BLESSED SACRAMENT

Pastor: Rev. Michael Morin
Assistant Pastor: Rev. Andrew Litt

Rectory: 1720 Lake Street
Lincoln, NE 68502
Phone: 402-474-4249
Rev. Morin Cell #: 402-937-5785
Email: fr.mike-morin@bsc.church
fr.andrew-litt@bsc.church
Website: www.blessedsacramentlincoln.org

School: 1725 Lake Street
Lincoln, NE 68502
Phone: 402-476-6202
Interim Principal: Molly Cassiday

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Weekend Masses:
Saturday: (Vigil Mass) 5:30 PM, Sunday: 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM & 11:30 AM

Daily Morning & Evening Masses:
Monday - Friday: 6:30 AM & 8:20 AM.

Confessions:
Saturday: 8:00-8:25 AM, 4:30-5:20 PM, 7:30-8:00 PM
Weekdays: (Monday through Friday) 15 minutes before the morning Masses

Holy Days:
As scheduled in the bulletin.

Marriage Preparation:
No date should be finalized until contacting the priest who will prepare you. A minimum of 4 months is required for marriage preparation, 6-12 months is preferred.

Baptismal Preparation:
Baptism Instruction Classes are held the first Sunday of the month at 6:30 PM in the school meeting room. Pre-registration is not required. Baptisms are usually held on Sundays at 12:30 PM.

Other Parish Organizations:
Legion of Mary, Altar Society, CCD, Parish Pastoral Council, Parish Finance Council, Marriage Encounter, Blessed Sacrament Prayer Line, Perpetual Adoration, Prison Ministry, Parish Choir, Ushers' Club, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Godparents Program, (High School), Knights of Columbus Council #11001, Cub & Boy Scouts, PTO Association, Living Rosary, Pro-Life Committee and many more.

February 14, 2021
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mass Intentions

Monday, Feb. 15th
6:30 A.M. Mark Payne
8:20 A.M. † Mary Costello

Tuesday, Feb. 16th
6:30 A.M. Bobbi Hall
8:20 A.M. Elise Suelter

Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17th
6:30 A.M. Craig Johnson
8:20 A.M. Andrew Ienn
5:30 P.M. People of the Parish

Thursday - Feb. 18th
6:30 A.M. † Becky Cunningham
8:20 A.M. † Hindman Family

Friday - Feb. 19th
6:30 A.M. † Leroy & Elaine Spieker
8:20 A.M. † Joseph Sullivan

Saturday - Feb. 20th
8:30 A.M. Tom & Deb Cabela
5:30 P.M. Julie Schmit-Albin

Sunday - Feb. 21st
8:30 A.M. † Paul Koster
10:00 A.M. † Becky Cunningham
11:30 A.M. People of the Parish

† Stations of the Cross †

Stations of the Cross will be held on Fridays during Lent at 2:50 p.m. & 7 p.m. Please join us for this beautiful Lenten Devotion.

Parish News

DATES & EVENTS:

February 14, 2021, Live Stream Mass 10:00 A.M. – You can access the 10:00 a.m. Mass through our parish Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/BlessedSacramentLincoln/

The parish Facebook page can also be readily found by searching online with "**Blessed Sacrament Church Lincoln Facebook**" but be forewarned, there is an unofficial page that also exists, so we suggest using the link provided above. Please know that you do NOT have to register on Facebook to access and view our videos or any of the content contained within it.

The link takes the viewer directly to our OFFICIAL parish Facebook page. You can click the "Not Now" & it will go directly there. Then you have to scroll down to the post for the Live Mass. We will have Mass in person available to anyone that desires to come, at all the regular times.

February 15 - March 19, 2021, Worldwide St. Joseph Consecration - If you have not already, please sign up now to take part in the worldwide St. Joseph consecration to be held March 19th. Consecration begins Feb. 15th, please visit: StJosephNow.org.

February 17, 2021, Ash Wednesday Mass – Join us on Wed., Feb. 17th, as we begin our Lenten journey together. Services on Ash Wed. are at 6:30 a.m., 8:20 a.m. (Livestreamed), & 5:30 p.m. Although it is not a Holy Day of Obligation, Ash Wed. is a reminder of our mortality & sinfulness, & it prepares us for a season of penance & prayer. Due to the pandemic we will be sprinkling the ashes on top of the head rather than placing them on the forehead.

Lenten Regulations for the Diocese of Lincoln - Ash Wednesday & Good Friday are days of fast & abstinence. All Fridays in Lent are days of abstinence.

Fasting - means eating only one full meal with two smaller meals, which together do not equal the full meal. No snacks or eating between meals allowed. Fasting obliges all Catholics between the ages of 18-59.

Abstinence - means eating no meat, nor soup, nor gravy made from meat. Abstinence obliges all Catholics over the age of 14.

Sickness, Hard Manual Labor, Pregnancy, etc., automatically excuse a person from these

obligations. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that these are serious obligations. In cases of doubt or question, the priest who hears a person's confession should be consulted.

CRS RICE BOWL - WE ARE CALLED - Join our faith community – and more than 12,000 Catholic Communities across the United States – in a life-changing Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl. Pick up your family's CRS Rice Bowl From the back tables in church on February 14, 2021. During the 40 days of Lent, we will reflect on how hunger and malnutrition affect our human family, and on the need to take action to end this global injustice. Visit www.crsricebowl.org to learn more.

FEBRUARY 19, & 26, MARCH 5, 12, 19, 26, 2020, DRIVE THRU FISH FRY - Serving Baked Fish, or Fried Fish, Fries, Coleslaw, Pickle & Dessert. $8 per Meal – Accepting Cash, Check or Charge Card All meals served from 5-7 p.m. at the Blessed Sacrament School Parking Lot, 1725 Lake St., on the corner of 17th & Lake St., near Bryan West.

FEBRUARY 19, 26, MARCH 5, 12, 19, 26, 2021, FISH FRY DESSERTS & VOLUNTEERS – The Altar Society is hosting desserts for all the Fish Fry's this Lenten season. Each week volunteers are needed to provide desserts (cookies, bars, brownies, etc.). These do not have to be homemade items. *Absolutely no nuts, including peanut butter, can be in the items as they are randomly chosen. *Dessert items need to be individually plastic-wrapped or enclosed in a zip lock bag or container. The desserts can be delivered to the school gym by 4:00 p.m. on the day of the event. We also 3-5 volunteers per event to help package the meals. Here is a signup genius for volunteer slots. https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4AA8A72AA0FCC70-2021.

ALTAR SERVER VESTMENT LAUNDERING - The Altar Society is looking for volunteers to help with the laundering of the Altar Server vestments & the cassocks This is done three or four times a year. This is a great opportunity for service hrs. Please contact Amy Lambert at bscaltarsociety@gmail.com.

"LIFE FOR LENT" - The Pro-Life Committee will have a box in the back of the Church marked "Life for Lent". We would like students & adults to fill it with spiritual gifts of prayers & sacrifices for protection of the unborn & all those suffering in our Parish Family, offering them in union with Jesus's Sacrifice on the cross. We will be doing a Rosary on Fridays at 6:30 p.m. in Church before the 7 p.m. Stations of the Cross, where all these sacrifices will be offered up during the recitation of the rosary. Sponsored by the Pro-Life Committee.

MAY 15, 2021, TABLE FOR TEN - Our annual fundraiser for the Blessed Sacrament Endowment fund, has been postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. Please mark your calendar for Sat., May 15th, & stay tuned! We will keep you updated as the event approaches.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY - LUNCHROOM SUPERVISOR - Blessed Sacrament School is now accepting applications for Food Service Supervisor. Responsibilities include oversight and preparation of the lunch program, supervision of food service staff, menu planning, purchasing, and compliance monitoring of all state and federal nutrition requirements. Applicants must be able to meet NDE job requirements and pass a criminal background check. Inquiries can be directed to Fr. Mike Morin at 402-937-5785. Please send credentials and a letter of application to: Lunch Supervisor Applications, Blessed Sacrament School, 1720 Lake St., Lincoln, NE 68502.

SCRIP NEWS - Scrip will be sold on the 1st and 3rd Sundays after the 8:30 a.m. & 10:00 a.m. masses. Do you ever stand in the store & think, "I should have bought Scrip for this!" Now you can with the RaiseRight app on your smartphone. eCards are loaded right on your phone within seconds! If eCards are not available, they can be shipped to your home. Questions? Contact Jennie Korth via text 402-366-4218 or email jefraz@yahoo.com.

Attention – Sanitization of Church Pews - Please we need volunteers to help sanitize the pews after each Mass. When attending any of our scheduled Masses at the parish, **please leave the kneeler in the DOWN position before you leave.** By doing this, volunteers will know which pews need to be sanitized. Kneelers in the DOWN position prior to a Mass will indicate the pew hasn't been sanitized. You can either sanitize the pew before occupying it or sit in another pew where the kneeler is in the UP position. Sanitizing Spray is located on the counter in the bride's room. Also, feel free to sanitize the pew you were sitting in after Mass but be sure to place the kneeler in the UP position, so volunteers know they don't need to sanitize it. Pews are sanitized daily after the 8:20 a.m. Mass during the week, & after all the weekend.

The Living Rosary - "When we pray our mystery of the Living Rosary, we should accompany it with a short reflection on that event in the life of Our Lord and His mother. Each event in our salvation history calls for a response from us, some specific application to our own life by which we may repeat, in a personal way, the mystery we meditate." –from the Rosary Booklet. Call Jan 402-438-2506 to sign up. No Meetings and No Dues.

Blessed Sacrament Prayer Line - Do you believe in "prayer power"? Our parish prayer line is a group of people who offer prayers to intercede for the serious needs of parishioners, their families and friends. If you would like to be a part of this group and you are 18 years old or more, call Lynn at 402-477-6252 for more details.

The Traveling Madonna: The Legion of Mary is pleased to make available to you a Fatima Statue, which you can have in your home for a week or two. We know that devotion to Mary will bring us closer to her Son. If you or family members are ill or you have problems of any kind, or have no problems at all but have a desire to grow closer to Jesus through Mary who is better to turn to than the Mother of Jesus? Please call Sandy Payne at 402-423-1177 to make arrangements to have the Fatima statue in your home. There is NO FEE.

Youth, School & CCD News

February 15, 2021, Pius X New Student Open House - Pius X High School will host an information night for parents and eighth-grade students and prospective high school transfer students interested in attending Pius X for the 2021-22 school year. For families, whose last names begin N-Z, please attend at 7 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 15th. If families are unable to attend on their designated night, they may attend the alternate evening. The sessions will be held in Bishop Flavin Gym (enter in the east or southeast doors). Only the parents and incoming student should attend, all should wear masks, and please follow social distancing guidelines. For more info., contact the Pius X Counseling Center at 402-488-0931 or email counselingcenter@piusx.net.

February 15-16, 2021 – BSS No School – Please plan accordingly.

February 17, 2021, No CCD Classes – On Ash Wednesday there will be no CCD Classes.

February 19, 2021, School 2nd Grade 1st Reconciliation – will be held directly after the 8:20 a.m. Mass.

March 15, 2021, Confirmation – Confirmation this year will be held at Cathedral of the Risen Christ (due to spacing & social distancing) & will be at 7 p.m. The Confirmation Retreat will be on March 13th here in Blessed Sacrament School Gym. Please plan accordingly.

Spiritual Enrichment

Perpetual Adoration

This Wed., Ash Wednesday, we prepare to walk with Jesus in His Passion. Please consider making this journey with the pledge of one hour a week in His Eucharistic presence.

