



SIMPLE SUPPLEMENTS

WHAT IS THIS?

Suggestions are provided for using this section, but its use is not limited to the following.

Examples: Individuals can use this section to discover where to learn more about a given topic. Clergy can refer to this section for ideas on weaving the message of mercy as related to respect for human life into their homilies. Teachers can pull personal quotes, stories, information, and references from this section to incorporate into lesson plans that naturally relate to human dignity, and consequently the respect due to each person's life.

HOW DO I ORDER THE USCCB RESOURCES?

Use the order form in the back of the catalog available at www.respectlife.org/catalog, or call toll-free 866-582-0943.

CORPORAL AND SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

Corporal: The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus (Matthew 25:31-46) and give us a model for how we should treat all others, as if they were Christ in disguise. They “are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs.”¹ They respond to the basic needs of humanity as we journey together through this life.

Feed the hungry
Give drink to the thirsty
Shelter the homeless
Visit the sick
Visit the prisoners
Bury the dead
Give alms to the poor

Spiritual: The Spiritual Works of Mercy have long been a part of the Christian tradition, appearing in the works of theologians and spiritual writers throughout history. Just as Jesus attended to the spiritual well-being of those he ministered to, these Spiritual Works of Mercy guide us to “help our neighbor in their spiritual needs.”²

Counseling the doubtful
Instructing the ignorant
Admonishing the sinner
Comforting the sorrowful
Forgiving injuries
Bearing wrongs patiently
Praying for the living and the dead

¹ USCCB, *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington D.C., 2006) 508.

² USCCB, *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington D.C., 2006) 557.



ACCOMPANYING EXPECTANT MOTHERS CONSIDERING ADOPTION

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 1:22-2:10 | Esther 2:7 | Matthew 1:18-25 | Matthew 12:50 | Matthew 18:5 | Matthew 19:13-15 | John 14:18 | John 18:25-27 | Acts 7:20-21 | Romans 8:14-17 | Romans 8:23 | Ephesians 1:5 | James 1:27

FROM THE POPES

- Pope St. John Paul II. “Address to the Meeting of the Adoptive Families Organized by the Missionaries of Charity.” September 5, 2000. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2000.

USCCB RESOURCES

- **Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan.** Pastoral Letter. (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2009), § “Gratitude.”
- **Homily, Cardinal Séan P. O’Malley, OFM Cap.** “Opening Mass, National Prayer Vigil for Life.” January 24, 2013. <http://goo.gl/dNurXv>
- **Accompanying Expectant Mothers Considering Adoption** 8-panel brochure. Item #1646. Spanish Item #1656.
- **An Adoption Love Story** 8-panel brochure. Item #1445. Spanish Item #1455.

SAINTS

- **Mary, Mother of God**
- **St. Joseph, Husband of Mary:** Foster father of Jesus, patron saint of unborn children and fathers
- **St. Gerard Majella:** Patron of expectant mothers
- **St. William of Rochester:** Patron of adopted children
- **St. Clotilde:** Patron of parents and adopted children

REAL PEOPLE, REAL LIFE

“I wondered if my heart was big enough to love an adopted child as I would my biological child. There were also so many other variables to consider, one of which was the expense involved... We felt we had no control, but God reminded us again that He is always in control and that we could trust in Him. ... Andrew* is two years old now, and... we can’t imagine loving a child whom we conceived more than we love Andrew. It is amazing how he fits our personalities so well. More and more every day we are so thankful to his birthmother for her selfless decision.”³¹

“A woman who becomes pregnant unexpectedly may feel as though her world is ending. To women with an unplanned pregnancy, Maya* says, ‘This is survivable. Have hope.’”³²

³¹ USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, *An Adoption Love Story*, (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2014).

³² USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, *Accompanying Expectant Mothers Considering Adoption* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2016).

DID YOU KNOW?

- “The term used more widely now [than ‘given up for adoption’] is ‘placed for adoption,’ which helps highlight the selfless generosity of birthparents in choosing an adoptive family for their child.”³³
- “Maya* ... emphasizes the need for continued support of the birth-mother and her family after the placement. Some birth-parents grieve after the placement. It doesn’t mean the decision was wrong, but simply that the experience was life-changing.” Some adoption agencies offer support services after the placement, and there are also support resources that are searchable online.³⁴

*Name changed for privacy.

INTERCESSIONS

For expectant mothers placing their children for adoption:
May they receive loving support as they walk this journey;
We pray to the Lord:

For married couples considering adoption:
May the Holy Spirit guide their discernment,
grant them peace, and make possible his holy will;
We pray to the Lord:

RELATED WORKS OF MERCY

Shelter the homeless
Feed the hungry
Give drink to the thirsty
Comfort the sorrowful
Instruct the ignorant
Counsel the doubtful
Pray for the living and the dead

³³ MaryPat St. Jean, “The Blessing of ‘Unanswered Prayers’: An Adoption Story”, <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/the-blessing-of-unanswered-prayers-an-adoption-story/> (accessed June 21, 2016).

³⁴ USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, *Accompanying Expectant Mothers Considering Adoption* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2016).

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