

# DIOCESE OF VENICE RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY

## LONG TERM GOALS:

1. Implement the U. S. Bishops' *Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities: A Campaign in Support of Life* and the Florida Bishops' *Into the Future for Respect Life Directors* Statewide Strategies.
2. Cut the abortion rate in the Diocese of Venice - work toward making abortion unthinkable.
3. Help more women, men and extended families heal from abortion.
4. Help people facing end of life decisions for themselves or others.
5. Challenge Catholics and others to accept Church teaching on capital punishment.
6. Develop effective communications with each elected representative, encouraging them to protect life in its most vulnerable stages through legislation.
7. Encourage Catholics to practice Faithful Citizenship.
8. Mobilize and train youth regarding the life issues and chastity.
9. Promote inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in parish life.
10. Help the frail elderly and their caregivers, particularly with loneliness.
11. Train teachers in different areas of the diocese; promote Natural Family Planning to married couples and fertility awareness to young adults.
12. Provide an outreach to African Americans and Hispanics regarding the life issues, particularly on abortion.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

### GENERAL:

1. **Prepare to host September 2005 Statewide Respect Life Conference.**
2. **Encourage the development of effective Parish Respect Life Committees - in more parishes with Co-Reps/Co-Chairmen (2x2) and teams/real committees.**
3. Promote *Gospel of Life* study groups in each area (5 coastal counties and Eastern Deanery).

**NOTE: Bold = HIGHEST PRIORITIES**

## **BEGINNING OF LIFE:**

1. **Develop Gabriel Project where needed (especially Sarasota, Manatee and Eastern Deanery). Continue development in existing areas (Naples, Lee County and Immokalee).**
2. **Continue development of the Pennies for Babies Fundraising project to help pregnant women and their babies in need, including recruiting and training County Assistance Coordinators.**
3. Support adoption through Choose Life License Plate Fund advertising and adoption counseling training for Pregnancy Resource Counselors.

## **END OF LIFE ISSUES:**

1. **Continue development of "In Support of Life" Program:**
  - a. **Videotape Dr. Mary Stegman's PowerPoint presentation.**
  - b. **In-service training for facilitators.**
  - c. **Conduct sessions in parishes/areas - concentrate in one area at a time to reach as many people as possible.**
2. Promote revised Catholic Declaration on Life & Death (when approved).
3. Build a coalition against assisted suicide (long term project).

## **LEGISLATIVE ACTION:**

1. Develop more effective Action Alert Network.
2. Develop effective Tallahassee lobbying effort with constituent(s) for each legislator.
3. Develop plan for district office visits with legislators.

## **CAPITAL PUNISHMENT:**

1. Plan/provide workshop for the Leaven XI Conference in March 2005.
2. Find and train a volunteer to coordinate a diocesan-wide Ministry to Victims of Violent Crime.
3. Incorporate teaching on the death penalty, including showing of the Florida Catholic Conference video "Talking About the Death Penalty", in our Catholic high school curriculum.

## **PROJECT RACHEL/POST-ABORTION HEALING & RECONCILIATION:**

1. Develop Rachel's Vineyard weekend to be presented in the Diocese.
2. Have Lay Companion Manual translated into Spanish for training in Eastern Deanery and other areas.
3. Prepare more priests to take part in post-abortion reconciliation and healing.

**YOUTH:**

1. Develop companion parent education program for parents of middle school students.
2. Promote chastity to the youth of the diocese.
3. Continue to develop Catholic high school programs on the life issues, particularly abortion, chastity and Capital Punishment.

**PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES MINISTRY:**

1. Develop a Parish Advocate Resource Manual.
2. Develop an effective Task Force and train Parish Advocates to promote greater inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in parish life and worship.
3. Organize area or parish Masses for Persons with Disabilities (including resources in the Manual).

**OLDER CATHOLICS MINISTRY:**

1. Develop an effective Task Force.
2. Develop outreach to shut-ins (Nursing Home and Assisted Living Facility residents and homebound), including Ministry of Praise prayer program.
3. Develop program to encourage more older Catholics to prepare to deal with end of life issues.

**NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING:**

1. Develop an effective Marriage Preparation introduction to NFP (with handouts).
2. Recruit and train NFP instructors.
3. Promote NFP to married couples (via home and school associations and parishes).