



Students for Life of America's
***Respect Life* Prayer Vigil and Mass Guide**



STUDENTS
FOR LIFE,
OF AMERICA

Prayer Vigil Guide

A great idea for incorporating a prayerful impact into your pro-life efforts is to organize a prayer vigil or a *Respect Life* Mass! Follow this checklist to help you stay organized:

Step 1: Location

- Research a location where the prayer vigil may be held. Does your school have a chapel, auditorium, or other large space where you can hold a vigil? Is there a local park, community center, or abortion facility where you can pray?
- If hosting the vigil off campus, locate the public property and where people can park so that you do not inadvertently trespass. Contact local authorities for any questions about public property lines. It is also a good practice to inform the police of any off-campus events.

Step 2: Promote

- Personally promote the vigil to friends, family, and community members
- Promote the vigil to local pro-life organizations [Right to Life Groups, pregnancy resource centers (PRCs), churches, 40 Days for Life, etc.]
- Promote on social media.
- Promote on-campus with flyers, announcements, your school's calendar, and through your pro-life group.

Step 3: Before You Go

- You may also want to invite speakers to join you to spread the forgiving and loving message of Christ. Speakers to consider including are local parish priests, your school's chaplain, campus ministers, or theology teachers, a SFLA speaker, and other faith leaders.
- Consider adding musicians who can sing throughout the vigil. Local parish choirs or student musicians are always a good option.
- Feel free to print copies of the prayers below for others to follow along.
- Bring materials for pro-life evangelization (utilize the materials in your *Respect Life* Event-in-a-Box or request more materials from **Programs@StudentsforLife.org**) so that you can distribute as people arrive and leave the vigil.
- Also, bring a group sign up form so that interested students can join your school's pro-life group.
- Make signs to hold while you are praying, so people know what you are doing. Utilize the messaging from this guide!

Step 4: At The Event



- Follow the Prayer Vigil Guide (below).
- Be a peaceful and prayerful witness for Life.
- Take pictures and videos! Tag Students for Life on social media.

Things to Bring:

- Cell phone fully charged
- Literature & Prayer Vigil Guide
- Signs
- SMILE!

Tips:

If protestors show up, remember to remain calm and compassionate. Continue to pray. Make sure to record and take pictures of protestors. Contact the local police department and leave if the situation becomes unsafe. This is very rare, but necessary for you to know.

Prayer Vigil Outline:

This prayer vigil consists of **5 parts**:

1. Prayers of Preparation
2. Prayers of Repentance
3. Prayers of Remembrance
4. Prayers of Petition
5. Prayers of Praise

Each part has a prayer that should be read aloud followed by a brief scripture reading (or readings) that correspond with the part's topic. Find volunteers to read the prayers and scripture passages for active involvement! If you asked a speaker to join the prayer vigil, select the section of the vigil you would like them to speak during and introduce them during that part.

1. Preparation

Prayer

God in Heaven, author of Life, we know that at this very moment precious preborn human lives are in danger. They are on the verge of death as they grow in their mothers' wombs. We are physically present, in front of this abortion facility, to be a witness of your love for every person – even the tiny baby you knit together in his mother's



womb. We pray today that our heartfelt prayers, our pleas will be heard, and that your Holy Spirit would rouse the hearts of the men and women involved in the abortions inside this facility. We pray that the abortionist would stop and flee from here- never to return. We ask that you turn the hearts of the mothers and fathers inside abortion facilities towards you and that they would overflow with love towards their precious preborn children.

Scripture

- Psalm 19:7-10. "The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb."
- Proverbs 31:8-9, "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."

2. Repentance

Prayer

Lord God, we come humbly before you in repentance for our sins and the sins of our nation. We ask for your forgiveness for our silence, for our apathy, and for our indifference. Your blood can cover a multitude of sins; please forgive our nation and cleanse it from unrighteousness. We need your Divine Mercy. We cry out in utter sorrow at the unthinkable stain abortion has left and continues to leave on our nation. First, forgive those who have turned away and ignored the plight of the widow, the fatherless, the poor, and the needy. Forgive us for being silent while babies are aborted, and families scarred. Lord, cause every abortionist who has ever ended the life of a precious human child to cry out to you in repentance. Turn the hearts of abortion advocates, escorts and pro-abortion politicians toward you and away from abortion. Forgive every mother and father who has entered an abortion facility and left without their child. Forgive every boyfriend, husband, parent, grandparent, counselor, clergy or friend who pressured a mother to end the life of her child or drove her to do so. You are the God of the universe. We know you can do miraculous things. Forgive us and heal our nation.

Scripture

- Psalm 25:1-11. "In you, O Lord my God, I place my trust. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies' triumph over me. No one whose hope is in your will ever be put to shame, but they will be put to shame who are treacherous without excuse. Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths, guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. Remember, O Lord, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you are good; O Lord. Good and upright is the Lord; therefore, he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant. For the sake of your name, O Lord, forgive my iniquity, though it is great."

3. Remembrance

Prayer

Dear Lord, we pray for our preborn brothers and sisters who are scheduled to die today. We pray for all those families regretting their actions and mourning for their lost children. While many deny the humanity of the millions of preborn children destroyed by abortion, we do not forget them. In their memory, we continue to fight the injustice.

Scripture

- Isaiah 49:15-16. "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast, and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands."
- Isaiah 42:3-4. "He will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not be disheartened or crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands will wait expectantly for his law."
- Psalm 10:12-15, 17-18. "Arise, Lord! Lift up your hand, O God. Do not forget the helpless. Why does the wicked man revile God? Why does he say to himself, 'He won't call me to account?' But you, O God, do see the trouble of the afflicted; you consider it to take it in hand. The victim commits himself to you; you are the helper of the fatherless. Break the arm of the wicked and evil man; call him to account for his wickedness that would not be found out. You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted, you encourage them, and you listen to their cry,



defending the fatherless and the oppressed, in order that man, who is of the earth, may terrify no more."

