

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON CHURCH



Father Mark Seiker
3301 Echo Drive
North Platte, Nebraska 69101

Rectory / Office [308-534-5461](tel:308-534-5461)
Parish Hall: 534-0511

Parish email: rectory-office@seas-np.org
Webpage: <http://www.seas-np.org>

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time *January 19, 2020*

Welcome to St. Elizabeth's: It is our hope that you feel at home and among friends here at St. Elizabeth. If you are a visitor for a day, we pray God's speed on your journey. If you are looking for a parish community, we would be delighted to welcome you into our parish family. Please introduce yourselves. Registration forms are available in the entry racks or contact us anytime at 308-534-5461.

Religious Services

Mass Schedule For Sunday Obligation:

Saturday 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 10:00 a.m.

Weekdays & Holy Days

As published in the Bulletin.

Rosary

Prayed **8:30 a.m.** Monday mornings, and
30 minutes before weekend Mass.

Sacrament of Confession

Offered 30 minutes before most all daily Masses
Saturday 4:00 p.m. – 4:55 p.m.
Sunday, 9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m., or by appointment.

Sacrament of Baptism

Parents are asked to attend a baptism preparation class. This is recommended, and easiest to do before the birth of the child, but must be done before the baptism.

Sacrament of Matrimony

To assist those who plan to marry, all couples will be required to fulfill the diocesan marriage preparation policy, which includes the FOCCUS & Engaged Encounter Programs. This requires a minimum of 4-6 months. The assessment process must be completed before a wedding date is set. Contact pastor early to begin the preparation.

Parish Information

Bulletin Deadline

All material is to be submitted to the parish office before noon Wednesday prior to the Sunday it is to appear. Email to: rectory-office@seas-np.org

New or Moving Parishioners

Please call the office to arrange an appointment with the Pastor to register in the Parish. Please call the office to notify us of any address change.

Your Will

Ask your attorney to include remembrance of your Church in your will.

Religious Vocations

Any young woman interested in religious life, or young man interested in a vocation to the priesthood should contact your pastor. Please pray for vocations!

Education

Family Formation Program

Sunday mornings (Sept-May) 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.)

For those interested in possibly joining the Catholic Church. Usually on Wednesdays (Sept-May), 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. in Parish Hall. Please contact the parish office for more information.

SCHEDULE OF MASSES

Monday	Jan. 20	8:00 a.m.
Tuesday	Jan. 21	7:00 a.m.
Wednesday	Jan. 22	5:30 p.m.
6:00pm–10:00pm Eucharistic Holy Hours => Spend time with Jesus		
Thursday	Jan. 23	8:00 a.m.
Friday	Jan. 24	5:30 p.m.
Saturday	Jan. 25	5:00 p.m.
Sunday	Jan. 26	10:00 a.m.

INTENTIONS

Triumph of Immaculate Heart of Mary
 Elizabeth (Liz) Haag
 Protection of all Human life, esp unborn
 Liv/Dec members Bode/Ruskamp fam.
 MaKenna Ketter
 Pat Burford +
 People of Our Parish

*“I will make you a light
 to the nations, that my
 salvation may reach to
 the ends of the earth.”*

— Isaiah 49:6b

Stewardship: January 12, 2020

Adult Envelopes:\$1,175.00
Loose Plate:\$162.00
Children:\$0.00
Holy Day: 0\$0.00
Total:\$1,337.00

Joy of the Gospel Campaign

Total Pledged:\$958,770.00
 Gifts last week:\$0.00
Total Gifts Received:\$880,183.05
 Original DIAL Loan:.....1,485,000.00
 Total Received (CTTF Camp): \$1,025,440.07
 Misc Donations Received:.....\$739,940.31
 Total Payments on Loan:.....\$1,702,428.04
 Balance on DIAL LOAN:..... \$62,451.74

Southern NE Register \$15.00

Parish Calendar

Wednesday Jan. 22 **6:00pm – 10:00pm:** Eucharistic Adoration **7:00pm – 9:00pm:** RCIA Classes in Parish Hall
 Anniversary of Roe v. Wade, Day of Penance
 Thursday Jan. 23 **1:00pm:** Adult Bible Study in Parish Hall
 Friday Jan. 24 **6:00pm:** Annual Villa Marie Benefit Dance, Lincoln
 Saturday Jan. 25 **6:00pm:** Catholic Daughters Supper, St. Pat's

Catholic School News:

Upcoming Events: 1/20- SPVA GBB- 1st Round, 4:00pm- JH BBB @ NPMS, 1/21- SPVA BBB 1st Round, 4:15pm- 9th BBBall @ NPHS, 1/22- 4:15pm - 9th BBBall @ NPHS, 1/23- NHS Blood Drive - St. Pat's Church, SPVA GBBall Semis-4:00pm- JH BBB vs NPMS, 1/24- SPVA BBBall Semis- 12:30pm WR @ South Loup 1/25- 12:00pm- SPVA G&B FINALS @ NPCC.