Adorers are needed for these open hours: **Sun.** - 1 a.m., 2 a.m.., 4 a.m., 2 p.m. (twice a month), 6 p.m., 12 Mid.; **Mon.** -1 a.m. (three times a month), 2 a.m., 3 a.m., 7 a.m.; **Tues.** - 1 a.m., 2 a.m.., 3 a.m.; **Wed.** 2 a.m.., 12 Mid; **Thurs.** - 2 a.m., 3

a.m.; **Fri.** - 1 a.m., 2 a.m., 3 a.m. (twice a month), 12 noon (every other week), 12 Mid. (twice a month); **Sat.** 4 a.m., 6 p.m.;

If interested in becoming an adorer or a sub, or for more info, contact one of the coordinators listed below: Lois Korinek-402-423-1949 - Cathy Rokke -402-423-6844 - Kathy Wells - 402-840-7732.

Our Lady of Good Counsel Retreat House - With the world in such turmoil we all ask, is **MY** heart at rest or is God calling me to "come away to a quiet place & abide with Him". Hear **His** soft & serene voice in the still silence of a retreat. He wants to give you **HIS** Love & **HIS** Mercy & the Peace that only **HE** can give! These retreats can be either in person or virtual.

Upcoming retreats:

- **Feb. 17th – Men & Women - Ash Wed. Day of Reflection** ($10 in person or online)
- **Feb. 20th – Moms of Young People - Fr. Benjamin Holdren -** Holiness is for Everyone
- **Feb. 26th-28th – Men or Women - Johnette Benkovic Williams -** Living His Life Abundantly in Today's World
- **March 4th-7th – Men or Women - Fr. Gary Coulter -** 4-Day Directed Spiritual Exercises (Thurs.-Sun.)
- **March 11th-14th – Men or Women - Fr. Gary Coulter & Fr. Christopher Barak -** 4 -Day Private Directed Ignatian Retreat (Thurs.-Sun.)
- **March 11th-18th – Men or Women - Fr. Gary Coulter & Fr. Christopher Barak -** 8 -Day Private Directed Ignatian Retreat (Thurs.-Thurs.)

Pick out a retreat & register today at www.goodcounselretreat.com.

The Bishop's Lay Committee for Vocations has produced a Seminarian Prayer Calendar for parishes & Catholic schools in the Diocese. Each seminarian is given a specific week during which we are encouraged as a parish to pray for that specific seminarian. The following is a list of the seminarians to pray for during Feb. & March 2021.

Feb. 14th- 20th: Scott Nicholas Schieuer
Feb. 21st- 27th: Louden Daniel Redinger
Feb. 28th- March 6th: Matthew Connor Kovar
March 7th- 13th: Tony Clint Schukei
March 14th- 20th: Bradley Paul Moss
March 21st- 27th: Bradley Paul Moss

Additional News

February 14, 2021, The Joy & Hope Anniversary Mass & Reception - scheduled for Sun., Feb. 14th at the Cathedral has been **CANCELLED**.

February 16, 2021, Lenten Series – An Introduction to Spiritual Life - Matt Simmons, diocesan director of the Office of Evangelization & Spiritual Formation, will lead the series. The series will be in-person at the Our Lady of Good Counsel Retreat House, Waverly, NE or at-home, live stream and on demand recordings. It will be held on Tuesdays starting on Feb. 16th through March 30th from 7 - 9 p.m. This series is free & registration is requested at https://lincolndiocese.regfox.com/lent2021. Any questions call 402-473-0615 or email Annette-Wemhoff@cdolinc.net. Participants are welcome to attend even if they cannot come to each event in the series. Everyone is warmly invited to attend!

February 16, 2021, Healing Hearts Support Sessions - for those who have suffered the loss of a loved one are being offered to assist Catholics in the grief process. The sessions will be held on six weekly Tuesday evenings beginning Feb. 16th, from 7-9 p.m., at John XXIII Diocesan Center, 37th & Sheridan Blvd. Suggested Donation: $25 (for materials) To register, please call 402-473-0620.

February 19-21 & April 23-25, 2021, Marriage Encounter - Presenting Virtual Weekends in 2021 - Spousal Hearts Renewed Contact Pat & Janelle Benson at (Pat 308-940-0670) or (Janelle 308-940-1105) or pbjbben@yahoo.com.

February 21, 2021, Celebration of Caring 2021 - Due to continued social distancing efforts, Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska's Celebration of Caring

2021 will be a virtual event. On Sun., Feb. 21st, you are invited to join us online at 5:30 p.m. at https://www.cssisus.org/Celebration2021/. We will begin with Mass, enjoy some entertainment, & celebrate how you help us bring Hope in the Good Life.

March 28, 2021, Mother/Daughter Program-"Fearfully & Wonderfully Made" for girls age 9-13 & their mothers will be held **Sun., March 28th,** from 1:30-4:30 p.m. at John XXIII Diocesan Center **and virtually**. This program is designed to educate girls on growing up and becoming a woman. Pre-registration is required. Cost is $25 per mother/daughter or $35 per family in person & $10 virtually. To register, visit https://lincolndiocese.regfox.com/motherdaughter. Questions, please call Jen Davis at 402-261-6375 or email jmdavis17@gmail.com.

April 23-25, 2021, Marriage Encounter-Virtual Weekend - 'Receptive couple-communication'. To register please call or email Pat & Janell Benson at Pat 308-940-0670 or Janelle 308-940-1105 or pbjbben@yahoo.com.

EMMAUS INSTITUTE
BIBLICAL STUDIES

Looking for a way to boost your spiritual life during Lent and Easter? The Emmaus Institute for Biblical Studies is accepting registrations for its 10-week **Online & In-Person Courses** starting March 8. Learn more at www.emmausinstitute.net.

Employment Opportunities

Employment Opportunity - Campus Ministry Internship - Pius X High School is seeking applicants for a paid Campus Ministry Internship that focuses on coordinating small groups. The position is approx. 15 hours per week and takes place March through December 2021, including the summer. The intern will recruit, train, and disciple small group mentors as well as invite students to build small groups. The intern will gain experience creating small group curriculum, forming mentors, and developing community. Applications will be taken through March 1st, visit www.piusx.net for more info. and to apply.

Employment Opportunity - Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska - is seeking a compassionate, energetic, & inspirational team member for the position of **Client Relations Specialist** for the Immaculate Heart of Mary Counseling Center. This person will serve as the first point of contact to all incoming clients, visitors, & vendors & assist in organizing & maintaining all clinicians' schedules, documentation, & office resources. This is a full time, hourly position with benefits. Full job description & application instructions available at csshope.org/careers.

Employment Opportunity - St. Patrick Catholic Church - at 6111 Morrill Ave. has two part-time openings. We are looking to fill a position as an **Assistant Cook** and a **Janitor**. Please contact Father Schweiger at 402-466-2752 for more details.

Employment Opportunity - Home Health Care Giver - Marian Sisters are seeking a home health care giver. CNA background preferred. Full day, half day, weekend, & overnight hours available. Contact Mother Ann Marie at 402-786-2750 or sr.annmarie-zierke@cdolinc.net for job description, application or to send resume.

Pro-Life News

Pray to End Abortion at Planned Parenthood, 5631 S. 48th St., on Tues. by attending the Rosary at 9:30 a.m., attending Mass at 10 a.m. at the Pro-Life Center across the street from Planned Parenthood or pray anytime between 7 a.m.-3 p.m. For inspiration go to www.humanfromdayone.com.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES - FEAST DAY FEBRUARY 11TH – On Feb. 11, 1858, the Blessed Virgin appeared for the first time to Bernadette Soubirous in the recess of the Massabielle Cliff near Lourdes, France, at the foot of the Pyrenees Mountains. Bernadette, then just fourteen, reported seeing a most beautiful woman, young & not taller than herself, dressed in white. A long rosary hung from her arm. She greeted Bernadette with a slight bow & seemed to invite her to pray. She passed the beads through her fingers as Bernadette recited the Rosary.

On February 25th, Bernadette was told, "Go drink at the spring and wash in it." Perplexed, she started for the river cave; but the maiden in white pointed to the floor of the cave "I went there," Bernadette recounts, "but I only saw a little dirty water. After scraping the floor several times water began to flow abundantly.

On March 25th, Feast of the Annunciation, Bernadette asked the visitor her name and was told in the Lourdes dialect. "I am the Immaculate Conception," – the dogma had been defined by Pope Pius IX four years previously. The eighteenth and last apparition took place on the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, July 16th, of the same year. Mary had made various requests of Bernadette: to pray for sinners, to do penance, to who ever saw the apparition or heard a voice. The ever-increasing crowds, growing into thousands, saw only Bernadette in her states of ecstasy.

FEBRUARY 16, 2021, 40 DAYS FOR LIFE KICKOFF EVENT - The Kickoff Event for 40 Days for Life will be Tues., Feb. 16th at 7:00 p.m. The event will be held at Lincoln Right to Life located at 5632 S 48th St. Please park at the Cornerstone Christian Church located at 4849 Old Cheney Rd. There will be a viewing of "Divided Hearts of America" - Super Bowl champion & executive producer Benjamin Watson goes on a journey to discover the truth about abortion & sits down with over 30 experts in various fields from both sides and asks the question: Can the most divisive issue of our time bring us back together again?

FEBRUARY 17, 2021, 40 DAYS FOR LIFE - begins on Ash Wednesday, & goes through March 28th. Blessed Sacrament has again been assigned the hours between 6:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. on Wed. We need at least two people to cover each hour & more is better. To meet this minimum goal there is need of another person for the 7:00 a.m. & the 9:00 a.m. hour. Please prayerfully consider signing up to pray for an end to abortion at Planned Parenthood located at 5631 S. 48th St. If you are not able to pray during the assigned hours, come any time between 6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. during the campaign or Tues., which is all Parish participation, when abortions are taking place. There is a sign-up sheet in the back of church or call Mary at 402-617-2769.

WOMEN'S CARE CENTER - The Women's Care Center has been operating for a few weeks & they have served 43 women. Word is spreading as some of the women that have been served have already been referred from others that received services. Parenting classes will begin in March & be held weekly. If you would like more info please go to https://supportwomenscarecenter.org/locations/lincoln/

THANK YOU FOR YOUR STEWARDSHIP

Sunday Collections (February 7, 2021)	
Envelopes	$ 55,943.50
Plate	394.00
Online Giving	5,572.90
Total Stewardship:	**$61,910.40**
Total Weekly Parish Need:	**$18,095.00**

EMMAUS INSTITUTE
BIBLICAL STUDIES

SPRING CLASSES (IN-PERSON & ONLINE)
MARCH 8 - MAY 20, 2021

The Whole In One:
A Survey of Every Book of the Bible in One Quarter
Mondays 6:30 - 8:30pm, March 8 - May 17
Team taught

Creation to New Creation: Acts and the Letters of Paul
Tuesdays 6:30 - 8:30pm, March 9 - May 18
Joshua Burks

Jesus' Farewell Discourse (John 13-17):
Encountering Our Lord in the Upper Room
Wednesdays 6:30 - 8:30pm, March 10 - May 19
Vern Steiner

Rediscovering the Kingdom Jesus Established in the Church You Attend
Thursdays 6:30 - 8:30pm, March 11 - May 20
Chad Steiner

REGISTER AT:

WWW.EMMAUSINSTITUTE.NET

3901 NORMAL BLVD, SUITE 101, LINCOLN, NE

Online classes are pre-recorded and can be viewed any time. In-person registration includes free access to the online class. Space is limited.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
COUNCIL 11001

DRIVE -THRU ONLY
FISH FRY

FEB. 19TH, FEB. 26TH, MARCH 5TH

MARCH 12TH, MARCH 19TH & MARCH 26TH

ALL MEALS SERVED FROM
5:00 — 7:00 P.M.

