



REVERENCE FOR LIFE MONTH PARISH GUIDE

This guide provides your parish with ready-to-use resources to educate, inspire, and engage your community. You are encouraged to copy, paste, and tailor the content to fit your parish's needs. All of the resources can be used throughout Reverence for Life Month, and you can use as much or as little as suits your community. You also do not have to use these resources only in May, but these can be incorporated into your parish life throughout the year. Use what works best for you. Every effort, big or small, makes a difference.

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Introduction

Welcome

Reverence for Life Month is a time to reflect, pray, and act in support of every human life. This guide includes everything you need to lead your parish through the four weeks of Reverence for Life Month, rooted in the Gospel of Life and the teaching of the Church. Inside, you will find ready-to-use tools, based on the themes: **See, Accept, Accompany,** and **Act.** Each week, we use the readings for that Sunday, helping parishioners reflect, pray, and respond with meaningful action. We hope these materials make your work easier and your ministry even more fruitful.

As challenges around end-of-life care continue to grow, including the expansion of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD), the Church is called to offer a response rooted in truth and hope.

What is Reverence for Life Month

Since 2013, the Archdiocese of Regina has observed May as [Reverence for Life Month](#). It is a special time to celebrate the God-given value and dignity of every human life from conception to natural death. Rooted in the promise of Christ, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10), this month invites us to proclaim the value of each person in all conditions. In this Jubilee year, this focus invites us to build a culture where life is cherished, compassion is lived, hope is offered, and our culture is freed from the myths and damages of MAiD.

Letter from Archbishop Donald Bolen

Dear friends in Christ Jesus. Alleluia, Christ is Risen! "May we exult forever, O God, in renewed youthfulness of spirit." The collect, from the third week of Easter, reminds us of the presence of your life within all of us. We know that every person is created in the Divine Image. The previously released Saskatchewan Bishop's letter, *Dying with Hope: Living and Walking Together*, reiterates the strength of this youthful spirit. This "faith invites us to live and die with trust in the God who graces us with breath."

May is Reverence for Life month. We are celebrating the precious gift of life throughout this month with the themes of **See** the Dignity of Every Life, **Accept** the Call to Care and Protect, **Accompany** One Another in Love, and **Act** to Make a Difference.

I encourage every parish to make May a time to focus on the needs of the unborn, parents, the elderly, the poor, the sick, the lonely, the imprisoned, the hungry, and the abandoned. Please be creative in your approaches to live out the Gospel of Life in your communities. The Reverence for Life Commission has put together some comprehensive and easy-to-use resources. The Parish guide has been emailed out in the Tuesday File and can be found by following this link: <https://archregina.sk.ca/2025-reverence-for-life-resources/>

All Resources for your Parishes can be found on the website using the above link and embedded in the Parish Guide that was sent out in the Tuesday File. Please include the Reverence for Life prayer during each Mass in May. It can be said after the Prayers of the Faithful to incorporate this prayer into your liturgy easily. There is a section of the Parish Guide titled, Liturgical Connections. This includes homiletic ideas created by Deacon Larry Worthen in Halifax, and Prayers of the Faithful.

Outside of Mass, we are inviting parishes to gather together to listen, learn, and act in ways that celebrate the gift of life. You will find many ideas in the Parish Guide. Whatever you do in your parishes, and however you choose to participate in cultivating a culture of life, not death, do it with compassion, a listening ear, and hope.

Christians are uniquely qualified to imbue the experience of suffering and dying with hope. This is so because we have come to believe and trust in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ's victory over death makes us a people of hope. In this world, we strive to be faith-filled disciples of Christ, who is the guarantor of our hope.

(*Dying with Hope: Living and Walking Together*, Saskatchewan Bishops' Letter, March 25th, 2025, the Solemnity of the Annunciation.)