God is Here: NOW is the Time! Join us for some exciting improvements at the North Platte Catholic Schools! Plumbing, restrooms, locker rooms, kitchen, roof repairs, and growing the Endowment to sustain the future of NPCC -- it's all on our list! Would you prayerfully consider a gift to this important campaign? With your help, we will improve and grow the NP Catholic Schools for generations of students to come. Contact the Endowment office for more info or to make a pledge: 534-5939, w.dodson@npccschools.org.

Parents' Night: Kindergarten information night- Mon., Feb. 3, 6:00pm @ McDaid. Presentation given by teachers Mrs. Cox and Mrs. York. Preschool information night- Wed., Feb. 12, 6:00pm @ Martin Cordes Building, 601 S. Taft Street. Presentation given by teacher Mrs. Cooley. Contact Gwen Covey to register: 308-532-1874. If you have questions or can't attend the information nights, please let us know- tours can be given throughout the year. Parents are also welcome to come and observe in the classrooms.

Fund-a-Need: Continued thanks to the G.R.E.E.N. donors who supported this year's Fund-A-Need project! Thanks to your generous support, 22 NPCC teachers are enjoying new chairs, 3 new desks, and a new water bottle fountain at McDaid. Stay tuned for more Fund-A-Need updates!

North Platte Catholic School:

Faith and Knowledge for a Brighter Future

Catholic Daughters Supper ... Catholic Daughters of America Court, Our Lady of Fatima # 1549, is holding a Soup and Cookie supper on Saturday, January 25 at 6:00pm for a \$6 charge, in St Patrick Parish Hall. Please come and enjoy a good bowl of soup and fellowship.

Healing after Abortion ... If you or someone you know is suffering after abortion, confidential, compassionate help is available. Visit HopeAfterAbortion.org.

LDCCW Winter Symposium ... Ladies, please join your Lincoln Diocesan Council of Catholic Women at the Winter Symposium Friday evening Feb. 7 — Feb. 8 at the Good Counsel Retreat House, Waverly. There will be prayer, meditation, great speakers, time for confession, Mass and fellowship. Register online at goodcounselretreat.com

Seven Sisters Apostolate Retreat ... on Saturday, July 18th at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church. It is for women already involved in a Seven Sisters Group and also those who would like more info about the Apostolate. The theme will be "Distractions in Prayer." Registration & Continental Breakfast will begin at 8:00am, 9:30am=Mass, the day will end at 3:00pm. Final details are being completed, and more info is to come. **Foundress Janette Howe will be our Retreat Leader**, and Joan Ryland (308-520-6800) is the representative from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. There are still several Priests we want to cover in prayer with a Seven Sister Apostolate Group and two more Bishops in our Diocese. If interested in joining us in prayer before Our Lord in His Blessed Sacrament, or for more info., please contact Rhonda Litt - text 402-525-6396 or call after 6:00pm.

Magnificat Winter Prayer Meal ... will be on February 8, 9:30am, Hillcrest Country Club, 9401 East O Street, Lincoln, NE. Special guest speaker is Diocesan Priest and Pastor at Cathedral of the Risen Christ, Father Justin Wylie. Come and be inspired by Father Wylie's Magnificat, his Testimony of how God called an Attorney to the Priesthood, and a South African to Lincoln, NE through the Power of His Holy Spirit! Register early by sending a \$25 check, payable to Magnificat c/o Tina Colgan, 521 N 56 St, Lincoln, NE 68504. Student fee is \$10. Deadline is January 31—walk-ins not accepted. For information call or text Rhonda Litt at 402-525-6396 or call Barb Bechtolt at 402-489-6905.

KofC Annual Free Throw Championship ... All boys and girls ages 9 to 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition for the Knights of Columbus Annual Free Throw Championship. The local competition will be Sunday, Feb. 2 at 1:00pm. More information coming soon.

9 Days for Life ... Join thousands of Catholics nationwide praying the annual 9 Days for Life novena, Jan. 21-29. Sign up today at www.9daysforlife.com!

Day of Prayer ... Did You Know? This Tuesday, Jan 22, the Church in the United States observes the annual "Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children." We are called to observe this day through prayer and penance. www.respectlife.org/january-22.

