

RESPECT LIFE SUNDAY 2020

Valuing the Vulnerable

Liturgical resources

Suggested prayers for inclusion in Prayer of the Faithful

Please feel free to adapt one of these or to write your own

- Loving God who welcomes everyone to feast at your table, help us to value and protect the vulnerable members of our families, communities, society and nation in all we do.
- Loving Father, we seek wisdom to guide all who will vote in next week's election, keeping in mind the protection of the most vulnerable who need it the most.
- Almighty God, awaken in our hearts your own love for the most vulnerable members of our society. Recognising our own fragility and vulnerability, help us to protect all people, from before birth to the natural end of our lives, and to eliminate discrimination and exclusion because of illness and disability.

Prayer for use after Communion or at home

Loving God, who calls each one of us to Respect Life,
We recognise at times we are all frail, all equal, all precious,
Each of us at times in need of protection.

We ask you to change hearts to help us value the vulnerable members
Of our families, our communities, our society.
To use our hearts and minds and strength to protect
Lives that others might cast aside.

Loving God, there is room at your banquet table for everyone.
Guide us in your revolution of tenderness
To find room also for each person at our tables and in our hearts.

Reflections on the Gospel for Respect Life Sunday 2020 – 11 October

This may be of use in the preparation of homilies or for people reflecting on the Gospel at home

- In the Gospel for Respect Life Sunday, 11 October 2020, some who are invited to a feast prioritise their farm or business work over the invitation, and refuse to come. The King instead fills his hall with all he can find, regardless of their status, worth and productive value as judged by society.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has brought us again to face ancient questions about the different ways we value life. While the society around us often shows that some lives are worth more than others, we reject that idea. Some of the ways we are seeing that at the moment

include commentators who suggest the lives of elderly people, people with disabilities and existing medical conditions, and people who are not part of the paid workforce are not “productive” members of society and therefore more expendable than others in the pandemic.

- New abortion legislation earlier this year weakened protection for life before birth. Next week many of us will be voting in the euthanasia referendum.
- Allowing legalised euthanasia or assisted suicide commits the State to a process whereby the worth of someone’s life will be assessed. It would divide people into two groups: those whose lives are protected and those who are deemed not to be worthy of the same protection.
- The idea that some lives are worth more than others is not the way we look at people through the eyes of faith.
- We are one human family, and there is a special place in our family for the most vulnerable, the poor, people experiencing illness or disability, unborn lives, people rejected by society.
- We reject the thinking that people’s value is based on some external assessment of their productive value. We recognise that each person has intrinsic dignity as we are each made in the image and likeness of God.
- We recognise that our attitudes and values towards some groups in society, eventually rub off and influence our attitudes towards other groups in society. If we regard some lives as worthless and able to be “thrown-away”, it influences our attitudes and behaviour in others. It affects how seriously our message is taken if we are seen as inconsistent or changeable in relation to how we value human life.
- In recognising the intrinsic value of every life, we recognise that each of us at times is frail, vulnerable, poor. Many of us now feel vulnerable; however, each of us is precious. Let us take that insight into our decisions and actions during this extraordinary period of human history.