May God, the Creator and Lover of life, bless abundantly all those whose lives are endangered, those whose lives are made difficult through indifference, violence, and injustices. Pray that all people may receive the grace to accept the Gospel of Life as a gift ever new, and the courage to bear witness to it. To the praise and glory of God, the Creator and lover of life. Amen! Alleluia!

If you have any questions or concerns,
Please contact Tashia Toupin,
Social Justice Coordinator,
at ttoupin@archregina.sk.ca



Basic Background on MAiD in Canada

Why Focus on Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD)?

“Incurable cannot mean that care has come to an end,” the Vatican affirms, even when a cure is impossible, our care and compassion should never cease.

vaticannews.va

Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) is now the fifth leading cause of death in Canada. Since its legalization in 2016, more than 60,000 Canadians have died by euthanasia. While often framed as a compassionate choice, many who request MAiD are not dying. They are struggling with loneliness, fear, or the feeling that their life no longer matters.

Originally allowed only when death was imminent, MAiD now includes:

- People with **chronic illness**
- People with **disabilities**
- And there are proposals to increase accessibility to MAiD

Why Are People Choosing MAiD?

Doctors and experts tell us that all physical pain at the end of life can be managed with proper care. MAiD is rarely chosen because of pain. According to the Government of Canada, those who request it often name:¹

- Loss of ability to participate in meaningful activities: 95.5%
- Feeling like a burden: 45.1%
- Emotional distress: 38.5%
- Loneliness or isolation: 21.1%

Why is MAiD a Growing Concern?

MAiD has been practiced for decades in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. In Canada, just eight years after legalization, we are already second only to the Netherlands in terms of the percentage of deaths by MAiD. By 2023, 4.7% of all deaths in Canada were caused by MAiD.²

This rapid growth makes Canada a cautionary example for the rest of the world. The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) is right to [call for Canada](#) to roll back its expansion of euthanasia, or MAiD. This also reinforces the fact that MAiD is an election issue in Canada on which every federal political party leader should take a clear stand.³

¹ Fifth Annual Report on Medical Assistance in Dying in Canada, 2023. Section 3.6 Nature of suffering. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/health-system-services/annual-report-medical-assistance-dying-2023.html#a4.4>, November 12th, 2024.

² James Crisp. UK Telegraph. *Global deaths from assisted dying surpass 30,000 in a year.* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/11/26/assisted-dying-hits-record-high-deaths-rise-30000-in-year/>, November 26, 2025.

³ UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. *Statement Regarding UN Committee's Call to Reverse MAiD Expansion in Canada.* <https://www.cardus.ca/news/news-releases/statement-regarding-un-committees-call-to-reverse-maid-expansion-in-canada/>, March 26th, 2025

What's Wrong with MAiD?

- It poses a grave danger to vulnerable individuals.
- If death becomes a "solution," what is the incentive for seeking treatment?
- When MAiD is offered as a valid or even preferable option for "treatment," the value of human life is trivialized.
- Morality and the sanctity of life have profound existential implications.
- We are failing our mission to be in loving relationships with our sisters and brothers.

The Church's Response

These are not medical problems. They are human ones. These issues deserve human answers, not a prescription to die. When someone asks, "Do I still matter?" We want the Church to be the voice that answers, "Yes." You matter. You are not a burden. You are not alone. We will stay.

This is why the Church must respond with clarity and compassion. Our Catholic bishops warn that this expansion "undermines the universal and inviolable dignity of human life and harms the building up of society; it cannot be condoned under any circumstances."⁴

For more information about MAiD, visit the CCCB website: [Suffering and End of Life - Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops](#)

⁴ Permanent Council of the CCCB. *Message from the Permanent Council to the Catholic Faithful on Permitting Persons Living with Mental Illness to Access Euthanasia/Assisted Suicide*. CCCB, March 9th, 2023. https://www.cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-05-05-Message-to-the-Catholic-Faithful_MAID-final.pdf

Planning for Your Parish

Supporting Parish Ministry

We understand the many responsibilities parish leaders carry. This guide is here to support your workload with ready-to-use resources. You are encouraged to copy, paste, and tailor the content to fit your parish's needs. Use as much or as little as suits your community.

