

RESPECT LIFE SPEAKERS BUREAU 2017–2018

Catholic belief is becoming counter-cultural as our society increasingly abandons the basic truths about marriage, family, life and human sexuality that used to be nearly universally understood across all religious faiths and ethnicities. The elderly, the young, the unborn, the sick and disabled, and the financially disadvantaged are most at risk because of the growing modern mindset. As Catholics, we are urgently called to help reignite a respect for the dignity of all human life from natural conception until natural death, and to defend our right to teach, believe and act on these principles.

The Office of Respect Life Ministries has assembled a Speakers Bureau that includes priests, bioethicists and other experts who can help educate Catholics to be better prepared to evangelize the wider culture about critically important topics that are no longer well understood. Suggested topics are listed below. If you do not see a topic here which you are interested in for your parish program, organization or youth group, please contact us with your suggestion and we will do our best to accommodate your request. Please note: unless otherwise noted, a nominal stipend of \$50 per speaker is expected.

Presentation Options

DEANERY WIDE

Let us help you collaborate with other parishes in your Deanery to bring speakers on important topics to Catholics in your area. The Respect Life Office can assist with scheduling, hosting and advertising speakers to reach as many people as possible.

Scheduling Difficulties? Skype Presentations may be the solution when scheduling is difficult, weather is uncertain, and speakers and parishes are from different geographic regions. Ask for more information on how to make this option work!

INDIVIDUAL GROUPS

Our speakers are available to present to individual parish groups and clubs, religious education classes, and general audiences.

Topics

YOUTH-SPECIFIC TOPICS

The Culture Project — an initiative of young people who proclaim the dignity of the human person and the richness of living sexual integrity to teens. As part of a year-long Diocesan chastity education initiative, the Offices of Respect Life and Youth Ministry are collaborating to help host parishes set up regional presentations of The Culture Project and to share costs, which includes speaking and travel fees. Call the Respect Life Office for complete information about scheduling this inspirational group.

Defending Life in the Secular World: — This talk is aimed at empowering young people to communicate effectively with their peers about important life issues, particularly that of abortion. This presentation begins

with a call to compassion, approaching the topic of abortion as a human rights issue that demands justice for both women and the unborn, and utilizing logical arguments based in facts and science.

GENERAL AUDIENCES

Pro-Life is Pro-Woman — Last year’s controversial Women’s March in Washington unwittingly helped create a new awareness about some of the lies of the “traditional” women’s movement that tells women they “need” contraception and abortion. Building on this new awareness, this talk helps develop the concept of authentic womanhood, which does not make an enemy of women’s procreative potential but rather, helps lead to true empowerment for both women and men.

Natural Family Planning: Pro-woman and Pro-Family — This talk explores fallacies about contraception and explodes myths about “Catholic birth control.” The reality is that used properly, NFP is highly effective, 100% natural, environmentally friendly, and cost-free! NFP is not ‘rhythm’! It is good for you, your marriage and even the environment. Learn the facts about this highly effective, medically-proven, completely natural and theologically sound approach to family planning.

Male and Female He Created Them — It’s claimed that 97% of Catholic women use artificial birth control. (The actual statistic is about 68%.) Why is it then that the Church continues to teach that children are a blessing from God and not a curse? Learn what being made in the image of God has to do with married love, and why the Christian emphasis on the body is not merely a reflection on sex, but also helps us to understand what it means to be human.

POST-ABORTION HEALING

Project Rachel — Mercy and Healing After Abortion

Pope John Paul II wrote: “No human sin can erase the mercy of God, or prevent him from unleashing all his triumphant power, if we only call upon him.” Abortion wounds in many ways, and with an estimated one in three American women having had an abortion by age 45, the wounded are many. Learn how Project Rachel, the Catholic Church’s post-abortion healing ministry, helps those who have been involved in abortions find forgiveness, peace and healing.

END OF LIFE

What Act 39 Means for Catholics in Vermont —

Anyone who has cared for loved ones struggling with a terminal diagnosis knows the roller coaster of emotions that can result from the illness itself as well as the knowledge that it may lead to death. In a State where assisted suicide is legal, it can be even more emotionally draining for patients who worry about burdening others with caregiving responsibilities and about financing health care. Learn what Act 39 actually says, how to guard against abuse, to advocate for yourself or for a loved one, and to resist pressure to seek assisted suicide as a health care “option” at the most vulnerable time of life.

Vermont Catholic Advance Directives — End of life ethics, concerns and choices: Learn how to write an Advance Directive and why having a Catholic Advance Directive can bring you peace of mind.

Hospice and Palliative Care — What will end-of-life care look like in the future, and what ethical guidelines do Catholic caregivers have in making decisions about palliative care? Find out more in this presentation from an experienced medical ethicist.

THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Threats to Religious Freedom in the U.S. — As Catholic beliefs about marriage, abortion, end-of-life care, contraception and human sexuality are challenged by secular institutions and public policies, our right to teach and act according to our beliefs is being undermined in our schools, our laws and government institutions. Learn specifics about the threats to religious freedom here in Vermont and what you can do.

To schedule a presentation contact:

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