



## NATIONAL PASTORAL INITIATIVE FOR LIFE AND THE FAMILY

### Suggestions for Homilies and Prayers of the Faithful

**“I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly.”**

**~John 10:10b**

When Jesus reminds us that he came that we might have life, he does so in the context of laying down his own life for our sake. Being “pro-life”, in our country and even in our faith communities, can cause division, fear of judgment and limit our relations with others. Yet Jesus continues to offer abundant life to all, and invites us to be one with him in receiving, protecting and nurturing life.

Proclaiming the “Gospel of Life” is unavoidable if the Good News is to be incarnated in the lives of his disciples. Why not take up the challenge to include some element of the culture of life each Sunday in your parish, and whenever possible in your daily life? But to be consistent with “the Gospel of Life”, we need to do it in a way that inspires unity, and dissipates fear and judgment. All of us, ordained and lay, are called to open others to the kind of relationships that make discipleship truly life-giving.

Each week, you will find here suggestions for a pro-life homily idea, a prayer of the faithful or an insight which can be used to foster the abundant life that Jesus came to bring to us. These suggestions can also be easily adapted for family and personal prayer, or for presentations when participating with other groups or organizations. Every parish, and each of us individually, are invited to make Christ’s life abundant, relevant and approachable for all.

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September 16, 2012 – 24 ORDINARY TIME, Year B

**Homily Idea:** *Truly living in the midst of suffering requires grace and a willingness to receive it.*

Both the Psalm and the Gospel this Sunday talk about the mystery of life and death together. Being people of life requires us to grapple with the fact that letting go of life, even welcoming suffering and death, will allow us to find God’s life. If we are to be, as Catholics, participants in a *culture of life*, we will have to celebrate the joy that can be found in living, even in moments of loss. During the homily consider asking the choir to sing the refrain of Psalm 116 again: “I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.”

**Prayer of the Faithful:** Give us courage, O God of Life, to walk always in the land of the living, that our lives might signal to the world just how profound is the dignity of life, we pray to the Lord.

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September 23, 2012 – 25 ORDINARY TIME, Year B

**Homily Idea:** *Jealousy, hatred and violence rob us of the life God desires for us.*

The first reading from Wisdom reveals how jealousy and hatred can lead people to violence against others. The Church clearly opposes torture and violence, and this reading is relevant both politically as well as in our daily lives. When we yell, threaten violence, gossip or bully people, we make our living an instrument of destruction, robbing others of their dignity, or perpetuate the lie we are worthy only when others are unworthy. Jesus reminds us in the Gospel that we find the meaning and fulfillment of our lives when we ourselves in service for others with open hands.

**Prayer of the Faithful:** We pray for the perpetrators of violence and torture, that they may see God in the people who suffer at their hands, and that all of God's people may know his peace in this life, we pray to the Lord.

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September 30, 2012 – 26 ORDINARY TIME, Year B

**Homily Idea:** *Wealth can be its own poverty*

Most of us don't have the luxury of being "rich" by Canadian standards, but compared to many people in the world we are certainly wealthy. James reminds us in the second reading that the Lord has heard the cries of the labourers while the hoards of the rich have rotted away. In a *culture of life*, we, as disciples of Jesus, need to be sceptical about amassing wealth. What riches have we hoarded instead of shared in our lives? (Money, food, words of encouragement?) Who might be crying out to God because we have been unjust to them? (Our employees, our neighbours, our children?) What might we willingly give away, to bless others so that the gifts God has given us do not rust and rot while we hoard them? (Cable TV, a luxurious vacation, that extra book we bought but didn't really need?)

**Prayer of the Faithful:** God of generosity, open our hearts and hands to share with those in need all that you have given to us. May we be wary of laying up treasure, that we might find wealth of life in relationships of care, rather than in money or things, we pray to the Lord.