Respect-Life Curriculum

The people of God must protect the life and dignity of the human person.

"Catholic School Solidarity in Human Dignity Day" January 22, 2013


SHARING CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHINGS:
CHALLENGES AND DIRECTIONS
USCCB

Catholic Social Teachings

Scriptural References

The Dignity of the Human Person:

Genesis 1:26-27 created in His image and likeness
Psalm 8: 5-7 humans made less than a god
John 12:32 Christ will draw all to Himself
Deuteronomy 30:19 choose life
1 Corinthians 15:22 Christ died for all

Family, Community and Participation:

Genesis 17:7-8 God's covenants with His people
Exodus 6:6-8 God's covenant frees His people
Leviticus 19:9-15, 35 -37 Covenant Social Laws
God's covenant with His people and their children
Mark 1:14-15 A social image of the reign of God
Luke 22: 14-20
Christ's new covenant
1 Corinthians 11:23-26 Hebrews 8:7-12
Humans Rights and Responsibilities:

Right To Life: food and shelter
Economic Rights: education and employment
Cultural Rights: religious freedom

Deuteronomy 5:17, 30:19 Right to life
Sirach 34:22 Rights of workers
Psalm 146:5-8 Freedom from oppression
Isaiah 10:1-2 Against unjust laws

Catechism of the Catholic Church:

USCCB
Creation of Man CCC 355-361
Respect for Human Person CCC 1929-1938
Equality and Differences Among Men CCC 1934-1938
Respect for Human Life from the Moment of Conception CCC 2270

Life and Dignity of the Human Person
Grades 3-5

* Begin with prayer for the Dignity of Life.

ELA Activities:

Working Towards ...Media Literacy
Teacher supplied-
Students share and discuss an article concerning social justice and human dignity from internet, magazine, newspaper etc. Each week, a designated student brings in the article for discussion. The student's views are captured in an essay and as the essays improve in quality, they are sent to administrators, Catholic news services, media outlets.

Dignity of the Elderly-
Students interview a person of senior age and write a compare and contrast article referencing the senior and their own lives. The teacher and the class decide which questions they will ask the senior that will promote 'senior human dignity'.
Mathematics Activity:

**A Dignity Donation Deposit Receptacle** can be kept in the cafeteria and students can put in their extra coins. Each month, this money can be counted by the third graders and graphed by the 4th or 5th graders. This information would be posted on the school web site. Money may be donated to a Catholic charity that supports the dignity of the human person.

Science Activities:

**One of a Kind**

Every person is a child of God and unique in every way. One way to look at the distinctiveness of each individual would be to investigate that everyone’s fingerprint is different. The follow lab from the site Teacher’s Zone will allow students to experience their unique fingerprint.

During this lesson students learn how to identify different fingerprint patterns.

NOTE: The magnetic fingerprint wands and dust are recommended if you have the money available for purchase. This method is less messy than the traditional black powder and fiber brushes.

**Presentation #1: Fingerprint Basics (PPT)**

**Worksheets: Fingerprint Basics (PDF), My Prints (PDF)**

**Fingerprint Analysis (PPT)** - This activity will analyze the distribution of fingerprint patterns. After students complete the **My Prints** worksheet and classify their prints, they complete the top section of the **Fingerprint Analysis worksheet**.

Plants for Life

**St. Fiacre- patron saint of gardeners; Born in Ireland lived in France**

**Feast Day- Sept. 1**

**Plant Life**

The student’s will plant seeds in small flower pots. They will have lessons that derive 'the care and needs' for the life and health of the plant.
A day with senior citizens is planned by the school. Students are prepared to share with senior visitors the ways in which they cared for the life and the health of their plants. A prayer for the dignity of life is attached to the plant or to the pot. All pray the prayer together. The plants are gifted to the seniors.

Religion Activities:

"I Demonstrated Dignity to Another" Award

Begin on January 22 but this can be carried for the week or the month. Possible Choice: Find patrons that will turn dignity awards into monetary help for the needy.

