

RESPECT LIFE MONTH

Parish Celebrations & Best Practice Recommendations

October 2026

“Mary, Mother of Life”

A month to recognize the gift of human life and build a culture that cherishes and protects it.



Prepared for parish use by Parish Evangelization Services



At a Glance

Respect Life Month: October • **Respect Life Sunday:** First Sunday of October

2026 Theme: “Mary, Mother of Life”

USCCB resources (available in English & Spanish): www.respectlife.org/respect-life-month

Archdiocesan resources: <https://archkck.org/prolife/activities/pro-life-respect-life-month>

Overview

In October, the Catholic Church in the United States celebrates Respect Life Month, and the first Sunday of October is designated as Respect Life Sunday. The USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities provides materials to help Catholics understand and value the gift of human life and help build a culture that cherishes and protects it.

2026 Theme: “Mary, Mother of Life”

The 2026 Respect Life Month theme, “Mary, Mother of Life,” reflects on Our Lady’s distinguished role as mother of all the living. The life of the Blessed Mother teaches us to respect each human life in every stage and circumstance. We ask her intercession in helping us to recognize the gift of human life, even when that gift is unexpected or calls us to make sacrifices.

Theme Poster: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/respect-life-poster-mary-mother-life>

Theme Graphics: <https://www.respectlife.org/respect-life-image-gallery>

Theme Reflection: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/respect-life-reflection-mary-mother-life>

September Action Steps

A simple checklist to get your parish ready for October.

- ✓ Pick up the Respect Life packet mailed to your parish early September.
- ✓ Schedule the “Mary, Mother of Life” USCCB Reflection as a bulletin insert for the first weekend of October. Suggest to your parish school leaders to include this reflection in its October school newsletter.
<https://www.usccb.org/resources/respect-life-reflection-mary-mother-life>
- ✓ Request the Respect Life Month INTERCESSIONS for Respect Life Sunday Masses and, if desired, throughout the month. <https://www.usccb.org/resources/respect-life-month-action-guide>
- ✓ Request a Respect Life Sunday pulpit announcement the weekend of Oct 3-4 (see suggested announcement on page 5).
- ✓ Plan weekly bulletin announcements, featuring a different Respect Life topic each week (see suggestions on page 5).
- ✓ Consider a lobby table or bulletin board connected to the weekly themes.

October: A Four-Week Parish Plan

Weekend	Focus	Suggested Action
Oct. 3–4	Respect Life Sunday	Introduce Respect Life Month and the 2026 theme, “Mary, Mother of Life.”
Oct. 10–11	Valuing & Protecting Life at Conception	Feature one bulletin box/resource on pregnancy support, infertility, abortion, or related themes.
Oct. 17–18	Protecting Human Dignity	Highlight human dignity and connect parishioners with ministries serving people in need.
Oct. 24–25	Human Dignity at Life’s End	Share Catholic teaching and practical resources for end-of-life decision-making.

Prayer & Worship Resources

1. Respect Life Month Intercessions & Homily Helps

Intercessions: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/respect-life-month-action-guide>

Homily helps: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/respect-life-month-homily-helps-0>

2. Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Life

Order prayer cards: <https://www.respectlife.org/respect-life-month>

Print/download the Litany: <https://www.usccb.org/prayers/litany-blessed-virgin-mary-mother-life>

3. Respect Life Month Novena • Oct. 22–30

Printable Novena, sample announcements, flyer, graphics, and subscription information:

<https://www.respectlife.org/respect-life-month>

4. Pro-Life Rosary

Schedule one Rosary or a weekly Rosary during Respect Life Month.

Sanctity of Life Rosary with 50 Hail Mary intentions: <https://archkck.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Sanctity-of-Life-Rosary-50-intentions.pdf>

All School Rosary: <https://archkck.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/All-School-Rosary.pdf>

5. Holy Hour for Reparation & Healing

Host one Holy Hour at your parish or collaborate with other parishes in your deanery.

Resource: https://archkck.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/Holy-Hour-for-Reparation-and-Healing_Apr26-1.pdf

6. First & Third Saturday Prayer

Encourage parish participation at the First Saturday prayer at Planned Parenthood in Leawood, the Third Saturday at Planned Parenthood in KCK, or both. See “Ongoing Events” at

<https://archkck.org/prolife/activities/pro-life-events/>

Respect Life Sunday Pulpit Announcement

Respect Life Sunday (First Sunday of October) - *Today is Respect Life Sunday, which kicks off Respect Life Month, when we consider more deeply why every human life is valuable and reflect on how to build a culture that protects life from conception to natural death. See the bulletin for more information.*

Weekly Bulletin & Communication Plan

Tip: Feature a different Respect Life topic each week of Respect Life Month. The USCCB has pre-designed “bulletin boxes” on a variety of topics. Choose topics that are most important to your community. Remember to use a “Mary, Mother of Life” theme graphic each week to create continuity.

