

# The *Life Line*

Fostering Dignity & Respect for All Life  
Through God's Love...

June 2023 NEWS



Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, Office of Family/Respect Life Ministry  
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## Let Freedom Ring

July 4, 2023 marks the 247th anniversary of our declaration of independence from Britain. This Independence Day, let us give thanks and praise for our liberties, particularly religious freedom, and for those that have and continue to fight for and protect them. Love for God, Church, and Country are not contradictory. They are meant to be complementary.

Through freedom of speech and religion, God given rights protected by our nation, let us freely practice our faith to push back against the injustice and violence of abortion and euthanasia.



## Prayers for Our Nation

O GOD OUR CREATOR, from your provident hand we have received our right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. You have called us as your people and given us the right and the duty to worship you, the only true God, and your Son, Jesus Christ. Through the power and working of your Holy Spirit, you call us to live out our faith in the midst of the world, bringing the light and the saving truth of the Gospel to every corner of society.

We ask you to bless us in our vigilance for the gift of religious liberty. Give us the strength of mind and heart to readily defend our freedoms when they are threatened; give us courage in making our voices heard on behalf of the rights of your Church and the freedom of conscience of all people of faith.

Grant, we pray, O heavenly Father, a clear and united voice to all your sons and daughters gathered in your Church in this decisive hour in the history of our nation, so that, with every trial withstood and every danger overcome— for the sake of our children, our grandchildren, and all who come after us— this great land will always be “one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Adaptations made by the Family/Respect Life Office



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# People of Life: An Interview with Sophia Corso

## **1. Please tell us a bit about yourself. Where are you from? How did you come to join the Family/Respect Life Office?**

I was born and raised in the Upstate New York area by a loving family. Having just graduated Le Moyne College in December, I spent time as an undergraduate becoming more devout in my faith, growing steadfast in my values, and trying to pursue truth, virtue, and morality within our increasingly secular society. During this process, I became associated with various organizations that work with college students to uphold truth, preserve liberty, and advocate for life. Through this priceless experience, I became connected with the Family/Respect Life Office and eventually started working as Program Coordinator for the ministry in March.



## **2. What drew you to want to be involved in pro-life work?**

As I started to engage with literature surrounding the topic of abortion, I began to further understand the grip this industry has on our nation. In our Declaration of Independence, it clearly states that each one of us is created equal with unalienable rights, the first being the right to life. Not only is abortion antithetical to Catholic teaching, it also fails to recognize and respect the God given right an unborn child has to life — a right that our nation was created to protect. Seeing this grave injustice operating in our nation and throughout the world, I began to involve myself in pro-life circles, leading me to work with pregnancy centers and to write about this topic as a crisis in our nation.

## **3. What is your goal or dream for the parishes and Catholic Schools in our diocese?**

My dream is for them to proudly stand for the right to life from conception and to accompany women who are facing crisis pregnancies. When a woman has an abortion, she may feel there is no other choice due to the perceived lack of support to keep her child. I want women in our diocese to be able to lean on our local parishes or Catholic schools with confidence and know they will receive the loving support and strength yearned for during this difficult time.

## **4. In your opinion, what is the best thing a pro-life person can do to show others the value of human life?**

It is of the utmost importance that people with pro-life convictions not only value the unborn child through love and compassion, but also value and support the mother and father facing a crisis pregnancy. By doing so, pro-life advocates can convey that all involved in a crisis pregnancy - and all life in general - is a valuable gift from God. These actions may help provide the encouragement needed to embrace unborn life as a gift of love from God. Additionally, pro-life individuals can show others how to value all life by advocating with love, respect, and confidence. It can be quite daunting to highlight the sanctity of all human life in the midst of a culture that does not share those values. But, by advocating in this way, we further God's will and the truth about the value of life while providing needed resources for women to help them have the strength they desire and need to bring their child into this world.

## **Pro-Life Student Group: Bishop Grimes High School**



**Bishop Grimes High School:** The Bishop Grimes Right to Life Club participated and sponsored several events this year to support the dignity of every human person including; sponsoring a dress down day in the fall collecting over 300 dollars for Joseph's House, participating in the Syracuse March for Life, collecting 100s of paper goods to be used by the residents of Joseph's House, and reorganized the children's library at Joseph's House. We also participated in the Oratory Contest sponsored by the Syracuse Right to Life Association and had a student win first place!

