

Respect Life May 2013 Recap

Next Meeting is Tuesday, August 27, 7:00pm, at Resurrection Parish

- **Opening Prayer/Faith Sharing**

Begin with prayer: prayer for personal conversion, prayer for discernment, prayer for faith sharing and group unity

In Galatians we learn that the Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control.

In the first reading for Sunday May 19, the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit. Refueled and on fire they began to speak in different tongues. The Holy Spirit may not have given us the gift to speak in different tongues but we were given other gifts, one appropriate to our time and our place and our need.

In Isaiah we hear that the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are: wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, Godliness and fear of God.

In Corinthians Paul writes that though there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, there is the same Spirit. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. To this I add: God does not make mistakes.

While we people of faith must be united in our central mission to build the Kingdom of Heaven here on Earth, the Holy Spirit has given each of us an appropriate tool (gift) for this construction project because building the kingdom of God requires more than the same tool. Together we are one community though we each bring – and share – our individual gifts. These gifts are the tools we use as we build the kingdom of God.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, our hearts ablaze and as people of faith now on fire we are moved to respond in different ways and to different issues but always in the service of the Lord. We are instructed not to judge our brothers and sisters because they are Jews or Greeks, man or woman, called by the Spirit to focus on protecting nascent life or protecting the poor. No, we are called to recognize that we are one body with many parts. We must come to love and appreciate our many parts.

Accepting the differences, the different gifts, of each other is not easy. Fortunately Jesus left us with the perfect tool – His gift of peace. When we are at peace with ourselves we can then share this gift with each other.

Let us recognize, tolerate and accept our gifts and the differences among us and the different paths we take, guided by the Holy Spirit who has bestowed upon each of us just the right gift.

In this we pray. AMEN

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- **News and Issues (to strengthen *our* parish Respect Life Ministry)**

Stop Taxpayer Funding for Abortion: Petition #6 (2014):

- No public funds shall be used to pay for any abortion, except when medically necessary or as may be required by federal law.
- Every day in Oregon, 11 abortions are funded by your state tax dollars. Abortion is not a woman's right; it is a life taken. When state legislators argue that budget constraints prevent an expansion of safety net services, our state tax dollars can be better used supporting all life: the unborn, the hungry, working parents and our children.
- The deadline for this initiative is likely to be a year from now, May 2014. But if you snooze, you lose.

In 2012 the Archdiocese supported and endorsed this petition. Though continued support is likely, this needs to be confirmed with our new leadership.

SB490:

- The Archdiocese of Portland opposes SB490, which is aimed at crisis pregnancy clinics run by groups that want to direct women away from abortion. SB490 would require these clinics to post public and visible notices that include information about whether they provide abortion referrals.

This did not pass!

Speaking Events:

Resurrection Parish:

It is the hope of Resurrection Catholic Parish's Celebrate Life Committee that together with the Respect Life Committees within our Archdiocese we can jointly plan, promote, finance and put on speaking events with high profile pro- life speakers.

The goal of these efforts would be to bring a greater number of Archdiocesan parishioners to awareness of the ubiquitous nature of the Culture of Death and to evangelize for courageous advocacy for life in every arena contaminated by the acceptance of legalized abortion and the culture that feeds it.

To this end we wish a Speakers Committee be formed to initiate a list of potential speakers; to devise a budget; to divide responsibilities; to plan the first speaking engagement in 2013; and to invite input from Archbishop Sample.

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- **Upcoming Events:**

- St. Matthew Respect Life Committee Human/Sex Trafficking Presentation: Tuesday, June 18 at 7pm.

AROUND THE ARCHDIOCESE

Fortnight of Freedom



Our faith tradition teaches us that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met – to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

We are Americans. We are grateful for the gift of liberty which is ours as American citizens. To be Catholic and American should mean that our allegiances, while distinct, should be complementary.

Archbishop Sample has asked pastors to arrange special events within their parishes or within vicariates to highlight the importance of defending our first freedom, in cooperation with other Christians, Jews, people of other faiths, and all who wish to defend our most cherished freedom.

