

## HOW-TO GUIDE: RESPECT LIFE DISPLAY

*\*This guide is meant only to provide helpful suggestions. All related local policies must be followed and required permissions obtained.*

### **What is this?**

This “how-to” guide gives suggestions and ideas for setting up a Respect Life display for various occasions throughout the year. Please note that these are simply suggestions, and you are free to follow, expand upon, or use as inspiration to spark new ideas. As always, be sure to comply with any local policies and permissions.

### **Who is it for?**

Staff or volunteers in pro-life, youth, young adult, or campus ministry; Catholic educators; religious educators; anyone who wants to share the Gospel of life!

### **When do I use it?**

Consider the following dates. (However, you can use these suggestions at any time and for any length of time—a day, a week, a month, etc.)

- Respect Life Sunday (First Sunday of October)
- Respect Life Month (October)
- Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children (January 22 or January 23, when January 22 falls on a Sunday)
- Day of the national March for Life or a local Respect Life march/rally
- Diocesan, parish, or school ministry fair
- Other feast days or solemnities with strong Respect Life connections

### **How do I use it?**

- Set up a display in your Church vestibule or other parish gathering area. Ask parish priests to incorporate Respect Life themes into their homily, and/or invite people to visit the display after Mass.
- Hold a youth contest, and feature the winner’s entry in a display at a Respect Life gathering.
- Invite local young adults to submit proposals for a talk they would like to give. Or, invite a local expert on a Respect Life topic to give a talk. Set up a display at the talk, and invite attendees to submit 1-3 sentence reflections or reactions to the talk. Feature some in your newsletter (as a continuing special feature or all at once), and highlight them on social media.
- Set up a display in a high-traffic area of your college campus for a week, and invite people passing by to attend a Respect Life event during or at the end of the week. Feature

resources that are available for people who may appreciate support choosing life (i.e. pregnancy care centers, suicide hotlines, etc.)

- Either as an individual teacher, or as a collaborative group of teachers, consider setting up a partial version of the display. Connect a Respect Life topic to what students are learning, and invite students to brainstorm how they could contribute to the display. Choose which ideas you want them to pursue, then set up the final display in a high-traffic space of the school for a week.
- While the display is set up, connect the topic with your lesson(s) or do a school presentation to show the connection between what students are learning and respect for human life.

For example, if discussing the theological virtue of charity, you could highlight how to care for loved ones nearing death in a way that respects the precious gift of their lives. (Download “Caring for Loved Ones at Life’s End” as a free, double-sided flyer from [www.usccb.org/lifes-end-resources](http://www.usccb.org/lifes-end-resources).)

- Set up a mini version of the display before a parish religious education class. Connect a Respect Life topic with the lesson of the day, and use the display to spark conversation about the connection between class content, faith, and respect for all human life. Provide starter questions, if needed.

## **COLORS**

Choose just a few complimentary colors to help give your display a cohesive, polished look. Start by choosing one or two colors to serve as the foundation for your display and then pick an accent color to add variety. Consider using previous Respect Life Program designs for color inspiration and as a source of complementary resources. The most recent Respect Life Programs can be found listed at [www.usccb.org/respectlife](http://www.usccb.org/respectlife).

## **TRI-FOLD POSTER BOARD**

Add dimension and visual interest to a display table by using a decorative tri-fold poster board.

### **Supplies**

- Tri-fold board (approximately \$4.00)
- Fabric or poster paint (approximately \$3.00 - \$12.00)
- Respect Life poster: (Order copies from [www.respectlife.org/catalog](http://www.respectlife.org/catalog) for approximately \$2.00.)
- Photos (free)
- Push-pins (Decorative push pins can add a little something extra and can be less expensive than plain ones.)

- Optional: If using fabric to cover board, hot glue gun and glue sticks (Miniature sizes start at approximately \$5.00.)

### **What to Do:**

- 1) Add some color to your tri-fold board! Use some poster board paint, or cover it with a colorful piece of fabric, using a hot glue gun to secure the fabric.
- 2) Use the board to post this year's Respect Life poster or any other information you want to display.
- 3) Gather some photos.

You could also ask for submissions to feature. For example, make an announcement asking for personal photos that illustrate cherishing the gift of human life.

***\*For any photos used, but especially those related to minors' privacy and parental consent, be sure it's clear the photos will be publicly displayed, follow local policies, and obtain the necessary permission for using these photos.***

- 4) Add the photos to your tri-fold board with push-pins. (Ideally, the pins would not be multi-colored, unless they're the colors you previously selected).

Alternatively, you could make a "twine photo display" using the directions below.

### **Bring it to Life:**

- A. Create slips of paper with action ideas written on them for living out the Gospel of life. Pin them on the tri-fold board, or put them in a basket on the table. Invite people to each take one, complete the action, and share their experience (what they learned, how they felt, insights they gained, etc.)

Ask them to respond in writing, by email, or whatever works best for you. Be sure to include this information on the slips of paper.

Feature submissions on the tri-fold later, after obtaining any required permission to do so (i.e. the following week, on another pro-life related date, etc.).

- B. Provide blank slips of paper and writing utensils for people to submit their own ideas for living the Gospel of life action. Pick the top submissions, feature them (after obtaining the required permission), and honor those who wrote them. Invite others to do the suggested actions and share their experiences with you and/or with friends and family.



