



THE DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
**Office of Human Life,
Family and Bioethics**



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- ❖ [Upcoming Respect Life Month Activities](#)
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September 2022

Dear Friends for Life,

SPEAKING TRUTH

It has been three months since the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision was announced, and in that time many misleading or untrue claims have been made to persuade audiences that the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* has harmed women, stripped rights, and even represents the end of American civilization. There is a desperate attempt to convince the unsuspecting that there is not in the womb a unique, unrepeatable human being who exists from the moment of fertilization, unfolding in a magnificently choreographed opus, and having the same rights as a person—most especially the inviolable right to life.¹ But we know that is not true.² Concurrently, technology companies are placing general warning labels on crisis pregnancy center listings to tarnish their reputations, “cancel culture” prevails on social media platforms, and demands for media censorship of prolife voices are made openly.³ To be truly informed can take a lot of effort because of this bias.

As Christians, though, we are commanded by Jesus Christ to “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Mt 28: 19-20) We are called to speak the Truth: we must preach the Gospel and teach the Faith. But sometimes, because of the distortion of the information most readily available, we have to clarify and correct the “general understanding” to reclaim what is genuinely true—if we don’t challenge the imbalance, no one will. (Do not underestimate the perilous advantage held by Planned Parenthood, *Teen Vogue* and other social influencers.) In this, we should not be afraid to enlighten others, but “be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves” (Mt 10:16) and know Jesus promised, “I am with you always.” (Mt 28:20) To underscore this duty, in his message for the celebration of World Day of Peace in 2011, Pope Benedict XVI stated:

¹ [Separating head from heart: Stacey Abrams's heartbeat claim explained | Washington Examiner](#)
[Nancy Pelosi says it's 'sinful' to restrict abortion for women | Catholic News Agency](#)
[New York Moves to Enshrine Abortion Rights in State Constitution - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)

² [Instruction on respect for human life \(vatican.va\)](#)
[Conception to birth -- visualized | Alexander Tsiaras - Bing video](#)

³ [Why the \(mis\)labeling of pregnancy resource centers on Yelp needs to be corrected - ERLC](#)
[Pro-Abortion MDs Want Media to Cancel Pro-Life Voices | National Review](#)
[Hochul tells Facebook to 'clean up the act' on abortion misinformation after Texas law | The Hill](#)
[Abortion Access Always: Governor Hochul Announces Robust, Multi-Platform Public Education Campaign for All | Seeking Reproductive Healthcare | Governor Kathy Hochul \(ny.gov\)](#)

But what does it mean, in practical terms, to promote moral truth in the world of politics and diplomacy? **It means acting in a responsible way on the basis of an objective and integral knowledge of the facts**; it means **deconstructing political ideologies** which end up supplanting truth and human dignity in order to promote pseudo-values under the pretext of peace, development and human rights; it means fostering an unswerving **commitment to base positive law on the principles of the natural law**. [emphasis mine]

This may be especially arduous work in evangelizing the Gospel of Life, but it is required of us. It is also most necessary that we **speak this truth with love**. Our words must be overflowing with *respect, compassion, humility*, and a *mindfulness* that not everyone has heard or read the scientific facts or actual history of abortion and women's rights. The truth can be shocking—but it will set you free! Nevertheless, we will not open hearts and minds with an insensitive approach. See the Sisters of Life [Into Life](#) series—several parishes are using this as a tool to begin that conversation.

Of course, when educating others, your approach will depend on whether you are speaking with a colleague individually, a young adult group, parishioners at Mass, or an elected official who supports abortion. Always remind your audience that we have resources to help an expectant mother in need regardless of her circumstances (see our [website](#)). Never be judgmental. And do not be discouraged: some will stubbornly continue to disagree, but others, one step at a time, will come to see the big deception of the abortion industry and its supporters. Consider these ABCs: **A**im for accuracy (details should be limited to make your point effectively and charitably, but always based on truth and facts), **B**e accommodating of your audience's ability to receive this information, and **C**ommunicate with civility plus the conviction to continue the conversation. ***Then pray for God's grace!***

We must remember, too, that almost no one is unscathed by abortion (whether having procured, encouraged, or lamented another's abortion) and an ostensible support for abortion may mask a deep, even unrecognized, wound. [Project Rachel](#) attests to the mercy of God for all those repenting the sin of abortion. Please share that message of hope and healing—repeatedly.

