

St. Paul Ramsey Respect Life Ministry

Mission Statement

The mission of the St. Paul Parish Respect Life Ministry is to witness, by word and action, to the teachings of Jesus Christ on the respect for the dignity of each human being from conception to natural death.

With the support of the Pastor, Parochial Vicars and Parish staff, St. Paul Parish Respect Life Ministry will focus on:

+ PRAYER & WORSHIP

Engage in prayer and worship guided by the teachings and sacramental life of the Church. This will include programs of communal and individual prayer with the intention that the culture of death surrounding us today will be replaced by a culture of life and love.

+ EDUCATION

Provide public information and education to its parishioners through the parish communication channels. The focus will be to deepen understanding of the sanctity of human life and the humanity of unborn children, the moral evil of intentionally killing innocent human beings—whether at the beginning of life or at its end—and the mission of the Church to witness to and serve all human life.

+ ADVOCACY & PUBLIC POLICY

Support public policy efforts directed to restoring legal protection of the lives of unborn children and those vulnerable to pressures of ending their lives by assisted suicide, and to providing morally acceptable alternatives to abortion and assisted suicide.

+ CARE & SERVICE

Support pastoral care for women with problems related to pregnancy; for all who have been involved in abortion; for those who are disabled, sick, and dying, and their families and caregivers; for those who have lost loved ones to violent crime; and for those in prison sentenced to death.

Goals

- Establish a platform within the parish that promotes Catholic teaching on life issues and integrates the principles of Saint John Paul II's "Theology of the Body".
- Advocate the true meaning of marriage as a sacrament ordained by God through advanced study and understanding of divine purpose of the marital union.
- Focus on supporting activities that end abortion locally, nationally and globally.
- Engage the St. Paul parish community to create a culture that cherishes and protects life, and educates children, teens, young adults, adults and seniors to prepare them to be pro-life advocates.
- Communicate with established Parish Prayer Groups, Departments (Religious Education, Confirmation, Youth & Young Adult), Ministries (Social Concerns, Family Mass, etc.) to prayerfully and practically support the Catholic Pro-Life agenda. This involves working with Parish staff as well as utilizing electronic/online, written/bulletin and pulpit opportunities.
- Raise awareness of State and Federal laws and public policies that threaten the sanctity of life, and encourage participation in Legislative methods and opportunities to stop or prevent laws that promote the destruction of life such as abortion, assisted suicide and the death penalty.
- Collaborate with the Respect Life Ministries of local Catholic Churches in sharing ideas, resources and participation in sponsored events. Also, share the mutual goals of this ministry with other worship communities within Ramsey, thereby extending participation in our ministry and activities.
- Provide access for the parishioners of St. Paul to Archdiocesan Respect Life activities through parish communication channels.
- Support organizations that assist those who choose life for their unborn child but require shelter, medical care or life services, as well as organizations that assist those dealing with other societal challenges such as end-of-life issues, suicide prevention and drug abuse, and prison ministries.
- Respond to those requiring post-abortion counseling, healing and reconciliation, or to families in crises related to suicide or drug abuse, by providing outreach and resources.

Activities and Committees

Prayer & Worship

Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

A Mass will be celebrated annually on the Solemnity of the Annunciation, (or nearest Saturday morning) not only to remember the Incarnation of Our Lord, but to also recognize the dignity and eternal value of every conceived baby. The day begins with a visit to an abortion clinic in Hackensack where the rosary is offered for the Blessed Mother to intercede for those contemplating abortion. This is followed by Mass at St. Paul. The annual Spiritual Adoption Novena is begun after this mass, when the novena cards are distributed and participants sign up for monthly email updates.

Spiritual Adoption Program

A nine-month novena prayed by parishioners in which the participants “spiritually adopt” an unborn child who is in danger of abortion. The daily prayer is simple and allows the unborn child to be prayed for throughout its mother’s pregnancy.

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

The nine-month Spiritual Adoption novena concludes in December with Holy mass and a “baby-naming” ceremony – celebrated on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe or nearest Saturday morning.