BAKED OR FRIED FISH, FRIES, COLESLAW, PICKLES, AND DESSERT.

$8 PER MEAL—ACCEPTING CASH, CHECK OR CREDIT CARD

BLESSED SACRAMENT SCHOOL PARKING LOT,
1720 LAKE STREET

CORNER OF 17TH & LAKE ST.,

NEAR BRYAN WEST.

40 DAYS FOR LIFE

SPRING 2021 CAMPAIGN: FEBRUARY 17–MARCH 28

Help Save Lives in Lincoln!

YOU CAN PROTECT MOTHERS AND CHILDREN by joining this worldwide mobilization to pray and fast for an end to abortion!

THROUGH PRAYER AND FASTING, peaceful vigils and community outreach, 40 Days for Life has inspired 1,000,000 volunteers!

18,003
BABIES SAVED FROM ABORTION

211
ABORTION WORKERS CONVERTED

107
ABORTION CENTERS CLOSED

TAKE PART IN 40 DAYS FOR LIFE IN LINCOLN:

- **Prayer vigil location:**
  Planned Parenthood
  5631 South 48th Street
- **Vigil hours:** 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM daily
- **Local contact:** Jeanne Kee, 402.413.9663
- **Learn more, get involved, and sign up** for prayer times by visiting our campaign at the web address below!

40daysforlife.com/Lincoln

"Planned Parenthood's own statistics show that if someone's praying out there, it [the abortion appointment no-show rate] can go as high as 75%."

- ABBY JOHNSON

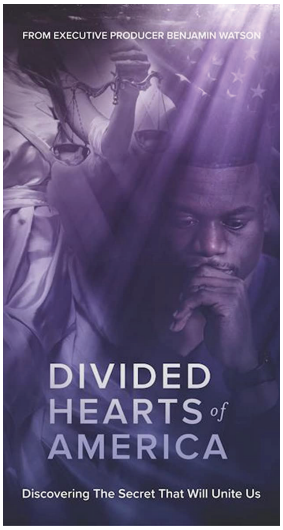
40 DAYS FOR LIFE KICKOFF EVENT

Tuesday, February 16 | 7:00 PM
Lincoln Right to Life | 5632 South 48th Street

Please park at Cornerstone Christian Church | 4849 Old Cheney Road

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A VIEWING OF "DIVIDED HEARTS OF AMERICA": Super Bowl champion and executive producer Benjamin Watson goes on a journey to discover the truth about abortion—a subject that has been at the center of heated debates since the passage of Roe v. Wade in 1973. Along the way, Watson sits down with over 30 experts in various fields and from both sides of the idealogical and political spectrums and asks the question: Can the most divisive issue of our time actually bring us back together again?

Sponsored by Lincoln Right to Life



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HuskerSurveying.com

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402-875-0344
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DAILY DEVOTIONALS

DAILY PRAYER INTENTIONS
FEBRUARY 17 – MARCH 28

Day of Preparation / February 16
For God's blessing upon all participating in the coming 40 Days for Life campaign.

Day 1 / February 17:
That we may use these 40 Days for Life to plead for God's mercy and grace upon all those involved in the sin of abortion.

Day 2 / February 18:
Let us pray that pastors may not be distracted from the priority of caring for human lives.

Day 3 / February 19:
We pray for God's gift of strength as we strive to protect human life during 40 Days for Life.

Day 4 / February 20:
May the mystery of the incarnation increase our zeal for defending life.

Day 5 / February 21:
May the truth of the final judgment shape our thoughts, priorities, and choices here on earth.

Day 6 / February 22:
That knowing the shortness of life, all may value it more deeply.

Day 7 / February 23:
May we have a heart and a zeal to save the poor and release the oppressed.

Day 8 / February 24:
May the spirit and example of the Good Samaritan fill the hearts and minds of all our citizens.

Day 9 / February 25:
May we grow in joy, knowing we serve a living God.

Day 10 / February 26:
Pray for your local pregnancy help center.

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Day 11 / February 27:

Pray that when those representing Planned Parenthood and other abortion groups see volunteers for 40 Days for Life, they see ambassadors of Christ, and may each volunteer be consciously aware at all times we represent Him.

Day 12 / February 28:

May the King of the Universe, who entered this world as a helpless infant, give us the humility to be healed.

Day 13 / March 1:

For all fathers who are terrified of being fathers

Day 14 / March 2:

Pray that the abortionists and all workers in abortion facilities would be troubled in their souls regarding their work and would seek truth.

Day 15 / March 3:

May God's people awaken to the fact that we are our brothers' keepers.

Day 16 / March 4:

Pray for the mothers going into pregnancy help centers.

Day 17 / March 5:

May all understand more deeply that the pro-life message is rooted in the two basic truths of life: 1) There is a God; 2) He isn't me

Day 18 / March 6:

We pray for a flowering of the joy of parenthood.

Day 19 / March 7:

We pray for a renewal of our zeal to offer generous help to the unborn and their families.

Day 20 / March 8:

That we may realize the generational impact of abortion.

Day 21 / March 9:

Pray that we each will daily put on the full armor of God, so that we are strong in the Lord and the power of His might.

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Day 22 / March 10:
May those who hold life as trivial realize that we live because God wills it so.

Day 23 / March 11:
We pray for the strength to love those who do not love us.

Day 24 / March 12:
Pray that God will continue to bless the efforts that have gone into the 40 Days for Life campaign, as we trust Him for the results.

Day 25 / March 13:
We pray for the conversion of all those who refuse to acknowledge that human life belongs only to God.

Day 26 / March 14:
Pray that those who have forgotten their purpose may discover it in God and therefore have the courage to choose life.

Day 27 / March 15:
We pray for humility in our work for God's Kingdom.

Day 28 / March 16:
We pray for the conversion of abortionists and all abortion advocates.

Day 29 / March 17:
Praise God for His compassion in pardoning our sins and forgiving our transgressions. Give praise that He delights in showing mercy.

Day 30 / March 18:
That those tempted to abort may understand that their child is already present, and already a real person.

Day 31 / March 19:
For the medical community, that the truth they know about the human body may become awe and wonder at the God who made it.

Day 32 / March 20:
As we pray for the end of abortion, let us pray for the expansion of the pregnancy help center movement worldwide.

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Day 33 / March 21:

May we absorb the truth that God is paying attention to us, and to each human life, personally and individually.

Day 34 / March 22:

May we come to know that divine life, in relationship, creates human life.

Day 35 / March 23:

Pray for post-abortive women who cannot forgive themselves; may they understand that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Day 36 / March 24:

We pray for the gift of openness to children.

Day 37 / March 25:

Pray that we will each submit ourselves this day as a living sacrifice to God, giving all that we have in us for those being sacrificed on the altar of convenience.

Day 38 / March 26:

Pray that those standing in peaceful vigil will extend mercy and grace to others as they remember that Christ did not treat us as our sins deserve.

Day 39 / March 27:

Pray that volunteers will replace exhaustion or discouragement with rejoicing over the miracles we have seen thus far, and enthusiastic service as God takes us on to victory!

Day 40 / March 28:

Let us keep our eyes fixed on the New Jerusalem, where death will be no more.

Day 41/ March 29:

Pray that the witness of 40 Days for Life bears abundant fruit, and that we begin again each day to storm the gates of hell until God welcomes us into the gates of heaven.

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Devotional for Preparation, Tuesday, February 16
Carmen Pate, former 40 Days for Life board member

Intention:

For God's blessing upon the coming 40 Days for Life campaign.

Scripture:

If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and forgive their sin and heal their land. — *2 Chronicles 7:14*

Reflection:

Not unlike God's chosen people of Israel, we must humble ourselves, pray, seek His face, and turn from our wicked ways, if we expect God to hear from heaven, forgive our sin, and heal our land. The need for repentance has not been greater since the Supreme Court decision of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973.

The number one cause of death in America is the needless sacrifice of our children at the altar of convenience called abortion. Conservative estimates put the number of deaths at nearly 48 million.

And lest we think this is an issue outside the church walls, 43 percent of women obtaining abortions identify themselves as Protestant, and 27 percent identify themselves as Catholic. One in four women has at least one abortion by the age of 45 – both non-Christian and Christian alike. Where was the voice of Truth – the church?

Mary Comm of In Our Midst Ministries, Inc. sums up the issue best as she writes, "We (the church) have been an unintentional accomplice to the millions of lives lost and to the multiplied millions of lives devastated by abortion. We didn't want them to abort. We didn't mean for them to abort. But, because of our lack of knowledge, because of our fear, we have continued to stand by and do nothing.

"We, God's hands and feet in this dark and hurting world, have been unintentional, unknowledgeable accomplice, but an accomplice nonetheless."

May today mark the beginning of change within the church, as God's people, in unity, seek His forgiveness.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we have turned our backs on you and your principles in your Word. We have allowed man to usurp Your role as God over life and the number of our days.

But we come to you in brokenness and repentance over our sin.

We cry out for Your mercy and ask you to remove the scourge of abortion from our land. Use us as your vessels, Lord, to bring the light of Your Truth to our nation once again. Because of Christ we pray, amen.

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40 DAYS FOR LIFE

Devotional for Day 1, Wednesday, February 17

Intention:

That we may use these 40 Days for Life to plead for God's mercy and grace upon all those involved in the sin of abortion.

Scripture:

Blow the trumpet in Zion! Proclaim a fast, call an assembly. Gather the people, notify the congregation. Assemble the elders; gather the children and the infants at the breast… Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep and say, "Spare, O Lord, your people."

—Joel 2:15-17

Reflection:

The toll of abortion cannot be measured. We hear estimates of almost 50 million innocent victims, but that's only one aspect of the harm that has unfolded in abortion's wake. There are also the mothers and fathers of these millions, as well as the grandparents, brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins. Unborn lives destroyed. Lives of the living shattered.

It's overwhelming and depressing, but even in the midst of such unfathomable darkness, the church teaches us to have hope. Yes, it was indeed Calvary that followed Christ's 40 days in the desert, but without Calvary there would have been no Resurrection – His victory over death that opened the gates of heaven to those who believe in and follow Him.

The psalmist encourages us to go humbly before God as we seek His will:

> A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me… Give me back the joy of your salvation and a willing spirit sustain in me… O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise (Psalm 51:12-17).

We are called to be God's messengers; or as the Apostle Paul wrote:

> We are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20).

That is the true message to all we encounter at the abortion centers and in our communities who have been deceived by the Culture of Death. We don't bring condemnation; we bring God's good news.

Prayer:

Lord, we ask for the strength, courage, wisdom, determination and stamina to carry out this mission according to Your will.

Guide us, we pray, as we go forth and proclaim Your truth, always doing so with a spirit of love and compassion, as was demonstrated to us through the work of Your Son, Jesus Christ. In His name we pray, amen.

Devotional for Day 2, Thursday, February 18
Rev. Clenard Childress, LEARN (Life Education and Resource Network)

Intention:

Let us pray that pastors may not be distracted from the priority of caring for human lives.

Scripture:

In those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.
— *Acts 6:1*

Reflection:

More folks learning left some yearning.

It is the dawning of a new day. There is much excitement in Jerusalem. Many who dedicated themselves to the faith became disciples (the word disciple means "learner").

The unprecedented church growth was miraculous and undoubtedly brought much satisfaction to the new leadership. The apostles, however, were about to experience growing pains in their master plan of evangelism.

Projects that engage the community, especially those that are evangelistic in nature, are high on the list of priorities for every duty-bound pastor.

Church attendance is a constant concern for every pastor and often his or her worth is measured by it.

Unfortunately, just as the original twelve pastors in Acts, they can be so focused on getting people in that they inadvertently end up pushing some people out. Murmuring is a deplorable deterrent to a harmonious fellowship, yet God used it to get the disciples attention. Those that needed daily attention due to their age and social status were being neglected.

