

WELCOME TO ST. JOSEPH – ST. LAWRENCE PARISH

“Two Churches, One Parish”

Growing as Disciples of Jesus; Making Disciples for Jesus
Fifth Sunday of Lent – March 29, 2020

St. Joseph of the Valley: 31151 207th Street, (Rural) Leavenworth, KS 66048
St. Lawrence: 211 West Riley, Easton, KS 66020
Parish Mailing Address: P.O. Box 129, Easton, KS 66020

Father Francis Bakyor, Pastor
Easton Rectory Phone: 913-773-5712
Father's cell: 913-235-6837
Father's Email: francis.bakyor@yahoo.com

Website: www.sjslparish.org
St. Joseph of the Valley Hall: 913-758-9225
St. Lawrence Hall & Fax: 913-773-8401
“LIKE” us on Facebook for new announcements

THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE:

TUES	March 31	06:00 pm	STL	CANCELLED
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Adoration will follow Mass until 7:30 p.m. - CANCELLED

WED	April 1	06:30 am	STL	CANCELLED
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FRI	April 3	06:30 pm	STL	CANCELLED
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SAT	April 4	05:00 pm	SJV	CANCELLED
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SUN	April 5	09:00 am	STL	CANCELLED
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Confessions: SAT-4:30 pm at SJV; SUN-8:30 at STL - CANCELLED

PLEASE NOTE: Archbishop Naumann has cancelled all public celebrations of the Holy Mass effective March 17th and until further notice. Please pray for the health and protection of our entire community and nation, and for an end to this crisis.

Please pray for the sick, especially: Phil Bell, Deacon Guy Berry, Susie Beying, Joe Brose, Jennifer Brushwood, Glenn Coffey, Carl Davidson, George Dean, Carolyn DeMaranville, Vince Eimer, Donald Ernzen, Tom Flack, Tina Gaspard, Ronnie Gast, Alan Halstead, Marly Heim, Richard Heim, Rita Sachse Heim, Frank Heintzelman, Jim Heintzelman, Lydia Heintzelman, Melanie Herken, Jon Highfill, Trista Highfill, Mark Hund, Arlene Jennings, Wendi Johnston, Michael Jones, Elmer Karczewski, Phillip Leon, Kelly Long, Joyce Lowe, Mary Meinert, Jeni Mettelstedt, Don Navinsky, Kay Nocktonick, Dannie Phillips, Adam Pineau, Mike Pursel, Mary M. Ruhlman, Kim Sachse, Tanner Siebenmorgen, Julie Simonis, Jim (Poly) Sloan, Gary Stafford, Aaron Welch, Louise Wistuba and Nick Yuska.

Prayer List for Our Soldiers: ARMY: 1LT Daniel Broaddus, Pvt. David Crook, Lexi (Skaggs) Hargis, Major Bryan Herken, SPC Derrick Hunt, SGT Colby Seifert, William Stradley. AIRFORCE: E-4 Robert W. Herken, TSGT Scott Loecher, E-3 Connor Schuler, A1C Noah Tattershall. NAVY: ADDA Jason P. Herken, YNS1 (SS) Kevin Lansing.

Prayer for Vocations: Brother Seelos (Tyler Lunsford).

OUR PARISH NEWS

REMINDER: Father would like to encourage everyone to pray for the health and protection of our entire community and nation, for all our brothers and sisters who are ill, for their caretakers, doctors, nurses, medical and emergency preparedness personnel and elected officials. Should you have an emergency and need to speak with Father, you are encouraged to call him at 913-773-5712 or 913-235-6837.

Please call Father to make an appointment for Confession, if desired. We are also encouraged to go to the Church for private prayers and adoration (but no more than 10 people at a time, and observing the social distancing of 6 ft apart).

MAGNIFICAT During this difficult time, many of the faithful may be unable to attend Mass. To help you sanctify your day and to keep walking in the liturgical rhythm of the Church, the MAGNIFICAT is temporarily available to everyone for free. You may access it at www.magnificat.com/free and it is also available in Spanish: www.magnificat.com/gratis.

A SUGGESTED PRAYER OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

Jesus, really present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar, since I cannot now receive thee under the sacramental veil, I beseech thee, with a heart full of love and longing, to come spiritually into my soul through the Immaculate Heart of thy most Holy Mother, and to abide with me, thou in me, and I in thee, in time and in eternity. Amen

COLLECTION: Thank you for your gifts to our parish! Collection-Total unavailable. Last week's on-line collection was \$180. Thank you for your generosity.

