

Respect Life Group

The Respect Life organization (in existence for some time under the Education Commission), was re-ignited shortly after the election late last year. Many from our Parish recognized the need for education coupled with action, in order to help promote a culture of respect for the dignity of human life. The group began meeting regularly (headed up by Todd Babiasz), with an enthusiastic and dedicated number of people who have shared their time and talents to help get the group organized and productive. Below are examples of a typical "Agenda" and "Meeting Minutes".

EXAMPLE OF A MEETING AGENDA (90 minutes, usually from 6:30 - 8:00 pm):

Respect Life Members,

Bring your Bible and your Catechism, as well as your 4 favorite pro-life websites or resources. At the end of the meeting we will have a discussion period

I. Opening Prayer: Holy Spirit and the Memorare, Hail Mary or Our Lady of Guadalupe Prayer.

II. Gospel Reflection: (20 minutes)

Meditate on the "life" message found in Next Sunday's Gospel:

* Discuss Bulletin Insert for the week.

* Available from:

<https://www.priestsforlife.org/liturgy/index.htm>

III. Apostolic Works: (10-15 minutes)

Review good works by Respect Life team members since last meeting.

IV. Life Line: (25-30 minutes)

Guest Speaker or Respect Life team member will address a well-researched life issue or an area of Catholic teaching as it pertains to life issues:

* Brevity by the speaker will allow for discussions and Q&A.

* Detailed information may be compiled and distributed for further reading.

V. Apostles in Action: (10 minutes)

Gather team members to take part in community pro-life events:

* Pray the rosary outside an abortion clinic (establish when/where).

* Volunteer at a pregnancy center, go to a pro-life event, etc.

* Work within the parish with Fr. Andrew on pro-life issues such as; bulletin inserts, creating a pro-life web page, etc.

VI. Spiritual Bouquet: (5 minutes)

What will we offer up as prayers, fasting and/or sacrifices for the pro-life movement?

VII. Closing Prayer: Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be

EXAMPLE OF MEETING MINUTES:

March 12, 2009

Hope to see you there with a friend - Todd Babiasz

- * Father Andrew was very supportive of our group. He allowed permission for bulletin space for a pro-life message and a prayer intention.
- * The question arose concerning our meeting over the summer. We decided since we meet only once a month we will continue to meet.
- * We decided to meet again on Thursday March, 26 at 6:30. This will not be a normal meeting, but preparation for the first meeting after opening it up to the entire Parish (now that we have organized).
- * It was decided to give an opportunity for each person to introduce themselves and tell why they came.
- * For our next meeting we will be creating a menu for people to choose each month what they would like to do. This would be during the "Apostles in Action" time frame. It would be up to each person to choose something that interests them, versus just a group wide thing. We will also brainstorm some topics for potential presentations and create a guest speaker list.
- * FYI - On March 25th in the Ballenger Field House on Mott CC, there will be a panel/discussion discussing stem cells. It doesn't sound like the pro-life view will be touched on much, so if we could have a presence there it would be great.

If you have any questions please let me know,
Todd Babiasz

Answers to some questions used as thought starters when talking to Respect Life Group:

- 1) **How has your ministry grown/declined since last year's report?**
 - Currently it is meeting monthly with approx. 17-24 members. It seems to have really gathered some strong interest with our members.
- 2) **How are you encouraging new membership?**
 - We currently are in the parish bulletin each week and are also spreading it by word of mouth.
- 3) **Are you meeting/exceeding your goals?**
 - I think we are doing very well considering how new we are. Most of the members are very active in taking on pro-life issues and our meetings are well attended.
- 4) **What would you most like to communicate to the Pastoral Council about your ministry?**
 - I would like the pastoral council to know how important our ministry is to the Church and our parish. I would like to have more opportunities to work with other groups like CAFE, Youth Group, and RCIA. This is a topic that too many people feel uncomfortable talking about, but it is not an option for us who proclaim to be Catholic. We need to educate our parishioners so they feel prepared to defend life whenever/wherever those topics come up.

- Regarding the "Pro-Life Intention" at Mass, have not heard anything in several weeks. When it has been, the "a-word" (abortion) was only mentioned once. It's very vague and social justice oriented (which is fine as a separate intention), but my impression was that the intention would be SPECIFICALLY PRO-LIFE. Todd has done an excellent job on the bulletin announcements. I think that specificity should be a model for the intentions.
- Joining with a CAFÉ sponsored event would be a good idea.
- A pro-life Sunday would be great; Mass with a pro-life homily, information tables manned by the group, a guest speaker during the day (apologist, Michigan Right to Life, Fr. Pavone, etc.)