Surviving Divorce ... Divorced? Come find comfort, counsel, hope and healing consistent with Catholic Church teachings. The twelve-week video series & facilitator led Surviving Divorce program begins on **Feb. 3**, 7-9pm, at John XXIII Diocesan Center, 3700 Sheridan Blvd. A suggested donation of \$50 covers the cost of the program and includes the Surviving Divorce personal guide & all materials. Classes are kept small & you may register by contacting the Family Life Office (402-473-0620) or catholicflo@cdolinc.net

Joy & Hope Anniversary Recognition Mass
The Mass and a reception for all married couples will be held Sunday, **Feb. 9**, 2020 at 9:00am Mass at Cathedral of the Risen Christ, Lincoln. We kindly request that all couples register with the Family Life Office, however, special recognition will be given to those couples celebrating 10, 25, 40 and 50 years or more. Suggested donation of \$10 per couple is appreciated! Family guests are welcome. Registration forms should be available at your parish office or call Family Life Office at (402) 473-0620.

Annual Villa Marie Dance ... Villa Marie Home and School for Special Needs Children is hosting its annual Benefit Dance, Silent Auction, and Raffle—"Anchored in Hope"—on **Friday, January 24** at the Rococo Theater, 140 N. 13th Street, Lincoln. (*Please note the change of venue.*) 6:00pm= Doors open, 7:00pm=event begins. Music provided by Malpractice. Tickets range: \$20 - \$40; a Valentino's dinner is included in ticket price. Contact the Rococo at <http://rococotheatre.com/events/> to purchase tickets. Please call Jenny (402-874-0577) or go to our website www.villamarieschool.com for more info. All proceeds go toward funding operational expenses at Villa Marie School. Thank you for your support!

New FertilityCare App ... Attention, Creighton Model Fertility Care users! There is a new app available for charting! Go to www.fertilitycareapp.com/app_features_and_faqs, for more info, and then contact your teacher or Certified Fertility Care Practitioner, Kathy Burr, to schedule a follow up or get signed up for the app. Email ckburr240@gmail.com or text 308-991-1880.

Three Key Themes ... This week our nation honors the dream of equal human rights articulated by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. On January 22, we also mark the anniversary of the most egregious violation of human rights through the Supreme Court's decision Roe vs. Wade, which permitted the killing of children in the womb. During these days, Christians also observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. These three themes intersect powerfully. We pray that Christians will unite in effective service to all who are deprived of their rights, and bring about a Culture of Life, Justice, and Love.

Spiritual Warfare Series ... A 3-part series will be given by Matt Simmons, Director of Spiritual Formation, on Spiritual Warfare at John XXIII Diocesan Center from 6:30-8:30pm. Ephesians 6:12 "For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens." Series will be **January 21**, Our Identity in Christ; **February 18**, Battleground of Our Minds; and **March 24**, Our Weapons for Spiritual Warfare. The workshop is free and registration is kindly requested. For topic details and to register please visit <https://lincolndiocese.regfox.com/03oe-spiritual-warfare>. Questions? Call 402-473-0615 or email Annette-Wemhoff@cdolinc.net

Into the Deep: Discovering the Depths of God Every Day ... **Saturday, Feb. 1**; 9:30am–2:00pm [8:00am Mass] at St. Michael Church, Hastings. **Dan Burke** (Avila Institute for Spiritual Formation) speaking.

Marriage Saving – the Weekend Phase ... During the weekend phase of Retrouvaille (*pronounced retro-vi*), a series of presentations are given by a team of three couples and a priest. The team presents a technique of communication that enables you to take a good look at most areas of your relationship. After each presentation you have time in the privacy of your room to discuss the previous presentation. For confidential information about or to register for the February program beginning with a weekend on February 14-16, 2020, call 1-888-317-5654 or 308-986-2351 or www.retrouvaille.org on the web.

Put a Retreat into Your Schedule ... register at www.goodcounselretreat.com & receive immediate confirmation or call Good Counsel Retreat House at 402-786-2705 to register now.

January – May Schedule:

Jan 31 - Feb 2 ... Fr. William Holoubek Men / Women
"Unbound: Breaking Free from Spiritual Wounds"
Feb 7-8..... Fr. Lux & Fr. McGuire (LDCCW)... Women
(LDCCW Winter Symposium Fri-Sat)
Feb 28 - Mar 1 .. Fr. Christopher Goodwin..... Men / Women
"Living on God's Word"
Mar 6-8..... Fr. Joseph Faulkner Men / Women
"Biblical Prayer and its Benefits"
Mar 13-15 Tony Brandt & Chris Stewart. Men/ Women
"Disciples on Mission: Discipleship, Evangelization & Stewards"
Mar 23-26 Fr. Chris Barak & Fr. Gary Coulter Men / Women
"4-day Directed Spiritual Exercises Mon-Thur"
Apr 3-5 Fr. Sean Kilcawley Men / Women
"Render Your Hearts: Living a Spirituality of Surrender"
Apr 9-11 Marian Sisters..... Young Women
Holy Week Retreat for Young Women
Apr 17-19 Fr. John Rooney Men / Women
"Receiving Mercy & Being Merciful"
May 1-3 Marian Sisters (Mother Ann Marie & Sr. Serena) . Women
Women's Retreat on Mary – Mother of God