Bulletin boxes: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/respect-life-bulletin-boxes-compilation>

Theme graphics: <https://www.respectlife.org/respect-life-image-gallery>

Oct. 3–4 • Week One: Respect Life Sunday

October is Respect Life Month, a time when the Church celebrates and reflects more deeply on the gift of human life and works to build a culture that cherishes and protects it. This year’s theme, “Mary, Mother of Life,” reflects on Our Lady’s distinguished role as mother of all the living. The life of the Blessed Mother teaches us to respect each human life in every stage and circumstance. We ask her intercession in helping us to recognize the gift of human life, even when that gift is unexpected or calls us to make sacrifices. Join Catholics nationwide in celebrating Respect Life Month! Visit www.respectlife.org/celebrate to learn more.

Oct. 10–11 • Week Two: Valuing & Protecting Life at Conception

Use the same Respect Life Month graphic as Week 1 and feature one of the following bulletin boxes provided by the USCCB (see link above): “Ten Ways to Support Her When She’s Unexpectedly Expecting”; “Children as Commodities”; “Healing Within Marriage from Abortion”; “Seven Considerations While Navigating Infertility”; or “What to do When a Friend is Considering an Abortion.”

Oct. 17–18 • Week Three: Protecting Human Dignity

Watching the news and reading the headlines, we may feel helpless seeing the heartbreaking lack of respect for human life. How do we respond when our efforts seem small in the face of the culture of death? To understand more fully how to defend and protect human life, we must first consider who we are, at the deepest level. God creates us in his image and likeness, which means we are made to be in loving relationship with him. The essence of our identity and worth, the source of our dignity, is that we are loved by God: “We are not the sum of our weaknesses and failures; we are the sum of the Father’s love for us and our real capacity to become the image of his Son.”

Learn more about and get involved with archdiocesan ministries that protect the dignity of the human person:

- Catholic Charities: <https://catholiccharitiesks.org>
- Special Needs Ministry: <https://archkck.org/special-needs>
- Foster Care Ministry: <https://archkck.org/foster>

OR feature the following USCCB bulletin box: “An Adoption Love Story”

https://www.usccb.org/resources/rfp-19-bulletinboxes-adoption-love-story_0.png

Oct. 24–25 • Week Four: Valuing & Protecting Human Dignity at Life's End

In light of the promise of sharing in divine life, which Christians believe will reach its full realization in eternity, life on earth is not our final destination (cf. Heb 13:14). Nonetheless, life remains a sacred reality entrusted to us, to be preserved with a sense of responsibility and brought to perfection in love and in the gift of ourselves to God and to our brothers and sisters. Difficult decisions about the use of medical technology at the end of life may be made easier if we take the time to express our wishes about end-of-life treatments before illness strikes.

The Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas has created a guide to help explain the moral principles of Catholic teaching about end-of-life decision-making and to outline the options that exist in Kansas for advance care planning. Visit: <https://archkck.org/prolife/support/catholic-guide-for-end-of-life-planning/> to learn more.

Connect the Themes to Parish Life

Consider having a table display or bulletin board in the lobby that aligns with the topics selected in your weekly bulletin. Reach out to the Parish Evangelization Services team to get brochures/resources for each week's themes, or feature a parish ministry group that aligns with the week's Respect Life theme. Representatives can staff the table after Masses to create awareness and provide information. Consider asking your pastor if ministry representatives can make a pulpit announcement highlighting their ministry for Respect Life Month—a different parish ministry each week.

Archdiocesan Ministries & Resources

- Catholic Charities — <https://catholiccharitiesks.org>
- Special Needs Ministry — <https://archkck.org/special-needs>
- Foster Care Ministry — <https://archkck.org/foster>
- Catholic Guide for End-of-Life Planning — <https://archkck.org/prolife/support/catholic-guide-for-end-of-life-planning/>

Additional Suggestions & Ideas

- Encourage your parish school or Youth Ministry to book the Culture Project Missionaries for a FREE Human Dignity presentation: <https://archkck.org/prolife/activities/the-culture-project>
- Promote the Spiritual Adoption program to your school or parish: <https://archkck.org/prolife/activities/spiritual-adoption>
- Begin a parish “Rose Bud Program” that helps your parish recognize and pray for couples who are pregnant, are struggling with infertility, have experienced a miscarriage, or have just given birth to a new baby. Your parish Walking With Moms group can provide support in these situations, if the couple so desires, by providing a meal train, childcare, and most importantly prayer. Contact Debra Niesen (dniesen@archkck.org) to learn more about how to begin the Rose Bud program at your parish.

Theme Graphics & Poster

Use the official 2026 “Mary, Mother of Life” poster and Respect Life Month graphics throughout the parish, school, bulletin, newsletter, and lobby displays.

- Theme Poster: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/respect-life-poster-mary-mother-life>
- Theme Graphics: <https://www.respectlife.org/respect-life-image-gallery>
- Theme Reflection: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/respect-life-reflection-mary-mother-life>

Share Photos of your Parish Displays

Parish Evangelization Services would like to feature your efforts in upcoming communications and newsletters. Please send photos to Jill Scaletty at pesadmin@archkck.org. Thank you!