

GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH, WAYLAND, MA
9 DAYS FOR LIFE: TUESDAY, JAN. 21 - WEDNESDAY, JAN 29, 2020

Day One: Tuesday, January 21, 2020

Intercession: May a culture of life grow ever stronger in our community.

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

Reflection: God has carefully, lovingly 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 doing so, we help to build “a new culture of life, the fruit of the culture of truth and of love” (EV, 77).

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.

Day Two: Wednesday, January 22, 2020

Intercession: May all people embrace the truth that every life is a good and perfect gift and is worth living.

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 circumstance never diminishes the value of a human life. For God does not call us to perfection of appearance or abilities, but to perfection in *love*. Christ invites us to embrace the lives we have been given, for as long as they are given, as true gifts.

Our relationships on this earth are meant to help us grow in God’s perfect love. Everyone we encounter is a gift, not because of what they can do or accomplish, but because of who they *are*—a beloved child of God. May each of us experience the power of God’s transforming love, that our eyes may be opened to the incredible beauty of the people the Lord places in our lives.

Act of Reparation

- Take a break from television, movies, and social media today. Reflect on today’s message.

Day Three: Thursday, January 23, 2020

If you or someone you know has been abused by a member of the clergy, please report the abuse to law enforcement. You may also contact your local Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator (Vivian Soper 617.746.5995)

Intercession: May all who have experienced sexual abuse receive justice, healing, and God's peace.

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

Reflection: Recent reports have once again exposed the terrible abuses that many have suffered at the hands of a member of the Catholic clergy. Our hearts ache for the grave harm that has been inflicted on our brothers and sisters. Words alone cannot express our sorrow, shame and disappointment that such affronts to human dignity have been carried out within our Church.

It is our prayer and hope that all who have experienced abuse will find the healing and justice they so rightly deserve, knowing that they are never alone. For, "only by confronting our own failure in the face of crimes against those we are charged to protect can the Church resurrect a culture of life where the culture of death has prevailed."

Acts of Reparation (Choose One)

- Fast from one meal today.
- Seek the intercession of Our Lady by praying a Rosary.

Day Four: Friday, January 24, 2020

Intercession: May God's peace fill the hearts of all who travel upon the path of adoption.

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

Reflection: The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us to "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). Families hoping to adopt children and mothers considering placing their children for adoption often face many challenges along the way. We pray that all who are involved in the adoption process would be filled with the hope of Christ and "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding" (Phil. 4:7). We also remember that we too can cling fast to this anchor of hope, for we have received "a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, 'Abba, Father!'" (Rom 8:15). May our loving Father envelop each of us in His love today and open our eyes of faith that we may see and rejoice in His love.

Acts of Reparation (Choose One)

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

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 and 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.

Acts of Reparation (Choose One)

- Abstain from meat today. If you are already abstaining from meat today, skip your favorite snack, too.
- Pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy (www.usccb.org/divine-mercy-chaplet) for those who are suffering the loss child through abortion, asking that they find healing and peace.

Day Six: Sunday, January 26, 2020

Intercession: May all victims and survivors of human trafficking find freedom, refuge, and healing.

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

Reflection: Those who are vulnerable are most at risk for being lured into situations where they are trafficked. Migrants and refugees often face increased risk factors like changes to language and culture, lack of support systems, and the burden of poverty. Young people on the margins, especially runaway and homeless youth, are targeted for sex trafficking and may subsequently be forced to have abortions. Easily tempted by the false promises of traffickers, victims often find themselves enslaved with no means of escape.

Christ came “to bring good news to the afflicted, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives” (Is 61:1, cf. Luke 4:18). May all who are trapped in situations of slavery be released from their chains of captivity and find freedom, refuge, safety, and healing in Christ and His Church.

Acts of Reparation (Choose One)

- Give up sleeping on your pillow tonight. Allow this small sacrifice to remind you of the sufferings endured by those in our world who are enslaved.
- St. Josephine Bakhita, who was born in Sudan and sold into slavery, has become known as the patron saint of human trafficking victims. Pray for victims and survivors of human trafficking, asking for her intercession.

Day Seven: Monday, January 27, 2020

Intercession: May those who long to welcome a child into their family be filled with trust in God’s loving plan.

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

Reflection: It can be very difficult and painful when the Lord doesn’t answer our prayers in the way we hope. A couple that finds themselves unable to bring a child into the world through their loving union can experience this disappointment very deeply. During such times of trial, we may wonder why we face the particular challenges that we do. Yet even though suffering is often shrouded in a sense of mystery, we believe that the Lord loves us with great tenderness and compassion that is beyond our imagination. Knowing this, we can trust that “all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28).

Act of Reparation

- Smile. Ask God today for the grace to be extra joyful and share Christ’s love with those who need encouragement the most today.

Day Eight: Tuesday, January 28, 2020

Intercession: May those nearing life's end receive medical care that respects their dignity and protects their lives.

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

Reflection: The dying process is a sacred time—a final season to seek closure in this life and prepare for the next. We know earthly death is not the end, but rather the door through which we must pass to gain eternal life. The deadly practice of assisted suicide—now legal in several states—shortens or even eliminates this sacred season, carelessly cutting short the life of the patient. To support the “false compassion” of assisted suicide is to see people as a problem to be eliminated. End-of-life care should instead help eliminate or alleviate the patient's problems, whether they are physical, spiritual, or emotional.

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.
- Pray a decade of the rosary (www.usccb.org/rosary) for your friends and family who have passed away, as well as the departed who have no one to pray for them.
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today's intention.

Day Nine: Wednesday, January 29, 2020

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/january22

Intercession: May the tragic practice of abortion come to an end.

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 life.

Acts of Reparation (Choose One)

- Abstain from snacking today. Eat three meals only.
- Learn how to pray the Angelus (www.usccb.org/angelus), and 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.