**Bulletin Boxes**

***Article Summaries***

*Ten bulletin boxes are provided for use in bulletins, newsletters, social media, and wherever else they would be helpful. These are summaries of longer articles published in previous years and cover a range of topics. They are especially helpful for highlighting Respect Life topics when space is at a premium, and each box provides a website where the full version can be read.*

*Digital files of these bulletin boxes are provided online, and the full-length articles can be either downloaded as double-sided flyers or ordered in print. More information:* [*respectlife.org/articles*](https://www.respectlife.org/articles)*.*

**What to Do When a Friend is Considering Abortion**

***Read the full version at respectlife.org/l-o-v-e.***

When a woman is facing a difficult pregnancy, the reaction of the first person she tells tends to set the tone for her decision-making. How do we respond in a loving way that is life-affirming for both her and her baby? First, prioritize listening over speaking. Ask her about her feelings, thoughts, values, beliefs, and wants. When her story is fully shared, it is your turn to provide factual information, in a loving and caring way. Encourage her. Help her set goals that extend beyond her due date to help her see life beyond her pregnancy. Reassure her that she is not alone, and provide practical support. Pray with her, offering Christ’s love at a crucial life-saving and life-defining moment.

***Reassure her that she is not alone.***

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**Seven Considerations While Navigating Infertility**

***Read the full version at respectlife.org/navigating-infertility.***

We often assume parenthood happens easily after “I do,” but for many married couples, it does not. For some, the joy of conception never happens. Others suffer repeated miscarriages. Still others experience secondary infertility: after giving birth to one or more children, they are unable to have another. If you experience difficulty bringing a child into your family, know that God is with you, and that He has a beautiful plan for your life as a married couple. You are not alone; His Church desires to walk with you. The full article at the website listed above contains compassionate, practical guidance, intended primarily for married couples struggling with infertility, though others may also find it to be informative.

***God is with you, and His Church desires to walk with you.***

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**10 Ways to Support Her When She’s Unexpectedly Expecting**

***Read the full version at respectlife.org/support-her.***

As a mom who had my first baby in college, I know that an unexpected pregnancy can sometimes bring fear, shame, and doubt. Perhaps one of your friends has become pregnant unexpectedly. I encourage you to support her in her new journey of being a mother. It’s okay if you don't know the perfect words to say. Let her know you are there for her, and ask how you can support her. Assist her in lining up practical help. She may not feel she “deserves” to show happiness; reassure her it’s okay (*and good*) to be happy. Your support might be the only support she receives. You can make a difference in her life. Will you?

***Your support may be the only support she receives.***

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**Children as Commodities**

***Read the full version at respectlife.org/children-commodities.***

At seventeen, Natalie\* discovered that her parents had contracted with another woman to become pregnant using her father’s sperm and the woman’s own egg. Natalie became estranged from her parents, hurt that money, rather than the physical expression of married love, was the context in which she was brought into the world. Since the advent of *IVF* (in vitro fertilization), the floodgates have been opened to bringing about reproduction through egg and sperm donation and surrogate pregnancies. Yet these technologies are fraught with medical, legal, and moral complications. Children deserve to not be created as a product of reproductive technology, but to be given by God, and to be born through married love.

***Children deserve to be given by God, born of married love.***

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**An Adoption Love Story**

***Read the full version at respectlife.org/adoption-love-story.***

Having children and raising a family had always been our expectation. We soon learned, however, that our chances of becoming pregnant were small. It wasn’t long before we started talking about the possibility of adoption. I wondered if my heart was big enough to love an adopted child as I would have loved a biological child. But with prayerful discernment, we decided to start the process. On Christmas Eve, Bill\* and I left the hospital with Andrew. It didn't take long before there was no doubt in our minds that he was our son, the greatest gift from God! We can’t imagine loving a child whom we conceived more than we love Andrew.

***We can't imagine loving a child whom we conceived more than we love Andrew.***

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**Healing within Marriage from an Abortion**

***Read the full version at respectlife.org/healing-in-marriage.***

When Susan’s\* husband, Juan, told her about the abortion he was involved in during college, she finally understood why he was so depressed and had trouble bonding with their children. The devastation of abortion brings with it many challenges. Often, the people who have participated in an abortion are unaware of the countless ways it is affecting their lives. It is scary to tell a spouse or fiancé(é) about a past abortion. It requires great trust in that person’s love and trust in God. But with the help of an abortion healing ministry, couples can successfully work through abortion-related challenges. God’s grace can bring true healing to the relationships of those who trust in His infinite mercy.

***God’s grace can bring true healing.***

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**Catholic Considerations for Our Earthly Passing**

***Read the full version at respectlife.org/end-of-life-considerations.***

We prepare for eternal life by choosing to love and follow God. Our journey with Christ includes equipping our consciences to make morally good judgments at the end of life. While no summary can substitute for thorough catechesis, one thing is clear: we are entrusted by God with the gift of life. This obliges us to make use of appropriate, effective medical care. The Church affirms the inviolable dignity of every person, regardless of the duration or extent of the person’s incapacity. Nothing diminishes the sanctity of a person’s life, or the obligation to protect and care for it. Those who are sick should not be alone, and, even after death, accompaniment continues by praying for those who have passed.

***We are entrusted by God with the gift of life.***

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**Advance Medical Directives: Planning for Your Future**

***Read the full version at respectlife.org/advance-directives.***

Human life is good and to be protected. All medical decisions ought to reflect this core belief. Yet some medical and legal documents used to define a patient’s future care can be harmful. No matter how well-crafted, they can’t predict all the possible scenarios and best courses of action. In each set of circumstances, we need to judge whether a given treatment will provide real benefit to the patient, without causing harm or disproportionate burdens. The safest option is to designate a health care agent to make decisions if you become incapable of doing so. It’s best to appoint a responsible, trustworthy person who understands and shares your Catholic values, and can apply them when the need arises.

***The safest option is to designate a health care agent.***

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**Top Reasons to Oppose Assisted Suicide**

***Read the full version at respectlife.org/reasons-against-assisted-suicide.***

Some polls indicate that the public is receptive to assisted suicide. But the same polls show that people’s views shift when they learn about its dangers—especially the dangers for those who are poor, elderly, disabled, or without access to good medical care. Consider that, in Oregon and California, some patients’ health insurance offered to pay for assisted suicide, but not treatment. And in states where assisted suicide is legal, often no psychiatric evaluation or treatment is required. Additionally, assisted suicide fosters discrimination by creating two classes of people: those whose suicides we spend millions of dollars to prevent and those whose suicides we assist and treat as a positive good.

***Assisted suicide fosters discrimination.***

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**How to Build a Culture of Life**

***Read the full version at respectlife.org/culture-of-life.***

Watching the news and reading the headlines, we may feel helpless seeing the heartbreaking lack of respect for human life. *How do we respond?* Changing the culture is a process of conversion that begins in our own hearts. When we encounter Christ, experience His love, and deepen our relationship with Him, we become more aware of our own immeasurable worth and that of others. His unchanging love is the source of our God-given dignity, which, therefore, cannot be taken away. When someone is facing great trials, we need to walk with them on their journey, intercede for them, and be open to sharing Christ’s love however He directs. We simply need to follow where He leads.

***Our mission field is daily life.***

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