Pastoral Support & Collaboration

We will be hosting **a live webinar on Tuesday, April 29th, 12:00/noon SK (2:00 ET)**, so you have time to plan and get information into your bulletins. In this webinar, we will walk through the materials and their implementation. All parish leaders and volunteers are welcome to attend. [Register for the Walk Through](#)

The Christian Medical and Dental Association (CMDA) is offering Train-the-Trainer sessions to prepare facilitators for the "Living with Christ, Dying in Hope" video series. Please [register online](#).

- May 8th, 15th, and 22nd at 7:00 pm ET (5:00 SK Time)
- June 26th, July 3rd, and 10th at 12:00/noon ET (10:00 SK Time)

Because the training is during May, we recognize that you might not be ready to host this program until later. You can do this any time of year. If you are open to inviting others in the archdiocese, we would love to collaborate and help promote your event. Please contact Tashia Toupin at ttoupin@archregina.sk.ca to discuss how.

Do You Have Questions or Need Support?

- For Parish Planning contact: Tashia Toupin, Social Justice Coordinator, Archdiocese of Regina at ttoupin@archregina.sk.ca
- Questions about the Horizons of Hope CCCB resource, contact the CCCB staff at: ofl@cccb.ca
- Medical Ethics and Living with Christ, Dying in Hope video series contact: Brad Mackinnon at bmackinnon@cmdacanada.org.

Themes and Resources Overview:

Everything you need to do for Reverence for Life Month!

Getting Started

1. Choose a point person or gather a small committee
2. Review the weekly themes and select what works for your parish
3. Talk to your parish Priest/Administrator and secretary to ensure bulletin announcements, prayers, and promotion of parish events are included.
4. Encourage bulletin announcements, small group discussions, or short post-Mass presentations

Links to the Resources for Each Week

- Tuesday, April 29th, 12:00/noon SK (2:00 ET), [Register for the Walk Through](#)
- Participate in or host the CCCB "Horizons of Hope" series. Contact Leona Burkhart if your parish wants to host at: lburkhart@archregina.sk.ca.
- [3-Part Dying with Christ, Living with Hope Video Series](#), Christian Medical and Dental Association (CMDA) Canada is offering Train-the-Trainer sessions to help prepare facilitators for the "Living with Christ, Dying in Hope" video series. [Register for Train-the-Trainers](#).
 - May 8, 15, and 22 at 7:00 p.m. ET or
 - June 26, July 3, and 10 at 12:00 p.m. ET
- The following can be found at the [Archdiocesan Reverence for Life Page](#)
 - Amanda Achtman, "Living Hope" and Panel Discussion Videos
 - The Facilitation Guide
 - [Multi-lingual Rosary](#)
- Conversation Guide Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan [Faith-Based Final Care Directive](#), Create your "Living Will"
- Novena: for the Feast of the Visitation, start on Friday, May 23rd, 2025. respectlife.org/visitation
- Printable PDFs for the novena <https://www.usccb.org/resources/visitation-novena-printable-rev.pdf>
- Send a Letter to your Saskatchewan Health Minister: <https://www.nooptionsnochoice.com/english/take-action-saskatchewan-consent> to send a message to your provincial representative urging protection for the vulnerable, protecting healthcare rights and funding for adequate palliative and hospice care.

Special Thanks to Brandi Klein for all her work in curating and connecting so many people who worked on this project! This would not have happened without your hours of work and perseverance. Thank you so much!

Week 1: See the Dignity of Every Life - Dignity does not Expire!

Date: May 3rd and 4th, Third Sunday of Easter

Goal: To affirm the Church's teaching that human dignity does not disappear with illness or age. Every life is sacred, from the beginning to its natural end.