Knights of Columbus One Rose, One Life Campaign ... on **Saturday, Jan. 25** & **Sunday, Jan. 26**. This fund raiser is Nebraska's primary source of income for Culture of Life. All funds collected will support Pro-Life Organizations & activities throughout Nebraska. Prayer is the greatest action we can take in battling the Culture of Death. The One Rose, One Life prayer cards are a good reminder for continued prayers throughout the year. As Knights of Columbus members hand these prayer cards to you, please be prepared to donate to this very important campaign.

Safe Environment ... The Diocese of Lincoln requires that its employees and volunteers report any allegations of abuse or neglect of a minor or elder connected with church related activity to law enforcement, consistent with the requirements of Nebraska law. If anyone has information that a minor or elder is being or has been subjected to abuse or neglect please report it immediately to local law enforcement or to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services toll-free number 1-800-652-1999, and also to any Parish Pastor, School Administrator, Teacher, or to any Diocesan official at the Catholic Chancery (402) 488-0921, so that immediate steps may be taken for the protection of the minor or elder.

Marriage Encounter ... Enhancing our couple-love Marriage Encounter Weekend, in Kearney, Feb. 7-9. Contact Pat & Janelle Benson (Pat=308-940-0670; Janelle=308-940-1105; pbjben@yahoo.com). Register right-away as a gift over to one another. This is for all three Dioceses in Nebraska.

FROM FR. MARK SEIKER:

Nominations for Parish Council ... are being accepted for the next few weeks. You may nominate another parishioner or yourself. Normally the terms for the parish council are for two years. We have 2 veteran members & 2 new members on the parish council each year. Hopefully there will be 4 parishioners' names on the ballot.

Liturgical Minister

	Sat., Jan. 25, 5:00pm	Sun., Jan. 26, 10:00am
Lector	Mike Krondak	Justin Pieper
Acolyte	Ed Rieker	Jerry Cooper
Server	William Krondak	Xavier Pieper
	Nicholas Krondak	Volunteer
Music	Matt & Ashley Perlinger	Buhrman/Niesen/Gregg
Gifts	Volunteer – Ask Ushers	Volunteer – Ask Ushers
Ushers	Steve Fear	Duane Johnsen
	Janet Fear	Heather Johnsen
Rosary		

Readings for the Week

Monday:	1 Sm 15:16-23; Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21, 23; Mk 2:18-22
Tuesday:	1 Sm 16:1-13; Ps 89:20-22, 27-28; Mk 2:23-28
Wednesday:	1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51; Ps 144:1b, 2, 9-10; Mk 3:1-6
Thursday:	1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7; Ps 56:2-3, 9-13; Mk 3:7-12
Friday:	1 Sm 24:3-21; Ps 57:2-4, 6, 11; Mk 3:13-19
Saturday:	Acts 22:3-16; Ps 117:1bc,2; Mk 16:15-18
Sunday:	Is 8:23 — 9:3; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17; Mt 4:12-23

Prayers for the sick: Peggy Lawler, J.D. Troyer, Matt Reisen (Matt & Ashley Perlinger's friend), Margaret Ruskamp (Donna Bode's mother), Special Intention, Carolyn Cohen, Tim Garth (Theresa McCarthy-Garth's son), Those struggling with Alcoholism, Mary Lou Robles (Toni Barron's sister), Renate Nordquist, Sharon Beckius, Mike & Kim Paul, Jim Beckius.

Prayers for the deceased: Dolores Kosmicki, Patricia Zamora (Toni Barron's sister), Teresa Clouatre, Gordon Swanson (Cindy Swanson's father), Florena Schneweis (Emily Krondak's mother), Carlos Fleury (Steve/Janet Fear's son-in-law), Ruby Ramirez (Toni Barron's sister), JoAnn Bode Waters (John Bode's sister), Fr. Paul Rutten, Fr. Brad Zitek, Eileen Boltz, Peggy Fleecs, Leona Clouatre, Bernadine Torres, Father Jim Novakowski, Martha Burbach, Luke Ranck, Margaret Baxa, Mary Portz, Phyllis Beckius.

Birthdays/Anniversaries: 1/19 - Paul Orr, Karl Hendricks, 1/20 - Carmen Buhrman, Sebastian Lafleur, 1/21 - Dennis Brosius, 1/22 - Don Exner, 1/23 - Reiny Burbach, 1/25 - Ellie Buhrman, John Torruella.

