joseph I love you very much. I beg you to spare the life of the unborn child I have spiritually adopted, who is in danger of abortion.

O Father in Heaven. You are the creator of life. Protect all expectant mothers and babies they carry in their wombs. We pray that those who suffer from the evils of abortion will be open to your infinite mercy and love. We ask for the conversion of all who fail to respect the gift of human life. Heavenly Father, guide our actions to help restore in the hearts of all people the sanctity of human life. Amen

Reflexión Respetemos la Vida

Cristo es nuestra esperanza en cada etapa de la vida

Desde el momento en que fuimos tejidos en el vientre de nuestra madre hasta que exhalamos el último suspiro, cada momento de nuestra vida es un don de Dios. Aunque cada etapa de la vida trae sus propios desafíos y pruebas, también nos brinda nuevas oportunidades para crecer en nuestra relación con Dios.

Hoy el don de la vida está amenazado de incontables maneras. Los más desamparados, en lugar de recibir la protección que merecen, demasiado a menudo son vistos como una carga y como prescindibles. A medida que siguen surgiendo nuevos ataques a la vida humana, podemos sentirnos tentados a desesperarnos, pero en cambio Cristo nos ofrece una esperanza inquebrantable.

La esperanza no es un falso optimismo o una positividad vacía. La esperanza cristiana es algo mucho más profundo y llega a lo más hondo de nuestra identidad como seguidores de Cristo.

La esperanza es la virtud "por la que aspiramos al Reino de los cielos y a la vida eterna como felicidad nuestra, poniendo nuestra confianza en las promesas de Cristo y apoyándonos no en nuestras fuerzas, sino en los auxilios de la gracia del Espíritu Santo" (CIC 1817).

Tal como nosotros, Cristo entró en el mundo por mediación del vientre de una mujer. Él voluntariamente asumió la plenitud del sufrimiento humano. Exhaló su último suspiro en la cruz del Calvario para poder salvarnos. Por lo tanto, "Dios es el fundamento de la esperanza; pero no cualquier dios, sino el Dios que tiene un rostro humano y que nos ha amado hasta el extremo" (Spe salvi 31).

Los cristianos saben que "tienen un futuro: no es que conozcan los pormenores de lo que les espera, pero saben que su vida, en conjunto, no acaba en el vacío" (SS 2).

Por esta razón, una mujer que atraviesa por un embarazo difícil puede encontrar la fuerza para acoger a su preciado hijo en el mundo. Un hombre

que enfrenta un diagnóstico terminal puede ver que el final de su vida terrenal es solo el comienzo de la vida eterna con Cristo.

La Iglesia nos enseña que "quien tiene esperanza vive de otra manera" (SS 2). La salvación que Cristo nos promete no significa que nos libremos del sufrimiento. Más bien, la promesa de salvación asegura que, incluso en los momentos más oscuros de nuestra vida, se nos dará la fuerza para perseverar. En virtud de esta esperanza cristiana, podemos enfrentar cualquier desafío o prueba. Cuando los mares de la vida se hinchan y las olas nos golpean, la esperanza nos permite permanecer anclados en el corazón de Dios. Aferrémonos a Cristo nuestra esperanza, desde el principio de la vida hasta su fin.



Virgin of Guadalupe, Patroness of unborn children, we implore your intercession for every child at risk of abortion. Help expectant parents to welcome from God the priceless gift of their child's life.

Console parents who have lost that gift through abortion and lead them all to forgiveness and healing through the Divine Mercy of your Son.

Teach us to cherish and care for family and friends until God calls them home. Help us to never see others as burdens.

Guide our public officials to defend each and every human life through just laws. Inspire us all to bring our faith into public life, to speak for those who have no voice.

We ask this in the name of you Son, Jesus Christ, who is Love and Mercy itself. Amen

The over 56 million abortions since the 1973 decisions of *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* reflect with heartbreaking magnitude what Pope Francis means by a “throwaway culture.” However, we have great trust in God’s providence. We are reminded time and again in Scripture to seek the Lord’s help, and as people of faith, we believe that our prayers are heard.