# Advocacy and Education: Abortion

Governor Kathy Hochul signed legislation on May 2, 2023 to provide abortion pills to all SUNY and CUNY college campuses in the state. This legislation is antithetical to Catholic teaching and promotes abortion as a solution to crisis pregnancies, rather than walking with mother's in their time of need and lifting them up. We pray for the protection of the unborn and that our state becomes a place where life is supported and cared for

NYS Catholic Conference Executive Director Dennis Poust stated in response to Gov. Hochul signing this legislation, "It's tragic that young women away from home for the first time and facing a crisis pregnancy will be simply handed abortion pills to take care of the 'problem,' rather than be given the multi-layered supports they need. Governor Hochul's single-minded focus on increasing abortions in the state, as though she's trying to win some sort of ghoulish contest, is terribly misguided. New York has many problems that need tackling; access to abortion is not one of them."

Stay informed with the latest abortion news and updates in The Empire State! Subscribe to the New York State Catholic Conference's Action Alerts at [nyscatholic.org/action-center/](https://nyscatholic.org/action-center/).



## Action Alert

Find your voice at [nyscatholic.org/action-center](https://nyscatholic.org/action-center)



## The Dangers of the Abortion Pill

### What It Is:

The abortion pill is a drug used to take the life of an unborn child up to 10 weeks gestation. The regimen involves ingesting two drugs: mifepristone and misoprostol. This inhibits the child from receiving progesterone, preventing the child from receiving nutrients and, ultimately, ending its life.\*

## Abortion Pill Complications

Women who undergo chemical abortions suffer complications up to four times of those who have surgical abortions. Up to one in five women who have a chemical abortion have complications, and up to 15 percent of women will hemorrhage.\*



### Abortion Pill Trauma:

The abortion pill is promoted as "convenient" and has even been compared to a woman's period. In reality, for some, it can be even more traumatic than a surgical abortion, as it often occurs in a woman's own home. Project Rachel founder Vicki Thorn explained that some women "get really panicked because they see the baby" as the process of the chemical abortion takes place.

## The Church Stands With Women and Children

Stand in solidarity with mothers facing crisis pregnancies. Learn more by going to [nyscatholic.org](https://nyscatholic.org).

### Local Resources:

For Crisis Pregnancies:

New Hope Family Services, Syracuse

Birthright of Onondaga County, Syracuse

Care Net Pregnancy Centers of CNY, Utica area \*Sources:

Birthright of Binghamton, Binghamton area

For Abortion Pill Reversal:

877-558-0333, 24/7 Hotline

Shelter for Women and Children:

Joseph's House for Women, Syracuse

Evelyn's House, Utica

1. Live Action: <https://www.liveaction.org/abortion-pill-kills/>

2. Lozier Institute: <https://lozierinstitute.org/fact-sheet-risks-and-complications-of-chemical-abortion/>

## Hope and Healing After Abortion

# Hope After Abortion

## Post-Abortion Healing

Day of Hope and Healing for Women  
(based on Entering Canaan)

July 15, 2023



Register confidentially 855-364-0076  
- [hopeandhealing@syrdio.org](mailto:hopeandhealing@syrdio.org)



## Advocacy and Education: Euthanasia

Certain New York State lawmakers are attempting to push assisted suicide legislation through the State Assembly and Senate. The bill (S2445/A995) seeks to legalize “medical aid-in-dying.” Assisted suicide does not provide medical care. It is the opposite of care. It is particularly dangerous for some of the most vulnerable such as the elderly, the poor, and those suffering with depression or those who live with disabilities.

As featured in the March 2022 edition of the *LifeLine*, Bishop Douglas Lucia highlighted the “redemptive value of suffering” as part of the reason we as Catholics oppose assisted-suicide. “That gives all our lives great meaning. . . every life is a gift. Every life makes a difference, and we don’t have the right to take away that life, whether that life is in the womb, or whether that life is coming to its natural end.”

## Catholic Resources on Assisted-Suicide

To learn more, please check out these resources:

- Memorandum of Opposition to Senate Bill S2445 from the New York State Catholic Conference: [nyscatholic.org/assisted-suicide-memo](https://nyscatholic.org/assisted-suicide-memo).
- *Now and at the Hour of Our Death: A Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decision Making*. Read at [catholicendoflife.org](https://catholicendoflife.org).