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION ... By Candlemas, forty days after Christmas, February 2, the season of Christ's coming has depleted our candle supply. Soon, the parish will order a new paschal candle from a catalogue or candlemaker, or in some communities, wax will be collected to be melted and molded. Last year's paschal candle shows the wear and tear of summer heat, or many funerals or baptisms. Paschal candles have been around since at least the fourth century, when Constantine's biographer Eusebius reported that the night of the sacred vigil was "transformed into the brilliancy of day, by lighting throughout the city pillars of wax, while burning lamps in every place so that the splendor of this night was brighter than the brightest daylight." Light was a precious commodity in the ancient world, and this lavish use of precious beeswax was a sign of the Christian's call to bear Christ's light into the world's darkness. In a pre electric age, a whole city aglow from the paschal flame must have been a glorious sight, and a reminder to every baptized Christian of our vocation to "be the light of the world." —Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

CALLED TO BE HOLY ... With this Sunday we begin Ordinary Time. The readings tell us about God's relationship with Israel and John the Baptist's relationship with Jesus. Israel's relationship with God is so close, so intimate, that it is through Israel that God's "salvation [will] reach to the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 49:6). But we know from John the Baptist that for Israel to accomplish God's will, it must also recognize that Jesus is the Son of God. During these weeks we also get to know Jesus. We begin to understand more deeply our relationship to Jesus and what that relationship means for us, who are "called to be holy" (1 Corinthians 1:2).
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FORGIVENESS ... The only true forgiveness is that which is offered and extended even before the offender has apologized and sought it. —Søren Kierkegaard

BEND, DON'T BREAK ... When you encounter difficulties and contradictions, do not try to break them, but bend them with gentleness and time. —St. Francis de Sales

Pray for our Seminarians: Jonathan R. Inman, from Cathedral of the Risen Christ in Lincoln. He entered the Seminary in 2018. He is in Theology 1 at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary.

Pray for our Religious Sisters: School Sisters of Christ the King, Marian Sisters of the Diocese of Lincoln, Sisters at the Carmel of Jesus, Mary & Joseph, Pink Sisters, Sisters of Mary, Queen of Mercy.

HOLY FATHER'S INTENTIONS ... (January)

Prayer intention for evangelization - Promotion of World Peace: We pray that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world.

Day One: Tuesday, January 21, 2020

Intercession: May the tragic practice of abortion end.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: At every stage and in every circumstance, we are held in existence by God’s love. The presence of an illness, disability, or other challenging situation never diminishes the value of a human life. God does not call us to perfection of appearance or abilities, but to perfection in love. Christ invites us to embrace our own lives and the lives of others as true gifts.

Abortion tragically rejects the truth that every life is a good and perfect gift, deserving protection. This violent practice ends the life of a human being at its very beginning and horribly wounds all those involved. But Christ came that we “might have life and have it more abundantly” (*John 10:10*), taking on human flesh for the sake of our redemption. May our culture experience the power of God’s transforming love, that all eyes may be opened to the incredible beauty of every human life.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Take a break from television and movies today. Consider spending some of that time praying with today’s reflection.
- Pray the short prayer “Every Life is Worth Living,” reflecting on the gift of human life. (*The prayer is also available to order or download at www.usccb.org/worth-living.*) Heavenly Father, thank you for the precious gift of life. Help us to cherish and protect this gift, even in the midst of fear, pain, and suffering. Give us love for all people, especially the most vulnerable, and help us bear witness to the truth that every life is worth living. Grant us the humility to accept help when we are in need, and teach us to be merciful to all. Through our words and actions, may others encounter the outstretched hands of Your mercy. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today’s intention.

One Step Further: Abortion is frequently a topic in the news, political debates, and everyday conversations with family or friends. Because abortion can be a controversial and emotional issue in any arena, many of us may feel intimidated when the topic arises, not knowing what to say. “Another Look at Abortion” (www.respectlife.org/another-look-at-abortion) provides a basic overview and summarizes key points. This article will help you be better prepared to witness to the sanctity of human life. NABRE © 2010 CCD. Used with permission. Copyright © 2019, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. All rights reserved.

Day Two: Wednesday, January 22, 2020

Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

Did You Know? In the Catholic Church in the United States, January 22nd is designated as a particular day of prayer and penance, called the “Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children.” As Catholics, we are called to observe this day through the penitential practices of prayer, fasting, and/or giving alms. More Information: www.usccb.org/january-22

Intercession: May all unborn children be protected in law and welcomed in love.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: Today, on this 47th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, we mourn the many children’s lives ended by abortion and remember in prayer those who suffer the aftermath. The Church comes together today to pray for the protection of all unborn children and to make reparation for abortion, trusting that the Lord hears our prayers.

