



October Toolkit – *Homily Helps*

1. Respect Life Month & Respect Life Sunday (October)

- Respect for human life is under attack in our culture in every conceivable way: abortion, suicide, euthanasia, human trafficking, wide-spread birth control use and in vitro fertilization.
- We are constantly presented with misleading information about these topics. However, we all have an opportunity and an obligation to learn and proclaim the truth about these issues with charity and love.
- From *USCCB* on the issue of abortion:
 - Woman's ability to nurture and bring forth new life is a special gift to her from God.
 - The Blessed Virgin Mary underwent many trials in bringing Christ into the world and caring for him, including poverty, misunderstanding from the people closest to her, and sometimes even danger. Yet God was with her always. In the Blessed Virgin Mary, greatest among creatures, God has elevated and sanctified the vocation of all mothers.
 - All mothers can turn to God for His help, and He will never leave them nor forsake them.
 - Every child is a blessing from God, regardless of the circumstances of his or her conception. All human life is sacred.
 - God has a plan for every person — every mother, and every pre-born child.

2. Feast of the Holy Guardian Angels (Oct. 2)

- From its beginning until death, human life is surrounded by [the angels] watchful care and intercession. Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him to life. Already here on earth the Christian life shares by faith in the blessed company of angels and men united in God (*CCC* 336).
- St. Basil the Great said of guardian angels, “Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd, leading him to life.”
- When we remember our guardian angel, he will help us to combat the spiritual attacks of daily life.
- St. Gemma Galgani, among other saints with the same gift, could see her angel. She even conversed with him throughout the day. He said to her, “Remember daughter, that whoever truly loves Jesus speaks little and bears all things. I command thee, on behalf of Jesus, to always refrain from giving your

own opinion, unless it is asked; always to prefer silence to upholding your own views. Whenever you have committed a fault, accuse yourself of it at once, and do not wait for others to accuse thee. Give full obedience to your confessor, and to those whom he commands thee to obey; and be always sincere with them. Remember to guard your eyes, and be assured that the eyes that are mortified, shall behold the beauties of heaven.”

3. Month of the Most Holy Rosary & Our Lady of the Rosary (Oct. 7)

- The holy rosary is a powerful weapon in spiritual warfare.
- It is a devotion that was given to St. Dominic by Our Lady during an apparition, in which she received the title, “Our Lady of the Rosary.” This apparition occurred in 1214 while St. Dominic was in a coma. Our Lady instructed him to preach her “Psalter,” which consists of praying the *Hail Mary* 150 times. St. Dominic divided these into three groups of five mysteries: the joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries.
- Our Lady said to St. Dominic: “I want you to know that, in this kind of warfare, the battering ram has always been the Angelic Psalter which is the foundation stone of the New Testament. Therefore, if you want to reach these hardened souls and win them over to God, preach my Psalter.” She also said that, through the rosary and the scapular, she would save the world.
- At this apparition, Our Lady revealed 15 beautiful promises to the soul that devoutly prays and meditates on the rosary: <https://dominicanfriars.org/the-15-promises-of-the-rosary>. Among other things, she promises that “the rosary shall be a powerful armor against hell,” you will receive special graces, she will offer powerful protection, increased sanctity, and special favors. She even goes so far as to promise that those devoted to the rosary will not die without the sacraments.
- At Fatima, the Blessed Virgin instructed the children, “Say the rosary every day to obtain peace for the world.”
- Quotes about the rosary’s power:
 - “The holy rosary is a powerful weapon. Use it with confidence and you’ll be amazed at the results.” – St. Josemaria Escriva
 - “Give me an army saying the rosary and I will conquer the world.” – Pope Bl. Pius IX
 - “The rosary is the most powerful weapon to touch the Heart of Jesus, Our Redeemer, who loves His Mother.” -St. Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort
 - “Those who say the rosary daily and wear the Brown Scapular and who do a little more, will go straight to Heaven.” -St. Alphonsus Ligouri
 - “The greatest method of praying is to pray the rosary.” -St. Francis de Sales
 - “The rosary is the best therapy for these distraught, unhappy, fearful, and frustrated souls, precisely because it involves the simultaneous use of three powers: the physical, the vocal, and the spiritual, and in that order.” -Archbishop Fulton Sheen

- “To pray the rosary is to hand over our burdens to the combined merciful hearts of Christ and His Mother.” (Pope St. John Paul II)

4. Religious Life (Oct.)

- Religious life is a beautiful self-gift that involves renouncing the world, including its goods and pleasures. These saints that are honored in October demonstrate this sacrifice.
 - *St. Therese of Lisieux (Oct. 1)*
 - St. Therese, known as the Little Flower, was a Discalced Carmelite nun and is considered a Doctor of the Church for her letters and writings. She was born in 1873 and died in 1897. One of these is a work called “The Story of a Soul.” She contributed the “little way” or the spiritual childhood that one should enter to fully surrender to God’s will.
 - Even though she was a cloistered nun, she is considered one of the patron saints of missions. This demonstrates the power of a praying nun. She constantly prayed for missions throughout the world and her work continues to bring people to the faith posthumously.
 - *St. Francis of Assisi (Oct. 4)*
 - St. Francis of Assisi was born around 1181 and died in 1226. He founded the Franciscans and the Poor Clares. He is known for his devotion to the humanity of Jesus and the imitation of His life. He was also a mystic.
 - After being captured for a year then falling very ill, he decided to commit his life to solitude and prayer. He was especially committed to poverty.
 - *St. Teresa of Avila (Oct. 15)*
 - St. Teresa of Avila, of Teresa of the Child Jesus, was born in 1515 and died in 1582. She was a Spanish Carmelite nun and mystic. She was a mystic and reformer of the Carmelites during the Counter-Reformation.
 - She is known for her spiritual writing to her fellow religious, including the *Interior Castle*.

5. Fruitfulness & Flourishing (Oct.)

- *St. Ignatius of Antioch (Oct. 17)*
 - St. Ignatius of Antioch was a bishop and martyr in the decades following Christ’s death and resurrection. He was arrested and executed for the faith.
 - He said, “We recognize a tree by its fruit, and we ought to be able to recognize a Christian by his action. The fruit of faith should be evident in our lives, for being a Christian is more than making sound

professions of faith. It should reveal itself in practical and visible ways. Indeed, it is better to keep quiet about our beliefs, and live them out, than to talk eloquently about what we believe, but fail to live by it.”

- *St. Luke (Oct. 18)*
 - St. Luke wrote one of the four Gospels. It is believed that he was the Gentile physician to St. Paul and travelled with him on his missions. As a doctor and Gentile, he had a different style of writing. He is also believed to have written the Acts of the Apostles.
 - The Gospel of St. Luke is full of imagery to fruitfulness when one follows Christ in all things. One example is Luke 8:15, in the parable of the sower: “But as for the seed that fell on rich soil, they are the ones who, when they have heard the word, embrace it with a generous and good heart, and bear fruit through perseverance.”

- *Pope St. John Paul II (Oct. 22)*
 - In his Theology of the Body, Pope St. John Paul II explained the mystery of marriage and God’s plan for two entering marriage. As a couple, they are called to be fruitful and multiply. He said, “Marriage...is the sacrament in which man and woman, called to become ‘one flesh,’ participate in God’s own creative love. They participate in it both by the fact that, created in the image of God, they are called by reason of this image to a particular union, and because this same union has from the beginning been blessed with the blessing of fruitfulness.”