



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

October 2/3, 2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

Every October, the Church in the United States celebrates Respect Life Month; an opportunity to reflect more deeply on why every human life is valuable. We also rededicate ourselves to building a culture that protects life from conception to natural death.

This year, our belief that every human life should be protected and cherished from conception has been under attack. Elected officials continue their efforts to force taxpayer-funded abortion by eliminating the Hyde Amendment and other protections. During the 'Stay Home, Stay Safe' order, Governor Whitmer allowed abortion clinics to remain open. As I stated then, "Two persons enter an abortion clinic. Only one comes out. Abortion is not life-sustaining."


Respect Life Month 2021 highlights Saint Joseph as "an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble" (*Patris Corde*, Intro). Through his witness, Saint Joseph shows us how to say "yes" to life. His example reminds us that we are also to care for, protect, and defend the lives of our brothers and sisters.

During this Respect Life Month, we can start to become more like Saint Joseph by asking ourselves: As we go about our day, do we treat people accordingly? How can we help those who are struggling to welcome new life, like mothers who are pregnant or parenting in difficult circumstances? How can we reach out to those having a hard time seeing their worth? How do we reassure those at the end of life who feel like their lives do not have meaning or that they are a burden?

When human life is threatened, when those we encounter need support embracing life, may we lovingly respond with the faithfulness of Saint Joseph.

Thank you to our parishes, schools, organizations, families, and individuals in the diocese for responding to the call to actively live out the Church's teachings on the sacredness of human life, especially those that make respect life efforts a priority throughout the year. I invite you to visit the diocesan website, grdiocese.org, for Respect Life Month resources to support you in these efforts. Saint Joseph, defender of life, pray for us!

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak
Bishop of Grand Rapids