Pope Saint John Paul II wrote, “A great prayer for life is urgently needed, a prayer which will rise up throughout the world. Through special initiatives and in daily prayer, may an impassioned plea rise to God, the Creator and lover of life, from every Christian community, from every group and association, from every family and from the heart of every believer” (*Evangelium vitae* 100). May that prayer arise in our hearts today and each day forward until every human being is protected in law and welcomed in love.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Fast from one meal today.
- Offer this brief “Prayer for Life” for all unborn children whose lives are at risk. (*The prayer is also available at www.usccb.org/prayer-for-life.*) Father and maker of all, you adorn all creation with splendor and beauty, and fashion human lives in your image and likeness. Awaken in every heart reverence for the work of your hands, and renew among your people a readiness to nurture and sustain your precious gift of life. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today’s intention.

One Step Further: More women and girls consider abortion than we may realize. They are our relatives and friends, people who work with us or for us. Even if someone identifies as being pro-life, the shock of an unexpected pregnancy, the devastation of a difficult prenatal diagnosis, shame, pressures, or fears may influence her to consider abortion.

If someone shared with you that she was pregnant and hadn’t ruled out having an abortion, would you know how to respond in a loving way that is life-affirming for both her and her baby? Learn about the four steps of the L.O.V.E.

Approach™*: *Listen and Learn, Open Options, Vision and Value, and Extend and Empower* (www.respectlife.org/l-o-v-e).

* The L.O.V.E. Approach™ is trademarked by Heartbeat International, Inc. and may not be adapted or modified. The L.O.V.E. Approach™ is used in “What to Do When a Friend Is Considering Abortion” with permission from Heartbeat International, Inc. Copyright © 2017, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. All rights reserved. *Evangelium vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*), no. 100 © 1995, Libreria Editrice Vaticana. Used with permission. All rights reserved. Copyright © 2019, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. All rights reserved.

Day Three: Thursday, January 23, 2020

Intercession: May every expectant mother receive compassionate care and support as she nurtures the life in her womb.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, she opened her heart to receive his message that she would conceive the Son of God in her womb. As a young, betrothed, but unmarried, woman, Mary knew that her pregnancy presented many challenges. Despite this knowledge, she faithfully responded, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word” (*Luke 1:38*).

Like the Blessed Mother, women who unexpectedly become pregnant often face significant challenges. They, too, are called to place their trust in God and faithfully respond to His gift of new life. And we are called to walk with them in their time of need. As Jesus taught us, when we love and serve others, we are loving and serving Him.

May all expectant mothers be encouraged by Mary’s example and receive support and grace in lovingly welcoming their children into the world.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Abstain from snacking today. Eat three meals only.
- Pray the Angelus today (www.usccb.org/angelus). You might also consider saying it every day for the next week – on awakening, at noon, or at 6 p.m. (or all three times).
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today’s intention.

One Step Further: When a woman is facing an unexpected pregnancy, the reaction of the first person she tells tends to set the tone for her decision-making. Pregnancy can be difficult and frightening, but no matter the circumstances, it’s important for an expectant mother to feel supported and loved. Read “10 Ways to Support Her When She’s Unexpectedly Expecting” (www.respectlife.org/support-her) for simple tips on how to provide loving, life-affirming support for a friend who is unexpectedly pregnant. Your support may be the only support she receives.

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Day Four: Friday, January 24, 2020

March for Life, Washington, DC

Intercession: May expectant fathers lovingly support the mothers of their children in welcoming new life.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: Fatherhood has its origins in God, who chose to reveal Himself to us as Our Father, sending his only Son for the sake of our salvation. Fathers therefore have a special role “in revealing and in reliving on earth the very fatherhood of God” (*Familiaris consortio 25*). Pope Saint John Paul II said fathers are called to exhibit “generous responsibility for the life conceived under the heart of the mother” (*FC 25*). They are uniquely entrusted with the protection and defense of both mother and child and, in this way, in safeguarding the sanctity of human life.

As evidenced in our world today, the role of the father “is of unique and irreplaceable importance” (*FC 25*). Often women choose abortion because they do not have the support of the child’s father, or – even worse – the father of the child pressures her to make the decision to abort. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge with compassion that men can also be overwhelmed by an unexpected pregnancy and that society increasingly tells them that they should have no say in their children’s lives. In the face of these false messages, we pray that expectant fathers will find courage in the example of St. Joseph – who embraced the role of father amid difficult circumstances – and offer loving, life-affirming support to the mothers of their children.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Give up sleeping on your pillow – or even your bed – tonight. Offer this small sacrifice for the intention that expectant fathers would courageously answer their call to support both mother and child.
- Pray a decade of the rosary (www.usccb.org/rosary) for all expectant fathers, that through her intercession, Our Lady may inspire in them the virtues of St. Joseph.
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today’s intention.

