

EVERY LIFE

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2018-2019

Respect Life Program

The U.S. bishops produce printed and digital tools to help leaders throughout the Church integrate the Gospel of Life into their work or ministry. View, download, or order the U.S. bishops' pro-life resources!

WWW.USCCB.ORG/RESPECTLIFE



INSIDE THE COMPLETE SET...

- 🌹 "How-To" File Folder (action ideas, liturgical resources, and more!)
- 🌹 17 x 22" Poster (bilingual, English/Spanish)
- 🌹 Reflection Flyer (bilingual, English/Spanish)
- 🌹 6 Bulletin Inserts (double-sided)
- 🌹 Catalog of U.S. Bishops' Pro-Life Resources
- 🌹 Summary Sheet (this flyer)

Bulletin Boxes

The following six abbreviated versions of the 2018-2019 Respect Life bulletin inserts can be used for church bulletins, e-newsletters, and more. To download, visit www.usccb.org/respectlife

A Perfect Gift

Read the full version at usccb.org/perfect-gift.

Soon after the birth of my son Charlie,* who has Down syndrome, a visitor asked whether he was "mild, moderate, or severe"—referring to his level of cognitive impairment. I was shocked. In my arms I held my beautiful baby boy, who defied easy categorization.

It's like looking at stained glass from the outside: the colors look dark, and you can't see the figures. But inside, with the sun shining through, the effect can be brilliant.

From inside our family, love illuminates our life with Charlie. What may seem dreary to others, perhaps even unbearable, is actually filled with beauty and color. Our love has nothing to do with his abilities. We love him simply because of who he is, and understanding this teaches us a fundamental truth: every life is a good and perfect gift.

Clinical labels don't tell the whole story.

*Name changed for privacy. This is a summary of a USCCB Respect Life Program article by the same name and is reprinted with permission. © 2018, USCCB, Washington, D.C. All rights reserved.

Caring for Loved Ones at Life's End

Read the full version at usccb.org/endoflifecare.

We are created to depend upon one another and walk together in suffering. But when loved ones approach life's end, we may not know how to provide compassionate care. Surround your friend or family member with love, support, and companionship that are "anchored in unconditional respect for their human dignity, beginning with respect for the inherent value of their lives" (*To Live Each Day with Dignity*, USCCB).

The dying process is a sacred time.

Learn about these 10 tips at usccb.org/endoflifecare.

1. Invite God in.
2. Listen.
3. Inform yourself.
4. Be steadfast in compassion.
5. Help them achieve closure.
6. Provide opportunities for resolution.
7. Reminisce.
8. Provide a peaceful atmosphere.
9. Show tenderness.
10. Bear their transition patiently.

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Bridges of Mercy for Healing after Abortion

Read the full version at usccb.org/bridges-of-mercy.

Maria,* Vanessa, Li, Jennifer, and Darryl are among the tens of millions of Americans whose lives have been directly touched by abortion. Like so many others, they have experienced regret, guilt, and grief. But, as they have also experienced, God's healing love and mercy are always possible.

Many Catholics want to help women and men who have experienced abortion, but some don't know how to begin. Visit usccb.org/bridges-of-mercy to learn how people from various walks of life can assist friends, family members, fellow parishioners, clients—or perhaps even themselves.

Also, be aware that the U.S. Church's Project Rachel Ministry for healing after abortion offers confidential, compassionate help. Visit HopeAfterAbortion.org.

Life is a gift from God, and so is His mercy.

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Another Look at Contraception

Read the full version at usccb.org/contraception.

To some, the Catholic Church's consistent teaching against birth control may seem outdated. Yet with each passing year, evidence of contraception's negative consequences keeps piling up.

In the time since birth control first became widely used, science has shown that some contraceptives can cause early abortions; procured abortions and nonmarital births skyrocketed; and women have been subjected to sometimes serious or fatal health issues, as well as what economist George Akerlof calls "the feminization of poverty."*

God invites us to a fuller, richer, deeper way of life and love.

As humans made in God's image, we are called to imitate His generous, sacrificial, life-giving, and eternal love. Through the Church's teaching, He invites us to a fuller, richer, deeper way of life and love.

*(Full citation at usccb.org/contraception.) This is a summary of a USCCB Respect Life Program article by the same name and is reprinted with permission. © 2018, USCCB, Washington, D.C. All rights reserved.

Killing the Pain, Not the Patient: Palliative Care vs. Assisted Suicide

Read the full version at usccb.org/killing-the-pain.

Assisted suicide is in the news and on lawmakers' agendas. Supporters call it "aid in dying" & claim it's just another option for end-of-life care. But it's radically different from the practice of palliative care, the healing art of relieving pain and other distressing symptoms for patients who are seriously ill.

Palliative care intends to comfort a patient, addressing physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs. Assisted suicide, by contrast, directly intends the patient's death. It ignores any underlying problems, and instead abandons and eliminates the patient who has the problems.

As a society and as individuals, we must dedicate ourselves to providing genuinely compassionate care that protects God's gift of life.

Did You Know?

Medical organizations like the American Medical Association oppose assisted suicide.

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Another Look at Abortion

Read the full version at usccb.org/abortion.

If someone takes an innocent person's life after he or she is born, it's against the law; before birth (even minutes before, in most states), it's legal because of the U.S. Supreme Court *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973.

Abortion results in the death of a child. For many, abortion causes severe and long-lasting emotional, psychological, and spiritual trauma, and other detrimental effects have also been documented. (For help, visit www.HopeAfterAbortion.org.)

Support mothers and their children during and after difficult pregnancies.

So, what are we to do? The Church does not approach difficult pregnancy decisions with a false "either/or" mentality, pitting mother against child. We love them both! Learn more at www.usccb.org/abortion.

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