Figure 1: Tri-fold display featuring 2016-2017 Respect Life Program

## **TWINE PHOTO DISPLAY:**

### **Supplies:**

- Twine (approximately \$3.00)
- Clothespins (approximately \$2.00)
- Photos (approximately \$4.00)
- Thumbtacks or tape (approximately \$2.00)

### **Here's what to do:**

- 1) Collect photos. (Ideas for doing so are listed above.)
- 2) Cut a piece of twine to fit the size of the space you are using, with a little extra on each side. For example, you could display it on a tri-fold board, or you could hang the poster on a wall and extend real twine out from the poster on either side, with pictures hanging from it. Whatever format you choose, please be sure to obtain the necessary approvals.
- 3) Clip your photos to the twine with the clothespins. If you want to add some flair, you can mount photos onto patterned scrapbook paper before hanging the photos.
- 4) Hang the display up so everyone can see the beauty of life in your parish!

## **PREPARING THE TABLE**

### **Supplies:**

- Tablecloth
- Optional: Table runner

- Optional: Cloth napkins

### **What to Do:**

- 1) Cover a 6-foot table (or whatever is available) with a tablecloth that is one of your foundational colors. Cloth looks particularly nice, but a new cloth tablecloth may be cost-prohibitive if you don't have one readily available. Alternatively, you could try looking for a previously used one in a second-hand store, or for a plastic tablecloth in a discount store. If you can't find one in the color you need, use a tablecloth in a neutral color (like white, off-white, cream, or beige).
- 2) To go a step further, you could use a table runner or cloth napkins, either in your foundation shade (if using a neutral tablecloth) or in your accent color (if your tablecloth is your foundation color).

The cloth napkins could be laid out next to each other in a line from one end to the other, angled with the corners pointed to the front and back of the table and overlapping each other. (See Figure 2.)



*Figure 2: Napkin placement*

### **SETTING UP THE TABLE**

#### **Supplies:**

- Completed tri-fold display board
- Sign-up forms for your group and/or newsletter
- Writing utensils
- Marked box or basket for completed sign-up forms
- Giveaway: Flyers for upcoming events
- Giveaway: Information on how to get more involved
- Optional: Marked box or basket with paper slips for action ideas
- Optional: Marked box or basket for action idea submission slips
- Optional: Respect Life materials (flyers, brochures, printable handouts, etc.) See [www.respectlife.org](http://www.respectlife.org).

### **What to Do:**

- 1) Set up your tri-fold display board in the center of the table or off to the side in the back left or back right corner. (The latter option is best if you have a lot of material to display.)
- 2) Arrange your display materials. A good rule of thumb is to give “breathing room” between materials; in other words, be cautious not to overcrowd your table.
- 3) It’s also helpful to add variety, height, and dimension where possible. (See the section “Other Ideas” at the end of this guide for suggestions.)
- 4) Don’t put all your writing utensils out at once. Save some for later, in case people accidentally walk off with them!
- 5) Make it clear what action you want from visitors to your table. Do you have free materials for them to take? Do you want them to sign up to your email list? Make sure you have signs indicating this clearly. (The picture frame idea in “Other Ideas” at the end of this guide is one way to convey the information attractively.)

### **DIY BROCHURE DISPLAY STANDS**

#### **Supplies:**

- 3 file folders (approximately \$6.00)
- Scissors
- [Instructions with pictures](#)

#### **What to Do:**

- 1) Fold down the top edges of a file folder (about 1/3 inch).
- 2) Cut off the tabs at the top of the folder.
- 3) Cut the folder into thirds.
- 4) Tape the bottom corners flat onto top of the table.
- 5) Prop up a brochure against your stand to add variation in height to the display and to show what you are giving away.
- 6) Put the giveaway brochures near the brochure display stand.

### **OTHER IDEAS**

- 1) Create multi-level display spaces on your table by using groups of differently-shaped boxes covered in cloth.
- 2) Add a vase of flowers, battery-operated, flameless candles, or a light scattering of decorative floral marbles or season-appropriate foliage (like synthetic autumn leaves,

flower petals, or evergreen branches). Choose colors that match the ones previously selected, if possible.

- 3) Pictures frames are an inexpensive, fun way to convey information. Put scrapbook paper inside, and write on the glass with dry-erase marker. Or, create your message with fun fonts, then print it on scrapbook paper and insert. (An internet search can help you find easy design templates to customize with your own text.)

## **PERSONAL PRESENCE**

Consider whether to have one or more people present to answer questions, talk to visitors, refill giveaways, keep things organized, etc. If you decide to have people present, it's helpful to think in advance of what you'd like visitors to your table to gain from the experience. What's the one thing you want them to remember when they leave?

Also, it can be intimidating for some people to visit a table when the host is sitting or standing behind it. Instead, move out from behind it and off to one side. Make eye contact, and smile genuinely. Don't hover if it looks like the person just wants to browse, but do let them know you're happy to answer any questions or tell them more about the ministry.

Be aware that you are representing what it means to respect human life. This can be a wonderful opportunity to show visitors, or even passersby, the sincere compassion that comes from seeing each person as a masterpiece of God's creation. Be present to those with whom you speak, and ask the Holy Spirit to guide your interactions.