Eucharistic Adoration - Holy Hour for Life

A Holy Hour for Life is offered on an on-going basis, every third Monday of each month, from 6:30-7:30 pm in the Church. The primary prayer intention is to change hearts and minds so that all embrace the value and dignity of life from conception until natural death. Other aspects pertaining to the dignity of life are also prayed for

Rosary at abortion facility- Hackensack

Initially started as an outreach of the Men’s Cursillo 4th Day Group. Depending on the calendar, the group leaves the St. Paul Church parking lot at 7:40 am on either the 2nd or 3rd Saturday of the month.

The group prays the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, then returns for 9 am Mass at St. Paul. If interested in participating, please provide your name to Gary Gyss to be added to the notification list. gjgyss@gmail.com

October - Respect Life Sunday

Guests (secular or religious) are invited to speak and/or preach at all masses on Respect Life Sunday. Various St Paul ministries are invited to participate in the parish’s “celebration of life” activities.

20/20 Project Awareness Campaign (2017 - 2020) – Awareness of NJ state legislation, and the 20/20 project’s goals of stopping late term abortion in the State of New Jersey by the year 2020.

40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil

Participate in the 40 Days for Life initiative by praying outside of an abortion facility in Hackensack. This includes a weekly group effort of offering a prayerful, public witness to the tragedy of abortion and a private, individual endeavor to fast and pray for 40 days for the end of abortion.

Christmas Card Sale (October)

In conjunction with Respect Life Month, the Respect Life Committee and Knights of Columbus will offer Christmas cards for sale on Respect Life Sunday. The intention is to encourage parishioners to utilize Christmas cards which convey a pro-life message in celebration of Jesus birth.

January – Participation in the National March for Life

Attend the March for Life in Washington, D.C. each January. The trip is open to all parishioners who would like to take the charter bus to the march. Watch the parish bulletin for details

Coordinating Parish - Archdiocese Respect Life Activities

St. Paul is a participating parish that hosts an Archdiocesan Regional Respect Life event annually and supports and promotes activities developed, endorsed or hosted by the Archdiocese of Newark Respect Life Ministry. (Rachel’s Vineyard, etc.)

Supportive Services to Several Sources-

Offer support to Several Sources, a home for unwed mothers in Ramsey. This help could be in any area needed, i.e., making hotline kits, yard work, or prayer. The support can be provided by people of all ages, and can be organized within parish groups,(i.e. Youth Group, Young Adults, Social Concerns).

Lighthouse Baby Bottle Program- (Social Concerns)

A fundraiser campaign for the Lighthouse Pregnancy Center that takes place between Mother’s Day and Father’s Day each year. This activity is coordinated by the Social Concerns Committee of St Paul.

Parish Communication on News on National Regional and Local Levels Regarding Respect Life Ministry (via webpage, opt-in email list, bulletin when appropriate)

There is a wealth of information from the national, state and local levels regarding legislative initiatives and spiritual activities supporting all aspects of the sanctity of life. The information can be available from so many varied sources which makes accession of it overwhelming at times. The intent of this effort is to vet the relevant information and provide links and summaries of the most important events. This communication will be by opt-in distribution only.

Ramsey Knights of Columbus Liaison-

The Ramsey Knights and the Knights of Columbus national organization have long supported the interests of Respect Life activities impacting societal issues that impact the dignity of life. St. Paul and the Ramsey Knights will support each other's activities and provide notification of these activities through communication channels to encourage parishioner participation.

Committee Meetings

The St. Paul Respect Life Ministry meets regularly – usually on ~~either~~ the 3rd Monday or Tuesday of the month in the Church Meeting (Counting) room, @ 7:30pm. Notification of upcoming meetings will be announced in the bulletin. Meetings in July and August will only be held if necessary for planning October/Respect Life Month activities. The focus of the meetings will be to report on the status of all existing activities and discuss new ideas which are consistent with the mission and goals of the committee.

Prayer To End Abortion

Lord God, I thank you today for the gift of my life
And for the lives of all my brothers and sisters.
I know that there is no life that destroys more life than abortion,
Yet I rejoice that you have conquered death
By the Resurrection of Your Son
I am ready to do my part in ending abortion
Today I commit myself
Never to be silent,
Never to be passive,
Never to be forgetful of the unborn.
I commit myself to be active
In the pro-life movement,
And never to stop defending life
Until all my brothers and sisters are protected,
And our nation once again becomes
A nation with liberty and justice
Not for some, but for all,
Through Christ our Lord. Amen!