Make sure that there is a follow through as to "what difference did my actions make to another human?"

The 3, 4, 5th grade teachers decide on a "I Demonstrated Dignity to Another" Award. Awards may be hung in a prominent place.

The awards can be translated in donations to the local charity that supports Dignity. (i.e. unwed mothers)

Rosary for Dignity-

Any tech device or space in the classroom may be used. Make the dot outline of a rosary.

These can encircle the room or be smaller on a Smartboard/ computer. Each child places a virtual bead or paper plate rosary bead as prayers for the Dignity of all Human life are recited.

Social Studies Activities:

Letters of Praise
The students will derive a person in history or current events that demonstrate/d the social teaching of the dignity of the human person. The students write a letter of praise to that person, living or deceased. Letters may be mailed to the living or posted on the web for the deceased.
Diocese of Metuchen

(Remember to follow your school handbook re: placing student names with web site postings.)

**Dignity Dinner**- (also may be used in Religion, Math, ELA classes)

Pre-Work necessary for set-up.

Each student is placed in a pool of students who represent a specific economic class through a lottery drawing.

The students can research the percentages in each one of these classes in the USA or the teachers may assign the percentages as below.

The economic groups:
- Upper Class - 17%
- Middle Class - 25%
- Lower class - 28%
- Poverty Level - 27%

Each group researches what a meal would look like for them. That is the meal they consume for that day.

The students journal their feelings and concerns about this experiment.

Question: What can students do to support a decrease of hunger and the dignity of each person?

**Life and Dignity of the Human Person**
*Grades 6-8*

**Resources**

Literature with cross-curricular themes into Social Studies, Science and Religion

- Crispin: The Cross of Lead - Avi (Middle Ages)
- My Bridges of Hope - Livia Bitton-Jackson (WWII)
- Francis: The Journey and the Dream - Murray Bodo (St. Francis of Assisi biography)
- The Watsons Go To Birmingham; 1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis (racial prejudice)
The House of the Scorpion - Nancy Farmer (Human Cloning)
Radiance Descending  Paula Fox  (Disabilities)
Diary of a Young Girl- Anne Frank  (WWII)
Among The Hidden- the Hidden Children Series- Margaret Peterson Haddix  (population controlled society- science fiction)
The Giver, Gathering Blue & Messenger- Lois Lowry (future society-science fiction)

People of particular note in the Dignity of the Human Person make excellent candidates for novel studies of historical fiction or biographies:
St. Peter Claver
St. Katherine Drexel
Dorothy Day
Blessed Damian of Molokai
Bishop Oscar Romero
Blessed Theresa of Calcutta
St. Francis Xavier
St. Francis Cabrini
Pope John Paul II
St. Maximillian Kolbe

Media

8th Grade Roving Reporters

We will ask the 8th graders to interview and report then report the activities of the children in their school, in their Respect Life Curriculum during the week of January 22. 8th graders can report to the principal, faculty, children, and parents etc., what the school accomplished for Respect Life Day or Week.
This interview should be information and phrases from the children so the 8th graders can document what the children remember and learned. What had the most impact on them in the Respect Life information?

8th Grade Respect Life Assessment Template

Name of School:
School Town:
Teacher/ Administrator overseeing data collection:
Please list the grades from which you have collected data:

Date:
Grade Interviewed:

(For early childhood children, have the teacher prompt the children with words that will help them share their Respect Life experience.)

What did you learn about “Respecting Life” today/this week?

Place children’s comments here:

PK:

K:

Grade 1:

Grade 2:

ETC.
Diocese of Metuchen

Recognize Your Inner Qualities

As Homework, the 8th graders ask their parents to list their child’s Greatest Inner Qualities. These are brought into class and the students discuss them in small classroom groups.

After their discussion, they are asked to write their parent/parents Greatest Inner Qualities. These are turned into the teacher and can be shared with parents or used as a Valentine for their parents if desired.

