

Archbishop John Wilson's Rosary for Life reflections

Pray for unborn children and an end to abortion (The Joyful Mysteries)

Dear friends,

As we prepare to pray this rosary for life, which we will offer for unborn children, I want to reflect briefly on the sanctity of life.

All human life is sacred, all human life is wanted, all human life is loved.

This is because all life is God-given and therefore willed by God. He created us in his "own image" (cf. Genesis 1:27), and as St Paul reminds us, we "are not our own" (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:19).

We all belong to God, we are willed by God, and in Christ Jesus, we were saved by God.

We do not become children of God at birth. Scripture tells us that God chose us "before the foundation of the world" (cf. Ephesians 1:4), and that before we were born we were "called by his grace" (cf. Galatians 1:15).

As Jeremiah hears from the Lord: "before I formed you in the womb I knew you" (cf. Jeremiah 1:5). From that moment, God not only calls us, he names us too (Isaiah 49:1).

From that very moment, we are His and made in His image. That is why we must do all we can to protect and pray for unborn children.

Unborn children have been called by God and they have been named by God. Their names, like yours and mine, are already carved on the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

As followers of the Lord Jesus, we are called to walk in His ways and proclaim His truth, and that means opposing abortion and giving a voice to the voiceless child in their mother's womb.

As you pray this rosary, please pray especially for expectant mothers and fathers who had not planned to have their child. Pray that they can find comfort and hope in the Lord Jesus, and come to know that their child is wanted, is loved, is named, and is willed by God.

O Virgin of Guadalupe, Patroness of unborn children, we implore your intercession for every child at risk of abortion. Help expectant parents to welcome from God the priceless gift of their child's life. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Pray for peace and for the victims of war (Sorrowful Mysteries)

Dear friends,

Before we pray a rosary for life, offered for peace in our world and for the victims of war, let us reflect briefly on war and peace.

Scripture is clear, for us a child is born, a son is given, who shall be called the "Prince of Peace" (cf. Isaiah 9:6). He will be "our peace" (Micah 5:5), who will "speak peace to the nations" (cf. Zechariah 9:10), and whose light of salvation will reach to the end of the earth (cf. Isaiah 49:6).

This prophecy is fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ, our Prince of Peace, who tells us clearly that peacemakers are "blessed" and "sons of God" (cf. Matthew 5:9). We are called to be a people of peace, to stand with those persecuted and suffering injustice (cf. Matthew 25:40).

That is why, in the face of war, we must be clear that God demands peace. I am not a politician, nor a statesman. I am a disciple and a shepherd. I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I know as followers of the Lord Jesus, the Prince of Peace, each of us is called to be a beacon of His peace.

Each of us is called to speak out for peace, to be with our suffering brothers and sisters – especially persecuted Christians – and proclaim the truth that God demands peace.

Let us keep praying for peace, especially in the Middle East, and pray for the conversion of hearts of all those who wrongly think war is the answer.

We invoke the maternal intercession of Our Lady, Queen of Peace, and we beg that she look tenderly upon every country suffering war, and intercede for all her suffering children.

Mary, Queen of Peace, grant us peace in our hearts, harmony in our families and peace throughout the world. Watch over those in the fear and shadow because of war, and protect them with your motherly love. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Pray for people with disabilities (Luminous Mysteries)

Dear friends,

Before we begin praying a rosary for life, offered for our disabled brothers and sisters, I want to reflect briefly on belonging.

In our society, a person's value and sense of belonging are too often treated as a commodity, as if some lives are worth more than others. But where is the dignity in that?

As our Holy Father Pope Leo XIV has said, "the quality of human life is not dependent on achievement. The quality of our lives is dependent on love".

This love comes from God. God is love (1 John 4:8), he is good to all and raises up all (Psalm 145:9-14). It is because each of us is loved by God that each of us is indispensable to him (1 Corinthians 12:20-25), and that includes especially our disabled brothers and sisters.

The Lord Jesus himself, in the Parable of the Great Banquet, tells us that we will be blessed when we welcome disabled people, the marginalised and the vulnerable (Luke 14:12-14).

This is why our Church, and our society, must be a place of welcome and belonging for all - especially our disabled brothers and sisters.

Please join in praying for all people with illnesses and disabilities, that they be comforted by God. And pray for those who care for them with such tenderness and love.

Together, let us be witnesses to the truth that every person is indispensable to God, deserving of dignity and respect. And that each of us is loved by God.

Our Lady of Lourdes, heal the sick, convert sinners. Health of the sick, Help of the suffering, pray for us. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Pray for the elderly and the vulnerable (Glorious Mysteries)

Dear friends,

Before we pray the rosary for life, offered for the elderly and vulnerable in our society, I want us to reflect on the value of every human life.

The Catholic Church is clear that every life, regardless of a person's physical or mental state, is valuable and is deeply loved by God.

As followers of the Lord Jesus, it is our duty to protect and support the most vulnerable in our society. Shockingly, today that includes the elderly and the most vulnerable, as people continue to seek to change the law so their fundamental right to life is deprived.

Life is a God given gift and right. We are made in God's image (Genesis 1:26), and the life of every living thing is in his hand (Job 12:10). As the letter to the Ephesians reminds us, each of us is God's workmanship, "created in Christ Jesus for good works" (Ephesians 2:10).

We are stewards, not owners, of the life God has entrusted to us. Life is not ours to dispose of. Our duty is to support and care for our brothers and sisters who are suffering.

So, as followers of the Lord Jesus, let us walk boldly in his ways and commit to work tirelessly to uphold, respect, and protect every human life from conception to natural death.

Let us pray that everyone in our society- especially the elderly and vulnerable - know that they are loved, and that they deserve dignity and respect.

O ever-Immaculate Virgin, Mother of Mercy, health of the sick, refuge of sinners, comforter of the afflicted, you know our wants, our troubles, our sufferings; look with mercy upon us. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

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