



**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. Defending 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? 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 homily, a prayer of the faithful or an insight which can be used to foster the abundant life that Jesus came to bring 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.

---

**May 6, 2018 – 6<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER, Year B**

**Homily Idea:** *Life flows from sacrificial love.*

There is an intimacy in the Gospel this week -- that we should be considered friends of Jesus! Everything the Father has given to Jesus, He extends to us, inviting us to follow Him. This is incredible and daunting because the measure of Jesus’ love for the Father is to offer His whole self that we might live. When we follow Jesus in loving sacrificially, we participate in God’s life-giving love, for ourselves and for others. What makes this kind of loving possible is staying deeply rooted in our relationship with God. We cannot sustain this kind of love without Him. As we prepare for the National Week for Life and Family beginning next week, spend some time already asking how your family could make a sacrifice to offer love to those struggling to appreciate the gift of life and family in your community.

**Prayer of the Faithful:** For friendship with God that allows us to love others sacrificially, we pray to the Lord.

**Prayer for Bulletins, Small Groups or Families:** Jesus, Friend and Redeemer, help us to draw close to you, that we might follow you in loving even when it is very difficult. Your sacrifice gave us life. Help us to choose sacrifices that share your love and care with others, so they might also see and love you. Amen. Alleluia!

---

## May 13, 2018 – THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

**Homily Idea:** *Jesus ascends into heaven and asks us to live lives that proclaim the good news.*

It's a scary moment when Jesus ascends into heaven, leaving us to proclaim the good news. Are we up to it? Surely it would be better if Jesus stayed? But He does ascend and His plan is for us to live in a way that proclaims the good news of His Death and Resurrection. So, what makes my life a witness to Jesus? We are entering into the National Week for Life and Family. Make a list this week of the ways your life proclaims the joy and gift of life, in its challenges and its joys. Make a second list of all the things you are grateful for in your family. Choose one area in your life where you would like to grow as a family in bearing witness to the gift of life and family. May the lives we live point always to Jesus.

**Prayer of the Faithful:** For lives that witness the good news of Jesus, we pray to the Lord.

**Prayer for Bulletins, Small Groups or Families:** Ascending Jesus, help us to trust that you are with us as we live to proclaim your good news. Show us where you want us to grow as witnesses in our community. Amen. Alleluia!

---

## May 20, 2018 – PENTECOST SUNDAY

**Homily Idea:** *God's life is for all people, and will have diverse expressions in different people, families and cultures.*

On Pentecost, the disciples were gathered in the upper room, afraid to go out and do what Jesus had told them. We are not alone when we feel unsure of how to witness to God's great love. God sends the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, sending them out to speak all different languages, to encounter all kinds of people, to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Unfortunately, we sometimes forget that the good news is for everyone, and we get trapped in racism, political ideologies, and unjust discriminations. That is not the life God desires for us. The Spirit is sent to bring us peace and lead us to truth. We do not need to be afraid of the Spirit at work among us in different ways: different languages and customs, cultural traditions and family rituals. As each of us receives the Spirit and is sent forth, let us remember that we are called together and that our differences make it possible for us to reach more people with life and love.

**Prayer of the Faithful:** For the Church that it be unified in our diversity, we pray to the Lord.

**Prayer for Bulletins, Small Groups or Families:** God of all nations, teach us to see you in all people, to be inspired by and curious about difference and not prejudiced or suspicious. Fill us with your Holy Spirit, that together with you we might speak all languages, engage all cultures, welcome all families, that all might come to know and love you. Amen. Alleluia!

---

## May 27, 2018 – THE SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

**Homily Idea:** *God has given us a life of freedom not slavery.*

Drawing on the second reading, it is fitting to proclaim on Trinity Sunday that all forms of slavery are a violation of the life of freedom God has desired for us. God's very self is a dynamic of three Persons loving freely to create perfect unity. Slavery removes the freedom of a person, making true unity and love impossible. Our world is full of all kinds of slavery: human trafficking and the sale of persons for forced labour, addictions of every kind, systemic and domestic violence, busyness and material consumption, and all kinds of sin. God made us for

freedom. What are the things preventing you from loving freely, with your whole heart? What are you willing to do to let God into the corners of your life where you are a slave to fear, sin, or violence? What is God asking you to do to set others free?

**Prayer of the Faithful:** For freedom from all forms of slavery for all people, we pray to the Lord.

**Prayer for Bulletins, Small Groups or Families:** Father, Son and Spirit, you have modelled for us a love of perfect freedom. Expose the ways we are enslaved and give us the courage to choose freedom for ourselves and for others. Amen.

---