

# Promoting Peace at Home:

## Communicate Catholic Teaching about Domestic Violence MEDIA TOOLKIT

### OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Enhance your efforts to address domestic abuse and violence and to promote family peace. We aim to inform the Catholic community on ways to promote [family](#) peace and to prevent and respond to



domestic abuse and to provide resources and promote prayer for all families. Our initiative provides education, resources, and research that help pastoral leaders, clergy, and parishioners recognize domestic abuse and

respond with compassion. To learn more, please visit [www.catholicsforfamilypeace.org](http://www.catholicsforfamilypeace.org).

We as a community of God are called to be part of helping friends and family suffering abuse. If you know someone suffering threats and beatings at home, help is available. Through the grace of God and the sacraments, through counseling, developing safety plans, and learning new relationship skills, family members in danger can get to safety, and abuse can stop.

Catholics For Family Peace Education and Research on Domestic Abuse is co-host of the National Domestic Violence Awareness Partners, in collaboration with the [U.S. Catholic Bishops Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth](#). Special thanks to Catholic Charities-DC for providing resources that can be used or adapted in your own communities. For more of their resources, visit [www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace](http://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace).

**KNOW THE FACTS.** For domestic violence victims—the vast majority of whom are women and children—home is a dangerous place. Even before the added stress and isolation of the COVID pandemic, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men experienced severe intimate partner physical violence, as reported by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Domestic abuse and violence refer to the physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse including teen relationships.

Faith communities are called to offer hope, help, and healing to all harmed by domestic abuse and violence. We must learn to recognize domestic abuse, respond with compassion, and refer people to the proper services that are prepared to help them.

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## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO BE HELPFUL IF AN ABUSIVE SITUATION IS REVEALED?

- Listen, Believe, and Refer. Share that the abuse is not God’s will. Say that help is available 24/7 at the National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233), 1-800-787-3224 (TTY) or at [www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org).
- Let them know that without intervention, abuse often escalates in frequency and severity over time.
- Seek expert assistance by calling the NDVH. Refer them only to specialized domestic violence counseling programs, not to couples counseling.
- If possible, encourage people who use abuse to seek help. Attending an appropriate 12-step recovery group has been a source of change for many people.
- Hotline for those who use abuse: 877-898-3411.

### SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

“How much violence is directed against women! Enough!” said Pope Francis, January 1, 2022 at St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican. “To hurt a woman is to insult God, who from a woman took on our humanity.”

You are not alone. The Church stands by families suffering violence at home. See more at *When I Call for Help*: <https://www.usccb.org/topics/marriage-and-family-life-ministries/when-i-call-help-pastoral-response-domestic-violence>

“He will shelter you with his pinions, and under his wings you may take refuge. His faithfulness is a protecting shield.” Psalm 91

Domestic violence against one of the members of the body of Christ affects all of us. Learn how you can help: <https://www.usccb.org/topics/marriage-and-family-life-ministries/when-i-call-help-pastoral-response-domestic-violence>

“If we have to fight against an evil, let’s do it, but always say ‘no’ to domestic violence.”  
- Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, 104

“The time has come to condemn vigorously the types of sexual violence which frequently have women for their object and to pass laws which effectively defend them from such violence.”  
- Pope Francis

### CONNECT WITH CFFP on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

Share your Domestic Violence Awareness Month outreach response and programs with Catholics for Family Peace. Initiatives will be highlighted on our website and social media pages.

[Email: Catholics For Family Peace](mailto:CatholicsForFamilyPeace)

### Restroom Signs

Placing signs in restrooms is a discrete way to let people know that the Church cares. [Download these signs](#), adapted by USCCB Committee for Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth. Space is provided for adding information on your local resources.

### BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. To learn more about the Catholic response, visit the U.S. Bishop’s website for their Pastoral Letter, “When I Call for Help.”

If you, a family member or friend needs help now, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 800-799-7233 (24 hours); 800-787-3224 (TTY), [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org). If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

[Download more bulletin announcements, signs and flyers.](#)

# SPREAD PEACE THROUGH PRAYER:

## Resources for Healing from Domestic Violence

### PRAY WITH US AT 3:00 PM EACH DAY FOR FAMILY PEACE

Catholics believe that God loves and cares for everyone, and that God knows their pain and concerns. Catholics For Family Peace invites you to join us in a moment of prayer at 3:00 pm, wherever you are, for those suffering from violence and abuse and those who use violence to control others. We pray for them and for all who work to end domestic violence.

**Would you set an alarm each day to remember to pray with us?**

### NOVENA TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Join us during October as we pray a [Novena for Peace in All Families](#), especially those suffering injustice or abuse. We will use the form of a novena, which is a traditional nine-day Catholic prayer. More prayers can be found on our website at <http://www.catholicsforfamilypeace.org>.

### HOW TO HELP THE ABUSED RECLAIM THEIR VALUE AND WORTH AS CHILDREN OF GOD

What would you do if your best friend or fellow parishioner told you about an abusive situation? Rose Folsom will show you how anyone can use three ordinary Christian virtues to safely walk with them toward healing. Visit Catholics For Family Peace's [video page](#) for a multi-part lesson.



JOIN US ON OCTOBER 28 FOR  
A UNITED DAY OF PRAYER  
TO ST. JUDE, PATRON OF  
IMPOSSIBLE CAUSES.