One Step Further: Research continues to show that one of the top reasons a woman chooses abortion is due to a lack of financial resources. Read “Poverty and Abortion: A Vicious Cycle” (www.respectlife.org/poverty-and-abortion), which explores the connections between abortion and poverty, and how the absence of fathers contributes to this ongoing cycle.

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Day Five: Saturday, January 25, 2020

If you or someone you know is suffering after abortion, confidential non-judgmental help is available. Visit www.hopeafterabortion.org.

Intercession: May each person suffering from the loss of a child through abortion find hope & healing in Christ.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: After more than four decades of legalized abortion, many children’s lives have been ended, and many parents and family members suffer that loss – often in silence. Yet God’s greatest desire is to forgive. No matter how far we have each strayed from His side, He says to us, “Don’t be afraid. Draw close to my heart.” Be assured that it is never too late to seek God’s forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Consider the parable of the Prodigal Son. After repenting of sinning against his father, he returns from far away to seek forgiveness and work as a servant. But the father sees him approaching, runs to warmly embrace him, and hosts a banquet to celebrate his return. So, too, does God welcome all of His repentant children, no matter how serious the sin. Let us turn confidently to Our Lord, Who is love and mercy.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Abstain from meat today.
- Pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy (www.usccb.org/divine-mercy-chaplet) for those who are suffering the loss of a child through abortion, asking that they find healing and peace.
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today's intention.

One Step Further:

If a friend confided in you tomorrow that she had an abortion, would you be able to respond in a way that brings her closer to healing? Learn what to do and say in "How to Talk to a Friend Who's Had an Abortion" (www.usccb.org/friend-had-abortion). Copyright © 2019, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. All rights reserved.

Day Six: Sunday, January 26, 2020

Intercession: May expectant mothers choosing adoption receive grace and support in embracing this loving option.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: Mothers placing their children for adoption often face many challenges along the way. One of the greatest obstacles can be inaccurately perceiving adoption as abandonment. But mothers who place their children for adoption are not abandoning their children. Rather, they are exemplifying the sacrificial love of Christ on the Cross in choosing to do what is best for their children, even at great cost to themselves. Like Christ, they pour out their bodies and souls for the sake of another. The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us that, in the face of fears and trials, we can "hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm" (*Heb 6:18-19*). We pray that all mothers considering adoption would be filled with "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding" (*Phil 4:7*) and see the beauty of their sacrifice. Let us all cling fast to the anchor of hope, for we have received "a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, 'Abba, Father!'" (*Rom 8:15*).

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Do you have a sweet tooth? Or do you prefer salty snacks? Pick your favorite kind of treat, and give it up for the day.
- Make an act of faith, hope, or love (www.usccb.org/faith-hope-love).
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today's intention.

One Step Further: Accompanying Expectant Mothers Considering Adoption" suggests nine ways to offer ongoing support to a woman who is considering placing her unborn child for adoption (www.respectlife.org/mothers-considering-adoption). Many of the tips given are also helpful for supporting a friend who is experiencing a challenging unexpected pregnancy, even if adoption has not been brought up.

Supplemental resources regarding adoption can be found at www.usccb.org/adoption-resources.

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Day Seven: Monday, January 27, 2020

Intercession: May all who support or participate in abortion experience a conversion of heart to seek and receive the Lord's boundless mercy.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: When God fashioned the human person in His own image and likeness, He destined us for eternal life with Him. Yet because of the sin of our first parents, death entered the world. The book of Genesis recounts the first occasion in which a person takes the life of another, as Cain violently kills his brother Abel. This instance of brother rising up against brother "at the very dawn of history is thus a sad witness of how evil spreads with amazing speed" (*Evangelium vitae 8*). From the time of creation, disregard for human life has continued to spread. When we, like Cain, allow sin to find a place in our hearts, we become blinded to the truth. Sometimes this blindness might be so deep that we fail to recognize the undeniable humanity of unborn children. We may even tragically believe the lie that abortion is an act of compassion. But we know that "life, especially human life, belongs only to God: for this reason whoever attacks human life, in some way attacks God himself" (*EV 9*). Let us pray that all who support abortion encounter the transforming love of the Father and, with repentant hearts, seek His mercy.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Smile. Ask God today for the grace to be extra joyful and to share the light of Christ with those most in need of His love and mercy.
- Seek the intercession of Our Lady by praying a scriptural Rosary, meditating on the Sorrowful Mysteries (www.usccb.org/sorrowful-mysteries).
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today's intention.