The teaching of our Catholic faith obliges us to work together with fellow citizens for the common good of all who live in this land. That is the vision of our founding and our Constitution, which guarantees citizens of all religious faiths the right to contribute to our common life together.

This constitutional guarantee includes the fundamental right to those things required for human decency including the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and the right to manifest one's religion either individually or in community, in public or in private.

As we approach summer and the day of our nation's independence, the United States of Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) calls for a second annual Fortnight for Freedom, a nationwide prayer effort to support the challenges to religious liberty both at home and abroad. The USCCB suggests that the fourteen days (fortnight means the space of fourteen nights and days) from June 21 - the vigil of the Feasts of St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More - to July 4, Independence Day, be dedicated to this "fortnight for freedom" - a great hymn of prayer for our country.

To remind us Americans, us Catholics, us People of Faith, of this constitutional and God-given right, the USCCB recommends that the Church focus "all the energies the Catholic community can muster" in this time of prayer. Bishops and pastors are encouraged to arrange special events to highlight the importance of defending our first freedom, in cooperation with other Christians, Jews, people of other faiths, and indeed, all who wish to defend our most cherished freedom.

Culminating on Independence Day, this special period of prayer, study, catechesis, and public action would emphasize both our Christian and American heritage of liberty.

Fortnight for Freedom is a political activity; it is not a partisan issue. It is not about defeating Obama or repealing the healthcare law. It is much more than the portion of the HHS Mandate that threatens our religious freedom. Fortnight for Freedom is about all challenges to religious liberty both at home and abroad.

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- **Respect Life Program 2013-2014**

THEME: OPEN YOUR HEARTS TO LIFE!

At our August meeting I will bring a copy of the 2013-14 Respect Life materials for each parish.

This theme is a reminder that the culture of death begins with a culture of rejection - all the seemingly trivial ways we give priority to our desires over the genuine needs of others - and that to love like Christ, we must open our hearts to others, loving them sacrificially and mercifully.

The main image on the poster is the touching photo of Pope Francis embracing Dominic Gondreau, an 8-year old boy with cerebral palsy, after Mass on Easter Sunday.

Seven articles are included this year's packet:

- Mounting threats to, and our obligation to protect, religious freedom
- Abortion is never a solution to pregnancy from rape
- The impact of 40 years of legal abortion on society, particularly vulnerable women and their children
- Obstacle to healing after abortion: difficulty in accepting God's forgiveness and forgiving oneself
- Domestic abuse: often possible to transform destructive patterns of behavior
- How Catholics can convey the reality of marriage to family and friends
- Fundamental reasons why all Catholics should oppose the use of the death penalty

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Work Plans: Building/Strengthening your Ministry: Small Groups: Planning for Respect Life Month/Sunday

As we approach Respect Life Month, how will you engage your parish, engage others in your ministry, and energize your committee? How will you engage the youth?

Break into groups; however you want – parish, vicariate, friends, etc. Take 40 minutes in your small group and brainstorm ideas.

Include time to identify a specific goal with realistic timelines, determine what steps you need to take or what activities need to happen to accomplish your goal. For example, who do you need to talk with in order to gain support and to promote this within the parish?

Goals:

Who are you targeting: parish, your ministry, your committee, youth?

Activities:

What Catholic resources will you use?

Who can help you accomplish your goals?

Timeline:

Topics for August Meeting

- Need 2 or 3 Parish Respect Life groups to showcase what you're doing, either for the first time or since you last presented.
- How will your Parish Respect Life group assist the Office of Life, Justice and Peace?
- How can the Office of Life, Justice and Peace assist your parish group?

• **Closing Prayer: Prayer for Reverence of Life**

All mighty God, giver of all that is good. We thank you for the precious gift of human life.

For life in womb, coming from your creative power → AMEN

For the life of children, making us glad with their freshness and promise → AMEN

For the life of young people, hoping for a better world → AMEN

For the life of the handicapped and disabled, teaching us humility → AMEN

For the life of the elderly, witnessing the ageless values of patience and wisdom → AMEN

Like Blessed Mary, may we always say yes to your gift. May we defend it and promote it from conception to its natural end and bring us at last oh Father to eternal life, in Jesus Christ our lord. AMEN