DO YOU WANT TO DONATE and not sure how during this time?

In Father's letter of March 24th, he wrote "I know many families are going through hard times this period. I would still like to encourage everyone to continue giving your weekly donations for the upkeep of the parish through online or mail services. God loves a cheerful giver."

Any donations during this difficult time will be greatly appreciated. You can mail in your donations to: St. Joseph-St. Lawrence, P.O. Box 129, Easton, KS 66020 or deposit online by visiting our website at <https://www.sjslparish.org/home/donations> to click on the link to donate on-line! Thank you! We wish everyone good health. Blessings to all!

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY: The Finance Council is happy to announce that the parish will be accepting applications for one or more scholarships for Catholic school (K-16) attendance during the 2020-2021 academic year or Catholic camp attendance during summer 2020. Interested applicants should fill out the application form, attach either a report card or transcript, and provide contact information for a reference. **Applications are due by April 1, 2020.** The link to the application form is available on the parish website or visit this site: <https://forms.gle/vXjX6PPruMRyhZts6>. If you cannot access the application form in one of these ways, send an email to angela.broaddus@gmail.com to request the link.

BIRTHDAY CARD SHOWER: Elmer Karczewski will be celebrating his 90th Birthday on April 15th with his immediate family. If you would like to honor him on this occasion, please send him a birthday card, letter, photos, and other good wishes, to 22068 Millwood Road, Easton, KS 66020. Happy Birthday Mr. Karczewski!

OTHER NEWS IN OUR ARCHDIOCESE

WALKING WITH MOMS IN NEED. A YEAR OF SERVICE

Pregnant and parenting moms in need are in our parishes and neighborhoods. As Pope Francis reminds us, our parishes should be "islands of mercy in the midst of the sea of indifference." The nationwide initiative called "Walking with Moms in Need, A Year of Service," is a wonderful opportunity for us to assess, expand, and better communicate the resources that we have throughout the Archdiocese to help women and families in need. The effort will kick-off Wednesday, **March 25, 2020** which is the 25th anniversary of the papal encyclical Evangelium vitae (The Gospel of Life). Find the Prayer for Pregnant Mothers and learn more about the resources available, the Gabriel Project Ministry, and how you can help at www.archkck.org/prolife-walkingwithmoms.

Unfortunately, the **March 29th Mass & Awareness Walk** that was planned to celebrate the kickoff of this initiative **has been postponed**. Please stay tuned for the rescheduled date.

25YEARS OF THE GOSPEL OF LIFE: They have provided a bulletin insert, which is attached to the end of this bulletin. You can also see it at the following web link: <http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program/2019/upload/wwmin-25-years-gospel-of-life-summary-eng.pdf> as well as: <http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/upload/wwmin-pope-john-paul-iis-challenge-to-our-church.pdf>

COUPLES CELEBRATING THEIR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY IN

2020: The Archdiocesan 50th Wedding Anniversary Celebration is on Sunday, June 7, at 2:00 pm, at the Church of the Nativity/Leawood. To receive your invitation from Archbishop Naumann, please call the parish office and give us your name, address, phone number and date of your wedding. Please do this as soon as possible.

PLEASE NOTE – There are a large number of other Archdiocesan announcements that could not fit in the space available. They will be posted on our church website listed above as a 2nd page to this bulletin.

Bulletin Items: Contact Kim Sachse, 913-775-0690 Or Email Sjslparish@gmail.com. Mass intentions may be scheduled with Kim as well. MUST SUBMIT BY 9 pm TUES FOR INCLUSION.

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(FOR POSTING ON THE CHURCH INTERNET SITE)

MOTHER TERESA ON ABORTION: “IF A MOTHER CAN KILL HER CHILD HOW CAN WE TELL PEOPLE NOT TO KILL ONE ANOTHER?”

Decades have passed since the death of one of the world's best known patrons of the poor, Mother Teresa of Calcutta. In the years since her passing, she has been proclaimed a saint by the Roman Catholic Church, and numerous books have been written about her incredible life of self-sacrifice.

Perhaps less well known, but powerfully significant, is the role Mother Teresa played in rebuilding a culture of life. She did not see a wall between helping the poor and aiding the unborn—she saw it all as part of her mission to share God's love with the world. In the book *Praying with Mother Teresa: Prayers, Insights, and Wisdom of Saint Teresa of Calcutta*, author Susan Conroy, who knew Mother Teresa personally, includes some of the legend's most noteworthy quotes on the issue of life.