# Strengthening Family Relationships

## *A Spiritual Bouquet to St. Joseph, Patron of Fathers*

### Sample Parish Activity for Father's Day From the USCCB:

"This activity seeks to lift up the many intentions brought to our hearts by the observance of Father's Day, entrusting them to the intercession of St. Joseph, Patron of Fathers. It also provides a way to honor St. Joseph for his own example of embracing the call to fatherhood amid difficult circumstances. Despite all obstacles, he was faithful, welcoming the life of the Christ Child and offering care and protection to both Mary and Jesus.

On the weekend of Father's Day, parishioners are invited to write a prayer intention on a slip of paper and place it, along with a flower if possible, beneath a statue, icon, or image of St. Joseph. (If you don't have one, you could look for an image online to print or temporarily display on a screen.)

When the activity is complete, you will have a spiritual and physical "bouquet" of prayer intentions and offerings serving as a visual reminder of the powerful intercession and protection of St. Joseph."

"From the Father's Day Action Guide of the USCCB" [respectlife.org/action-guides](http://respectlife.org/action-guides)



SAVE THE DATE

Faith, Family, and Fun Day  
Christ the King Retreat House  
August 20, 9:30am-1:30pm

CONTACT KRISTIN DIEVENDORF, PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
OFFICE OF FAMILY/RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY  
[KDIEVENDORF@SYRDIO.ORG](mailto:KDIEVENDORF@SYRDIO.ORG), 315-472-6754 EXT. 2

Made possible by a grant from  
The Good News Foundation

Co-sponsored by the Family/Respect Life Office and the CTK Retreat Center





A group program designed to build marriage skills

**In-Person/Online Meetings June-September 2023  
Sundays 6:30-8:30pm**

In-Person Meeting Location:

The Church of St. Michael & St. Peter (Parish Center)  
4780 W. Seneca Turnpike, Syracuse, NY 13215

### Topics Include

- June 4th Handling Anger Constructively: It Can Be Constructive
- June 25th Speaking the Truth in Love: Seven Communication Techniques
- July 16th Conflict Resolution: Solving Disagreements
- Aug. 13th Ending the Hurt Spiral and Start Loving Again
- Sept. 10th Practicing Forgiveness: The Way We Start Over
- Sept. 24th Rebuilding Trust: It Can Be Done

All Are Welcome

Contact Stephanie Stewart for more information or  
to join meetings at: [sstewart@syrdio.org](mailto:sstewart@syrdio.org) or 315-472-6754

## Branch Out and Grow

For Separated and Divorced

A caring, compassionate, and supportive environment for  
men and women who have experienced divorce or separation.

- June 7th Your Former Spouse
- June 21st Single Living
- July 5th Brighter Days
- July 19th Deep Hurt
- Aug. 9th Road to Recovery
- Aug. 16th Anger
- Sept. 6th Grief and Depression
- Sept. 20th Loneliness

If you are interested in joining the meetings, learning more,  
or talking one-on-one, contact the Family/Respect Life Office  
at [familyrespectlife@syrdio.org](mailto:familyrespectlife@syrdio.org) or (315) 472-6754 Ext. 4



**Office of Family/Respect Life Ministry**

Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse

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## Prayers and Petitions for the Family

### *A Prayer for Families*

We bless your name, O Lord,  
for sending your own incarnate Son,  
to become part of a family,  
so that, as he lived its life,  
he would experience its worries  
and its joys.

We ask you, Lord,  
to protect and watch over this family,  
so that in the strength of your grace  
its members may enjoy prosperity,  
possess the priceless gift of your peace,  
and, as the Church alive in the home,  
bear witness in this world to your glory.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.



### *A Patron Saint for Your Family*

Choosing a saint for your family to pray for their  
intercession can help strengthen both your personal  
faith and your family's. Here are a few patron saint  
suggestions:

- **St. Joseph:** Patron Saint of Married People and Families
- **St. Thomas More:** Patron Saint of Difficult Marriages
- **St. Valentine:** Patron Saint of Happy Marriages
- **St. Gianna Molla:** Patron Saint of Mothers, Unborn Children
- **St. Nicholas:** Patron Saint of Children

Take your time in choosing a saint with your family,  
and pray that God may bestow the graces your family  
is searching for through the intercession of this saint!