Call to Action (Advocacy & Activities):

- **Education:** Play the 3-minute video featuring Amanda Achtman, "Living Hope" and encourage parishioners to watch her full presentation.
- **Personal Encounter:** In the bulletin insert, there is a call to reach out to others. Encourage your parishioners to talk up this small but powerful action.

Parish Communications

Mass Announcement

This weekend marks the beginning of Reverence for Life Month in our parish. Over the next four weeks, we are invited to reflect, pray, and act to uphold the dignity of every human life. This year's theme is See, Accept, Accompany, Act.

This week we begin with "See" as we open our eyes to those who are vulnerable, sick, or suffering. In Canada, Medical Assistance in Dying is now the fifth leading cause of death. Many people are choosing it not because they are dying, but because they feel hopeless, lonely, or burdensome. As Catholics, we are called to see every person as God sees them and to respond with care and compassion.

For more information, please check the bulletin. **We will be hosting a short video screening on (DATE) (AFTER MASS), please come and join us for conversation and coffee as we work to build a culture of care.**

Bulletin Insert

Reverence for Life Month – Week 1

Theme: **See. Recognizing the Dignity of Every Life**

This May, our parish joins others across the Archdiocese in observing Reverence for Life Month. Over the next four weeks, we will reflect on what it means to see, accept, accompany, and act in a way that reverences and respects the lives of every human at every stage, and is created in every wonderful way.

We begin with the invitation to **See**. In a world that often overlooks those who are elderly, ill, vulnerable, or just plain different from us, we are called to see each person as Christ does. Jesus saw the ones others ignored. He noticed the suffering, the lonely, and the forgotten, and He stayed with them.

Why does it matter if we choose to see or ignore those around us? The third most common reason why people request MAiD is a loss of dignity. But can dignity be lost? The Church teaches that dignity is not something we earn or lose. The Catechism says, "Being in the image of God, the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something but someone" ([CCC 357](#)).

What You Can Do This Week?

Take time to truly see someone who may be feeling unseen. Say hello to someone new at Mass. Call a friend who lives alone. Visit a family member or neighbour. Watch this week's video at: <https://archregina.sk.ca/2025-reverence-for-life-resources/> and reflect with family or friends at home or in your parish. There are guiding questions and a facilitator's guide also on this website for your use.

Liturgical Connections

Homily Ideas

First Reading: Acts 5:28-29

- Even when it is challenging, we must remain faithful to teaching the truth.
- Peter and the apostles demonstrate that our commitment to God's teachings must be stronger than any human authority or fear of consequences.

Second Reading: Revelations 5:11-14

- We know that the Triune God is the ultimate author of Creation, and all things are set in motion with a purpose. The suffering of Jesus seemed a horrific and frightening tragedy, but here we see the glory, honour, and blessings that have come from this. God has the final say on how our suffering can be redemptive.

Gospel: John 21:15-19

- The call to "Follow Me" is a call to follow Jesus in word and deed.
- Jesus' threefold question to Peter about his love reflects the need for love to be demonstrated through action. Each time, Jesus reaffirms the importance of caring for the vulnerable, "feed my lambs, tend my sheep, feed my sheep."
- Sheep represent the vulnerable, and in our world today, many are vulnerable. The Church's mission, as shown by Jesus, is to care for and protect them from harm, just as a shepherd protects their flock.

Prayers of the Faithful: Select as many as you would like

- We pray for the vulnerable, may we hear the call of Jesus and tend to his sheep by protecting life. We Pray to the Lord.
- For the Church, that we may always see the inherent dignity of every human life. Born or unborn, young or old, healthy or sick, and joyfully witness to the truth that each person is loved by God, we pray to the Lord.
- For our parish community, that this Reverence for Life Month may open our eyes in new ways to serve those around us, seeing Christ in each person we meet, we pray to the Lord.
- For those who feel invisible, unwanted, or undervalued in our society, that through our reverence and care they may know their priceless worth, we pray to the Lord.
- For lawmakers and medical professionals, that they will resist policies like expanded euthanasia that judge some lives as less worth living, and instead work to uphold the dignity of all, we pray to the Lord

Week Two: Accept the Call to Care and Protect

Date: May 10 and 11, Fourth Sunday of Easter

Goal: To encourage parishioners to accept personal responsibility in protecting and honouring life through preparation, self-advocacy, and care rooted in faith.