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, no. 373, designates January 22 as a particular day of prayer and penance, called the “Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children”: “In all the Dioceses of the United States of America, January 22 (or January 23, when January 22 falls on a Sunday) shall be observed as a particular day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life and of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion.”

As individuals, we are called to observe this day through the penitential practices of prayer, fasting and/or giving alms. Another way to take part is through participating in special events to observe the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. Call your local diocese or parish to find out what events might be taking place in your area.

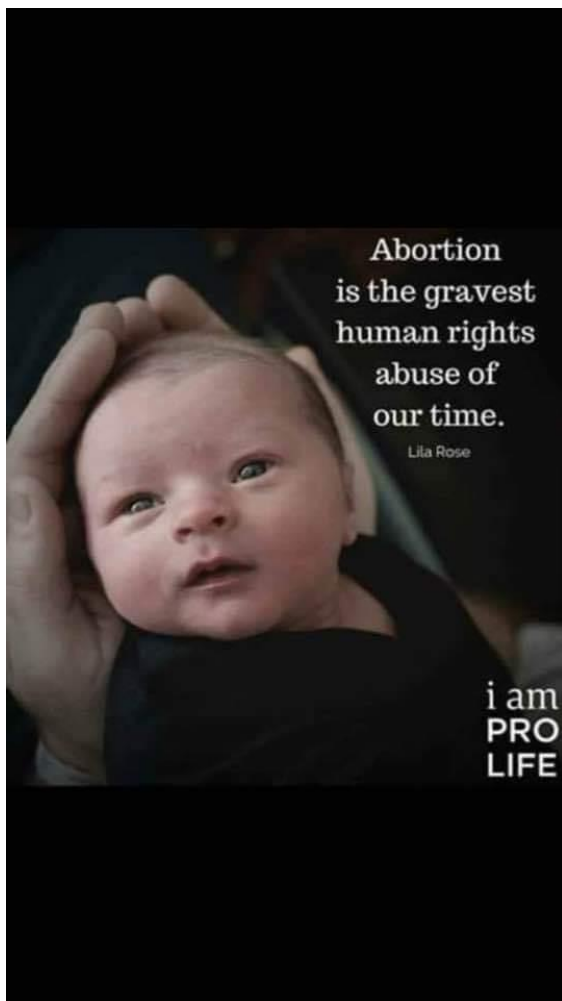
Pro-Life Event Calendar for St. Mary Catholic Church

- **January- Celebrate Life Week together with the PMC (January 19-26).**
- **February- 40 Days for Life prayer vigil begins February 26th through April 5th.**
- **May- Steps for Life annual Mother's Day Celebration (Saturday, May 9th) sponsored by the PMC**
- **October- Respect for Life month/ Banquet for Life Celebration sponsored by the PMC.**

-Please refer to St. Mary's weekly bulletin for more details or contact

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AS A GIFT FROM GOD, EVERY HUMAN LIFE IS SACRED FROM CONCEPTION TO NATURAL DEATH. THE LIFE AND DIGNITY OF EVERY PERSON MUST BE RESPECTED AND PROTECTED AT EVERY STAGE AND IN EVERY CONDITION. THE RIGHT TO LIFE IS THE FIRST AND MOST FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF HUMAN RIGHTS THAT LEADS CATHOLICS TO ACTIVELY WORK FOR A WORLD OF GREATER RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE AND GREATER COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE AND PEACE



Want more Respect Life resources, please visit these additional sites:

- Respectlifeprogram.org
- HopeAfterAbortion.org
- EsperanzaPosAborto.org
- USCCB.org/Prolife
- 40daysforlife.com
- Pregnancymedicalclinic.org
- Rachelsvineyard.org
- ProLifeUtah.org