

# Justice, Peace and Life

October 2018

## Respecting Every Life

October is Respect Life Month. It's a good time to reflect and act on our belief in the sacredness of every human life. Articles for this special month are online at [www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program](http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program). They cover topics including end of life care, assisted suicide, abortion and disabilities.

This year's theme is "Every Life: Cherished-Chosen-Sent" and focuses on the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the unborn:

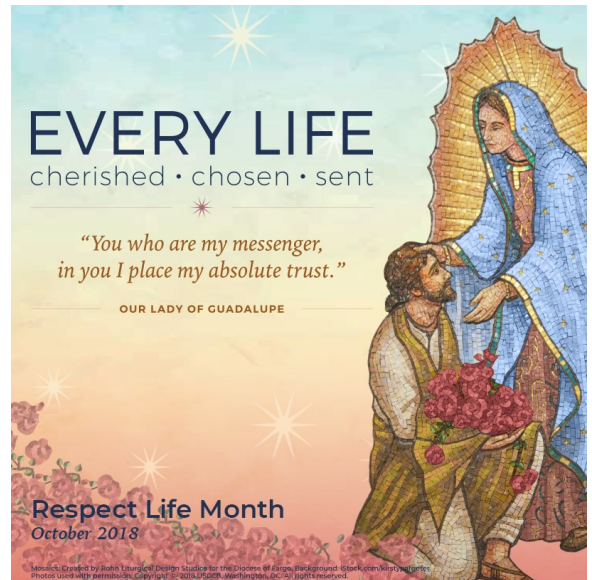
"In 1531, when the indigenous peoples of Mexico were subjugated and the practice of human sacrifice was still a recent memory, the Mother of God appeared to St. Juan Diego as a pregnant native woman, now known as Our Lady of Guadalupe.

She sent him with miraculous flowers in his cloak to tell the bishop to build a church where people could receive her Son and her loving, tender care. When St. Juan Diego opened the cloak before the bishop, an image of Our Lady was revealed that remains to this day. The chapel was quickly built, millions embraced Christianity, and the Church increased its protection of the indigenous peoples.

By embracing the mission entrusted to him, St. Juan Diego helped bring Christ's transforming love to cultures gripped by oppression and death.

Today, we again see the dignity of human life disregarded. Unborn children are destroyed through abortion, and ill people are encouraged and assisted to take their own lives.

How do we respond?



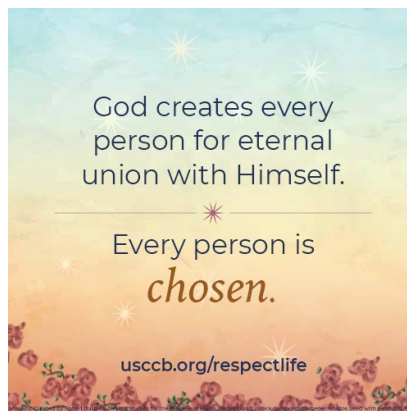
The essence of our identity is that we are created in God's image and likeness and loved by Him. Nothing can diminish the priceless worth of any human life. Every person is **cherished**.

God creates every person for eternal union with Himself and continually invites us to embrace a loving relationship with Him. Every person is **chosen**.

We are called to be messengers of God's love, treating one another as cherished and chosen by Him. In doing so, we help build a culture that respects all human life. Every person is **sent**.

Like St. Juan Diego, let us embrace our daily mission to help others encounter God's transforming, life-giving love."

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“Assisted suicide is in the news and on lawmakers’ agendas. Supporters call it “aid in dying” and claim it is just another option for ending intolerable pain as part of end-of-life care. But assisted suicide is radically different from end-of-life care and the practice of palliative care, the healing art of relieving pain and other distressing symptoms for patients who are seriously ill. In fact, these two agendas are at war with each other.

When properly prescribed for the pain of serious illness, powerful pain medications like morphine and other opioids are safe and effective. Patients can have their pain well-controlled without risk to life, and generally stay alert as well.

Assisted suicide is very different. Where it has been legalized, doctors can prescribe a lethal overdose of pills to patients whom they think will die within six months, so they can kill themselves. The patient then intentionally swallows a massive overdose of barbiturates to cause unconsciousness and death.”

From: *“Killing the Pain, Not the Patient: Palliative Care vs. Assisted Suicide”*

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Our Diocesan Public Policy Committee will continue to keep parishioners informed on the status of the effort to legalize physician assisted suicide in our state. Thank you for remaining vigilant on this issue.

**Do you know someone who is hurting from a past abortion?**

Mothers, fathers, and grandparents can feel pain, regret and loss from past abortions. Project Rachel provides free, compassionate, confidential help including pastoral counseling and support groups.

**Being Pro-Life Means Reflecting the Unconditional Love of God**

Remind your children and grandchildren that you love them unconditionally and that they can come to you with their troubles and mistakes. This could mean a world a difference if they ever face an unexpected pregnancy.

To contact Project Rachel in the Diocese of Rochester:

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[www.hopeafterabortion.com](http://www.hopeafterabortion.com)

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