4. Petition

Prayer

Lord, we know you hear the cries of the 60 million babies who've died. Abortion, which ravages our nation with tears, grief, pain and sorrow must end. How long? How long until the world hears the cries of preborn children? How long until the world sees the truth? Open their eyes, we pray. Open their ears. Let them not ignore the cries of the children any longer. Let it haunt all the people of our nation and the world until we all say in one voice, "enough!" Lord, show us how to respond. Let us not feel helpless to stop abortion. Give us the strength to endure in our fight to restore preborn human rights. Bestow your blessing, courage and peace on pregnant mothers contemplating abortion, so that they will choose life.

"O God, early in the morning I cry to you. Help me to pray and gather my thoughts to you, I cannot do it alone. In me it is dark, but with you there is light; I am lonely, but you do not desert me; My courage fails me, but with you there is help; I am restless, but with you there is peace; in me there is bitterness, but with you there is patience; I do not understand your ways, but you know the way for me. Father in Heaven praise and thanks be to you for the night." -Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. And where there is sadness, joy. Lord, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console. To be understood, as to understand. To be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned. And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen." - *Prayer for Peace*, St. Francis of Assisi

Scripture

- Matthew 6:9-13. "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."



- Psalm 82:3-4. "Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

5. Praise

Prayer

Lord, we praise you with our lives, our lips and our hearts. Our very existence is a gift from you, and we offer our lives to be used as you see fit. You reign on high. You are the great creator and sustainer of life. Accept our praise, prayers and petitions to you as we humbly request your justice and mercy. You came down as a lowly preborn child, and we praise you for the gift of Jesus Christ. We know you can end abortion in our city, in our state, in our nation, and in the world.

Scripture

- Psalm 139:13-16, "For you created my inmost being, you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful; I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."
- Luke 1:41-44, "When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, 'Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy.'"

Song

Consider singing well-known encouraging songs. Women in abortion facilities can sometimes hear you singing from inside! Song is a great way to show that your group is peaceful. The following are a few examples of Christian songs you could easily sing (have everyone view the lyrics from their phones):

- *Amazing Grace*
- *How Great Thou Art*
- *Lay it Down* – Matt Maher
- *In Christ Alone*



Respect Life Mass Guide

If your school is able to, celebrating a *Respect Life* Mass is a great way to pray and witness to the dignity of life and God's mercy. Follow this checklist to help you stay organized (suggestions for hymns and petitions are below):

Step 1: Location

- Does your school have a chapel or auditorium where masses are usually held? Talk to your Campus Ministry department to see what space on campus is suitable for Mass.
- If your school partners with a local parish, call the priest and ask if he would be willing to host a *Respect Life* Mass. If your school has a chaplain, ask him.

Step 2: Promote

- Personally promote to friends, family, the parish, and community members
- Promote to local pro-life organizations (Right to Life Groups, PRC's, other churches, 40 Days for Life, etc.)
- Promote on social media, especially to local campus ministry sites for area Catholic high schools and colleges.
- Promote on-campus with flyers, announcements, your school's calendar, and through your pro-life group.

Step 3: Before Mass

- Research what scripture readings will be used during the mass. Will they be the usual Missal readings or are there guidelines from your diocese for choosing readings at a "Mass for Various Needs and Occasions." (Resources on prayers from the USCCB can be found at www.respectlife.org).
- Be sure that you have at least two volunteers for each lay task at mass, or an assigned person from the parish: Lectors, Altar Servers, Gift Bearers, Cantors, Musicians, etc.
- Bring *Respect Life* literature to distribute to the congregation outside or in the Narthex after the Mass.

Step 4: At Mass

- Follow the guidelines of your school, parish, and/or diocese.
- Be a peaceful witness for life.
- Pray for all the victims of abortion: the mothers, the fathers, the babies, and all those who have been impacted by abortion violence. Pray for forgiveness for your sins and the sins of our culture and pray that God can help your school or parish build a Culture of Life.



Respect Life Mass: Hymns and Intentions

What follows are some recommendations for hymns and intentions for a Respect Life Mass. Intentions referenced from the *USCCB, Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities*.

Hymn Recommendations:

- *In Christ Alone*
- *How Great Thou Art*
- *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*
- *At the Dawning of Creation*
- *God Has Chosen Me*
- *Salve Regina*
- *Immaculate Mary*
- *Faith of our Fathers*

Petition (Intercessions) Recommendations:

- For Pope Francis, all bishops, clergy, and laity; that everything we say and do will witness to God's merciful love for every human being.
- For leaders in government, and especially for Governor _____, that s/he might work to protect the lives of all human beings, born and preborn.
- For all whose hearts ache from the loss of a child by abortion: that God will heal them with the balm of his mercy.
- For those who pray at abortion facilities, who march for life, or who witness to the rights of all human beings: that God might guide and strengthen them.
- For an end to all laws that permit the taking of innocent human life.
- For men and women scarred by involvement in the abortion industry: that they will resist the temptation to despair but will seek reconciliation with God and find life-affirming work.
- For teachers in medical and nursing schools: that their love for life and healing might inspire their students.

To request a free Student for Life speaker for your prayer vigil or to speak after your *Respect Life* Mass, go to **StudentsforLifeHQ.com/FreeTraining**.

To connect to our diocese and church outreach program, *Called*, go to **StudentsforLife.org/Called** or contact **Programs@StudentsforLife.org**.



Connect with Students for Life of
America

Phone: (540) 834-4600

Email: Info@StudentsforLife.org

Social Media: [@StudentsforLife](https://www.instagram.com/StudentsforLife)

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