

# The Respect Life Church Ministry:

## Educating and Leading the Church Community in Prayer and Action

Do you know ...

- ... how many abortions are happening every week in your county?
- ... that minority communities suffer disproportionately from abortion?
- ... what pregnancy centers do, and where the nearest center is in your community?
- ... that hormonal methods of birth control can actually act to cause very early abortions?
- ... what post-abortion syndrome is; how women are harmed by abortion?
- ... that human embryos are routinely discarded during the process of in vitro fertilization?

There is much knowledge relating to life issues that has not reached the average American. Does your church have a ministry to inform the membership on how the lives of our brothers and sisters are being threatened, how women are being misinformed and victimized?

The pastor most probably has his hands full with all the ways he is already ministering to his flock. A [Respect Life committee](#) could help the pastor to serve the congregation in this way. The purpose of the Committee could include education, prayer, support for women in difficult situations, and encouragement members to consider the abortion issue as a priority in their voting decisions. They can help to publicize volunteer opportunities and fundraisers for area pregnancy centers, or to inform everyone about particular legislation that is being considered. They can also invite speakers, show a pro-life video, or hold prayer events to pray for the women being pressured or coerced to abort, women wounded by abortion, and for conversion of everyone in the abortion industry.

**A. Educate:** Excellent pro-life books, brochures, videos, and audio files are available.

1. Pamphlets can be placed in a rack available to members, featured at a monthly table, or even passed out to the congregation.
2. Inform the congregation about local pregnancy centers and post-abortion healing ministries so that anyone who is experiencing an unplanned pregnancy or post-abortion trauma knows where to go for help.
3. If your church has a library, make sure it includes good pro-life literature and videos. If not, perhaps your group can begin a small collection of pro-life books and videos available for lending.
4. Encourage existing church groups to feature a pro-life presentation at one of their meetings, or invite a speaker to address the entire church. Many local organizations would be happy to provide a speaker at no charge.
5. Encourage members to subscribe to Christian Voices for Life weekly email, "Wednesday Word".

**B. Prayer:** Encourage prayer in your church community for an end to abortion and more specifically for our brothers and sisters who are involved with and affected by abortion.

1. Intentions:
  - a. Pray for women who are tempted – that they find the support, courage, and grace they need to choose life.
  - b. Pray for fathers to give their support to the mother and take responsibility for his child.
  - c. Pray for women who have aborted and for the men involved - that they find healing and forgiveness
  - d. Pray for conversion of those involved in providing and promoting abortion
  - e. Pray for government leaders – that they will work to protect life with legal measures.

2. Encourage prayer within the church:
  - a. Print and distribute a simple prayer for daily use, such as the one featured on <http://www.christianvoicesforlife.org/prayer>.
  - b. Encourage your pastor to regularly include petitions relating to life issues in public prayers during services.
3. Prayer at abortion clinics: Be informed about group prayer at abortion clinics and encourage church members to participate. Consider making a commitment to have church members pray at an abortion facility once a month or once every two months. Local pro-life organizations may sponsor a program and provide training. For a national directory of pro-life organizations, go to <https://www.causeiq.com/directory/pro-life-organizations-list/> . You can go to the search interface and choose a location to search in. Sites of 40 Days for Life campaigns can be found at [www.40DaysforLife.org](http://www.40DaysforLife.org).

**C. Support:** Show the women of your community that you will support them with alternatives to abortion.

1. An international directory of pregnancy centers is available at <https://www.heartbeatinternational.org/worldwide-directory> Find the nearest center and ask how your church can help support their efforts. Pregnancy centers need both volunteer and financial support from the community in order to help women to choose life, and to continue to offer them help during their pregnancy. They can also use donations of diapers and baby items.
2. The Gabriel Project is a national program which many Catholic parishes participate in. Find your local Look at the website of the local diocese or parishes to find a local program. The diocese can refer you to the parish closest to you. Participating parishes have “angel” volunteers who are matched up with pregnant women in need of support. In addition to emotional support, diapers and other baby items are provided. It is not necessary to be Catholic to receive support. Local dioceses can be found at <https://www.usccb.org/find-a-bishop-and-diocese>
3. Let the families of your own community know that an unplanned pregnancy would be met with love and support, not judgment.

**D. Civic action:** It is a Christian duty to help build a government system that truly serves the common good. Church members can be encouraged to make life issues a priority in political decisions and action.

1. While churches are not encouraged to endorse political candidates or parties, it is certainly appropriate for church leaders to speak to the moral issues that relate to political decisions. Christians can be encouraged to form their consciences to make political decisions in accord with Christian moral beliefs, fostering the common good rather than their own interests. Churches are allowed to speak in favor or opposition to particular proposals, according to how they bear on moral issues. A practice such as abortion which is morally wrong and harmful should never be supported, and working against it should be a priority in voting decisions.
2. The teaching document on the political responsibility of Catholics is available at <https://www.usccb.org/offices/justice-peace-human-development/forming-consciences-faithful-citizenship> (from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops).
3. See “Why Vote Pro-Life” from Heritage House '76 at <https://www.hh76.org/default.aspx?s=why%20vote%20pro&g=-1>
4. See <https://www.humanlifeaction.org/> for information on national legislative issues.



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[www.ChristianVoicesforLife.org](http://www.ChristianVoicesforLife.org)