## DIOCESAN EVENTS

- **DAY OF HOPE AND HEALING FOR WOMEN, July 15, 2023:**

Have you felt sad, ashamed, or not forgiven due to an abortion? Experience God's mercy and peace at a Day of Hope and Healing. For more information, call Project Rachel Ministry at (855) 364-0076 or email: hopeandhealing@syrдио.org. All calls and emails are confidential.

- **THE THIRD OPTION MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT MEETINGS:**

Meetings are held on Sunday's from 6:30pm to 8:30pm online or in person at the parish center of St. Michael and St. Peter Church at 4780 W. Seneca Turnpike, Syracuse, NY 13215. Come build your marriage in the comfort of your own home. Upcoming topics and dates are: June 4 -- "Handling Anger Constructively: It Can Be Constructive" ; June 25 -- "Speaking the Truth in Love: Seven Communication Techniques" ; July 16 -- "Conflict Resolution: Solving Disagreements" ; Aug. 13 -- "Ending the Hurt Spiral and Start Loving Again" ; Sept. 10 -- "Practicing Forgiveness: The Way We Start Over" ; Sept. 24 -- "Rebuilding Trust: It Can Be Done". For more information or to participate, contact Stephanie at sstewart@syrдио.org or 315-472-6754.

- **FAITH, FAMILY, AND FUN DAY, August 20, 2023:** See ad on page six.

- **BRANCH OUT AND GROW, Support Group Meetings for those affected by separation and divorce:**

Online zoom meetings every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, 7:00-8:00 p.m. Meeting topics: June 7 -- Your Former Spouse; June 21 -- Single Living; July 5 -- Brighter Days; July 19 -- Deep Hurt; Aug. 9 -- Road to Recovery; Aug. 16 -- Anger; Sept. 6 -- Grief and Depression ; Sept. 20 -- Loneliness. If you are interested in joining the meetings, learning more, or talking one-on-one, contact the Family/Respect Life Office at familyrespectlife@syrдио.org or 315-472-6754 Ext. 4.

## UPCOMING FAMILY/PRO-LIFE HAPPENINGS

- **JOSEPH'S HOUSE 9TH ANNUAL "BIRDIES FOR BABIES" GOLF TOURNAMENT, June 12, 2023:**

Skaneateles Country Club, 3344 W. Lake St., Skaneateles. Enjoy 18 holes of golf Captain and Crew, gourmet lunch on the course and more. All proceeds from the fundraiser support the programs and services for the women and children at Joseph's House. To register for golf or become a sponsor, visit [jhfw.org/birdies-for-babies](http://jhfw.org/birdies-for-babies).

- **THE THIRD OPTION MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT MEETINGS, The Good News Center, 10475 Cosby Manor Rd, Utica:**

Meetings are held via Zoom from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. Learn from the experience of others on how to improve your relationship and find the joy in living a happier, healthier life together! Upcoming dates are June 11, July 2, July 16, July 30, Aug. 13, Aug. 27, and Sept. 3. Contact Michele Jones at (315) 735-6210 for more information.

- **MOM'S HOUSE "HART & HILLS MEMORIAL" GOLF TOURNAMENT 40 DAYS FOR LIFE, ITHACA, July 8:**

The Links at Hiawatha Landing. To register or become a sponsor for this fundraiser, visit [momshouseny.org](http://momshouseny.org) or call (607) 644-9972. Mom's House provides free New York State licensed childcare to low income, single parents that are enrolled in school part time or full time. Mom's House is located at 770 Harry L. Drive, Johnson City, NY 13790.

**Office of Family/Respect Life Ministry**

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May expectant fathers lovingly support  
the mothers of their children

in welcoming new life;

**We pray to the Lord:**

For expectant fathers:

May they find courage

in the example of St. Joseph,

as they prepare to love, protect,

and provide for their child;

**We pray to the Lord:**

For all priests:

That through the intercession of St. Joseph,

they will be filled with the wisdom,

understanding, and strength they need

to follow in the footsteps of Jesus;

**We pray to the Lord:**

For all married couples  
struggling to have a child:

May the Lord grant them

peace and comfort;

**We pray to the Lord:**

For all those longing to welcome  
a child through adoption:

May the Lord guide their journey  
and grant them peace along the way;

**We pray to the Lord:**

For fathers who mourn the  
loss of a child:

May they find peace and  
consolation

in the heart of God the Father;

**We pray to the Lord:**

Source USCCB



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