

Dear Father,

I am enclosing the materials for this year's *Day for Life*. I would appreciate your help in letting as many people as possible know about the day.

*Day for Life* – the day in the Church's year dedicated to celebrating the dignity of life from conception to natural death – will this year focus on '**Caring for Life**'.

This year's message begins with the words of Pope Francis taken from a homily in 2005 on the Feast of the Patron Saint of expectant mothers and midwives, when His Holiness spoke simply and beautifully about what promoting a culture of life really means: "Jesus teaches us to care for life because it is the image of God, who is absolute life. We cannot announce anything else but life, and from the beginning to the end. All of us must care for life, cherish life, with tenderness, warmth... to give life is to open (our) heart, and to care for life is to (give oneself) in tenderness and warmth for others, to have concern in my heart for others... Caring for life from the beginning to the end. What a simple thing, what a beautiful thing... So, go forth and don't be discouraged. Care for life. It's worth it!"

*Day for Life* 2013 will focus most particularly on:

- Care for unborn children and their mothers
- Care for people who are elderly
- Care for those who are suicidal and their families...

...and will emphasise how we all have a role to play in working together for the culture of life.

Enclosed you will find suggested liturgical materials, copies of the *Day for Life* leaflet, and a possible paragraph for inclusion in parish newsletters.

As in previous years, there will be a special collection in parishes for *Day for Life*. In most dioceses this will be held on 28 July (although we understand some dioceses may be holding this collection on another Sunday near that date). Proceeds of the *Day for Life* collection assist the work of the Anscombe Bioethics Centre (formerly the Linacre Centre for Healthcare Ethics) and other life-related activities supported by the Church.

This year we would be grateful if the collection proceeds from your parish could be sent to the office of the Catholic Trust for England & Wales. Details are on the collection form enclosed. With my thanks in advance for your continued support of *Day for Life*, my prayers and best wishes.

Yours in Christ



**+Peter Smith**

Archbishop for *Day for Life*,

Department for Christian Responsibility and Citizenship

[www.dayforlife.org](http://www.dayforlife.org)

ENCS

**“When you pray, say ‘Our Father’”**

When Neil Armstrong died in August last year there was much talk in the media about the fact that he was the first person to walk on the moon.

There were also stories of other famous astronauts, such as Alan Shepard, who was the first American in space and who also walked on the moon.

One incident caught my attention, it was the occasion during the space programme when Alan Shepard lost radio contact for twenty minutes. He was outside the spacecraft and just floated there in space.

Can you imagine just floating in space between the earth and the stars? He said afterwards that it felt like eternity.

While hanging there he had what he described as a mystical experience. He saw himself, God and the world totally differently. He looked at the world and he saw no borders, no East and West, no North and South. He saw the whole world as one living organism. It changed him completely. He realised that all the divisions and barriers in the world are human constructs.

After that he devoted the rest of his life to working for peace and reconciliation.

In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches the disciples how to pray. He teaches them that God is 'Our' Father and in doing so he was teaching us that we are all brothers and sisters, children of the one God.

It is the centre of our faith.

Christ is teaching us not to make false barriers between people. He calls us to treat everyone you meet as you wish to be treated. We should keep that vision of the Fatherhood of God, of the unity of creation, as we keep today the 'Day for Life'.

The issues of life are often cast in a political context but for the disciples of Christ they are a deeply spiritual reality. All of life, from the moment of conception until natural death, is the gift of God.

We are called to see that all of God's children have the right to life. Every single individual has a call upon our concern.

The challenge to us is not to draw up arbitrary boundaries for those we feel are worthy of care and protection. The mentality that looks at any human life and thinks that because a person is not useful or productive, their life is not worth defending or preserving does not really see them as a fellow child of God.

A culture that weighs the birth of the unborn child in terms of whether or not it is convenient or too much of a burden, even if that burden is indeed very great, has not begun to embrace the reality that God is the Father of all.

The circle of life for the Christian must include all, the unborn, the elderly, the suicidal, we must include all within the circle of humanity if we are truly to live the truth that comes from calling God 'Father'.

**Fr Michael McAndrew**  
*Clifton Diocese*

PRIEST: *Jesus teaches us 'ask and it will be given to you' and so with confidence we pray to God our Father*

READER: **We pray for the whole Church:  
that all who follow Christ will be faithful in prayer.**

PRIEST: *Lord in your mercy*

READER: **We pray for those who make decisions over life and death, and for those who seek death – whether it be for others or for themselves – that they may opt for life, not death, for hope and not despair, for peace and not for war.**

PRIEST: *Lord in your mercy*

READER: **We pray for our communities and parishes:  
that we may respect one another and honour one another as people created in the image and likeness of God. May we recognise in all of humanity the gift of life and the capacity to love and be loved.**

PRIEST: *Lord in your mercy*

READER: **We pray for all the women and men who work to protect and to proclaim the dignity of human life.  
May our faith inspire all of us to work for justice for the elderly,  
the terminally ill, the handicapped  
and all the most vulnerable of our world.**

PRIEST: *Lord in your mercy*

READER: **We pray for our young people, that in midst of the conflicting messages they receive they may perceive the truth and wonder of true love and compassion, shown to us in the life and teaching of Jesus.**

PRIEST: *Lord in your mercy*

READER: **Let us pray for a moment in silence...**

**We join our prayer with the prayer of Mary the mother of Jesus as we say 'Hail Mary...'**

PRIEST: *God our Father, you teach us to ask, to seek, to knock at your door.  
In our every need, grant us the first and best of all your gifts  
the Holy Spirit who makes us your children  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.*

## Day for Life

28 July 2013

### ***Care for Life – It's Worth It***

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It will emphasise how we all have a role to play in working together for the culture of life.

### **Website**

[www.dayforlife.org](http://www.dayforlife.org)

Visit the *Day for Life* website for publications, themes, subjects, multimedia and more information on the pro-life work of the Catholic Church.

### **There will be a second collection in parishes to support Day for Life**

Proceeds of the collection will go to The Anscombe Bioethics Centre (formerly the Linacre Centre for Healthcare Ethics) and other life-related activities supported by the Church.

### **Images for Parish Newsletters**

The Flickr website has photos of Catholic life and events which you can download free for your parish newsletter and website to go with the text above. You are welcome to use these more widely in your parish resources: [www.flickr.com/photos/catholicism](http://www.flickr.com/photos/catholicism).

Please credit: @Mazur/catholicnews.org.uk

Holy Mary, Mother of Love,  
holding in your arms, the fruit of your womb,  
graciously look upon our earth and remove from it  
all that hardens our hearts and dims our eyes  
to the preciousness of human life,  
from the moment of conception to natural death.

Through the example of your tenderness  
teach us the ways of compassion and love  
that we may build up the civilisation of love among us  
and a society that is truly worthy of the human person.  
Help us to reject all that contributes to a culture of death,  
and to work with others of goodwill  
in promoting the culture of life.

Bring us ever closer to your Son,  
so that we may know the fullness of life that he offers us  
and come to know that life more perfectly,  
with you, and all the angels and saints,  
in the eternal life of Heaven.

*Amen*

**\* Please write in block capitals**

Parish Name

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Diocese

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Church Address

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Postcode

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Telephone Number

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Email Address

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*Please make cheque(s) payable to: Catholic Trust for England & Wales (CaTEW)*

Forward this summary along with cheque(s) to:

Catholic Trust for England & Wales  
39 Eccleston Square  
London  
SW1V 1BX

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