Social Studies/ Math/ Science/ ELA-

Graphs of Reality for all and Religion for Some

*Students prepare a graph that they will use to chart statistics that have been decided upon from the items below.*

*Students predict numbers of people in each one of the categories below prior to their research.*

The students research the statistics in NJ or USA on one or all of themes:

1. capital punishment
2. assisted suicide
3. abortion

Students correlate the laws that apply to these areas.
The data is entered into graphs, geographical maps.

Analyze the data.

Students discuss and draw conclusions.

Students make a presentation to school community adults on their results.

Other related topics: genocide; cloning; embryonic stem-cell research
Religion/ ELA-

Our Beatitudes/ Corporal Works of Mercy are Current

Students research a beatitude or work of mercy and relate how it aligns with the Respect-Life message of the Catholic church. They are to express in a speech “Each Life Is A Gift”, how this knowledge can directly affect their behavior now and in the future.

Music-

Music of Life- Each Life Has Value because we are made in His image and likeness.

Students choose a song that can depict the Respect-Life message of the Catholic Church. In some instances, they might need to research Christian bands and music.

This is a good way to acquaint the student with some alternative music from their every day choices.

The choices are cleared through the teacher and then shared with the other students. The student explains his/her choice.

They acknowledge if it is: Rhythm; tempo; lyrics etc. that influenced their choice.

World Language-

Respect-Life is Sweet Music in All Languages

Students will receive world language words as a group to complete and match them with English pro-life vocabulary words.

The world language words can be developed into sentences of a pro-life message. These may be displayed after completion.
Math-

**Baby Growth**

The students research the size of the baby in utero. They graph the results to show the growth pattern of the baby from conception to birth.

Students can chart their own birth weight with the whole class and compare to their researched chart.

**Life and Dignity of the Human Person**

High School

There is an article in *The Reading Teacher* out of the University of Pittsburgh that speaks of an activity called “In the Media” Margaret McKeown et al. This article explains how to get students to be aware of vocabulary from their academic subjects in the everyday mainstream media.

The following activity is based on McKeown’s idea:

**WORDS TO LIVE BY...**

Using these guide words under the theme of “Respect Life”, students are to find the words in all manner of print; speech; TV; radio etc.
Respect Life Glossary List:

Glossary of Terms

Abortion – the intentional killing of a preborn child in the womb any time from the moment of conception until birth. Sometimes referred to as “terminating a pregnancy.”

Alcohol – a liquid produced by fermentation of carbohydrates that, when consumed, produces increasingly deteriorating states, including drunkenness, and possibly loss of consciousness. It is classified as a drug.

Assisted Suicide – a form of self-inflicted death which is accomplished with the aid of another person. When a physician is the providing a lethal prescription, it is called physician-assisted suicide or doctor-prescribed suicide.

Drugs – chemical substances used in the treatment, cure, prevention, or diagnosis of disease that affect a person’s physical or mental well being. When used wrongly, they can be harmful and addictive.

- **Cardinal (Natural) Virtues** – main virtues upon which all other virtues depend
- **Temperance** – helps us master the attraction of things pleasurable to our senses
- **Courage** – helps us overcome difficulties and challenges and to do the right thing, especially when others are urging us to do wrong
- **Justice** – helps us give to God and other people what is due them, to act or treat fairly
- **Prudence** – helps us to know what is good in every situation, to act with care, caution, and good decision-making

Character – The combination of qualities or features that distinguishes one person, the moral or ethical quality of a person.

Chastity – the virtue that enables us to control our sexual impulses, which enables us to love selflessly.

Complementarity – The quality that causes two different things to bring out the best in the other and to fit together in a more complete way. In marriage, men and women unite together to form a more complete image of God because of their complementarity.

