

Justice, Peace and Life

October 2025

Commemorate Respect Life Month

“LIFE: OUR SIGN OF HOPE”

Respect Life Reflection

There is perhaps no more beautiful celebration than when parents bring their newborn child to the waters of baptism. Parents, godparents, family, and friends share in this sacrament with incomparable joy. For in baptism, we share in Christ's death and resurrection, and through the outward signs of water and oil, are made *children of God* and given the hope of eternal life with Him.

“The death and resurrection of Jesus is the heart of our faith and the basis of our hope.”¹ Through our Lord Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, death is overcome, and life is victorious. “Hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite not knowing what the future may bring.”² Because of this Christian hope, we can face the unknown trials of life with faith rather than fear.

We are called to be signs of hope to all people, especially those whose goodness, value, and dignity are undermined. As members of the Body of Christ, we carry this hope with us as we continue Jesus' mission on earth. Pope Leo XIV encourages us, “How important it is that each and every baptized person feel himself or herself called by God to be a sign of hope in the world today.”³

Sadly, there is a devastating absence of hope today. We see this most profoundly in a sweeping disregard for human life in its most vulnerable forms and stages. Abortion and assisted suicide are products of hopelessness and despair. Yet even amid the increasing attacks on human life, we know that the “storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death.”⁴

We have been entrusted with a message of hope for the woman who finds herself unexpectedly pregnant or for the man diagnosed with a terminal illness. At these challenging moments, we must bring God's presence, witnessing to His love, and inspiring a renewal of hope in those whose hearts are burdened. For “hope is born of love and based on the love springing from the pierced heart of Jesus upon the cross.”⁵

Having been “buried with Christ in Baptism, we receive in his resurrection the gift of a new life that breaks down the walls of death.”⁶ Confident of God's presence within us, may we share the Gospel of Life with those most in need of hope, knowing that “the grace of God precedes and accompanies his people as they press forward firm in faith, active in charity and steadfast in hope.”⁷

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¹Pope Francis, *Spes non confundit*, 20.

²Ibid, 1.

³Pope Leo XIV, Vatican News, May 26, 2025: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2025-05/pope-leo-xiv-africa-day-pilgrimage-blessing-vatican-basilica.html>.

⁴Pope Francis, *Spes non confundit*, 25.

⁵Ibid, 3.

⁶Ibid, 20.

⁷Ibid, 6.



Help Women Choose Life



During Respect Life Month, prayerfully consider volunteering at and donating to your local pregnancy care center. Here are just a few of the centers within our diocese:

Rochester, Ithaca: www.birthright.org

Elmira: www.mosaicsoutherntier.org

Hornell, Bath, Corning: www.be-prcv.org

Auburn: www.auburnpcc.com

Geneva: www.familyhopecentergeneva.org



Click this [link](#) to hear Maggie's story about facing a terminal cancer diagnosis with a desire to value every moment of living.



Click on this [link](#) to hear Jannette's story about her request for physician-assisted suicide and the doctor who gave her hope to keep living.

Respect Life Month Call to Action!

Tell Gov. Hochul: Say NO to Physician-Assisted Suicide

Governor Hochul has still not acted on the bill, passed by both houses of the New York State legislature, that would legalize physician-assisted suicide in our state. There is still time to encourage her to VETO it! **Don't wait until it's too late!**

Even if you've already contacted her, go to [this link](#) (again!) to e-mail the governor. Then CALL her office after you e-mail at 1-518-474-8390. Let her staff know that you oppose this policy that denies human dignity.

To learn more, go to www.nyscatholic.org

Speak Up Against The Death Penalty

The states of Indiana, Missouri, Florida, Mississippi, Texas, and Arizona are all scheduled to put people to death THIS month. Florida has already executed 13 children of God this year. Speak out against this publicly funded killing. And ask friends and relatives in those states where executions are happening to do the same.

Catholic Mobilizing Network is a national anti-death penalty organization that works closely with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Use this [link](#) on their web site to ask for clemency for death row prisoners.

Gather online for their [First Friday vigils](#) to pray for all those impacted by capital punishment.

Pray their special Respect Life Month [Novena to End the Death Penalty](#).



Justice & Peace Ministry Staff of Catholic Charities:

Monroe: Marcus Ebenhoe 585-546-7220 ext. 6202; Marcus.Ebenhoe@fcscharities.org;

Chemung/Schuyler/Tioga: Kathy Dubel 607-734-9784 ext. 2135; Kathy.Dubel@dor.org

Cayuga/Ontario/Seneca/Yates/Wayne: Robert Vona 315-521-6684; Robert.Vona@dor.org

Tompkins: Laurie Konwinski 607-272-5062 ext. 12; Laurie.Konwinski@dor.org

Diocesan Coordinator of Life Issues: Elizabeth Johnston 585-328-3228 ext. 1278; Elizabeth.Johnston@dor.org