**Respect Life Bulletin Boxes**

The following six abbreviated versions of the 2018-2019 Respect Life bulletin inserts can be used for church bulletins, e-newsletters, and more. Copy and paste from the pages below, or download other formats from <http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program/2018/respect-life-digital-resources.cfm>!

***Table of Contents***

The abbreviated 2018-2019 Respect Life articles have been formatted for your convenience in a variety of formats, including…

1. MS Word **Text Boxes**……………………………………...…………….………………2
2. MS Word **Text-Only** (Only pull quotes are in text boxes.)…..………………...………..3
3. JPG (color)……………………...…………………………………………………….….7
4. JPG (grayscale)……….…..…...…………………………………………………………13

**Caring for Loved Ones at Life’s End**

***Read the full version at usccb.org/endoflifecare.***

We are created to depend upon one another and walk together in suffering. But when loved ones approach life’s end, we may not know how to provide compassionate care. Surround your friend or family member with love, support, and companionship that are   
“anchored in unconditional respect   
for their human dignity, beginning   
with respect for the inherent value   
of their lives” (To Live Each Day with Dignity, USCCB).

Learn about these 10 tips at usccb.org/endoflifecare.

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**A Perfect Gift**

***Read the full version at usccb.org/perfect-gift.***

Soon after the birth of my son Charlie,\* who has Down syndrome, a visitor asked whether he was “mild, moderate, or severe”—referring to his level of cognitive impairment. I was shocked. In my arms I held my beautiful baby boy, who defied easy categorization.

It’s like looking at stained glass   
from the outside: the colors look   
dark, and you can’t see the figures.   
But inside, with the sun shining   
through, the effect can be brilliant.

From inside our family, love illuminates our life with Charlie. What may seem dreary to others, perhaps even unbearable, is actually filled with beauty and color. Our love has nothing to do with his abilities. We love him simply because of who he is, and understanding this teaches us a fundamental truth: every life is a good and perfect gift.

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***The dying process is a sacred time.***

***Clinical labels don’t tell the whole story.***

6. Provide opportunities   
 for resolution.

7. Reminisce.

8. Provide a peaceful   
 atmosphere.

9. Show tenderness.

10. Bear their transition patiently.

1. Invite God in.

2. Listen.

3. Inform yourself.

4. Be steadfast in   
 compassion.

5. Help them achieve   
 closure.

***Life is a gift from God, and so is His mercy.***

***God invites us to a fuller, richer, deeper way of life   
and love.***

**Another Look at Contraception**

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To some, the Catholic Church’s consistent teaching against birth control may seem outdated. Yet with each passing year, evidence of contraception’s negative consequences keeps piling up.

In the time since birth control first became widely used, science has shown that some contraceptives can   
cause early abortions; procured   
abortions and nonmarital births   
skyrocketed; and women have   
been subjected to sometimes   
serious or fatal health issues, as   
well as what economist George   
Akerlof calls “the feminization of poverty.”\*

As humans made in God’s image, we are called to imitate His generous, sacrificial, life-giving, and eternal love. Through the Church’s teaching, He invites us to a fuller, richer, deeper way of life and love.

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**Bridges of Mercy for Healing after Abortion**

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Maria,\* Vanessa, Li, Jennifer, and Darryl are among the tens of millions of Americans whose lives have been directly touched by abortion. Like so many others, they have experienced regret, guilt, and grief. But, as they have also experienced, God’s healing love and mercy are always possible.

Many Catholics want to help women   
and men who have experienced   
abortion, but some don’t know how   
to begin. Visit usccb.org/bridges-of  
-mercy to learn how people from   
various walks of life can assist friends, family members, fellow parishioners, clients—or perhaps even themselves.

Also, be aware that the U.S. Church’s Project Rachel Ministry for healing after abortion offers confidential, compassionate help. Visit HopeAfterAbortion.org.

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Abortion results in the death of a child. For many, abortion causes severe and long-lasting emotional, psychological, and spiritual trauma, and other detrimental effects have also been documented. (For help, visit www. HopeAfterAbortion.org.)

So, what are we to do? The   
Church does not approach   
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with a false “either/or”   
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**Killing the Pain, Not the Patient:   
Palliative Care vs. Assisted Suicide**

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Assisted suicide is in the news and on lawmakers’ agendas. Supporters call it “aid in dying” & claim it’s just another option for end-of-life care. But it’s radically different from the practice of palliative care, the healing art of relieving pain and other distressing symptoms for patients who are seriously ill.

Palliative care intends to comfort   
a patient, addressing physical,   
psychological, emotional, and   
spiritual needs. Assisted suicide,   
by contrast, directly intends the   
patient’s death. It ignores any   
underlying problems, and instead abandons and eliminates the patient who has the problems.

As a society and as individuals, we must dedicate ourselves to providing genuinely compassionate care that protects God’s gift of life.

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**Did You Know?**

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