



# ACTION GUIDES

## Introduction

This year's Respect Life Program focuses on providing parish resources that are actionable and ready-to-go. The materials are designed to complement existing parish life and manifest that the Gospel of Life is part of the very fabric of the Gospel itself. This year's materials put a renewed emphasis on integrating existing resources into the life of a parish, school, or ministry.

To assist you in doing this, five new action guides have been developed to help leaders take advantage of opportunities to highlight and integrate Respect Life themes throughout the year. Liturgical celebrations and other annual calendar occasions provide natural opportunities to help build a culture of life.

The action guides are structured around five main calendar occasions: Respect Life Month (October 2019), the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children and related events (January 2020), the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord and the 25th Anniversary of *Evangelium vitae* (March 2020), Divine Mercy Sunday (April 2020), and Mother's Day (May 2020).

### What is an action guide?

Each action guide focuses on a specific occasion that relates to respect for human life and gives natural opportunities for building a culture that protects, cherishes, and celebrates life. The guides feature tools to help you build such a culture in your own parish or school. They contain sample timelines, "simple steps," activities, sample announcements and intercessions, and homily helps. Each contains ways to help you integrate your efforts into regular programming, so as to reach the greatest number of people in a given parish, school, or ministry—all without having to plan separate events. (Although, ideas for separate events are also included).

### Who are the action guides for?

While the action guides have been developed primarily with parish leaders in mind, they also offer ideas for adaptation for use in schools, ministries, and even by families at home. These action guides can be used by diocesan, parish, school, and ministry leaders, as well as anyone who desires to build a culture of life in their particular faith community.

### How do I use these action guides?

The action guides are intended to help leaders integrate respect for human life into their respective work and/or ministries. While specific dates and general timelines are often provided, they are only included as suggestions. Any of the ideas and activities included in the action guides that you find helpful can be used at any time. We also encourage leaders to build off the 2019-2020 theme, "**Christ Our Hope: In Every Season of Life.**" A reflection is provided at the front of this resource guide to help unpack the theme.

The Respect Life Program is meant to be brought to life by you! And the action guides are no different. While suggested action steps are provided, you are encouraged to adapt each guide as needed to best serve your parish, school, or ministry. When implementing these action guides, always remember to follow local policies and procedures, especially regarding safe environment guidelines. If you have any questions about local policies, consult your diocese, parish, school, or ministry staff.

The provided action guides are meant to serve as basic frameworks and jumping off points for your own creative ideas. Don't be afraid to make these plans and activities your own. As always, we'd love to see how you use the action guides in your specific ministry. Let us know what you're doing by emailing [prolife@uscgb.org](mailto:prolife@uscgb.org), or tag us on Facebook ([@peopleoflife](https://www.facebook.com/peopleoflife)) or Twitter ([@uscgbprolife](https://twitter.com/uscgbprolife)). *Thank you* for your dedication in building a culture in which every human life is cherished!