### Litany of Hope

God of Compassion, whenever two or three are gathered in your name you are in their midst. Loving God, you have called us each by name and invited us to respond as a community of faith with hope, help and healing to those whose lives have been wounded by betrayal, abuse and violence. Heal them and make them whole, that they may once more receive and give love with confidence in their dignity as your sons and daughters. In Jesus name. Amen. As people of faith we believe in the kingdom of God, therefore, today, we respond with a litany of hope. [READ MORE](#)

### STORIES OF SEEKING SAFETY AND HEALING

Catholic women told author Melanie Rigney about their journey from abuse to healing Melanie Rigney. Read their stories [here](#). Read another testimony in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) of an Hispanic Catholic woman escaping from abuse.

### THE SAINTS: AN EVER-PRESENT HELP

The Saints' lives can help us respond prudently with care and compassion to people dealing with difficult situations. [Visit this page](#) to pray with the Saints.

### HOMILIES FOR HELP AND HEALING

Fr. Charles W. Dahm, O.P., heads up the domestic violence outreach ministry for the Archdiocese of Chicago. <https://youtu.be/VdDS-PbdMu0>. More homilies are on the Catholics For Family Peace webpage, <http://www.catholicsforfamilypeace.org/video-resources.html>

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL FOR OCTOBER 2022

### FIRST SUNDAY

For all people in abusive relationships. May they experience God's love and know that their abuse is not God's will. May they find in our parish community support to seek help, find safety, and free themselves from domestic violence, we pray to the Lord.

### SECOND SUNDAY

That as a Church we might be a place of refuge for those experiencing domestic violence. For women, children and men traumatized by violence in their homes, we pray to the Lord.

### THIRD SUNDAY

During this month of Domestic Violence Awareness, we pray that the Lord might open our eyes to see families suffering domestic violence in our midst, so that we might be able to better protect the vulnerable among us, we pray to the Lord.

### FOURTH SUNDAY

For the elderly who are abused. May they experience God's love and find the support and resources they need in our parish community, we pray to the Lord.

### FIFTH SUNDAY

For teenagers in violent or controlling relationships. May they find in our parish the role models of kindness, care, and love that will show them how to recognize what a healthy and whole relationship should be, we pray to the Lord.

## ORACIONES DE LOS FIELES PARA OCTUBRE DE 2022

### PRIMER DOMINGO

Para todas las personas en relaciones abusivas. Que experimenten el amor de Dios y sepan que su abuso no es la voluntad de Dios. Que encuentren en nuestra comunidad parroquial apoyo para buscar ayuda, encontrar seguridad y liberarse de la violencia doméstica, roguemos al Señor.

### SEGUNDO DOMINGO

Que como Iglesia podamos ser un lugar de refugio para aquellos que sufren violencia doméstica. Por las mujeres, niños y hombres traumatizados por la violencia en sus hogares, roguemos al Señor.

### TERCER DOMINGO

Durante este mes de Concientización sobre la Violencia Doméstica, oramos para que el Señor abra nuestros ojos para ver a las familias entre nosotros que sufren violencia doméstica, para que podamos proteger mejor a los vulnerables entre nosotros, oremos al Señor.

### CUARTO DOMINGO

Por los ancianos que son maltratados. Que experimenten el amor de Dios y encuentren el apoyo y los recursos que necesitan en nuestra comunidad parroquial, roguemos al Señor.

### QUINTO DOMINGO

Para adolescentes en relaciones violentas o controladoras. Que puedan encontrar en nuestra parroquia los modelos a seguir de bondad, cuidado y amor que les mostrarán cómo reconocer lo que debe ser una relación sana y completa, roguemos al Señor.

# Promoting Peace at Home:

## Communicating Catholic Teaching about Domestic Violence

### For Priests and Deacons - Resources for Preaching All Year Long

Domestic Violence Awareness Month offers us the opportunity to draw attention to the Church's teaching on the dignity of all human life and the problem of violence in the home. However, the scripture readings of almost *every Sunday* of the liturgical year afford us the opportunity to speak about gospel values of love, respect, kindness, and gentleness to others, especially to those with whom we live.

Just a simple and pastorally sound reference to domestic violence in a homily lets people know that it is okay to approach you, the pastor or deacon, about the matter for help. Be aware that possibly some form of domestic violence may impact at least a third of the assembly that is listening to your homily on any given Sunday. Here are some examples of [opportunities for preaching](#) against domestic violence throughout the year, compiled by the USCCB Committee for Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth.

For homily helps *specifically* written for the 2022 September and October readings, along with more resources for parish outreach to use and adapt, visit <https://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace/parish-outreach-material/>.

### Quotations from Catholic Teaching about Domestic Violence

"A correct reading of Scripture leads people to an understanding of the equal dignity of men and women and to relationships based on mutuality and love" (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, When I Cry for Help: A Pastoral Response to Domestic Violence Against Women, 2002, p. 9). [READ MORE.](#)

### Marriage Resources

- From the USCCB Committee for Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth

[For Your Marriage.org](#)



[Por Tu Matrimonio.org](#)



[Marriage Preparation Education Module and Questionnaire](#)

- From Catholics For Family Peace, in English, Spanish, French

### Podcasts and Media Interviews

["When Love Means Leaving"](#) - From *Made for Love*, USCCB

["Exploring domestic violence in Catholic families, and how the Church can help"](#)

- *America Magazine* interviews Dr. Christauria Welland, founder, [Pax in Familia](#)

[Interviews with Three Catholics Working to End Domestic Violence](#)—For Your Marriage, USCCB

[Domestic Violence and the Pandemic—Long Term Consequences](#)—Catholic Sentinel

