



## DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY

February 2010

Greetings from the Respect Life Office!

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation for the various types of prayerful observance of the anniversary of Roe vs Wade. One example was the group on the bus trip to Washington DC, departing from Our Lady of the Snows, together with others in the diocese participating with other groups, for the [March for Life](#). The desire to witness to the sacredness of all human life has become a passion with a growing number of young people, and the event one was one the largest ever. Still, even as the average age of the participants is youthful, the example of seniors who have remained steadfast in defense of life is an inspiring testimony of perseverance and compassion for the unborn. As a brief example, our bus needed to assist a group from another bus. One older woman from the broken bus struggled to get in. Despite the inconvenience of the late night transfer there were no complaints. She listened with us to the DVD on end of life issues (respect of life in **all** stages!) and remarked that this would be her 28<sup>th</sup> March for Life and she had every intention of continuing as long as needed!

An especially important component of the March for Life is the many masses that take place all over Washington to pray for conversion of hearts and minds to embrace the true dignity inherent in every person. One particularly inspiring event is the [Youth Rally](#) and [Mass](#) at the Verizon, where 20,000 gather with scores of deacons, priests, and bishops. You are encouraged to take a few minutes and click on these two links and view at least a few minutes of each of these. Listening to the testimonies during the return trip it was evident that new insights nurtured both compassion and commitment; also, prayers and advocacy were linked in defense of the vulnerable and a building up of faith in action.

On a different, but not unrelated note, there was a sign seen at the March suggesting that the pro-life message (so clearly, frequently, and publicly voiced by the Bishops, and encouraged for the laity) had effectively stopped health care reform. While it might at some level be the case, it wasn't the goal, and if the hard work of developing **genuine** health care reform is abandoned (rather than reworked/refined) it would not be cause to celebrate. Recognizing that all human life is sacred and possesses inherent dignity, we are challenged to persevere, to continue to be informed and engaged, caring for the poor and vulnerable in all stages and circumstances. Truth about life, about the Gospel, will be unheard if it is not expressed in actions of compassion and justice. Likewise, **authentic** care of the poor and vulnerable can't take place detached from the truth that all life has dignity, from the moment of conception to natural death.

In the attached "Sounds and Signs...Healing and Wholeness" there is some added reflection from the 2010 March for Life. Following are additional Bulletin Announcements.

Again, Thank you for all you do!

Laurie Edwards

---

*Laurie Edwards, Coordinator*

2620 Lebanon Avenue 618-235-9601 ext 133  
Belleville, IL 62221 Fax: 618-257-2969

Email: ledwards@diobelle.org

Project Rachel: 1-800-618-HEAL

[www.RespectLife.catholicweb.com](http://www.RespectLife.catholicweb.com)



## DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY

---

Please plan now for the second annual [Catholics at the Capital](#) Wednesday, March 3, 2010 in Springfield, Illinois. Join Cardinal Francis George, the Bishops of the Illinois, Clergy, and Laity from across the state, to promote our gospel values on a range of relevant issues with state policy makers! For details and transportation information visit [www.respectlife.catholicweb.com](http://www.respectlife.catholicweb.com). For reservations call 235-9601, ext. 146, or e-mail [ledwards@diobelle.org](mailto:ledwards@diobelle.org) with name, phone number, and address. The cost of the bus is \$5.00, including the complimentary lunch for all participants.

---

The Respect Life Office is happy to introduce Matt and Emily Joost: Matt and Emily live in Belleville, IL and are expecting their first child in February. They recently completed their training to become a Couple to Couple League Teaching Couple and are looking forward to promoting and educating engaged and married couples about their fertility and, especially, God's beautiful plan for family. Contact information: Matt and Emily Joost: (618)355-7535, [mejooost@gmail.com](mailto:mejooost@gmail.com)

---

St. John's Mercy Department of Fertility Care Services in St Louis has scheduled events to provide an atmosphere to promote communication between parents and children about God's gift of sexuality, emphasizing respect, understanding, and appreciation. There are various age-based sessions for Fathers and Sons or Mothers and Daughters. Registration deadlines begin Feb 22. For information call 314/991-0327. Registration forms with more information may be found under Events at [www.respectlife.catholicweb.com](http://www.respectlife.catholicweb.com).

---

A Day of Healing with Dr Sandra Vicari, for post-abortive women and men, is scheduled for March 20, 2010, from 9 am to 3 pm, at the Chiara Center in Springfield, Illinois. Registration fee: \$15.00 includes lunch and can be paid at the door. For more information see Events at [www.respectlife.catholicweb.com](http://www.respectlife.catholicweb.com) or call 1-877-722-4355.

---

The St Louis Gateway Catholic Ethics Network will present a conference on "Quality, Ethics and the Continuum of Care" on March 26, 2010 at Our Lady of the Snows, in Belleville. Health Care professionals may be especially interested. For more information see Events at [www.respectlife.catholicweb.com](http://www.respectlife.catholicweb.com)

---

Thank you for all you do in defense and protection of Life!

Laurie Edwards

---

*Laurie Edwards, Coordinator*

2620 Lebanon Avenue 618-235-9601 ext 133  
Belleville, IL 62221 Fax: 618-257-2969

Email: [ledwards@diobelle.org](mailto:ledwards@diobelle.org)

Project Rachel: 1-800-618-HEAL

[www.RespectLife.catholicweb.com](http://www.RespectLife.catholicweb.com)