Finally, in last month's newsletter, public policy efforts that vigorously promote abortion were shown to conflate direct abortion with the management of miscarriages or imply that abortion is a routine solution to pregnancy complications. In an example of this bold evangelization, the USCCB produced an excellent [graphic](#) to help dispel this misinformation. Facts matter!

UPCOMING RESPECT LIFE MONTH ACTIVITIES

October is Respect Life month and we invite you to join us in celebrating life!

40 Days For Life campaigns have begun in Hempstead, Patchogue and Brentwood. Please consider committing to an hour of prayerful witness every week if you can—or whatever you have to give—it **could save a life from abortion and a lifetime from regret!** Daily vigils run from **September 28 to November 6, 2022** (please check the schedule for a particular site). For more information see our [website](#).

Please note it is really helpful to the site organizers and for inspiring others, to ***sign up*** officially through the convenient websites:

[40 Days for Life](#) - Hempstead

[40 Days for Life](#) - Patchogue

[40 Days for Life](#) - Brentwood

Know your *presence* at any of these sites is *powerful!!!*

Stand Up For Life is Sunday, October 2. This is another excellent opportunity for prayerful witness. You can find more information [here](#).

[Take Action](#) to voice opposition to the reinterpretation of discrimination rules in **Section 1557** of the Affordable Care Act U.S. Department of Health and Human Services which would impose morally objectionable mandates on Catholic hospitals and healthcare workers. Public comments are open through October 3.

Catholic Medical Association White Mass (for healthcare professionals) will be celebrated Sunday, October 16, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. at St. Agnes Cathedral, Rockville Centre. All are welcome—and bring your white coat!

The **National Catholic Bioethics Center seminar** is October 28-29. Please consider joining us this year for an intense overview of important bioethics topics. [Registration](#) is now open. You can read more about the experience [here](#).

Respect Life Sunday is **October 2, 2022**. Please give generously to support the work of the Office of Human Life, Family and Bioethics and your parish ministry so that together, we may build a civilization of love and life.

Please pray for the success of [Project Rachel](#), with our next Rachel's Vineyard Retreat for Women and Men (in Spanish) scheduled for November.

November 8, 2022 is Election Day this year. Tips for preparing to carry out this civic duty can be found in our [October 2020 newsletter](#).

PRAY ALWAYS

As we celebrate the feast day of the Archangels on September 29, let us beg their intercession in this spiritual battle. We know prayer is our most effective weapon against the evils attacking both life in the flesh and our immortal souls. St. Michael, St. Gabriel and St. Raphael, pray for us!

A Prayer to The Archangels St. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael⁴

*Heavenly King, You have given us archangels
to assist us during our pilgrimage on earth.*

*Saint Michael is our protector;
I ask him to come to my aid,
fight for all my loved ones,*

⁴ [A PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL, GABRIEL AND RAPHAEL, THE ARCHANGELS - Powerful Catholic Prayers](#)

and protect us from danger.

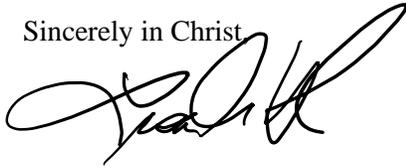
*Saint Gabriel is a messenger of the Good News;
I ask him to help me
clearly hear Your voice
and to teach me the truth.*

*Saint Raphael is the healing angel;
I ask him to take my need for healing
and that of everyone I know,
lift it up to Your throne of grace
and deliver back to us the gift of recovery.*

*Help us, O Lord,
to realize more fully the reality of the archangels
and their desire to serve us.
Holy Angels, pray for us!*

Please consider joining us for the Rosary for Life on Fridays at 3:00 p.m.

Sincerely in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa A. Honkanen', written in a cursive style.

Lisa A. Honkanen, M.D.