This neglect of the Hellenist widows during the daily distribution of food was causing undue grief and needed to be corrected by the leadership. By God's grace the problem was dealt with, but the lesson remains.

And during these 40 days, let us pray that today's church not make the same mistake of forgetting the contributions of our seniors, or the needs of the weakest among us, the unborn.

Prayer:

Father, in the Church's desire to engage our communities with the gospel let her not disengage from those who need their care and company the most.

Let us gain wisdom from those who have gone before us and cherish their experiences and perspectives. Help us to appreciate every soul in the body of Christ and minister properly to everybody. Amen.

Devotional for Day 3, Friday, February 19
Dennis DiMauro, Lutherans for Life

Intention:

We pray for God's gift of strength as we strive to protect human life during these 40 Days for Life.

Scripture:

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

—Matthew 6:25-26

Reflection:

Billions of dollars are spent each year on diet plans. But Jesus tells us to stop worrying so much about our bodies, and instead to trust in God's care for our physical needs

What would happen if the people who had started on a low-carb diet this year had instead gone on a diet of heavenly food? For non-believers that diet would include trusting in Christ for their salvation, and for believers it would include a renewed prayer life, a new Bible study, or even a spiritual fast.

This diet doesn't include giving up on certain kinds of foods. What this diet includes is giving up on anxiety by resting in the loving arms of Christ, trusting that He will provide. Such a spiritual diet also frees us from our worries, and allows us to freely praise Him and serve others. Christ's words bear repeating:

> Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

This promised provision teaches us the inestimable worth of our lives. He will not allow us to go without. This intimate knowledge and care for human life on the part of our gracious God is what motivates us to seek for the preservation of human life in all its stages.

Prayer:

Loving heavenly Father, help us to see the worth of all human beings by the way in which you provide for us. We would ask that you provide also the faith, grace and courage to enable us to protect that which is so precious to you. Through Christ our Lord, amen.

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Devotional for Day 4, Saturday, February 20
Randolph Sly, National Pro-life Religious Council

Intention:

May the mystery of the Incarnation increase our zeal for defending life.

Scripture:

Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."
— Luke 1:30-33

Reflection:

"God has assumed Humanity, joining it with Divinity, and kindled in men's hearts new love of me." These words were written by a Roman poet in the Fourth Century. He spent his life finding ways to express the greatest mystery of the world: the incarnation, in which God became man.

The womb has been referred to as the "first home of the whole human race." It is the place where life begins, where our stories start. In the womb the great men and women of history began their magnificent march through life. In the womb Divinity met humanity, and God the Son was born into the world.

As one of the Fathers of the early church, St. Leo the Great, declared, "Within her spotless womb Wisdom built itself a house and the Word became flesh."

Recently, I was at the hospital for the birth of my fourth grandchild. Looking through the nursery window at the rows of newly born babies, I began to think of the great stories that would be written about these tiny lives.

During his visitation with the Virgin Mary, the angel prophesied to Mary about the life of her child. Here in this hospital, I pondered, what would he say about each of these? Would they meet the one who also came from His mother's womb to redeem the world and kindle our hearts afresh for God? I thanked God for each baby alive and prayed for each story yet to be written.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, you have made the womb of each woman a very special place. Help us to hold fast to the sanctity of this first home of humanity, remembering the wonderful mystery, that God inhabited the womb of a young woman and came forth as the savior and deliverer of the world. We ask this in the Name of the one who came forth, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 5, Sunday, February 21
Rev. Ben Sheldon, President Emeritus, Presbyterians Pro-Life

Intention:

May the truth of the final judgment shape our thoughts, priorities, and choices here on earth.

Scripture:

The King will answer and say to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

—Matthew 25:31-46

Reflection:

Jesus' picture of the final judgment concludes with this sobering word: the wicked, who failed to care for others in their various needs (the hungry, the thirsty, the aliens, the naked, the sick, the imprisoned) will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous who did seek to meet those needs will end up with him, enjoying eternal life.

We know that this was no mere parable! Jesus has given us fair warning!

Everything in God's Word points to the truth that compassionate concern and practical care for all people, especially for the poor, the destitute, the weak and needy is required of us, if indeed we hope to escape the punishment of the fire of hell.

And who are the poor and needy, if not helpless, unborn babies, as well as the aged and infirm at the other end of life?

Surely the "least of these" embraces not only those at both ends of the continuum of life, but all others in between.

Just how we, as Christ's true followers, respond to his admonition "inasmuch as you did it to the least of these, you did it to me" will determine whether we enjoy eternal bliss in his presence or the bleak and dreadful reality of eternal punishment in hell.

Caring for others is not optional. Nothing in God's Word could be clearer!

Prayer:

Gracious and merciful Father, we gladly embrace your Word, in which you counsel us to care for the least of your children.

We renew our dedication to defending the unborn and all whose right to life is compromised by our godless society's selfish lack of concern.

Free us from our own failures and sins so that we will be truly pro-life in every area of our lives. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 6, Monday, February 22
Rev. Paul Stallsworth, Lifewatch (United Methodist Church)

Intention:

That knowing the shortness of life, all may value it more deeply.

Scripture:

Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the well.

Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.

—*Ecclesiastes 12:6-7*

Reflection:

God is giver of all life. Short lived or long lived, human lives are lived out in this world.

The metaphors for death are many. But their meaning is clear and singular: all will die. Even so, death is not the absolute end. It is not the end of the story.

For as certainly as God gave life, at death the life or spirit that God gave returns to God.

By God, we are created. For God, we live our given days. To God, we return at the end of our earthly days. And with God, we live through eternity.

Clearly, all along the way, this gracious, loving God is with us. No human life is random or alone. No human life was created without purpose. Not one human life is without destiny.

All human lives, acknowledged or not, are related to God -- from beginning, to end, throughout eternity.

Therefore, in this world, all human lives are to be respected and protected, for their lives are signs of God's sovereignty.

Prayer:

O God, we too often try to live in ways that ignore our coming death. We forget that our days are numbered by You, that at the end of our days your judgment awaits, that You are the Lord of our destiny.

Help us to repent daily, and then to live each day in joyful obedience. Lead us to live in the light and promise of eternity.

Prepare us to live fully and sacrificially.

Prepare us to die faithfully and hopefully, so that we might live forever with You. Through Jesus Christ, who has gone before us, we trust and hope and love and pray. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 7, Tuesday, February 23
Fr. Terry Gensemer, National Director, Charismatic Episcopal Church for Life

Intention:

May we have a heart and a zeal to save the poor and release the oppressed.

Scripture:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.

—Luke 4:18-19

Reflection:

This passage is a very familiar one. It has been preached on many occasions, even made popular in books and songs.

Though the quote is about Jesus, all Christians take this commission seriously as a directive on how to reach the world with the gospel.

We, like our Savior, are to bring the good news to the poor, the broken hearted, those in captivity, those who cannot see, and the oppressed.

The commission given to us in this passage is clearly a charge to care for those for whom God cares the most. I wonder though, whom do we look for to be touched by the Holy Spirit as we go out into the world?

Who are the poor, if not those unborn children who have been abandoned by their parents before they ever leave the womb? Who are the broken hearted, if not those unborn children whose only example of love is having their mother take them to an abortion clinic to be destroyed, or the mother of a child who has been deceived by everyone around her into believing that what she is doing is best for her and her child?

Who are the captives, if not those unborn children who are bound over to death by the "choice" of abortion?

Who is more blind than an unborn child in the darkness of a womb that has become a waiting room for their death?

And who is more oppressed than those unborn children whose oppression has been legitimized by their government, their church and even their family and loved ones.

Prayer:

Lord, You empower us with Your Spirit to do your will in the earth.

Send us to the poorest, the most broken, the most captive, the most blind and the most oppressed in the world, the innocent pre-born children in their mother's wombs that are scheduled for destruction.

Help us to bring them healing, liberty, sight and justice through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

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Devotional for Day 8, Wednesday, February 24
Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director, Priests for Life

Intention:

May the spirit and example of the Good Samaritan fill the hearts and minds of all our citizens.

Scripture:

Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.

"A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.

"So, too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

"But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

—Luke 10:30-37

Reflection:

Here Jesus commands us to show mercy to the victims of the culture of violence and death. But why did the priest and Levite fail to show mercy? Perhaps they feared that the robbers were hiding just around the next corner to attack them. They asked themselves, "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?"

The Samaritan, however, reversed the question, and asked, "If I *don't* stop to help this man, what will happen to *him?"* In working to save the unborn, let's not worry about what will happen to us if we act; let's worry about what will happen to the unborn if we don't.

Prayer:

Father, we are moved by the lesson of the Good Samaritan, who allowed compassion to influence him more than fear. Give us the same heart. Grant that we may never count the cost of standing up and speaking out for the unborn. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 9, Thursday, February 25
Day Gardner, President, National Black Pro-Life Union

Intention:

May we grow in joy, knowing we serve a living God.

Scripture:

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

—John 1:14

Reflection:

The Word of God came to us in human form in Jesus Christ. Every time I contemplate this fact I get chills! And I think it is something that we, as Christians, tend to gloss over.

I can only imagine how the first disciples felt when they were looking into the eyes of the one and only Almighty God who created them.

The first disciples developed a close relationship with Him as they daily walked and talked with Him.

They ate with Him, prayed with Him and rested when He rested.

As they listened to the Word of God, who was and is Jesus, they believed and "beheld His glory."

Today, this is something we can still do because we serve a living God. Remember, Jesus died on the cross but rose from the dead in victory!

Jesus is every bit as real and alive for all of us as He was to the first disciples.

He wants us to develop a close relationship with Him in the very same way. Jesus wants us to know Him personally. He wants us to walk with Him and talk with Him on a daily basis.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I thank you for your love and saving grace in Christ Jesus.

Help us to realize every day the great blessing we have in our Savior.

I pray that we will rise every morning with excitement and zeal, looking forward to walking another day in your footsteps fully knowing that you continue to dwell among us. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 10, Friday, February 26
Rev. John Ensor, PassionLife

Intention:

Pray for your local pregnancy help center: for those who answer calls from women considering abortion, those who provide ultrasounds, and those who personally help mothers prepare to parent or place for adoption.

Scripture:

Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

— Psalm 82:4

Reflection:

When a woman arrives at her local pregnancy help center, the hard work of "rescuing the weak" begins. They listen to her. What desperate circumstance is driving her? They act. A professional ultrasound and medical care is provided. They pray, "God use us." Then, they take up her burdens and work towards life. It is cross-bearing for the child-bearing.

Recently, I prayed for one volunteer who was working with one mother in her struggle. Here is what "rescue the weak" looked like in this one case:

- **Aug 3:** She made an appointment for Thursday to get an abortion and while she feels terrible about it, she also feels like she has no choice. Pray that her heart is changed!
- **Aug 10:** She is 12 weeks along but missed her appointment. She had some good conversations with people at the pregnancy center. She is now considering adoption.
- **Aug 13:** Things are down again. She now has an abortion scheduled for Monday. Pray!
- **Aug 17:** Missed appointment! God is working in her life.
- **Sept 1:** We've hit another rocky period. She has an abortion scheduled for tomorrow. She found out today that her parents are planning a trip to visit her and she is panicking.
- **Sept 15:** Missed third appointment. But feels like she has no choice. Please pray today.
- **Sept 20:** She fears her parents but has agreed to another ultrasound (a breakthrough).
- **Sept 22:** I was there with her for her ultrasound. She saw her baby moving and made the realization that she wants to carry her baby.

Please keep praying against attack by the enemy. We are overwhelmed by seeing God's hand move in this situation and are so very thankful for the prayers lifted up by each one of you. God is good!

