

## SAMPLE TIMELINE

We have provided a sample timeline to help you prepare for the celebration of Mother's Day. While these steps apply most directly to a parish coordinator for Respect Life ministry, whatever your role serving the Church, they can help you think about key steps for planning ahead.



### FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

### MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

### APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

### MAY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

#### Early to mid-February

- ◆ Meet with your pastor to discuss highlighting the precious gift of life as part of the observance of Mother's Day. Let him know what resources are available, such as the homily helps and sample intercessions that follow later in this guide. Ask him to consider offering the *Blessing of a Child in the Womb* in addition to other special Mother's Day blessings. Share with him the ideas for offering a spiritual bouquet to Our Blessed Mother (sample activity at the end of this Mother's Day action guide). Request permission for these things and any bulletin submissions you have in mind, as well as to set up a table in the vestibule or other gathering area. Most importantly, *ask what you can do to help* and whether there's any other information he would like you to provide.
- ◆ Following your conversation with your pastor, contact your parish office to open the lines of communication. Share the results of the conversation with your pastor and what you are requesting for the observance of Mother's Day. Find out bulletin submission guidelines and deadlines and what the parish hours will be during Holy Week and Easter Week. This information will help you determine the best date to follow up with your bulletin submissions. Many parishes need content several weeks in advance to be able to include it in the weekly bulletin. Find out what else the parish staff needs from you and when they need it.

#### Early March

Once you have received the appropriate approvals and permission, begin gathering materials for the spiritual bouquet. Research what options you may have for purchasing flowers at an affordable price, and compare the information against your budget. Keep in mind that flower options and prices may change based on the season.

#### Mid-March

Begin to recruit volunteers to help you facilitate the spiritual bouquet. Volunteers will be needed to staff the table after each Mass the weekend of Mother's Day. Other volunteer tasks might include picking up or transferring flowers to the parish or preparing materials.

## Late March

Send the bulletin and pulpit announcement submissions you hope to have featured. This will help your parish plan and allot the necessary space in the bulletin.

## Mid-April

Reconnect with appropriate parish staff regarding your bulletin and pulpit submissions, and make sure they have received all the materials needed, including the spiritual bouquet announcements and the *Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Life*. If you have obtained permission from the pastor, make arrangements to set up a table in the vestibule or other gathering area on Mother's Day weekend.

Touch base with your pastor to offer further assistance and to confirm any plans you may have made, such as the spiritual bouquet or the *Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb*. Make sure he has everything he needs, such as pulpit announcements or a copy of the rite.

## Early May

With your volunteers, prepare all the spiritual bouquet materials except for the flowers.

## Saturday of Mother's Day Weekend

Gather with your volunteers to set up the table prior to the vigil Mass. Keep the flowers in a safe area. Consider allotting a certain number of flowers for each Mass, and setting out each allotment just prior to each Mass. This will help ensure that you don't run out of flowers before the final weekend Mass. Remember that some Masses have higher attendance than others, and plan accordingly.

## Mother's Day Weekend

Help participants complete the spiritual bouquet following each Mass. Depending on how you have planned to complete and/or adapt this activity for your parish, specific logistical steps will vary. (See the sample activity at the end of this Mother's Day action guide for various options for doing this activity.) After the final Sunday Mass, break down the table, and clean up any leftover materials. The spiritual bouquet can remain in place for the next 1–2 weeks.

## 1-2 Weeks After Mother's Day

Clear away the spiritual bouquet, and remove any leftover vases.

## BULLETIN & PULPIT ANNOUNCEMENTS

*If you are using the Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb, see the action guide for the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord for sample announcements and other ideas ([www.respectlife.org/action-guides](http://www.respectlife.org/action-guides)).*

### ◆ Bulletin Announcements

(Suggested Weekends: The Two Weekends Before Mother's Day)

On Mother's Day weekend, please join us in offering a spiritual bouquet to Our Blessed Mother. Following each Mass, parishioners will be invited to write down their prayer intentions and offer them to Our Lady along with flowers of thanksgiving for her motherly love and intercession. *[To cut the cost of providing flowers, consider adding: "If you would like to participate, please bring a flower with you to Mass that/next weekend."]*

As we celebrate the gift of mothers and honor Our Blessed Mother, *we also recognize that Mother's Day can be a difficult holiday for many*. We hope this spiritual bouquet provides an opportunity to pray for the intentions brought to your heart by Mother's Day.

### ◆ Pulpit Announcements

#### Option 1

(Suggested Weekend: Weekend Before Mother's Day)

Next weekend after each Mass, please join us in offering a spiritual bouquet to Our Blessed Mother. All are invited to write down a prayer intention and offer it to Our Lady with a flower of thanksgiving for her maternal care. Please see the bulletin for more information.

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