“The greatest destroyer of peace in the world today is abortion, because it is a direct war, a direct killing,” Mother Teresa said. “If we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell people not to kill one another?”

Those quotations seem especially prescient. In the 21st century—the century Mother Teresa did not live to see—violence seems ever-present. The failure to recognize the sanctity of innocent human life at its conception leads to a refusal to honor life at other stages of development. Mother Teresa's words were not hollow. She was willing to take on the responsibility of caring for and raising a child—if it would mean that a child's life was spared:

“Please don't kill the child,” she said. “Give me the child.” Mother Teresa's indomitable spirit lives on...in the order of Sisters she founded...and in the hearts of all those who work to protect precious lives from abortion. Her legacy lies in the lives she saved...the souls she healed...and the people she inspired. May we never forget the power of her life-affirming message.

CAMP KATERI TEKAKWITHA combines demanding outdoor activities with powerful, spiritual instruction bringing about a unique encounter with God. Although our adventure activities are memorable, often the love that campers experience through prayer is what kids remember most. Take advantage of this amazing opportunity for your kids. For more information and to register, please visit <https://www.archkck.org/camp>

“THE HISTORY & LEGACY OF IMMACULATA HIGH SCHOOL” is now available for purchase from the publisher, Lulu.com. Access the link to order from Facebook pages “Forever Raiders”, “Immaculata High School Alumni” or “The History & Legacy of Immaculata High School”. Direct link is:

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/mary-ann-sachse-brown-and-marti-sachse-judson/the-history-legacy-of-immaculata-catholic-high-school-in-the-first-city-of-kansas/hardcover/product-24157407.html> This is a keepsake hardcover 120 page book with nearly 300 images. Available in color (best quality) or black and white.

FAMILY DAY AT PRAIRIE STAR RANCH

Prairie Star Ranch is offering you the chance to step away and enter into a day of prayer, adventure, outdoor activities, and time to reconnect. Families, friends, and communities are invited to join us on **May 3rd** from 9am to 5pm! Opportunities include Horseback Riding, Canoeing, Ropes Activities, and time for prayer. The experience will culminate with the celebration of the Holy Mass in our beautiful St. Kateri Chapel. Let us journey together on this day of Christ-centered adventure! Register online now or contact the Team at Prairie Star Ranch. www.archkck.org/ranch -- 785-746-5693 -- psrministry@archkck.org

CREATING FINANCIAL SECURITY FOR A LOVED ONE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: Tuesday, **May 5**, 2020, St. Thomas More Catholic Church, 11822 Homes Road, Kansas City, Missouri 64131

- Establishing a Special Needs Trust
- Guardianship
- The Achieving Better Life Experiences Act of 2013 (ABLE) which allows for tax-advantaged savings accounts for individuals with disabilities. RSVP to Tom Racunas at tracunas@archkck.org or call 913.647.3054. Sponsored by the Special Needs Ministries of the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas and the Diocese of Kansas City—St. Joseph Missouri

CAMP TEKAKWITHA WOMEN'S RETREAT

Ladies, this is a weekend for you! Here you will find the space to relax, rejuvenate and reconnect. This is a retreat for women of all ages (21+). You will find speakers that inspire you, sacraments that draw you to the heart of Christ, and fellowship with other women. Come enjoy the beauty of God's creation at Prairie Star Ranch and the gift of sharing life with other women seeking the heart of Jesus. Fri, **Apr 24** - Sun, **Apr 26** at Prairie Star Ranch. Further details and registration: <http://www.camptekakwitha-womensretreat.com>

BEGINNING EXPERIENCE ~ Grief Support Weekend: Beginning Experience is offering a healing weekend **April 24-26**, 2020, at Precious Blood Retreat Center in Liberty Mo. This invitation is open to men and women of all ages who have suffered the loss of a spouse through death, divorce, or separation. It is a time to heal and a time to begin anew. Reservations are required. For more information visit: www.beginningexperience_kc.org email: register.bekc@gmail.com or contact Laura 308-530-1873.