Prayer:

Father, we praise you for this one sister who gave herself, heart and soul, to rescue this one mother and baby. O may you empower the hundreds more today who are serving in our pregnancy help centers. Grant those answering calls, providing ultrasound and following up with a bold spirit of truth, love and perseverance.

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Devotional for Day 11, Saturday, February 27
Carmen Pate, former 40 Days for Life board member

Intention:

Pray that when those representing Planned Parenthood and other abortion groups see volunteers for 40 Days for Life, they see ambassadors of Christ, and may each volunteer be consciously aware at all times of Whom we represent.

Scripture:

I...beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness, and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love.
— *Ephesians 4:1b-2*

Reflection:

When Carol Everett, a former abortionist and post-abortive woman, was asked what turned her heart from death to life in Christ, she said, "It was unconditional love," shown by a man who prayed daily for her in front of the abortion clinic where she worked.

He told Carol that "God had sent him" because there was someone in there that God wanted out. She left 27 days later and now serves as Christ's ambassador to help others. We too have been sent by Christ as an ambassador to love unconditionally those God seeks to "get out" of their bondage and sin. What a high calling it is -- much higher than any presidential appointment to another country.

In his book, *Fishers of Men*, Dr. Sumner Wemp describes what it means to be an ambassador of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings:

- God has chosen us (John 15:16)
- We are sent into a world that is not our home (1 Peter 2:11)
- Our walk must match our talk (1 Timothy 3:7)
- We must abide in Him for daily instruction (John 15:5)
- Know our purpose -- to seek and to save that which is lost (Luke 19:10)
- We are to reconcile others to God with His authority (Matthew 28:19-20)
- Do not let kindness and truth leave you (Proverbs 3:3-4)
- Our service is to be grounded and rooted in love (Ephesians 3:17)

Pray that we each will walk worthy of the calling with which we were called!

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, we are humbled that you have called us and appointed us to be ambassadors of Christ in a world that is not our home.

We pray that your Holy Spirit will empower us to walk worthy of the calling. We pray that Your unconditional love will flow through us to those who desperately need Your saving grace. In the name of Christ who is worthy, amen.

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Devotional for Day 12, Sunday, February 28
Kevin Burke, Executive Director, Rachel's Vineyard Ministries

Intention:

May the King of the Universe, who entered this world as a helpless infant, give us the humility to be healed.

Scripture:

My power is made perfect in weakness.
—2 Corinthians 12:9

Reflection:

The great mystery of the Humility of God is very near and dear to the mission of those serving in pro life and in a special way, post abortion ministries across this nation.

For those wounded by their participation in abortion, the door to healing often feels like crossing an abyss of great fear: fear of judgment, fear of being torn apart by the pain, by self hatred and rage at those who hurt and abandoned you, and manipulated you in your time of temptation.

For men in particular, entering the unknown waters of emotional vulnerability, so necessary to healing calls for a different kind of courage that feels deceptively like weakness.

The door to healing is humility.

It is born in the inability to no longer control the pain, to live with the consequences of that tragic decision to reject life. The hearts cries out, "I have committed a grave offense against my Creator and I am consumed by regret, grief and sorrow!"

During these forty days let us pray for all who have participated in abortion and with love call them to healing and reconciliation. With healing these women and men can become as John Paul II proclaimed in the Gospel of Life, "the most eloquent defenders of everyone's right to life."

Jesus proclaimed, "I am the Vine, you are the branches" (John 15:5). To bear the greatest fruit, the branches must be pruned. Each level of pruning of the vine requires a deeper level of humility so that we can abandon ourselves to His will.

This is not a lofty theological concept as much as it is an earthy experience of pulling weeds, tilling rocky soil, pruning and healing the vines. "If a man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and begin to follow in my footsteps" (Matthew 16:24).

Prayer:

Lord, during these forty days, we ask that with each day of this sacred vigil, everything in us that separates us from your perfect will would be pruned from our hearts and souls.

In this blessed freedom may we experience a powerful anointing of your Holy Spirit. Filled with confidence and trust may we proclaim with the mother of Jesus, "Let it be done to me, according to your Word."

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Devotional for Day 13, Monday, March 1
Randolph Sly, National Pro-Life Religious Council

Intention:

For all fathers who are terrified of being fathers.

Scripture:

A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy habitation.

—Psalm 68:5

Reflection:

I had a friend many years ago who confided in me that he was terrified of being a father. He and his wife already had two children when this revelation came forth. "I never knew my father," he explained, "and I have no idea what a father is supposed to do."

We continued to share about this, as well as pray together. He began to see he had a father's heart for his children.

His biggest problem was not a limitation on love but not knowing how to act out this love.

One day we talked about the verse quoted at the top of this page. I shared that he did know his Father… not his biological father but his Heavenly Father, who had rescued him from a life of destruction not many years before.

"How did your Heavenly Father guide you?" I asked. He talked about the ways he had seen God's love offered to him and the way the Lord had used circumstances and the Scriptures to mold him and mature him.

"Well, the Lord wants to do the same thing through you for your children. Be available to His love and available to your kids. You'll do fine."

How wonderful it is to know that God takes a personal interest in each of us, many times using His faithful people – the Church – as channels of this love.

No one is fatherless who lives in the Lord. His fatherly care begins at the moment of our conception, as it is written, "you knit me together in my mother's womb" (Psalm 139:12), and continues to be poured upon us throughout our lives.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for caring about each of us so deeply. Help us to see and know you as our Father in heaven each and every day of our lives.

Your loving hand also rests on every child today carried in its mother's womb. May they be born into this world and come to know fully and personally your endless love. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 14, Tuesday, March 2
Carmen Pate, former 40 Days for Life board member

Intention:

Pray that the abortionists and all workers in abortion facilities would be troubled in their souls regarding their work and would seek truth.

Scripture:

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ s sake has forgiven you.
— *Ephesians 4:31-32*

Reflection:

We see the evil and oppression in the world, the arrogance of those who mock God, the millions of innocent lives destroyed because of the greed of a few. Our flesh tells us that we should take justice in our own hands, but instead of vengeance, the Lord calls us to love our enemy, to forgive others as we have been forgiven.

God loves the abortionist and the Planned Parenthood advocate just as much as He loves you.

It breaks His heart to see them in bondage to sin and He is giving you this opportunity to introduce them to the Savior who sets the captive free.

Though you may not experience direct interaction with these souls, your presence will not go unnoticed. Your non-verbal communications speak volumes about the God you serve.

Forgiveness is an act of obedience to God (Colossians 3:13). Forgiveness is not condoning or overlooking the wrong behavior of others, but rather it is freeing ourselves so that

God can work mightily through us to touch their hearts for Him. Let's join our hearts with His in recognizing that those in the abortion industry are not the enemy, but rather they are blinded by the enemy.

God desires that we bring them the message of truth and hope found in Christ, but the messengers He will use are those willing to forgive.

Prayer:

Dearest God, You tell us in Proverbs that the foolish and the wicked lack wisdom and understanding. I pray you will trouble the souls of those in the abortion industry so that they hunger for truth and cry out for freedom.

I pray that my life would reflect my redemption so others may see it and trust in You. In obedience to You, and by your grace, I choose to forgive others as you have forgiven me. In the name of Christ I pray, amen.

Devotional for Day 15, Wednesday, March 3
Rev. Rob Schenck, President, Faith in Action

Intention:

May God's people awaken to the fact that we are our brothers' keepers.

Scripture:

Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground."

—Genesis 4:8-10

Reflection:

"Methinks he doth protest too much ..."

The Bible is filled with passages that speak to our obligation to care for our fellow human beings.

From the many commands in the books of Moses enjoining love of family, neighbors and even strangers, to Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, the injunction to care for others is inescapable.

In this account, the guilt-stricken Cain tries to shrug off his obligation to his own kin by dismissing it as an unreasonable duty. A la Shakespeare, though, "methinks he doth protest too much."

Cain's objection doesn't stem from his sense of proper boundaries of responsibility, but from his own self-centered sense of self-preservation.

Christ said, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13).

This is the standard of divine love. It required God to sacrifice what was most precious to Him for the temporal and eternal well being of all humankind (see John 3:16). Though on a much-reduced scale, he expects us to do the same.

Trying to duck our obligation to others is futile. We can't get away with simply dismissing others, especially the most vulnerable among us: the pre-born, the disabled, the sick and the aged.

As with Cain, God sees and hears their suffering and will call us to account for what we do – or do not do – for them.

Prayer:

Father, help us to embrace the fact that we are our "brother's keeper." When, due to selfish motives, we try to cast off this responsibility please call to us to account. We would be pleasing to you and to our "brother." Through the help and grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 16, Thursday, March 4
Rev. John Ensor, PassionLife

Intention:

Pray for the mothers going into pregnancy help centers. The personal care, the free ultrasound, the ongoing practical help is designed to deliver them from those who profit in shedding innocent blood.

Scripture:

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

—*Matthew 11:28*

Reflection:

"You have twins. That will be another $350." She did not speak English. But she finally understood that they were telling her to go get more money and return for her abortion.

She had already given them her rent money. But they were not about to give her a two-for-one deal. They told her to get dressed and return with more cash.

A couple, who was praying outside, comforted her. They brought her to their local pregnancy help center.

The staff quickly saw that her personal circumstances were so desperate, and immediate, that they would need direct and ongoing help from local Christians and churches. They started making calls.

Then they did the ultrasound. It showed there was only one baby, not two. This abandoned, immigrant, powerless mother was being exploited. She would do whatever she was told. Who would know? Who would care?

God calls us to "Rescue the weak and the needy; and deliver them from the hand of the wicked" (Psalm 82:4).

When you provide an alternative to abortion you are not only rescuing innocent babies, you are delivering mothers from the wicked: those who profit in the shedding of innocent blood. Pray for those who rescue and deliver daily at your local pregnancy help center.

Prayer:

Father, hear our prayer!

Snatch desperate mothers from the fire. Bring them out of our abortion businesses and into our pregnancy help centers. Deliver them from evil.

Use us to help them chose life and see your hand of provision.

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Devotional for Day 17, Friday, March 5
Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director, Priests for Life

Intention:

May all understand more deeply that the pro-life message is rooted in two basic truths of life:

1) There is a God
2) He isn't me

Scripture:

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

—*Genesis 2:7*

Reflection:

From the beginning of the Bible until the end, the theme is echoed that God alone has dominion over human life. He made it; shared it; died to save it; will raise it up forever.

The act of creation described in Genesis 2:7, and earlier in Genesis 1:26-27, is a sovereign act. God did not have to do it, and would have been happy forever without us. Yet without our asking for it or earning it, God brought us out of nothingness and into life, and sustains our existence at every moment.

And He does so in Christ: "For by Him all things were created…in Him all things exist" (Colossians 1:16-17).

"You are not your own," Paul declares in 1 Corinthians 6. God alone owns us. While He entrusts us to the care of one another, He does not allow any human being to own another.

A Southern California abortionist, James McMahon, once explained how he justified killing children after 20 weeks gestation by the process known as partial-birth abortion.

He did not deny that this was a child, but rather asked, "Who owns the child? It's got to be the mother."

The struggle over abortion is really a struggle over the dominion of God.

The Christian individual, and the Christian Church, cannot sit idly by when others declare that God is not God.

Prayer:

Lord, we are yours. Thank you for breathing into us the breath of life.

Thank you for claiming us as your own.

May our words and actions in defense of human life proclaim to all the world that you alone are Lord of life and death, Lord of our freedom and of our choices.

We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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Devotional for Day 18, Saturday, March 6
Randolph Sly, National Pro-Life Religious Council

Intention:

We pray for a flowering of the joy of parenthood.

