Fact Sheet for Parishioners

in the Diocese of Rockford

March 2022

Because we were created in God's image, all human life is sacred. As a people of God, we must witness to this sacredness. In a time when the Supreme Court is considering the legal protection of the unborn, the Church is redoubling efforts to accompany parents who are facing unexpected or difficult pregnancies, offering them loving and compassionate care.

The Rockford Diocese invites you to join a national initiative, "Walking with Moms in Need," sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. This parish-based process encourages parishioners to connect with local mothers facing difficult pregnancies, identifying local resources, and filling the gaps so that families can receive necessary material, spiritual, and emotional support.

There are three parts of Walking with Moms in Need in the Rockford Diocese:

1. **Disseminating a local inventory of pregnancy and other resources for moms in crisis**

   The diocesan Life and Family Evangelization (LiFE) Office with the assistance of the Parish Respect Life Coordinators will compile this inventory. The diocese will send this finalized inventory to all priests and Respect Life Coordinators for further dissemination. The inventory will also be posted at: www.rockforddiocese.org/life/walking-with-moms. The aim is to get these resources into the hands of moms and dads in crisis.

2. **Evaluating local gaps to better meet the needs of expectant parents in crisis**

   The diocese will provide all parishes with a reflection, "How Are We a People of Life?" This will assist pastors, staff, Respect Life committees, and all parishioners in discernment of what more we can do for parents in crisis. We encourage you to implement with the highest priority these additions in your parish ministries. This reflection is posted at: www.rockforddiocese.org/life/parish/walking-with-moms.

3. **Praying in our parishes for expectant parents in crisis during May 2022**

   The diocese will provide all parishes with prayers of the faithful and other prayer resources. Visit www.rockforddiocese.org/life/parish/walking-with-moms for these resources.

over

How Can the Faithful in the Pews Help?

- Pray for expectant mothers in crisis during the month of May 2022, a month dedicated to the Blessed Mother. Visit www.rockforddiocese.org/life/parish/walking-with-moms for a list of prayers.
- Share a warm smile with families who attend Mass with small children. Thank them after Mass for bringing their children to the parish.
- Ask for your parish's local pregnancy resources list or visit www.rockforddiocese.org/life/walking-with-moms for the list. Keep a copy of this list or the link in case you encounter a family in need.
- Share with your friends and family that the Catholic Church is a resource for providing help and support to expectant mothers and fathers in need.
- Complete the reflection, "How Are We a People of Life?" This will help you discern how you can help in accompanying expectant parents in need. This reflection is at www.rockforddiocese.org/life/parish/walking-with-moms.
- Learn more about the Church's teachings on the sacredness of life and its mission to protect and nurture life at every stage of its existence. If you have grappled before with teachings on abortion, the death penalty, assisted suicide, contraception, or other life and dignity issues, commit to learning more about the "why" behind these teachings. Pray to the Holy Spirit to open your heart to their beauty and truth.
- If you are married, work with your spouse to make your own marriage a model of unity and openness to life. Your parish or the Rockford Diocese LiFE Office (life@rockforddiocese.org) can help you find marriage enrichment resources.
- Contact your parish priest or your parish's Respect Life Coordinator to offer help. Your passion, energy, and talents are needed to witness to the gift of life.
- Commit to donate resources to your local pregnancy care center or organize baby showers and diaper drives in your parish for the center. Involve your own children or grandchildren. Children love helping babies!
- Check the parish's pregnancy resource list for maternity homes. These homes may need mentors to do job training or tutoring for mothers, or they may need volunteers to help the homes run. Offer your talents and skills.

For additional information, contact your parish Respect Life Coordinator or the LiFE Office in the Diocese of Rockford at life@rockforddiocese.org.