

RESPECT LIFE



Respect Life defends two teachings: the God-given life and dignity of all human persons from conception until natural death, and the natural family based on marriage as the fundamental human institution, defined by a lifetime union between one man and one woman that is open to life. As followers of Jesus Christ and members of His Catholic Church, our goal is to build a culture of life and of love through education,

information, prayer and support. We teach about -- and confront -- the evils of abortion, contraception, and euthanasia / assisted suicide, and promote the meaning of sacramental marriage. Through our pamphlets, we address all life and family issues from a Catholic perspective.

The teachings of the Catholic Church on Respect Life are based on the Catechism of the Church supplemented with passages from the Holy Scriptures, *Evangelium Vitae* (Gospel of Life) by Pope St. John Paul II and *Humana Vitae* by Blessed Pope Paul VI, and by the proclamation of a Message of Mercy by Pope Francis.

At Blessed Trinity, the present Respect Life group was started around 1995. The annual Life Chain Sunday that is held on the first Sunday of October also began that year. Today, all parish ministries are invited to stand up for life by forming a chain along Pine Ave. On that Sunday we join with our brothers and sisters across the United States and Canada in silent and prayerful witness for children lost to abortion.



A few years later January became Respect Life month. Our ministry celebrates a birthday party in honor

of the unborn, observing the anniversary of the legalization of abortion in the US.

In 2000, Vince Lombardi began inviting priests to preach on pro-life issues during the 8 A.M. Mass on the last Saturday of January. This eventually became the Respect Life Weekend with the blessings of Fr. Pat Sheedy. The sale of coffee and donuts on the 2nd Sunday of the month was started to raise funds to offset the travelling expenses of our guest priest and raise money for other Respect Life projects. During the months of January and October, we erect wooden crosses next to the parking lot of the gymnasium facing SE 17th Street in memory of all the unborn children.



In 2015 the Respect Life group began to aggressively promote the ministry within the parish and also



reached out to our neighboring non-profit organizations such as Alpha Center and Women's Pregnancy Center. We invited parishioners to participate in 40 Days for Life, praying outside the Ocala Women's Center (abortion mill) on Pine Ave. We participated in several Marches for Life (Washington D.C., San Francisco and St. Augustine) and held seminars regarding women's health and legislative issues. We also support the Baby Bottle Boomerang of Alpha Center and

Women's Pregnancy Center's Walk for Life.

We deeply thank our dedicated volunteers including Vince Lombardi, Ron & Pat Livsey, the Bianculli Family, Lee Erazmus (23 years!), Nanette Wicks, Leo and Kathy Gerace, Steve and Brenda Reynolds, Victor and Marilyn Carvalho, Steve and Mhel Tapanan, Barbara Iazetti, Mary Peters and all the parishioners who support this ministry. We are also grateful for the efforts of the Knights of Columbus and Fr. Pat, who worked together to provide an ultrasound machine for the Women's Pregnancy Center.

When the abortion mill on Pine Ave permanently closed in 2016, the site became Interfaith Emergency Services. Its God-given mission is to create community and to offer emergency assistance without judgment to all persons in Marion County.

