

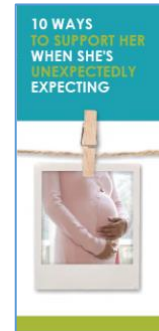
# WORD OF LIFE: DECEMBER 2021

*Recommended dates are provided, but you are welcome to use these materials at any time!*

## FEATURED THIS MONTH...

### Advent

The season of Advent is a time of preparation that directs our hearts and minds to preparing for the celebration of the Lord's birth on Christmas and for Christ's second coming at the end of time. During this time of preparation and expectant waiting, we also remember expectant mothers who are preparing for the birth of their children. This Advent season, consider highlighting the article "10 Ways to Support Her When She's Unexpectedly Expecting." (It is available in a variety of formats at the bottom of [this webpage](#).)



## [Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary](#) *Patronal feast day of the United States of America (December 8, 2021)*



On December 8, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. (This feast is also a holy day of obligation for dioceses in the United States.) On this feast, we celebrate Mary's conception free from the stain of Original Sin, and we recognize that Mary's life began the moment she was conceived in the womb of St. Anne. So, too, does every human life begin at the moment of fertilization, when it is lovingly knit together by God the Father.

The Immaculate Conception is sometimes confused with the Annunciation. This [bulletin insert](#) can be used to help differentiate these two important celebrations. On this solemnity, consider praying Pope Francis' [Prayer for the Immaculate Conception](#): "We are in need of your immaculate gaze, to rediscover the ability to look upon persons and things with respect and awareness." You can also offer this [prayer for religious liberty](#). The front of the printed [prayer card](#) seeks the intercession of Mary Immaculate.

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## **Intercessions for Life**

**December 5<sup>th</sup>**

May God help us prepare the way of the Lord  
by acting with tenderness and compassion,  
especially toward the most vulnerable among us;  
*We pray to the Lord:*

**December 8<sup>th</sup>**

For women who are unexpectedly pregnant:  
May they be filled with trust in God's providence  
and lovingly welcome the gift of their child;  
*We pray to the Lord:*

**December 12<sup>th</sup>**

For all victims of human trafficking:  
That they may find hope and healing  
in the Lord who proclaims liberty to captives  
and release to prisoners;  
*We pray to the Lord:*

**December 19<sup>th</sup>**

For all parents awaiting the birth of their child:  
May they look to the Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph  
and follow their example  
of cherishing and protecting human life;  
*We pray to the Lord:*

**December 25<sup>th</sup>**

For all Christians:  
May the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ  
awaken in our hearts wonder  
at the precious gift of every child;  
*We pray to the Lord:*

**December 26<sup>th</sup>**

For all families:  
That as the domestic Church,  
they may pursue holiness,  
pass on the faith, and persevere in love;  
*We pray to the Lord:*

**Second Sunday of Advent**

**Solemnity of the Immaculate  
Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

**Third Sunday of Advent**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)**

**Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus,  
Mary and Joseph**

## Bulletin Quotes

### December 5<sup>th</sup>

“Jesus calls each of us to ‘care for the other as a person for whom God has made us responsible’ (EV 87). ...The encyclical *The Gospel of Life* recognizes the full range of threats against human life, from poverty and malnutrition to murder and war. Particular emphasis, however, is placed on threats to life at its beginning and end—precisely when it is most in need of protection. In modern times, children in their mothers’ wombs and those approaching the end of their lives are certainly among the ‘least of these’ in our world’s estimation.”

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USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities  
[respectlife.org/live-the-gospel-of-life](https://respectlife.org/live-the-gospel-of-life)



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### December 12<sup>th</sup>

“O St. Bakhita, assist all those who are trapped in a state of slavery; Intercede with God on their behalf so that they will be released from their chains of captivity. Those whom man enslaves, let God set free.”

USCCB , “Prayer to St. Josephine Bakhita”



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### December 19<sup>th</sup>

“Perhaps one of your friends has become pregnant unexpectedly. As someone who has been there, I encourage you to support your friend in her new journey of being a mother.” Learn ten tips at [respectlife.org/support-her](https://respectlife.org/support-her).

USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities  
“10 Ways to Support Her When She’s Unexpectedly Expecting”



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### December 26<sup>th</sup>

“Like every other human family, the Holy Family had to confront real and concrete challenges. Yet, ‘in every situation, Joseph declared his own ‘fiat’ (PC 3). His ‘yes’ to the Lord meant that regardless of the hardship and personal sacrifice to himself, he consistently chose to put the needs of Mary and Jesus before his own. Joseph’s devotion helps reveal to us our own call to show special care for the lives of those whom God has entrusted to us.”

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USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities  
2021 Respect Life Reflection



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## WORD OF LIFE - December 2021

### Bulletin Art

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**Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

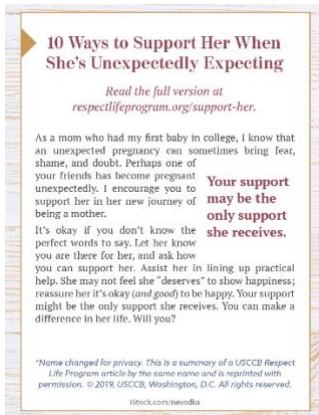
Featuring **[“Live the Gospel of Life”](#)**



- [Graphic](#)
- [Bulletin Insert](#)

**Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

Featuring **[“10 Ways to Support Her When She’s Unexpectedly Expecting”](#)**



- [Bulletin Box](#)

**Sunday, December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

Featuring **[“St. Joseph: Faithful Protector of Mother and Child”](#)**



- [Graphic](#)
- [Reflection](#)

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