



Pregnant and parenting moms in need are in our parishes and our neighborhoods. As Pope Francis reminds us, our parishes need to be "islands of mercy in the midst of a sea of indifference." Everyone in the parish community should know where to refer a pregnant woman in need.

Walking with Moms in Need is a nationwide, parish-based initiative to increase support for pregnant and parenting mothers in need. It works to ensure that any woman who finds herself unexpectedly pregnant, or parenting in difficult circumstances, can turn to her local Catholic Church and be connected with the resources she needs. It is an opportunity for Catholic parishes and communities to "walk in the shoes" of local pregnant and parenting women in need, accompanying them in friendship and helping to connect moms with local resources.

[from official website - walkingwithmoms.com]

The primary goals of the Walking with Moms in Need Initiative are:

- *Pregnant women in need should feel they can turn to any Catholic Church for help*
- *Every parishioner should know where to connect a pregnant woman in need for help*

Being a "Walking with Moms in Need" parish which means that parish can provide emotional, material and spiritual support to pregnant, parenting and post-abortive women and men through our parish and community partners in northeast Kansas.

Our goal is to be a stepping stone to help moms and families with an immediate need and connect them to local resources that can better assist them.

Walking with Moms in Need provides an opportunity to:

- Improve outreach and support to pregnant and parenting mothers in need
- Empower clergy and laity to make a positive impact together
- Change the national pro-life conversation
- Engage parishioners in a new vision of what it means to live the Gospel of Life
- Communicate the Church's commitment to women and their children
- Utilize existing resources and assistance more effectively
- Build relationships between ministries and helping agencies
- Transform what is often seen as a partisan divide in pastoral unity

Some ways a parish can help::

- Form a WWM committee to help in various ways

- Provide outreach tools e.g. brochures/cards to share with:
 - RL ministry members
 - other ASC ministry leads (speak at other ministry meetings)
 - Parishioners
 - broader community organizations (pregnancy resource centers, schools, physicians, hair/nail salons, coffee shops...)
- Connect a pregnant woman with a pregnancy resource center, maternity home, Gabriel Project, or Catholic Charities
- Provide support groups (e.g. Embrace Grace, Embrace Life) in the parish
- Request donations of clothing and gently used baby items when needs arise
- Provide occasional meals or food cards
- Host/Participate in a local fundraising walk to increase awareness and support
- Host a baby shower
- Provide a meal train (coordinate with MOYC)
- Offer to pick up groceries
- Implement "The Rose Project" which increases awareness of the presence of life or potential loss of life and infertility within a parish
- Lead a special project designed to help moms create community and learn life skills
- Have a resource directory on women-focused services and ministries available (e.g. Archdiocesan Pro-Life Office WWM brochure)
- Holding regular events such as diaper drives
- Can help people by giving them rides to (a more distant) food bank or to a doctor's appointment
- Offer opportunity to watch the Into Life Series
- Prayer - encourage people to participate in the weekly adoration hour (Saturdays 10am); provide other prayer opportunities (e.g. Divine Mercy chaplet, pro-life rosary)

As a participating parish, we will need to continuously address the following questions:

- What needs/gaps exist in our community's support of mothers? How can our parish or Family of Parishes fill this need? If we cannot, do we know who can?
- What ministers in our church will moms in need interact with? Do these ministers have access to the proper resources to make referrals?
- How will we continuously demonstrate that our parish is aware of, interested and responsive to the needs of mothers? Single parents, including fathers?
- Do all parish members recognize that we are a "People of Life" and a refuge where they and others can find the resources they need?
- How will we continuously educate our people about Church teachings on life?

To learn more...



archkck.org/walking-with-moms