Scripture:

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but shall speak with their enemies in the gate.

—Psalm 127:3-5

Reflection:

I still vividly remember the day my first child was born. As she came into the world I gazed upon the most beautiful little baby I'd ever seen.

Later I was driving home from the hospital for a shower and a fresh change of clothes when a song came on the radio, "The Men in My Little Girl's Life"—a ballad about being a father as he watches his daughter grow through childhood to womanhood.

I wept as I listened, knowing the years would go by very fast—and they did.

Being a father, whenever I read the Psalm quoted above I'm always captivated by one word: "heritage." It basically means "something passed down from a preceding generation."

That little girl I watched being born and wept for is not mine to give to God like a product of our fertility, but rather His, which he has entrusted to us. So are all her siblings.

My wife and I share a great treasure: precious lives, which are placed in our lineage that His life with us might be perpetuated.

To the psalmist, this was a blessing from the Lawgiver, God Himself, who blessed Israel with another generation intended to continue their covenantal promise. For us in Christ, it is his gift of succeeding generations for His Church and her families.

These days I'm looking upon my grandchildren, and rejoicing that my children and their spouses will pass on the greatness of Christ's gospel to them and thus will continue the work of God in the world. What a blessing. What a heritage!

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, please keep me from taking for granted the gift of children. Help us to remember this heritage that you have given us.

Make us faithful stewards of these precious lives, that each generation might be raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.

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Devotional for Day 19, Sunday, March 7
Rev. Rob Schenck, President, Faith and Action

Intention:

We pray for a renewal of our zeal to offer generous help to the unborn and their families.

Scripture:

If I have despised the cause of my male or female servant when they complained against me, what then shall I do when God rises up? When He punishes, how shall I answer Him? Did not He who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same One fashion us in the womb?

—Job 31:13-15

Reflection:

The ground is level as we stand before God.

Job lived with an awe provoking sense of God's expectation of him, particularly regarding his obligation to care for the weak and needy. He knew that in God's economy everyone stands on level ground when it comes to our status as God's creatures. Because of that central truth, we must take care of each other.

Job also knew that he didn't deserve any of the good things God gave to him. Instead, those blessings came to Job from God's benevolent heart.

As an extension of that knowledge, Job instinctively linked his obligation to be generous to others to God's kindness toward him.

As in Jesus' parable of the unmerciful servant (Matthew 18:23-35), Job knew that it is an egregious sin to deny to others what we enjoy ourselves.

He actually calls down on his own head severe condemnation and even punishment should he fail to share with others out of his own abundance (see verses 16-23).

Proverbs 3:27 reads, "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do so." Some things are so obvious that we don't even need to pray except to ask of God forgiveness and the power to do what so obviously needs doing.

Prayer:

God, forgive us when we try to explain away the obligation we have to help others who need help. Enable us to not devalue them because they are in the circumstance that they are in, but to see them for what they are, those, who like us, were formed by your hand in their mother's womb. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 20, Monday, March 8
Rev. Ben Sheldon, President Emeritus, Presbyterians Pro-life

Intention:

That we may realize the generational impact of abortion.

Scripture:

Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer and Rebekah his wife conceived. The children struggled together within her, and she said, "If it is thus, why do I live?" So she went to inquire of the Lord.

And the Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples, born of you, shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger."
— *Genesis 25:21-23*

Reflection:

What an answer to prayer!

Who dares to say that the unborn are not human, with distinct personality and character right from the moment of conception?

This account emphasizes the vitality and uniqueness of the twins who, because of Isaac's prayer for his wife, were conceived in Rebekah's womb.

When Rebekah was told by the Lord that the older would serve the younger twin, God already knew that Jacob and Esau would lead turbulent and conflicted lives.

God knows us and knows all about us, including our personality and disposition long before we are actually born, indeed, from the moment we are conceived in our mother's womb.

What a tragedy of gargantuan proportions that babies, planned and endowed by the Creator, with distinct and unique personalities and with, perhaps, a future and destiny intended for greatness, have their lives snuffed out by cruel abortionists before they ever see the light of day! May our prayers that the dreadful scourge of abortion in our land may vanish be as fervent as Isaac's were for Rebekah.

Prayer:

O, God, you formed us in our mother's womb and planned a unique and special life and purpose for each of us, and we do thank you. Grant that we may pray and work for an end to abortion, especially in these 40 days, so that no unborn baby you have made may fail to achieve your divine intention for him or her because of intentional abortion. We pray this for the sake of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 21, Tuesday, March 9
Carmen Pate, former 40 Days for Life board member

Intention:

Pray that we each will daily put on the full armor of God, so that we are strong in the Lord and the power of His might.

Scripture:

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand.

— Ephesians 6:12-13

Reflection:

I am confounded to see how the battle over the issue of life is perceived more often in churches today as political rather than spiritual. Ironically, the enemy has used this twisted perception to silence many in the body of Christ. We must see the battle for what it is and we must daily "put on" the armor God has given us:

- Gird your waist with Truth (vs. 14) — Commit your emotions to believe truth and to speak truth, regardless of the repercussions.
- Put on the breastplate of Righteousness (vs. 14) –It will protect our hearts – the innermost springs of our beings – from all unrighteousness so evident in this fallen world.
- Shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. (vs. 15) — Preparation is vital if we are to be effective in God's work.
- Taking the shield of faith (vs.16) — The Accuser will instill doubt, fear, and guilt. Faith acts as an invisible shield that deflects such false accusations.
- Taking the Helmet of salvation (vs.17) — A helmet protects the head, the brain and in turn our mind and thoughts. Satan hopes we will set aside divine revelation for human reasoning.
- Taking the sword of the Spirit (vs.17) — The Word of God, the only offensive weapon in this armor, was used by the Lord Jesus against Satan. The living Word is powerful and effective.

Our armor is complete. We are ready to wage war, and the next verse tells us how, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit." (vs.18)

Prayer:

Dear Lord, as you lead us into the spiritual battle of abortion may we be reminded that the battle is truly Yours. Thank you for hearing our requests for direction and protection. Thank you for the victory that is ours because of Your Son Jesus, amen.

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Devotional for Day 22, Wednesday, March 10
Georgette Forney, Anglicans for Life

Intention:

May those who hold life as trivial realize that we live because God wills it so.

Scripture:

Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this, in His hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.

— Job 12:9-10

Reflection:

Job was a man acquainted with grief, trials and tribulation. He had everything taken from him, including his family. He endured sickness, ridicule and judgment from his friends.

Everyone gave him advice about his situation, questioning his spirituality and his God. Job's circumstances were bad but he never loses faith. Why? Because "the hand of the Lord has made all life." Created by God, he knows his life has meaning and purpose, regardless of the circumstances.

In our present culture, we've lost that basic truth; every life is made and allowed to live by God's sovereign authority. As people who pride ourselves on our independence, we have a hard time acknowledging our dependence on God.

From our creation, when we were knit together in our mother's womb to our last breath, God's word is clear that "in His hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind."

It's time for us as individuals, and as a society, to recognize that we exist by God's grace and turn back to Him, honoring His word and His teachings. Why? Because our world is full of Jobs, people who are dealing with trials and tribulations and hurting desperately.

Job's response should be ours as well. Regardless of what we face (even an unplanned pregnancy) God in His wisdom and mercy will redeem it.

How do I know? Job's friends who doubted God's sovereignty cry out to God asking for help, God instructs Job to pray for his friends and after he does, God restores all that Job had lost.

In other words, because Job never lost faith and knew and trusted His Creator, the Lord blessed Job.

Prayer:

Thank you Father God for being the Creator of my life and every life. Please give me, and the society in which I live, an appreciation for your gift of life.

Please help us set aside our pride and acknowledge that we need you.

Show me how I can honor you today in response to all the blessings you bestow freely. In the name of Jesus, amen.

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Devotional for Day 23, Thursday, March 11
Dennis DiMauro, Lutherans for Life

Intention:

We pray for the strength to love those who do not love us.

Scripture:

But the Lord said "You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in the night and perished in the night. And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left, and much livestock? Should I not be concerned about that great city?"

—Jonah 4:10-11

Reflection:

God doesn't value people and things like we do. Jonah loved a shade tree more than an entire city of sinful people. We love our dogs more than a terrorist. We love our cars more than a beggar on the side of the road. And sometimes, we love our money more than a child growing in a desperate teenager's womb. But God isn't like us. Genesis 1 tells us that humans were the capstone of God's creation.

We were created on the sixth day after God had completed the land, the stars, the plants and the animals.

Therefore, His love for us is greater than His love for a plant, an animal, or any other created thing.

And the book of Jonah tells us that He loves even the most sinful people and seeks to bring them into His merciful arms. And it's a love that seeks to touch all of his created children: that desperate teenager, the baby growing in her womb, even tyrants and terrorists.

So it's up to us to imitate God's merciful love by helping and praying for those who persecute us, and those who don't love us back.

Prayer:

Gracious God, loving our enemies seems like one of most difficult things you could ask of us.

Please remind us that this is how you love and that if you ask it of us then you will give us the grace to do it. This we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 24, Friday, March 12
Carmen Pate, former 40 Days for Life board member

Intention:

Pray that God will continue to bless the efforts that have gone into the 40 Days for Life campaign, as we trust Him for the results.

Scripture:

Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power, and by Your strong hand. O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name.

—Nehemiah 1:10-11

Reflection:

Nehemiah provides an awesome blueprint for volunteers in God's service, particularly those responding to the devastation abortion has caused our nation.

Nehemiah grieved for God's reputation as he witnessed the condition of the city walls of Jerusalem. The walls were broken down which was seen by neighboring people as a sign of weakness on the part of Jerusalem's God. No wall meant no security for the city and its people.

We learn from his story that he covered every detail in prayer; inspired others to join the cause; organized others to help do the work; confronted opposition directly and turned to God when discouraged; and finally celebrated what was accomplished and gave God all the glory!

Like Nehemiah, we must acknowledge God's sovereignty as we serve Him before a mocking world.

We too need to be reminded that we are "fighting" for our families.

We too must have an attitude of confession and repentance before a Holy God. We must pray for strength, refute slander, and not be diverted from our work.

Like Nehemiah, we will draw attention from the enemy when we are seeking to protect the well-being of God's people. We too must stand firm and seek God's help to persevere until the task is done. We too will be victorious.

Prayer:

Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in heaven and in the earth is Yours.

We pray for your continued guidance and protection throughout the remainder of this 40 day campaign.

May we be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in Your work, knowing that our labor will not be in vain. We pray in the name of Jesus, amen.

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Devotional for Day 25, Saturday, March 13
Rev. J. Kirk van der Swaagh, Conservative Congregational Christian Conference

Intention:

We pray for the conversion of all those who refuse to acknowledge that human life belongs only to God.

Scripture:

Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

— Jeremiah 1:4-5

Reflection:

To be or not to be?

There is no question!

The question of "being" is something philosophers have long pondered.

What is the meaning of being and what is the source? In the passage before us, we have our answer.

We have being because we are known by God.

For God to declare that he knows and sets apart the prophet Jeremiah even before he is conceived indicates that our being rests in God's own being.

Because He is and because He wills we, therefore, are and do.

The Apostle Paul says as much when he declares before the philosophers of his day, "In Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

One of the tragedies of the abortion culture is that life in the womb has been so heartbreakingly devalued.

To embrace the arguments of the "pro-choice" crowd one must conclude that the child in the womb doesn't exist, isn't there, has no being. But nothing could be further from the truth.

That child is known by God and, as such, has being.

Prayer:

Lord God, we confess that in You we live and move and have our being.

Because You are, we are.