Conception – the uniting of a man’s sperm and a woman’s egg to form a new human being

Conscience – the inner sense of what is right or wrong in one’s conduct or motives, based upon the truth

Contraception – (contra = against; conception) any action that manipulates the sexual act for the purpose of preventing life. Contraception should be distinguished from Natural Family Planning, in that when married couples choose natural means to space children, they do not manipulate the sexual act; instead, they respect the life-giving aspect of sex by refraining from it during fertile periods. Contraception, on the other hand, implies that a person manipulates the sexual act, so as to engage in sex with the intent of avoiding pregnancy.

Courtship – the attempt to win the affections or love of a member of the opposite sex

Covenant – a solemn agreement, as between God and humans, or between a man and a woman in marriage

Dating – going out socially with a person of the opposite sex, often with romantic interest
Death Penalty (also capital punishment) - execution of an offender sentenced to death after conviction by a court of law of a criminal offense.

Embryo - In humans, the embryo is defined as human life at its earliest stages after it is implanted in the uterus wall through the eighth week of development.

Emotional Quotient – an index (indicator) of emotional intelligence

Euthanasia - the act or practice of killing someone who is very sick in order to prevent suffering.

Faithful – (character) has loyalty to and dedication to a person or mission

Family – a man and a woman united in marriage, together with their children

Femininity – the quality of being feminine; womanliness. The image of God in humans is partially shown in males, partially in females.

Fertility – the gift of God which empowers men and women to be co-creators with God of human life

Fetus - an unborn offspring of a mammal, in particular an unborn human baby more than eight weeks after conception.

Freedom – the ability to seek the truth and choose what is good

Generosity – readiness and fullness in giving; self-giving in marriage and the family,

Grace – friendship and communion with God that is God’s free gift

Human dignity – human worthiness of honor and respect, based on our creation in God’s image

Human rights – the basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled. As expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, they include the right to life and liberty, freedom of thought and expression, and equality before the law.

Justice – the habit of treating others, including God, fairly and giving them what they deserve

Love – desiring and doing what is best for another person, even to the point of self-sacrifice. True love is a reflection of the love of God.

Lust – uncontrolled sexual desire

Manipulation – shrewd or tricky management of another person, especially for one’s own advantage, particularly in an unfair or fraudulent way

Masculinity – The quality or condition of being masculine. The image of God in humans is partially shown in males, partially in females.

Marriage – a lifelong union between a man and a woman established by God for their good and the procreation and education of their children

Media – the means of communication, such as radio and television, newspapers, and magazines, and Internet sites that reach or influence people widely

Moral Environment – one’s surroundings, such as family, friends, school, entertainment, and media that will teach good or bad moral values

Natural Family Planning – methods that married couples use to plan or prevent pregnancy in a way that respects the life-giving element of sex by observing the natural signs of fertility. The methods find the days on which the couples can or cannot get pregnant from sexual intercourse. If the couple is seeking pregnancy, then they engage in sexual activity on the days they can get pregnant; if the couple is seeking to avoid pregnancy, then they do not engage in sexual activity on the days they can get pregnant.
**Pornography** – presentations of sexual behavior in writings, drawings, photographs, or other means, especially those having little or no artistic merit

**Post Abortion Grief** – deep regret after an abortion experience and grief for the loss of the aborted child

**Predator** – a person characterized by robbing and destruction; (sexual) – a person who commits rape or sexual abuse

**Puberty** – the period or age at which a person is first capable of sexual reproduction of children

**Rape** – having sexual relations with another person by force

**Realistic** – (character) enables a person to see things as they really are; concerned with, or based on what is real or practical

**Responsible** (character) – is able to make moral or rational decisions about our behavior and therefore able to be trusted or depended upon

**Sacrament** – an outward sign instituted by Christ that gives grace

**Seduction** – the leading or drawing away from faith and one’s principles, especially with regard to sexuality

**Sexual Impulse** – sudden inclination to act on sexual feelings

**Sexually Transmitted Disease** (Sexually Transmitted Infection) – a disease/infection that can be passed to other persons through any kind of sexual contact