Calls to Action: This week's actions focus on supporting those who are suffering and advocating for compassionate care for our end-of-life wishes:

- Plan in Faith: Engage with CHAS [Faith-Based Final Care Directive](#).
- Prayer and Sacrifice: Encourage parishioners to offer a prayer or sacrifice this week for someone who is suffering.
- Highlight Pastoral Care Ministries: Take this opportunity to highlight any ministries that already exist in the parish/diocese for those suffering, like the Ministry of Care for the homebound, grief support groups, mental health ministries and invite new volunteers.
- Pray with a multitude of languages representative of the breadth and width of our Catholic Church using this [multi-lingual Rosary](#) video.

Parish Communications

Mass Announcement

Welcome to Week Two of Reverence for Life Month. Our theme this week is "Accept". This week invites each of us to take personal steps to plan for our own care and support others who may be vulnerable. One simple and powerful action is to complete a Catholic faith-based advance care directive. It helps ensure that your medical decisions reflect your faith and offers clarity and comfort to your loved ones in times of uncertainty.

In Canada, some of the most vulnerable people are being offered Euthanasia/MAiD even when they have not asked for it. When someone is already afraid or isolated, this can deepen their despair. This week challenges us to accept our shared responsibility to care for one another with compassion and presence, and to plan for our wishes.

This week introduces the Catholic Healthcare of Saskatchewan's [Faith-Based Final Care Directive](#), a legally recognized tool grounded in Catholic teaching. It empowers individuals to approach end-of-life planning with clarity and peace. **There are copies at the back of the church, or you can download it online. The link is in the bulletin.**

Bulletin Insert

Reverence for Life Month – Week 2

Theme: Accept. Accept the Call to Care and Protect

This week, we reflect on what it means to accept the gift of life, even when it brings hardship. To accept is not to give up, but to say yes to life, to love, and to the people entrusted to us. Jesus accepted the Cross out of love. We are called to walk with one another through life's trials, offering support and compassion to those who may feel alone, afraid, or burdensome.

What does it mean to accept the gift of life and the responsibility that comes with it? Accepting life includes both welcoming others with compassion and preparing thoughtfully for our care, especially as we approach the end of life. Vulnerable people in our communities are being offered MAiD even when they have not asked for it. When someone is afraid or isolated, this message can deepen their despair. The Church is called to respond with something greater, the healing presence of real companionship and care.

What You Can Do This Week?

This week introduces the Catholic Healthcare of Saskatchewan's [Faith-Based Final Care Directive](#). It empowers individuals to approach end-of-life planning with clarity and peace. Talk to your family about your values and your wishes for care. Consider filling out a Catholic advance care directive that reflects your faith and affirms life. Access the Catholic Healthcare of Saskatchewan Faith-Based Advance Care Directive and other practical tools at <https://chask.ca/publications/>.

There are copies at the back of the church, or you can download it online.

Did You Know?

Planning with this tool is an act of love. It protects you and guides your loved ones and caregivers when difficult decisions arise.

The CHAS Faith-Based Directive offers an extraordinary level of clarity and granularity. In practice, when I see a family bring out this directive, I know exactly how to honour the patient's wishes and faith. It's far more practical than the standard legal living wills I often encounter, which can be too general. This directive spares families from confusion and helps doctors provide the right care consistent with Catholic values.⁵

Our Catholic response is to care, to listen, and to ensure no one faces suffering alone. Christ knows each of us by name. Let us hear His voice and follow.

⁵ Dr. David Kopriva, Vascular Surgeon, Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Surgery, University of Saskatchewan, College of Medicine.

