



## Capitol Comments: Celebrating Respect for Life in October..and onward!

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Texas is blessed with vibrant respect life ministries throughout the state. Earlier this year, over 400 Catholics gathered at the State Capitol for the Life and Family Life Day, and met with every state legislative office to discuss the importance of legislation that respects the life of all people.

Several dioceses celebrate October as Respect Life month. Many are participating in 40 days for Life, in which participants pray and offer support for mothers to choose life at abortion facilities, as well as Life Chains. Other dioceses are hosting public square rosaries or events involving prayer to end the death penalty. Other activities include Lock-ins, Strike for Life bowling, and Hikes for Life, Gabriel Project trainings and donation drives, sidewalk counselor training, parenting classes, movie screenings, adoration and rosaries for life.

If you are unable to participate in the activities hosted by your diocese, there are several simple things you can do at home or with friends to promote a culture of life. Cardinal Rigali, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, gives one example of how to do so in his statement for Respect Life Sunday:

"One could begin by spending a day with a young child. The average child is a wellspring of joy and giggles, capable of daring leaps of imagination, probing curiosity, and even reasoned (though sometimes self-centered) appeals for justice. Children delight in God's creation and love their family unconditionally. God gave every human being these marvelous aptitudes, and children can help us recover and appreciate them anew."

Some other ways to promote a culture of life include:

- Pray that the dignity of all human life will be upheld.
- Advocate for true health care reform that does not fund abortion, euthanasia, or measures that fail to protect human life.
- Collect coupons for diapers, baby food, and other baby products, and send them to your Respect Life office, pregnancy help centers, or Catholic Charities.
- Talk with friends and family about issues on the Texas Catholic Conference Legislative Agenda (found at [www.TXcatholic.org](http://www.TXcatholic.org)) and how they uphold the dignity of human life.
- Meditate on the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary which illustrate Jesus' early life on earth and Mary's commitment to life.

No activity is too small. Activities and practices can help us individually and as a church to foster a culture that regards all human life as sacred. Every encounter with another human is an opportunity to provide a smile, a compliment, a hug, a helping hand--all ways to appreciate God's gift of life in others.

At this year's Scripture Seminar, Fr. Lawrence Boadt, C.S.P., explained the meaning of being created in the image and likeness of God. This isn't a physical likeness, stated Fr. Boadt. Rather, we are like God because we have knowledge to discern good and evil, and we have freedom, or free will. Let us pray that all will understand fully the honor and responsibility of being made in God's image and likeness, and commit by action, by the gift of free will, to protecting all who God has blessed with the gift of life.

For more information on getting involved in Respect Life ministries in your diocese, contact your diocesan chancery or main office. You can also sign up for Life Issues action alerts at [www.TXcatholic.org](http://www.TXcatholic.org).