

2023

**CATHOLIC
MINISTRIES
APPEAL**

DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

*One Family - Journeying together in
Communion, Participation and Mission*



Happy Autumn!

respect life
month

OCTOBER 2023



“Let us remember that life is a gift from God! It is always sacred and inviolable, and we cannot silence the voice of conscience.”

-- Pope Francis

October is Respect Life month. As faithful Catholics we are aware that respecting life is a constant pursuit. May we always consider more deeply that every human life is valuable and reflect on how we can build a culture that protects life from conception to natural death.

With your support, we can achieve this challenge of keeping the sanctity of life at the forefront of our community and society. Your donation to the Catholic Ministries Appeal provides Respect Life initiatives through prayer services, education, witness and action, and many support services such as Project Rachel, Pregnancy Loss Counseling, Adverse Prenatal Diagnosis Resources, and Gianna Center of Long Island for Women's Health. These are just a few programs that provide hope and love to those in need.

[CLICK HERE TO VISIT OUR RESPECT LIFE WEBSITE](#)

Does Your Estate Plan Include A Pro-Life Medical Directive? By Mark Henry

When you get your estate plan done, it is an opportune time to make

sure that decisions involving serious medical treatment issues will be made consistent with your Catholic values.

This is important as it enables you to clarify to your family and friends what your wishes are when it comes to critical end of life medical decisions.

Unfortunately, many Catholics overlook getting an **Advance Medical Declaration** that is consistent with Catholic teachings on end of life matters. In fact, many people sign Living Will forms which may lead to health care treatment that is contrary to Catholic pro-life teachings.

Without written medical treatment instructions, a person's surviving family is left guessing what a relative's wishes are concerning end of life medical decisions. Should they insist that the hospital continue to provide life-sustaining care to their aged and sick parent, or should they yield to pressure to consent to their loved one being euthanized by discontinuance of ordinary life-sustaining care?

Often, Catholics who seek guidance on end of life matters are told that it is permissible to stop providing normal life-sustaining care to a loved one who has become hospitalized. This is unfortunate since it "paves the way" for a faithful Catholic's family to give their consent to something that is wholly inconsistent with Catholic moral teachings; the euthanizing of their loved one.

Euthanasia is not a permissible choice for Catholics. However, this does not mean that Catholics need to fight death heroically by employing every available medical procedure to oppose death. ***In the Declaration on Euthanasia, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith states "When death is clearly imminent and inevitable, one can in conscience refuse forms of treatment that would only secure a precarious and burdensome prolongation of life, so long as the normal care to the sick person in similar cases is not interrupted.*** See, Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, Declaration on Euthanasia (1980).

It is important to understand the real meaning of the term "normal care" when you are considering your end of life medical planning. Many Catholic medical ethicists believe that unless a patient is near death and can no longer assimilate food and fluids, providing the patient with nutrition and hydration should be considered "normal care".

Why do Catholics need to be knowledgeable about such a detailed medical issue when they are doing their estate planning? It is because many Catholics end up including a Living Will document in their estate plans. The Living Will is a commonly used, yet misunderstood estate planning document, which usually gives the hospital permission to cease providing normal ordinary life-sustaining medical care to a patient.

There are "code" words that Catholics should be on the look out for

when reviewing a Living Will or other Medical Treatment document before deciding whether to sign the document. These code words include terms like *comfort care*, *quality of life*, *heroic measures*, and *artificial means*. You may want to exercise caution before signing a Living Will form that contains these problematic terms. This is because such a document may put you at risk of not receiving life-sustaining care which, according to Catholic teachings, may be considered normal care and morally obligatory.

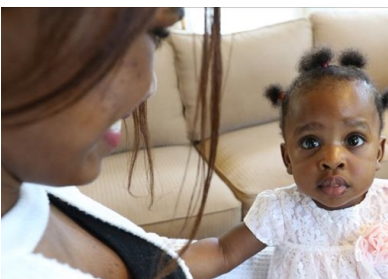
Instead, when getting your estate plan done you may want to consider getting a Pro-Life Health Care Declaration that directs your health care providers to provide you end-of-life health care which respects your pro-life Catholic values.

Seek the advice of an independent advisor, legal, medical or financial, before implementing any planning strategies or ideas. If you would like more information, ideas, or help with this process, please call Barbara Kilarjian at 516-678-5800 ext. 257 or email her at bkilarjian@drvc.org or get ideas on what type of legacy you can leave at www.drvc.org/planned-giving



Catholic Charities' Regina Maternity Services

Catholic Charities' Regina Maternity Services provide case management, crisis intervention and parenting education to low-income pregnant and parenting mothers with infants and toddlers living on Long Island.



"We connect moms to various services – with healthcare if they need a doctor for themselves or for their baby. We connect them to job training and education programs so they can find employment or advance their career. And we can connect them to services if they are in need of food, diapers, cribs or other essentials.



When you have a mom who is feeling as though she is not capable of taking care of her baby, she is not going to be a good employee, parent or productive member of society, so our goal is to get moms to a place where they feel most comfortable – grow healthy children and become productive members of society."
Amy Agiato, Director of Catholic Charities Nutrition and Maternity Services



Prayer for Radical Solidarity

O Blessed Mother, at the angel's word you went in haste to the aid of your cousin Elizabeth. Although pregnant yourself, you placed her needs before your own.

By your example of radical solidarity, teach us to reverence and protect those in need, without conditions or expectations. Ask your Son to give us unfailing determination to witness to the profound dignity of every person, at every stage and in every circumstance.

In that first Eucharistic procession, you carried Jesus to Elizabeth in her time of need. Obtain for us the grace to bring Christ to any expectant mother who is alone and afraid.

May our support help them to find hope and strength in the Lord.

Amen.

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Ministries Appeal!

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