**Sexual Urge** – the feelings resulting from the wish to gratify sexual desire

**Thankfulness** (gratitude) – awareness and appreciation of a gift

**Theological Virtues** – virtues that are directed gifts from God and have God as their goal
  - **Faith** – enables us to believe in God and all that God has revealed to us
  - **Hope** – allows us to seek the Kingdom of Heaven and eternal life as our ultimate goal
  - **Charity** (Love) – self-giving love of God above all things, and of our neighbor as ourselves

**Trust** – confidence in and reliance on God and others

**Truth** – actual existence, reality, correctness, accuracy

**Vigilant** (character) – alert, aware, watchful to detect danger

**Virtue** – a good habit; moral excellence, goodness, righteousness

Each time they locate or hear a word or phrase they submit it and the place they discovered it. The words/ phrases amount to points and the points receive some kind of benefit decided upon by the teacher.

**Debate This! (Life Has Value at All Stages and Conditions)**

What can the guiding principle of the Dignity of the Human Person teach us?

1. Can understanding Respect-Life issues teach students about everyday living?
2. Can dignity of the human person become practical and practiced in our daily lives?
3. Can the use of technology infuse Respect-Life practices into the classroom? These are topics for class debates.

40 Years-Roe v Wade –
What do I know?
What do I think I Know?

How can the media influence a position when writing or reporting the news?
The students should research the Catholic writings on Roe v Wade. Or the teacher may supply “a writing” on abortion. Students choose to report or write and use subtle influences in their presentations to persuade their audience in a direction of thought. Where can a person get factual information in regard to the Catholic Church and her doctrines and traditions? What affect does a person’s media literacy have on his or her opinion?

Life and Dignity of the Human Person
Early Childhood

I’m “Thumbody Special”!
I’m a child of God!
Children make a thumb print on paper and understand that each print is unique— one–of–a–kind. They turn their print into a picture of themselves. They may use the print as any part of their head, body etc. Also, pictures may be turned into paper crowns for the children to wear and parade as “Thumbbody Special”.

Children in class get to talk about why they are so special!
Child brings home picture to share with his/her family why s/he is special

Baby ‘Doll’ Day- Babies are fresh from the hands of God!

Have a number of children bring in a baby ‘doll’ on a specific day. Try and balance the gender Boy/Girl dolls. Each doll should have his or her name taped to her/his clothing. (Please have them be baby dolls and not teen, action or adult figure dolls.)

Science: Babies are a gift from God
The children make a list of how a baby:-

Looks when it is first born.

Discuss:
- Hair
- Teeth
- Skin
- Size

Acts when first born
- Sound
- Smell
- Speech
- Sight

Needs when first born
- Food
- Sleep
- Care
**If you have a willing parent, s/he may bring in a real baby for the final discussion. Children each prepare for homework one question they might ask the parent about the baby in class.**

**Math:**

**Babies Really Measure Up-: Babies are a gift from God**

- Using a yard stick, measure the baby dolls for height. Make a graph with the name of each doll and place on chart according to height. Children read and analyze facts from the chart.

- Children compare the height of two babies and write an equation using the greater and less than signs. The use of comparative words tall and short, taller and shorter, tallest and shortest should be promoted in the youngest grades and/or inches and/or feet in the older early childhood grades.

- Groups of three children are asked to take the yard stick and locate items in the room that are larger than the stick and shorter than the stick.

- Children use the other room items’ heights and add or subtract the height of their doll to/from it. (teacher assisted)

- Children add the heights of two or more dolls. And subtract the heights of two dolls. (teacher designated)

- In groups of two, children move about the room and find items that are tall and short, taller and shorter, tallest and shortest than each other. The children devise a graph of tall, taller, tallest etc. items that they have researched and analyzed.

**ELA:**

**Baby Talk-: Babies are a gift from God**

- Using any of the vocabulary from these lessons, place on posters/cards and place on bulletin board or wall.