FAITH IN BLOOM BENEFIT DINNER

Join us in celebrating 75 years of the Villa St. Francis mission at the Faith in Bloom Benefit Dinner & Live Auction! Wednesday **April 29th**: 5:30 Cocktail Hour; 6:30 Dinner Program; 7:30 Award & Auction. Reserve your ticket today! Archbishop Naumann will be presenting the annual Archbishop

Joseph F. Naumann Sanctity of Life Award to the Servants of Mary, Ministers to the Sick, in honor of their dedication to promoting the dignity of life through their end-of-life ministry. If you or someone you love has been impacted by the Servants of Mary, Ministers to the Sick, (also known as the Sisters, Servants of Mary), and would be interested in helping us honor them by sharing your story, let us know by replying to this email by Friday, March 6th.

AMAZING PARISH: Registration is filling fast for the upcoming Amazing Parish Conference hosted by our Archdiocese on **Oct. 19-21st** at the Overland Park Convention Center. Parish teams from around the country have already signed up to take part in this valuable training! Register Here: <https://amazingparish.org/>

What does an Amazing Parish look like? If you're ready to build an effective leadership team and improve the organizational health of your parish, we hope you'll join us. Amazing Parish gives busy pastors and their teams the tools they need to transform their parishes - moving from maintenance mode to mission communities that are truly alive! For more information : Parish Journey – A Pastor's First Steps, <https://amazingparish.org/get-started/#firststeps> or call the Office of Evangelization at 913-721-1570

FAITH-BUILDING AND EVANGELIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

Benedictine College is pleased to offer a number of opportunities for faith-building and evangelization:

Study Abroad Experience: Attention, Parents and Grandparents! Do you know a high school student who would benefit from a once-in-a-lifetime short-term study abroad experience with Benedictine College? Students earn 3 hours of college credit while traveling with a Benedictine College professor to Italy **June 26 – July 16, 2020**. Highlights include a general audience with Pope Francis, guided visits to Rome, Assisi, Florence, Padua, Ravenna, Verona, and Milan. Register by December 1 to save \$500! Learn more and submit an inquiry form at www.benedictine.edu/journeywithdante.

Faith & Beauty in Italy - You are invited to travel with Benedictine College to Italy **June 15 – 24, 2020** with Associate Professor of Theology Dr. Matt Ramage. Visit the most significant cultural sites in Rome and Florence. Walk in the footsteps of St. Benedict and St. Francis in Subiaco and Assisi. Meet current Benedictine College students at their summer villa in Florence. Learn more and submit an inquiry form at <http://www.benedictine.edu/ravendiscovery>.

Opportunity for College Students and Adult Learners – Benedictine College Professor of Theology Dr. Mark Zia will lead a two-week Holy Land Study Abroad Summer Program **May 31 – June 14, 2020**. Earn 3 credit hours while traveling to Bethlehem, Galilee, Jerusalem, and other sites. Learn more and submit an inquiry form at <http://www.benedictine.edu/holyland>.

NEW END-OF-LIFE RESOURCE GUIDE IS NOW AVAILABLE

The Ethics Council that serves Archbishop Naumann has produced a comprehensive resource for end-of-life planning titled “Catholic Guide For-End-Of Life and Establishing of Advance Directives”. The purpose of the guide is to assist the faithful in making wise decisions about complex treatments in grave illness or as life's end approaches in accordance with the teachings of our Catholic faith. It also includes two Appendices for a Durable Power of Attorney and an Advance Directive form. For a free digital copy of the Guide, visit www.archkck.org/prolife-end-of-life-care.

25 Years of *The Gospel of Life*



This year the Church celebrates the 25th anniversary of the papal encyclical *Evangelium vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*). This prophetic document was written by Pope John Paul II to reaffirm the value and inviolability of every human life and to appeal to all people to respect, protect, love, and serve every human life. The following is a brief overview of this important document.

The Gospel of Life is at the *heart* of Jesus' saving message to the world. Through the Incarnation and birth of Christ, God reveals to us the dignity of all human life. Human life, as a gift of God, is sacred and inviolable. The Son of God has united himself with

The Gospel of Life is at the *heart* of Jesus' saving message to the world.

every human being and desires for us to share eternal life with him. For this reason, direct attacks on human life, such as abortion and euthanasia, are always unacceptable. Yet, sadly we see new and expanding threats to human life emerging on an alarming scale. These new threats to life are often justified, protected, and even promoted by our laws and culture.