Liturgical Connections

Homily Ideas

First Reading: Acts 13: 14, 43-52,

- We might be persecuted, but like Paul and Barnabas, we must continue to persevere in spreading God's word to all who will listen and shake the dust from our sandals and carry on, filled with the Holy Spirit.

Second Reading: Revelation 7:9; 14b-17

- When we suffer in this world, we can unite our suffering with Christ's. We know that suffering and death do not have the last word. The Resurrection is the consequence of suffering and death. We know that God will receive us and will wipe away every tear. Those who suffer in pain and those who struggle for righteousness, and everyone else.

Gospel: John 10:27-30

- Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me." We are always invited to respond to God's voice and follow.
- We can share our love by holding precious the sanctity of all life, and intentionally creating spaces where we show our care to those who think or move differently in the world, those who have been silenced or ostracized, those who have been "thrown away."
- In our world, there is a growing mindset that if life includes suffering, it is not worth living or should be ended. This attitude is seen in the support of euthanasia and abortion. True compassion, however, does not seek to end a life to eliminate suffering.

Prayers of the Faithful: Select as many as you would like.

- For families facing an adverse prenatal diagnosis, caring for a child with special needs or the elderly who are suffering. That God may strengthen them to embrace their loved one as a precious gift, and that they receive an outpouring of support from the community, we pray to the Lord.
- For the sick, the elderly, and the dying: that in our parish we would accept the call to accompany them, providing presence, prayers, and practical care, and affirming their dignity when the world tempts them to despair, we pray to the Lord.

Week Three: Accompany One Another in Love

Date: May 17 and 18, Fifth Sunday of Easter

Goal: Encourage a parish culture of compassionate presence and introduce tools for learning how to accompany others well.

Call to Action:

- Participate in the CCCB's "Horizons of Hope" discussion or the CMDA's "Living in Hope, Dying in Christ" video series via Zoom or in person.
- Pray a Novena: On Friday, May 23rd will be nine days before the Feast of the Visitation. [respectlife.org/visitation](https://www.usccb.org/resources/visitation-novena-printable-rev.pdf)
<https://www.usccb.org/resources/visitation-novena-printable-rev.pdf>

Parish Communications

Mass Announcement

This is Week Three of Reverence for Life Month. Our theme is "Accompany." As we continue to reflect on the growing impact of Medical Assistance in Dying in Canada, we are reminded that many who choose it are not at the end of life. Instead, they may be feeling afraid, isolated, or like a burden. The Church is called to respond with something greater: real companionship and care.

Jesus never turned away from those who suffered. He stayed, he listened, and he loved. Jesus shows us how to accompany. He noticed the sick, the grieving, and the forgotten. He touched those others avoided. He did not turn away from suffering. We are asked to do the same: "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34).

This love is not abstract. It is expressed through small, faithful acts of care such as visiting the sick, sitting with the lonely, and walking with those who suffer, known as the Corporal Acts of Mercy. This week, we ask: who in our lives might feel forgotten or alone? How can we offer the kind of presence that brings comfort and hope?

We invite every parishioner to explore the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops' "Horizons of Hope" video series and the Christian Medical and Dental Association's Canada video series, "Dying with Christ, Living with Hope." These gentle and informative resource helps us understand what real accompaniment looks like and how we can bring it into our homes, friendships, and parish life.

We will be hosting (Horizons of Hope/Dying with Christ, Living with Hope) on (DATE) at (PLACE). Links are available in the bulletin and on our parish website. Let us continue building a community where no one suffers alone.

Bulletin Insert

Reverence for Life Month – Week 3

Theme: Accompany One Another in Love

This week, we reflect on what it means to truly walk with others in their suffering. Jesus never turned away from those who were sick, lonely, or grieving. He stayed. He calls us to do the same.

Many people choose Euthanasia/MAiD not because of physical pain, but because of emotional distress, loneliness, or fear of being burdensome. There are even vulnerable people being offered MAiD even when they have not asked for it. In moments of fear or isolation, this message can deepen despair.