- Using the name of each doll, children alphabetize the doll names from A-Z.
Children are small grouped. Each group chooses a doll and to each other verbally describes what their doll looks like. Following, they write a description of their assigned doll using the information that they collected and analyzed.

Children write a story about a real baby that they know. Teachers encourage them to use Jesus or God in their story.

**Home research can be done in advance so that they have information about the baby they will share. This also gives them practice with a parent/s on what they will say.**

Technology:

**Go Ahead and Graph It!** - Babies are a gift from God

- Using the Smartboard, groups are asked to represent their graph/s for the class.

Art:

**Doll Artist & Designer**

- Students may be asked to artistically represent a doll in any medium the teacher chooses.
- Pair /Share: Students ask each other, what change they would make to the doll if they were a doll designer.

Engineering/ Career:

**Babies are a gift from God but I can design a doll!**

**Doll Entrepreneur – “I want to own a doll company.”**

- Children design their own doll on paper; Smartboard; computer; iPad etc.
Answering these questions:
1. Out of what material would your doll be made?
2. Why did you choose this material?
3. What would your doll feel like to the touch?
4. Who would buy your doll and why?
5. What would you name your doll/dolls?
6. What type of clothes would you put on your doll?
7. What color clothes would you put on your doll?
8. What are accessories?
9. Would you make accessories for your doll?/What kind of accessories?

Religion:

God, Babies and Church-Perfect Together:- Babies are a gift from God

- Students are asked to talk to a friend and tell them, “When was the first time they remember going to church as a baby?”

Share with the group.

Ask them to talk about:

God’s Home-
- Do they see little babies in church?
- What do the little babies do the most?
- What other actions have they seen babies do in church?
- Is it good for babies to be brought to church? Why?
- At Mass where are the babies located in each one’s church?
- Does God love little babies?

My Home-
- If a baby was in their house, how would they help to show the baby love?
- Name their most favorite idea about a baby?
- Name the sacrament that most Catholic, little babies receive.
- (Your regular Baptism lesson may follow here.)
Social Studies:

Baby Futures are Bright!: Babies are a gift from God

- Have a group of children choose another doll to discuss. They will talk about what kind of career the doll will have in the community, what will the doll be when s/he grows up? Why did the doll pick that career?

Conflict Resolution:

Babies do cry but are never unkind!

- Choose two dolls and their groups.
  Make up a scenario about one doll saying something mean to the other.
  Ask each group how they would help the doll be kinder.
  Why is being kind important?
  When someone is mean to you, how did it make you feel?
  When someone is kind to you, how does that make you feel?
  Have the students re-play the scenario but with the kind words instead of the mean ones.

(Catholic School Students-Good God Choices Curriculum will continue this lesson’s objectives.)
Respect for Life Resources

Diocesan Website: http://diometuchen.org/offices-and-ministries/pastoral-life/respect-for-life/
Abortion
Abortion Facts: www.abortionfacts.com
Abortion Facts: www.secondlookproject.com
Help after abortion: www.hopeafterabortion.com
Teen Outreach: www.gravityteen.com
End of Life Issues
US Bishops: www.usccb.org/toliveeachday
Physician Assisted Suicide
http://diometuchen.org/physician-assisted-suicide
http://www.newjerseyagainstassistedsuicide.org/
http://noassistedsuicidenj.org/
Disabilities
The National Catholic Partnership on Disability: www.ncpd.org
Helpful Phone Numbers
Pregnancy Hotline 1-800-238-4269
Post-abortion helpline: 1-877-877-4300
The Respect Life Office: 732-562-1990 ext. 1629

DVD’s
Seeking Divine Wisdom – Beginning and End of Life Issues - 2 parts – 30 min. each
The Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death – Catholic Teaching on the Death Penalty – 15 min.
The Lines that Divide – Stem Cell Research Debate – 57 min.
The Science of Stem Cell Research – explains the different types of stem cell research – 14 min.
Truth Booth – prenatal development in the womb – 3 min.
Fetal Models – available for loan.