Not only must human life not be taken, but it must be protected with loving concern. Each of us is made in the image and likeness of God, and we reflect his glory in the world. God made the human person with the capacity to love and reason and share in a relationship with himself, the Creator. The human person bears an indelible imprint of God and is the pinnacle of all creation. The source of our dignity is not only linked to our creation by God, but to our final end and destiny to spend eternity with the Father. By accepting Christ as our Savior through the ministry of the

Church, despite our sinfulness, we can begin to share in eternal life even now.

Despite the grave threats to human life in the modern world, we, as the People of God, are called to place our faith in Jesus, the "Word of life" (1 Jn 1:1). As Christians, we have received the full truth about human life as proclaimed by the very person of Jesus. In sharing in the lowliest and most vulnerable conditions of human life—even death on a cross—Jesus shows us that life is *always good*. The true meaning of our lives is found in giving and receiving love. It is only through this understanding of a sincere gift of self that human sexuality and procreation reach their true and full significance.

God holds the lives of all people in his gentle and loving care, giving meaning and value to any sufferings that we bear. Even within the

In sharing in the lowliest and most vulnerable conditions of human life—even death on a cross—Jesus shows us that life is *always good*.

mystery which surrounds suffering and death, these experiences can become saving events as we unite them with Christ's own sacrifice. By making human life the instrument of our salvation, the Son of God shows us the priceless value of human life.

Although the roots of violence against life are not new—going all the way back to Genesis, when Cain took the life of his brother Abel—our modern world is now suffering under a culture of death. Scientific and technological advances and an increasingly secularized world have led to an eclipse of the value of human life. However, respect for life requires that science and technology should always be at the service of the human person and his integral development. We must reject systems of structuralized sin which value efficiency and productivity over human persons.

Governments and international institutions promote abortion and euthanasia as marks of progress and freedom. But this is a false and perverse understanding in which freedom is equated with absolute individualism. True freedom is inherently relational, recognizing that God has entrusted us to one another. As cultures and societies fail to recognize these objective truths, everything becomes relative, and all principles are called into question—even the fundamental right to life. However,

To proclaim Jesus is to proclaim life itself. Gratitude and joy at the incomparable dignity of the human person impel us to bring the Gospel of Life to the hearts of all people and make it penetrate every part of society.

the blood of Christ's sacrifice remains our constant hope. Christ's gift of himself on the Cross reveals how precious life truly is and gives us the strength to commit ourselves to building a *culture of life*. Christ's blood, shed for us, promises that in God's plan death will be no more, and life will be victorious.

Society as a whole must respect, defend and



promote the dignity of every human person, at every moment and in every condition of that person's life. Each life is a gift from God and ultimately belongs to him. He has sole authority over life and death. We are therefore called to reverence and love every human person, loving our neighbors as ourselves. It is our responsibility to care for and protect human life, especially the lives of the most vulnerable among us.

Having received the gift of the Gospel of Life, we are the people of life and a people for life. It is our duty to proclaim the Gospel of Life to the world. *To proclaim Jesus is to proclaim life itself. Gratitude and joy at the incomparable dignity of the human person impel us to bring the Gospel of Life to the hearts of all people and make it penetrate every part of society. In every child which is born, and in every person who lives or dies, we see the image of God's glory. We celebrate this glory in every human being, a sign of the living God, an icon of Jesus Christ.*

*Cf. *Evangelium vitae* © Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City. Summary compiled of studies and adaptations used with permission. All rights reserved. [Stock.com/young-woman-holding-baby](https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/stock-photo/young-woman-holding-baby); [Stock.com/TatianaDevilova](https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/stock-photo/young-woman-holding-baby); [Stock.com/naravodica](https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/stock-photo/young-woman-holding-baby). Models used for illustrative purposes only. Photos used with permission. All rights reserved. Copyright © 2010, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C. All rights reserved.

Pope St. John Paul II's Challenge to Our Church: The Inspiration for *Walking with Moms in Need*



On March 25, 2020, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, the Church celebrates the 25th anniversary of the papal encyclical *Evangelium vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*). This prophetic document, written by a great saint of our time, Pope John Paul II, reaffirmed the Church's constant teaching on the value and inviolability of every human life.