One Step Further: Our culture is obsessed with perfection – a superficial perfection. Social media, magazines, and television are staged and edited to depict seemingly perfect lives. When life doesn't seem to measure up to these standards, we may be tempted to believe it's not worth living.

In “A Perfect Gift” (www.respectlife.org/a-perfect-gift), one parent shares about the experience of raising a child with Down syndrome, contrasting it with what onlookers might perceive: “It’s like looking at a stained-glass window from the outside: The colors look dark, and you can’t quite make out the figures. From the inside, however, with the sun shining through it, the effect can be brilliant. From inside our family, love illuminates our life with Charlie.* What may seem dreary to others, perhaps even unbearable, is actually filled with beauty and color.” Every life is a gift.

*Name changed for privacy. *Evangelium vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*), nos. 8-9 © 1995, Libreria Editrice Vaticana. Used with permission. All rights reserved. Copyright © 2019, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. All rights reserved.

Day Eight: Tuesday, January 28, 2020

Intercession: May civic leaders work for the protection of all human life, in every stage and circumstance.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: The entire moral vision of our nation is based on respect for the dignity and sanctity of the human person. The Declaration of Independence boldly affirms that first among our inalienable rights is the right to life, given to us by the Creator. Yet despite being so solemnly proclaimed, the right to life is today threatened and often denied, particularly at the moments when life is most fragile. Our laws should – first and foremost – protect life; but currently our laws abandon the most vulnerable and violate our nation’s core principles. For “there can be no genuine justice in our society until the truths on which our nation was founded are more perfectly realized in our culture and law” (*Living the Gospel of Life*, 14).

Laws and policies that legalize or promote an intrinsic evil like abortion violate the virtue of justice. Those who work as public officials and civic leaders have a duty to serve the common good, and therefore have a profound obligation to safeguard this most fundamental right. As Christians, we are called to be a leaven in the world, transforming our culture from within. Through our own prayer, witness, and civic participation, we can encourage our leaders to truly answer their call to protect the rights of all people. For “there can be no true democracy without a recognition of every person’s dignity and without respect for his or her rights” (*Evangelium vitae* 101).

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Sacrifice some of your free time to do a small act of service, such as making breakfast for a family member, writing a note of encouragement for a coworker, or praying for the intentions of a friend.
- Sometimes restrictions on religious freedom constrain our efforts to live out the Gospel of Life. We must be free to live out our Catholic faith in the public square. Offer this Prayer for Religious Liberty, that Christians may always be free to respect, protect, and defend human life (www.usccb.org/prayer-for-religious-liberty).
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today’s intention.

One Step Further: In 2004, the U.S. bishops reaffirmed the Church’s consistent teaching that abortion is an intrinsic evil and offered guidance to Catholic politicians regarding this fundamental teaching. Read “Catholics in Political Life” (www.usccb.org/catholics-in-political-life), in which the bishops outline the responsibility of Catholics in the public square to share in the “unequivocal commitment to protect human life and dignity and to preach the Gospel in difficult times.”

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Day Nine: Wednesday, January 29, 2020

Intercession: May all who defend life find strength and renewal in the Holy Spirit.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: God has carefully, tenderly created every person in His own image and likeness, to be in a loving relationship with Himself. From each tiny child knit within a mother’s womb, to every person approaching death, all are loved perfectly and completely by God. “It is therefore a service of love,” Pope Saint John Paul II explains, “which we are all committed to ensure to our neighbor, that his or her life may be always defended and promoted, *especially when it is weak or threatened* [emphasis added]” (*Evangelium vitae* 77).

In a world in which the most vulnerable are so often overlooked and disregarded, Christ calls us to embrace and uphold the unconditional dignity of every human life. In answering this call, we help to build “a new culture of life, the fruit of the culture of truth and of love” (*EV* 77). May the Holy Spirit continually renew us as we strive to faithfully defend God’s gift of life.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

- Do you love your cup of tea or coffee? Abstain from caffeine today, or try your coffee black.
- “Unplug” for some time, and reflect on how God may be asking you to help build a culture of life in your home, workplace, or Church community.
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today’s intention.

One Step Further:

Watching the news and reading headlines, we may often feel helpless in the face of heartbreaking lack of respect for human life. When our efforts to make a difference feel small, it’s important to remember that changing the culture is a process of conversion that begins in our own hearts. It includes a willingness to be instructed by the Holy Spirit and a desire to be close to Jesus – the source of joy and love.

“How to Build a Culture of Life” (www.respectlife.org/culture-of-life) briefly explains where to start.

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