



## DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

### RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY

November 2009

Greetings from the Respect Life Office!

First of all thank you for the ways you observed Respect Life month during October. The presence of members of the Belleville Diocese at the Springfield Diocesan event in Granite City, and participation in the Life Chain in a variety of locations, were two of the visible examples of our witness to life and public cry to protect the life of the unborn.

The next similar opportunity planned will be the *March for Life in Washington, DC*. This past year has witnessed several decisions in Washington that further threaten life. If you haven't considered making this pilgrimage before – or haven't promoted it in your parish – I encourage you to make this the year to give it careful and prayerful consideration. It is not a trip for everyone. It is not a sight seeing or touring trip. It is two nights sleeping on a bus and a day of exposure to whatever weather we are given. But it is also a trip with powerful personal and public impact; an experience with the potential to witness to the nation, and ones own heart, the truth that human life, with its inherent dignity, begins at the moment of conception. It is a time of prayer, education, and advocacy. It is a time for penance for that which we have allowed to be brutally discarded; but it is also, and especially so, a reminder of life that we celebrate! Information and registration forms are available at [www.respectlife.catholicweb.com](http://www.respectlife.catholicweb.com). Now is a great time for a bulletin and/or newsletter announcement, and posting a flyer. Please see the following page for this and other bulletin announcements.

Throughout the diocese many other efforts regularly highlight that there are many obstacles to the opportunity to live up to the fullness of human dignity. Consequently, Respect Life Ministry includes the support/promotion of efforts of charity and justice in a wide range of areas, in the same way that it invites everyone to participate in active and prayerful support of the more direct threats against life. As individual members of one body, we may not always be called to the same work, but in all cases our efforts flow from our fundamental call to discipleship, our call to live a life of love guided by truth.

If you haven't yet read "*Charity in Truth*" (a link is available on the Respect Life website above), you are encouraged to take a little time to simply start with the introduction. See if perhaps that doesn't inspire you to continue to the conclusion which begins, "Without God man neither knows which way to go, nor even understands who he is...The greatest service to development, then, is a Christian humanism that enkindles charity and takes its lead from truth, accepting both as a lasting gift from God." Humility and discipline for ongoing formation (conscience shaped by truth, informed by our faith and reason) and transformation (hearts burning with love) is a challenge for all of us as we journey together to "build a culture of life" and "go into all the world" sharing the gospel.

May God bless you and those you love and serve,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie Edwards".

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*Laurie Edwards, Coordinator*

\*\*Before you get to the Bulletin Announcements below, here are a couple of links you might want to view; the first is a discussion on the “Theology of the Body for Teens” curriculum in general, the second is a note to parents. This is being considered by at least a couple of parishes in the Diocese, especially those who have already had a presentation/series by Christopher West and are excited about getting the message out to youth.\*\*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbzoE3bdudc> (Introduction to TOB for Teens Curriculum)  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daxy2P7\\_HUk&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daxy2P7_HUk&feature=related) (Excerpt from Parent DVD)

Now the Bulletin Announcements:

This first one is need for the upcoming weekend!

A “*Day of Healing: Abortion hurts – Forgiveness Heals*” will take place in Springfield, Illinois, on November 14<sup>th</sup> for post-abortive women and men. Whether it has been 2 days, 2 months, or 20 years, healing is available; for more information visit [www.respectlife.catholicweb.com](http://www.respectlife.catholicweb.com), under “Upcoming Events,” or call 1-877-722-4355.

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### **MARCH FOR LIFE in WASHINGTON, D.C.: Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010**

Join us on pilgrimage to Washington DC as we gather with hundreds of thousands from throughout our nation to pray and publicly witness so that hearts and minds may be opened to the Gospel of Life and laws may be changed to reverence all human life. A bus will be traveling to DC from Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, departing Thursday, 1/21, and returning Saturday, 1/23. For more information and to register please contact Doug Lugge at 618-476-9505 or [jdlugge@wisperhome.com](mailto:jdlugge@wisperhome.com). Registration forms and info are also on the Diocese of Belleville Respect Life’s website at [www.RespectLife.catholicweb.com](http://www.RespectLife.catholicweb.com), under “Upcoming Events.” Register early to insure a seat!

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***November is National Adoption month.*** In light of the commonly heard reason for choosing abortion over adoption for someone not in a position to raise a child, namely *they* just couldn’t bear “giving a child away,” the following words show again that ***adoption is the option of love:***

Whoever wants to keep his life just for himself will lose it. Only by giving ourselves do we receive our life. In other words: only the one who loves discovers life. And love always demands going out of oneself, it always demands leaving oneself. Anyone who looks just to himself, who wants the other only for himself, will lose both himself and the other. Without this profound losing of oneself, there is no life.

-Pope Benedict XVI, Homily at St. Stephen’s Cathedral, Vienna, Sept. 9, 2007

For information about adoption options in the Diocese of Belleville visit “Focus on Adoption” under “Respect Life Topics” at [www.RespectLife.catholicweb.com](http://www.RespectLife.catholicweb.com).

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For additional ideas remember the “Word of Life” from USCCB for announcements and Intercessions for Life! ([Click here](#) – or the link is available on the Respect Life website under “Devotion and Prayer Aids.”)