May we find grace from You to affirm the being of every human and may we labor to make this truth known to the world around us. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 26, Sunday, March 14
Vera Faith Lord, Director, Alpha/Omega Life Ministry

Intention:

Pray that those who have forgotten their purpose may discover it in God and therefore have the courage to choose life.

Scripture:

These all wait for you, that you may give them their food in due season, what you give them they gather in; you open your hand they are filled with good. You hide your face, they are troubled; you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. You send forth your Spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth.

— Psalm 104:27-30

Reflection:

"I am a feather on the breath of God."

As the quote above portrays, we are upheld by the power and purpose of God. Our very existence on earth, from our body's first breath to its last, when we leave it to return home, is our Father's choice and happens only by His willing to do so.

He who created the universe also created that which is "me." I do not "have" a soul – I AM a soul, as well as a body.

My entire purpose in this life is to find my way back to my Creator.

Prayer:

Beloved Father, remind us today that there is no truth but you.

Do not let us fall prey to the evil one's lie that we may choose death.

Remind us right now that you, who created all life, are in control of all life, and let us know right now that you who created all life, are in control of all life, and let us choose life always.

Father, please let us hear your voice more today than yesterday.

Keep lighting the pathway home, for us and for all who participate in this 40 Days for Life campaign.

Father, we're on our way. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.

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Devotional for Day 27, Monday, March 15
Ernest Ohlhoff, Outreach Director, National Right to Life

Intention:

We pray for humility in our work for God's Kingdom.

Scripture:

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bond-servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

— Philippians 2:5-8

Reflection:

There is no limit to what we can accomplish when we don't care who gets the credit.

Jesus Christ's life on earth exemplifies a total submission to the will of the Father. His humility, compassion, gentleness and thoughtfulness are reflected over and over again in the New Testament. He was God incarnate, yet He chose to be born to a humble, working class home.

How absurd it must have seemed to the rich and powerful that the Son of God, the Messiah, the one foretold by the prophets, the 'King of the Jews' was born and raised as a simple peasant.

During His thirty-three years on earth, He sought no riches, claimed no secular power and gathered no possessions.

His short time on earth changed more lives, softened more hearts, and gave hope to more people, than all the rich and powerful human 'kings' combined.

And, at the end of His life on earth, by dying on the cross, He opened the door to eternal life for those who heed his words and follow in his footsteps.

Prayer:

O Lord, help us follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Let us humbly and diligently work to restore legal protection for the unborn, the disabled, the medically dependent and all innocent children of God whose lives are threatened.

Let us remember the old adage that "He can never lead who has not first learned to obey."

And, Lord, grant us a peaceful heart as we labor in your name. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 28, Tuesday, March 16
Rev. Ben Sheldon, President Emeritus, Presbyterians Pro-life

Intention:

We pray for the conversion of abortionists and all abortion advocates.

Scripture:

Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.

— Isaiah 1:16-17

Reflection:

God is just.

Inscribed around the inside of the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, DC, are the immortal words of Thomas Jefferson: "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just."

If the deist, Jefferson, knew in the depths of his being that God is just, how much more ought we Christians to reflect on this profound truth? The justice of God, like his holiness and his purity, encourages us to seek justice for all people.

It is the evil deeds and wrong, selfish attitudes of our modern society that have led to the cavalier acceptance of abortion and euthanasia. But, as Jefferson also said, "his justice will not sleep forever."

God is calling us today to seek justice, to encourage the oppressed, and to defend the orphans and widows of our society.

It is a noble calling! It is one which every true believer, every God-fearing man and woman, should heed with no hesitation and no reluctance.

To follow the God of justice and truth is to stand unequivocally for the right to life of everyone, especially the unborn, the physically disabled, and the terminally ill.

God's word through the prophet Isaiah is as relevant in today's 21st century world as it was in Isaiah's 8th century BC world. May God's grace help us to defend the unborn's right to life as well as that of the already born.

Prayer:

O God, our heavenly Father, give us courage and wisdom as we seek to eradicate the evil in our society.

Help us to realize that your divine Spirit alone can change hearts and minds so that all your human creatures may enjoy the fullness of life you intended for them.

I pray this prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 29, Wednesday, March 17
Carmen Pate, former 40 Days for Life board member

Intention:

Praise God for His compassion in pardoning our sins and forgiving our transgressions. Give praise that He delights in showing mercy.

Scripture:

Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgressions of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us; and will subdue our iniquities.

—Micah 7:18-19

Reflection:

Micah had been sent to declare God's judgment and call the people of Judah to repentance. The people had become spiritually and ethically corrupt.

Prosperity had hardened the rich, the poor were oppressed and the heirs to David's throne were practicing abominations and idolatry.

Is it not easy to see the parallels of God's people in Micah's day and God's people today in America?

Through Micah, God corrected His people by demanding justice, not burnt offerings and sacrifice. He told them to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God. In speaking of the Old Testament stories of God's people turning from God to sin and idolatry, Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:11, "Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."

Many biblical scholars believe God has removed His hedge of protection around our nation in response to our sins of immorality and abortion. Let us cry out in repentance for His mercy once again.

And may we honor His faithfulness by doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, eternal, changeless, and faithful Lord, we recognize that we are in need of forgiveness as a nation, for turning our hearts away from you.

Hear our prayer of repentance Lord and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We praise you for your tender mercies and your compassion that never fails.

Lord, it is only by Your grace that we can live lives that are just, and merciful.

May Your Holy Spirit enable us to walk humbly in Your presence and may You be pleased to restore America so that a generation not yet born may praise you. In the name of Christ Jesus, who has done great things for us, amen.

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Devotional for Day 30, Thursday, March 18
Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director, Priests for Life

Intention:

That those tempted to abort may understand that their child is already present, and already a real person.

Scripture:

And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

—Luke 1:41-44

Reflection:

Jesus not only loves unborn children — He was one himself!

Think about this for a moment.

We often hear people speak of a pregnant mother by saying, "She's expecting a child."

Now if one is expecting a package, the package is not yet there.

As reflected in our verse for today, however, this is not the case with the mother.

Her gift is already there. The pregnant woman, a mother already, does not have a child "on the way," but has a child, already present and in full possession of his or her human rights, starting with the right to life.

Prayer:

Jesus, open my eyes to your presence in the life of every child. Open my heart to joy in the birth of every child, a birth that reflects the joy of your own birth in Bethlehem.

As you shared life in the womb of Mary, so now send your protection upon every child still in the womb, and grant to their mothers the strength and joy that comes from welcoming the gift of life. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 31, Friday, March 19
Rev. J. Kirk van der Swaagh, Conservative Congregational Christian Conference

Intention:

For the medical community, that the truth they know about the human body may become awe and wonder at the God who made it.

Scripture:

Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.

—Psalm 139:16

Reflection:

Human beings -- God's tapestries.

Psalm 139 is a psalm that reveals the enormity and otherness of God. His divine attributes are on display: omniscience (2-4), omnipresence (7-12), loving-kindness (17-18), justice (19-20), righteousness (23-24), and omnipotence.

Yet, when it came to express this last attribute, what example did the psalmist use – God's creation of mountains, seas, or far-flung galaxies? No, he used none of these. To express the wonder of God's unparalleled creative power the writer mentions the fashioning of the human in the womb (14-16).

The Hebrew word used to express God's forming of us in the womb, *raqam*, is the same term for needlework or embroidery.

In other words, we are a tapestry that displays God's artistic mastery.

And, like the artist who knows his creation down to the last detail, God intimately knows us.

This reality provokes the writer to awe and wonder. He proclaims, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

What is true for this psalmist is true for each human being.

Each is fashioned by God and known by him and we can proclaim on behalf of each, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

Prayer:

Gracious God, help us to appreciate the wonder and beauty of Your creation. Help us proclaim on behalf of every one of our fellow human beings, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

May the knowledge that we are intimately known by You shape our lives and actions. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 32, Saturday, March 20
Rev. John Ensor, PassionLife

Intention:

As we pray for the end of abortion, let us pray for the expansion of the pregnancy help center movement worldwide.

Scripture:

The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne.

— Revelation 12:4-5

Reflection:

You don't need to be a theological scholar to get the essential point of Revelation 12. Something BIG is afoot. It has something to do with the birth of Christ and the children of God.

It involves a war in heaven, with powers and principalities beyond our expertise. But the battles are fought here on earth.

The crux of the matter centers around the babe of Bethlehem and the cross of Calvary.

It continues to unfold down through the ages, through us, the children of God, who put their faith in Christ and take up their cross and follow him.

We are waging a war of love against all things that destroy body and soul.

The intensity waxes and wanes, but like labor pains, they grow and culminate in new life.

The unleashing of legal abortion nearly 40 years ago stirred up prayer (lamentation really). Many were then led to start pregnancy help centers and maternity homes.

Today there are over 3,000 such ministries that did not exist 40 years ago.

They reflect a movement of God on our watch: Christians driven to give their time and charity to end abortion one woman at a time.

Let's pray this movement expands worldwide. Let's pray for thousands more Christians to start, serve and support pregnancy help centers.

Prayer:

O God, from generation to generation, you have called your people to be the very aroma of life amidst a culture of death. Now it is our turn.

Prepare me. Send me. Use me. I am eager to do my part.

Stir your people every where to take up this great work.

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Devotional for Day 33, Sunday, March 21
Fr. Terry Gensemer, National Director, Charismatic Episcopal Church for Life

Intention:

May we absorb the truth that God is paying attention to us, and to each human life, personally and individually.

Scripture:

When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor.

— Psalm 8:3-9

Reflection:

How often we ignore the phrase, "stop and smell the roses" and instead submit to the all too "urgent" task at hand. Is this tendency what keeps us, at least in part, from acknowledging that God's care for His sacred creation is paramount in His own mind?

The Psalmist speaks of God's handiwork: the heavens, the work of his "fingers," and then points to God's masterpiece – human life. He declares to us that God is mindful of us. God keeps His masterpiece in His thoughts.

God, the creator of the awe-inspiring heavens, is not distracted by the tasks before Him. He is not pulled away, as we might be, by thoughts of something "more important." God is paying attention to and attending to His crowning glory, His masterpiece of creation, which cannot be duplicated or replaced, which surpasses the beauty of all other created things – the human being.

There is no way to adequately describe how God feels about us as human beings. There are no words to fully portray His love, compassion or desire to be in communion with us.

Perhaps, the closest we can come, is to contemplate the thoughts of a mother as she gazes for the first time at her newborn child. God cares for Life. We, as His followers, should take time to consider the life He has created and called upon us to love and protect.

Prayer:

Lord, you are the creator of all things. Guide my thoughts to consider your creation in all of its majesty, beauty and holiness. Guide my heart especially to your creation of precious human life.

Help me to comprehend how essential life is in your own heart. Teach me to appreciate, love and protect all human life through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 34, Monday, March 22
Rev. Paul Stallsworth, President, Lifewatch (United Methodist Church)

Intention:

May we come to know that divine life, in relationship, creates human life.

Scripture:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

—John 1:1-3

Reflection:

"In the beginning" was God. Always, before all times, there was God. This particular God -- the God of the Bible, the God of St. John's Gospel -- is different from all other gods. This God is alive and full of life. This God is not the picture of deadness and death, aloneness and isolation.

This God is the picture of life, relationship, and unity. For within this God, within this one God, there are three divine persons who live, who love, and who work -- together. This is the glorious mystery of the Trinity. The Trinity means divine life. The Trinity means three, living Persons -- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit -- who relate to each other. The Trinity means mutual love and service among three Persons.

The Word was always with God the Father. This Word was, is, and will be the Trinity's second person. The Word is also the Son of God or, as revealed in time, Jesus Christ. God the Father and God the Son live, love, and work for each other. As one, they create "all things" together: the Father creates all things, including all human life, through the Son.