The good news is that we live in the hope of Easter, celebrating Christ's victory over death and the promise of new life. No one should suffer alone.

What Can We Do?

Reach out to someone who may be feeling forgotten. A visit, a phone call, or a quiet moment of prayer can bring comfort and restore dignity.

We also encourage you to explore the Canadian Conference of Bishops' video series "Horizon of Hope" and the CMDA Canada video series "Dying with Christ, Living with Hope." This gentle resource helps us learn what real accompaniment looks like and how to bring it into our relationships and communities.

We will be hosting (Horizons of Hope/Dying with Christ, Living with Hope) on (DATE) at (PLACE). Links are available in the bulletin and on our parish website. Let us continue building a community where no one suffers alone.

Did You Know?

Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) is now the fifth leading cause of death in Canada. In 2023, one in twenty Canadians who died did so through MAiD. Since legalization, over 60,000 Canadians have died by euthanasia or assisted suicide.

Many who request MAiD are not in physical pain. The number one reason given for requesting MAiD is "loss of meaningful activities." What is more meaningful than loving someone, or allowing them to love you? This is not a medical problem, it is a spiritual and existential one. This is a human struggle that deserves a human response. We are not meant to be alone, but to be surrounded by our loved ones, and to call them close to us. Let us walk together in love and be the healing presence of Christ for others.

Liturgical Connections

Homily Ideas

First Reading: Acts 14:21-27

- Do not be afraid to go to people and places that you have not been before, and preach the love of Christ.
- The early church never could have imagined all the places they would go and the warmth and welcome they would receive from the Gentiles, the Romans, the Samaritans, those who had been historical, and current enemies and oppressors.
- No one and nothing is outside of the power of the Holy Spirit.

Second Reading: Revelations 21: 1-5a

- The vision of the new heaven and new earth gives us hope. God promises that every tear will be wiped away and there will be no more death, mourning, or pain. We can find comfort knowing that God will bring an end to suffering and make all things new.
- The love and care we offer to those who suffer reflect this hope. By being present to those in pain, we are offering them a glimpse of the new heaven and new earth that God has promised.

Gospel Reading: John 13:34-35

- Jesus gives us a new commandment to love one another as he has loved us. By this love, everyone will know we are his disciples.
- Did Jesus lose dignity because of His suffering? No. Then why do people think we lose dignity if we suffer?
- God does not give us suffering, but it is part of the reality of living in this world. When we suffer, it is a time when the love of another is most transformative. Our suffering gives us a window into others who have gone through this before us. We can learn empathy and, in turn, care for and walk together with those around us with new compassion and love.
- The Church doesn't want us to suffer. It teaches that terminally ill patients should be kept free from pain and allowed to die naturally with dignity. Discontinuing burdensome treatments is not a sin. (CCC 2278).

Prayers of the Faithful: Select as many as you would like.

- We pray for those sick and lonely: that they will hear the voice of Jesus and be surrounded by the love from one another and our community, we pray to the Lord.
- For caregivers and healthcare professionals: that God may strengthen them as they accompany the sick and dying, and that our society may support them in providing life-affirming care, especially through better palliative care resources, we pray to the Lord.

Week Four: Act to Make a Difference

Date: May 24 and 25, Sixth Sunday of Easter

Goal: Inspire parishioners to take meaningful public action to support ethical healthcare, protect the vulnerable, and ensure everyone has access to proper care at the end of life.

Calls to Action:

- Send a Letter to your Saskatchewan Health Minister:
<https://www.nooptionsnochoice.com/english/take-action-saskatchewan-consent> to send a message to your provincial representative urging protection for the vulnerable, protecting healthcare rights and funding for adequate palliative and hospice care.
- Share Your Story: If you or a loved one has been affected by MAiD, consider anonymously submitting your story through an [Online Portal](#). These stories help policymakers understand the impact of current laws.