In this encyclical, the Holy Father explains that the Gospel of Life is at the *heart* of Jesus' saving message to the world. Through the Incarnation of Christ, God reveals to us the dignity of all human life. Each of us is made in the image and likeness of God, reflecting his glory and his imprint. We are therefore called to "respect, defend and promote the dignity of every human person, at every moment and in every condition of that person's life."¹

Evangelium vitae highlights the special and particular role of women in bearing the gift of life to the world. Pope John Paul II offers heartfelt thanks to these "heroic mothers," who, placing their trust in God, "devote themselves to their own family without reserve, who suffer in giving birth to their children and who are ready to make any effort, to face any sacrifice, in order to pass on to them the best of themselves."²



Pope John Paul II also outlines the many challenges that expectant mothers may face, including lack of support from the father, financial strains, concerns about her own health or that of her child, and pressures from family and friends. The Holy Father recognizes that an "unborn child is totally entrusted to the protection and care of the woman carrying him or her in the womb."³ For this reason, it is particularly important that the Church come alongside mothers, offering them encouragement, assistance, and support.

Through Christ, we have received the gift of the Gospel of Life in its fullness. As members of the Church, we are the *people of life and for life*. It is our duty to proclaim the truth of the Gospel of Life to the world, for "to proclaim Jesus is itself to proclaim life."⁴ Pope John Paul II tasked us with building a culture of life to combat the forces at work in the culture of death. He challenged us:

With great openness and courage, we need to question how widespread is the culture of life today among individual Christians, families, groups and communities in our Dioceses. With equal clarity and determination we must identify the steps we are called to take in order to serve life in all its truth.⁵

In honor of *Evangelium vitae*'s 25th anniversary and in answer to Pope John Paul II's call, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Pro-Life Activities has launched a nationwide effort beginning March 25, 2020 entitled, *Walking with Moms in Need: A Year of Service*. Parishes, through the support of their bishops and pastors, are invited to join this effort to increase the Church's outreach and support to pregnant women facing difficult or unexpected pregnancies. This special anniversary year provides the Church with an opportunity to assess, expand, and better communicate resources to pregnant moms and families in need.

Pregnant and parenting moms in need are in our parishes and our neighborhoods, but in desperation, they are turning to other places for help. We know the needs and challenges can be immense

for women in difficult pregnancies, especially women in poverty, and the sources for help may not be apparent to those most needing support. Women facing challenging pregnancies should see the Church as a place where they can find help, especially with its extensive social services dedicated to meeting the needs of people in crisis.

Through the *Year of Service* the Church is being asked to respond to Pope John Paul II's call and honestly assess the pastoral and practical assistance that it currently provides to pregnant moms and families in need and how effective it is in communicating such help.

Pope John Paul II wrote that, "gratitude and joy at the incomparable dignity of the human person impel us to share [the Gospel of Life] with everyone."¹ He said we need to bring this message "to the hearts of all people and make it penetrate every part of society."² By reaching out to lovingly support and care for pregnant women and their children, we witness to the sanctity of every human person, in every stage and every circumstance.

Evangelium vitae emphasizes that, "where life is involved, the service of charity must be profoundly consistent. It cannot tolerate bias and discrimination, for human life is sacred and inviolable... We need then to 'show care' for all life and for the life of everyone."³ Pope John Paul II highlights the incredible history of service and charity that the Church has provided throughout the centuries to those abandoned and forgotten by society. He urges that "every Christian community, with a renewed



sense of responsibility, must continue to write this history."⁴

We are called to reverence and love every human person as ourselves. It is our responsibility to care for and protect human life, especially the lives of the most vulnerable among us. *Evangelium vitae* teaches us that "the task of accepting and serving life involves everyone, and this task must be fulfilled above all towards life when it is at its weakest."⁵

Pope John Paul II wrote, "the Gospel of God's love for man, the Gospel of the dignity of the person and the Gospel of life are a single and indivisible Gospel."⁶ The Gospel of Jesus is the Gospel of Life, and to love Jesus is to love and serve life. As followers of Christ, may we strive to continually respond to the needs of the poor and vulnerable entrusted to us by God.

For this Year of Service, the USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities will be providing educational, pastoral, and action-oriented resources to help parishes go to the peripheries and bring hope and help to mothers in need. Through the combined efforts of parishes nationwide, we hope to move closer to the day when every pregnant mother in need knows where to turn for help, and abortion is unthinkable. Visit WalkingWithMoms.com to learn more and to pledge to prayerfully walk with mothers in need.

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1 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995), 81.
2 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 86.
3 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 58.

4 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 80.
5 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 95.
6 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 80.
7 *Ibid*.

8 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 67.
9 *Ibid*.
10 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 43.
11 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 2.