So the Father, through the Son, creates all human lives. The little one swimming in his mother's womb, the infant smiling in his father's arms, the child crying in pain in a hospital bed, the energetic teen running another mile, the old man gasping for his last breath -- all were created, at their beginning, by the Father through the Son. No exceptions. Divine life creates human life.

Prayer:

O God, may we always be quick to call you Father. And when we call you father, let your Spirit remind us that we, and all people, from their beginning to their last day, are your children. We praise you, Father, that you sent your Son to reveal to the world that all people are His brothers and sisters, that all people are your children. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 35, Tuesday, March 23
Carmen Pate, former 40 Days for Life board member

Intention:

Pray for post-abortive women who cannot forgive themselves; may they understand that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Scripture:

Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sin is covered. Blessed is the one to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.

— Romans 4:7-8

Reflection:

In the passage above, the Apostle Paul making a point about justification by faith, refers back to David's words in Psalm 32:1-2.

In spite of the enormity of David's sin—adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband—and the utter absence of any personal merit, David in his brokenness, understood the imputed righteousness of God.

David's response was not continued guilt over his sins, but praise for his freedom from guilt, and God's power to live life differently.

Once your relationship with God has been restored, your guilt has served its purpose and should no longer be given place in your life. This is true regardless of the particular sin, including the sin of abortion.

As a post-abortive woman, I too struggled with this issue until I realized that punishing and hating myself after receiving God's forgiveness was an insult to God.

It was as though I were minimizing Christ's work on the cross as insufficient to cover my sin. I was denying Him the opportunity to bring glory to His name for the healing and restoration He wanted to do in my life.

I was giving victory to the enemy who having lost the battle for my soul, was bent on destroying my testimony as I accepted the continual guilt he heaped on my mind.

It is my joy to continually sing of God's grace rather than give the devil a foothold in my life. Don't waste God's mercy! Accept His forgiveness and forgive yourself as testimony of His amazing grace.

Prayer:

Our Most Gracious Heavenly Father, thank you for your amazing grace that saved a wretch like me.

I come against the enemy of my soul who would have me feel cast down and dejected.

Lord, keep your children from falling prey to the accusations of the father of lies. Turn our mourning into dancing and may we bring praise to you as we give testimony of Your healing and restoration in our lives. For by His grace we are saved, amen.

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Devotional for Day 36, Wednesday, March 24
Rev. Ben Sheldon, President Emeritus, Presbyterians for Life

Intention:

We pray for the gift of openness to children.

Scripture:

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them.

And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."
— *Genesis 1:27-28*

Reflection:

God's intention is that we multiply and fill the earth. One of the most pernicious lies that sociologists have foisted off on the public is that the earth is becoming overpopulated.

What kind of a sadistic god would create the earth and human creatures on it, only to have them literally reproduce themselves into oblivion?

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our divine Creator, has commanded us to multiply and fill the earth and far from letting the population get out of control, He has, in fact given his human creatures a dominical role over all the lesser creatures.

The "birth control" movement, which had its beginnings with Margaret Sanger in the early years of the last century, has led, in many parts of the world, to a birthrate that is drastically below the normal replacement rate.

God's Word assures us that children are a blessing, that they are a reward of faithfully trusting and serving God and that they are the crown of their parents' old age.

The spread of the contraception mentality that has so permeated our culture is, undoubtedly, a factor in the ready acceptance of abortion. God's commandment to multiply and fill the earth has never been withdrawn. May He help us to accept the gift of children and give him thanks for every baby who is born into the world.

Prayer:

Father of mercy and grace, we thank you for the gift of our children. Grant that every fiber of our being may rejoice when a new baby, our own or any else's, is born into the world. Help us to welcome them as we would welcome you, for whenever a new baby is conceived, another life to bear your image and another voice to praise and worship you, is beginning. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 37, Thursday, March 25
Carmen Pate, former 40 Days for Life board member

Intention:

Pray that we will each submit ourselves this day as a living sacrifice to God, giving all that we have in us for those being sacrificed on the altar of convenience.

Scripture:

I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

— Romans 12:1

Reflection:

Since all things are for His glory, we are to offer ourselves for that purpose.

This of course is in sharp contrast to those who are being swayed by the enemy to sacrifice their babies on the altar of convenience, rather than choosing to surrender their all, including their unborn child, to the Lord for His purposes.

A career, education goals, or even a boyfriend can unknowingly become an idol for some young women. In their minds, abortion is a convenient way to "rid themselves" of an obstacle in the way of their "worship."

In light of the sacrifice Christ made on our behalf, and the fruit of God's mercies on our lives, we owe God our highest form of praise and worship.

Presenting our bodies as living sacrifices is therefore reasonable service.

We were made to worship God and to worship God alone.

The enemy who seeks worship for himself distorts God's truth regarding worship, sacrifice, idols, and children.

As you have given of yourself to rescue those who are perishing—the young woman as well as her child—you are worshiping God in the truest sense of the word.

May your prayerful example lead an abortion minded client to turn away from her idols to worship the one true God, sparing her child from the altar of convenience, and sparing herself from a lifetime of regret.

Prayer:

God Almighty, You alone are worthy of our praise and worship.

Having accepted Your Son's sacrifice on my behalf, I in turn present my body to you as a living sacrifice.

Thank you for deeming me holy and acceptable because of Christ's shed blood for me.

I pray that you would use me as your vessel to rescue others who are perishing. Through Christ who is Our Glory, amen.

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Devotional for Day 38, Friday, March 26
Carmen Pate, former 40 Days for Life board member

Intention:

Pray that those standing in peaceful vigil will extend mercy and grace to others as they remember that Christ did not treat us as our sins deserve.

Scripture:

You have heard it was said, 'you shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.
— *Matthew 5: 43-44*

Reflection:

Perhaps it is obvious by now that not everyone thinks this campaign is a great idea! In fact, those on the front lines standing in peaceful vigil are perhaps being cursed and hated for what God has called you to do. Because we are all fallen creatures, our natural response may not be as Christ-like as we would hope it would be.

So, how do we keep our natural response in check, while allowing the Holy Spirit to empower us to love, bless, do good, and pray for those who hate us or would do us harm?

Consider first the Holiness of God. It seems that sin has clouded our ability to think clearly about God's nature. We simply don't have a clue of how outraged God is by our sin, what an insult sin is to His person, or how sin fires the flames of His wrath. Praise God that He didn't leave us in our depravity destined for His divine wrath!

Ephesians 2:4-5 says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in sin, made us alive together with Christ; by grace you have been saved."

Because of God's mercy and grace towards us, we who receive Him receive eternal Hope. Those who curse you, hate you, spitefully mistreat you and persecute you need that same Hope. That is the only way we can ever expect them to behave differently. Ask the Holy Spirit to love them -- through you -- so they are drawn to the Hope that is in you, that is Christ Jesus.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, may we reflect your character of grace and kindness to those who hate us and curse us. Guard our hearts and our tongues as we respond in love to words and actions meant to rile us or cause us harm. Let others see the Hope that is Christ in all we say and do. In His precious name we pray, amen.

Devotional for Day 39, Saturday, March 27
Carmen Pate, former 40 Days for Life board member

Intention:

Pray that volunteers will replace exhaustion or discouragement with rejoicing over the miracles we have seen thus far, and enthusiastic service as God takes us on to victory!

Scripture:

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

— 1 Peter 1:6-7

Reflection:

We have reason to rejoice when we consider the many babies whose lives have been saved during the 40 Days for Life campaign. Add to those lives, the women and men who have been spared from a devastating decision and now have opportunity to make a plan for their baby that is both life affirming and God honoring.

Whether directly, or indirectly, you have contributed to these testimonies of praise with your sacrificial service.

Perhaps you have been grieved by various trials during your commitment to 40 days.

The attacks of the enemy come in many forms -- difficulties in relationships, finances, health. Or maybe you are physically and mentally exhausted and have been marking off the days on your calendar, eagerly waiting for Day 40.

Consider these trials in light of God's plan for you.

The Apostle Paul understood the big picture when he said in Romans 8:18, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

This is our Hope and our victory. Let us rejoice in the opportunity to give that Hope to others in our path.

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, we sing to You a new song, for You have done marvelous things. Forgive us when we allow circumstances to defeat us. You give power to the faint and You increase strength in those who have no might.

We rest in You dear Lord, and ask You to empower us again for Your service as You work out Your plan for us and through us.

May You receive glory through our victory in Christ, in whose name we pray, amen.

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Devotional for Day 40, Sunday, March 28
Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director, Priests for Life

Intention:

Let us keep our eyes fixed on the New Jerusalem, where death will be no more.

Scripture:

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"

— Revelation 21:4-5

Reflection:

Every activity we undertake in defense of the sanctity of life is *prophetic,* inasmuch as it points to the day when "death will be no more."

Every victory we have when an act of abortion is prevented is prophetic of that day when death itself will be definitively conquered.

Every triumph of grace in this world, whereby someone is brought to see the value of life and given the strength to welcome it, is a breaking into our history of that definitive future in which the old order of things will have passed, and all things will be made new.

As pro-life warriors, we must keep our eyes fixed on heaven, and our hearts secure in the hope that the day is coming when all evil will be conquered.

It is the future that shapes the present; it is victory that informs the battle; it is the destination that determines the journey.

Daily, we are called to reflect on heaven.

When we weep, we are to think of the day when every tear will be wiped away.

When we face the destructive power of death, we are to think of the day when death is swallowed up in victory.

When we labor against abortion, we are to think of the day when we will have the rest and peace of the final triumph of life.

Heaven is as real as earth, and its joys will be as real as our present sorrows.

Prayer:

Father, you are the God of hope. Your word fills us with the vision of the world to come, when every tear will be wiped away, and death will be no more.

Father, how we need that hope, how we are strengthened by that vision! Keep our hearts focused on heaven, and diligent in the labors of earth.

As we struggle against the culture of death, root our souls in the assurance of victory. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Devotional for Day 41, Monday, March 29
Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director, Priests for Life

Intention:

Pray that the witness of 40 Days for Life bears abundant fruit, and that we begin again each day to storm the gates of hell until God welcomes us into the gates of heaven.

Scripture:

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. On this rock I will build my church; the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

— *Matthew 16:18*

Reflection:

When we read this verse, we usually think that the Lord is promising that the church, which is His Body, will withstand all the attacks launched against it.

Of course, that is true. But when we think about it more carefully, we realize that in a battle, the gates do not run out into the battlefield to attack the enemy. Rather, they stand still to defend the city from the enemy attacking it.

So when the Lord says that the gates of hell will not prevail against the church, who is doing the attacking?

It is the church storming the gates!

The church, all of God's people in Christ, is called to take the offensive, to run into enemy territory, and to gain ground for Jesus Christ. We do not wait for an invitation; we already have a command.

We prepare, but we do not wait for circumstances to be perfect; we already have one who has gone before us.

During these 40 days, we have stormed the gates. We have taken the offensive.

We have pushed forward the boundaries of the kingdom. And we must keep doing so, in numerous ways.

Indeed, the gates of hell will not prevail. The gates of falsehood will flee in the presence of truth. The gates of sin will melt in the presence of grace. The gates of death will fall in the presence of the church, the People of Life!

Prayer:

Father, we praise you. We have heard the voice of your Son, and therefore we can make our voices heard.

We have done battle with the power of evil, and therefore we can have compassion on those still within its grip. We have been freed from the kingdom of darkness, and therefore we can bear witness to your Kingdom of Light.

May the witness of all your people through these 40 Days for Life bear abundant fruit, and may we begin again each day to storm the gates of hell until You welcome us into the gates of heaven.

We pray in the victorious name of Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.

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