Parish Communications

Mass Announcement

This final week in Reverence for Life Month invites us to move from prayer and education to action. Palliative care doctors agree that nearly all end-of-life pain can be effectively managed with proper care. The problem is that many Canadians do not have access to quality healthcare, not because of a lack of willingness from healthcare professionals, but because of limited resources and funding.

At the same time, many healthcare providers and institutions are being required to participate in MAiD, even when it violates their conscience or deeply held beliefs. This places tremendous pressure on professionals who entered the field to heal and care. We believe there is a better way. The Church calls us to advocate for just and compassionate care that respects the dignity of both patients and providers. Palliative care is a true alternative, but remains underfunded and unavailable to many Canadians.

At the end of Mass, there are letters that you can sign to let your MLA know that this is a concern to you and that you are calling for better access to palliative and hospice care. Also, you are calling for conscience protection rights for medical healthcare workers. Check your bulletin for details on how to send this letter via email. You will have to edit this information based on what your parish decided to do.

Bulletin Insert

Reverence for Life Month – Week 4

Theme: Act to Make a Difference

Our faith does not stop at prayer and reflection. It sends us out to be a voice for life in our communities and in our country.

Did you know?

MAiD does not just impact the individual requesting it. It affects families, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and our society as a whole.

- Family Physicians are expected to assess eligibility and initiate MAiD referrals, even when it violates their conscience, religious beliefs, or professional judgment.
- Pharmacists are required to fill prescriptions for lethal medications.
- Palliative Care Teams are sometimes bypassed or underfunded while MAiD services receive government support.

In Nova Scotia, a policy was passed in 2024 that forces doctors to refer for MAiD, even against their conscience, and advise patients when they qualify. Canada has legalized MAiD and expanded eligibility without clear protections for healthcare practitioners who do not want to participate in MAiD.

According to the Church, Catholic physicians can not refer patients for euthanasia because to do so would violate the dignity of the human person.

What Can You Do?

Take one simple step. It only takes a few minutes to send a message to your elected official asking for better access to palliative and hospice care and conscience protection for healthcare workers.

As people of faith, we must speak up for policies that support life, dignity, and true care. We are reminded of Jesus' words, "whatever you do for the least of these, you did for me." We are called to protect the vulnerable and to advocate for a healthcare system that values life from beginning to natural end. Let us act with faith and love.

Liturgical Connections

Homily Ideas

First Reading: Acts 15: 1-2, 22-29

- The followers of Christ are struggling with their identity, who is in and who is out. We know, if we read a bit further, that you do not need to be part of a particular culture or religion to be initiated into what will in a few centuries be called Christianity.
- Everyone is cared for and welcomed, regardless of past sin, cultural practices, race, religion, gender, socio-economic background, or any other division we humans like to put on each other.

Second Reading: Rev 21: 10-14, 22-23

- A continuation of last week's second reading. This tries to illustrate to us readers the beauty of Heaven. The goodness of God and the abundance that is waiting for us in Heaven.
- There is always hope to give someone, because we know that God is good, merciful, and loving.

Gospel Reading: John 14:23-24

- Do we do what God says? God's commands are clear. In Exodus, He says, "thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13).
- A request for MAiD may be a cry for help. It is crucial to understand the root of the suffering and explore ways to provide support.
- God's commandments lead us to protect people, especially when they are most vulnerable. People are at greater risk when there is a constant temptation to choose euthanasia.

Prayers of the Faithful: Select as many as you would like

- For our elected officials in our province and in Canada: that God grant them wisdom and courage to enact policies that promote a culture of life, defending the unborn, improving mental health care, and expanding palliative care for the suffering, we pray to the Lord.
- For unity among all who work for the protection of life, all people of good will, that together we may build a world founded on respect for human life, we pray to the Lord.
- That the Holy Spirit inspire each of us to be brave and loving witnesses for life, in our families, workplaces, and society. May our words and actions defend those who cannot defend themselves, we pray to the Lord.