

# RESPECT LIFE MONTH— DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS



## *Suggestions for Homilists*

*October is Respect Life Month and Domestic Violence Awareness Month. On October 25th we are giving special attention to this important issue.*

RESOURCE CARDS FROM  
**HUMAN OPTIONS**  
- (877) 854-3594 -  
WILL BE MADE  
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(E.G. CONFESSIONAL,  
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RECEPTION) AT  
PARISHES.

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## **SUGGESTIONS FOR HOMILISTS:**

30th Sunday of Ordinary Time

October 25, 2015

*As pastors of the Catholic Church in the United States, we state as clearly and strongly as we can that violence against women, inside or outside the home, is never justified. Violence in any form"—physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal"—is sinful; often, it is a crime as well. We have called for a moral revolution to replace a culture of violence. We acknowledge that violence has many forms, many causes, and many victims. . .The Catholic Church teaches that violence against another person in any form fails to treat that person as someone worthy of love. Instead, it treats the person as an object to be used. When violence occurs within a sacramental marriage, the abused spouse may question, "How do these violent acts relate to my promise to take my spouse for better or for worse?" The person being assaulted needs to know that acting to end the abuse does not violate the marriage promises. While violence can be directed towards men, it tends to harm women and children more. (USCCB, ["When I Call For Help: A Pastoral Response To Domestic Violence Against Women"](#))*

### **What is Domestic Violence:**

Domestic Violence is any kind of behavior that a person uses to control an intimate partner through fear and intimidation. It includes physical, sexual, psychological, verbal and economic abuse.

Examples include battering, name calling and insults, threats to kill or harm one's partner or children, marital rape, or forced abortion.

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## Some Statistics on Domestic Violence:

- One in four women (25%) has experienced domestic violence in her lifetime.
- Approximately one in five female high school students reports being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner.
- Women ages 20-24 are at the greatest risk of nonfatal intimate partner violence.
- Women of all races are about equally vulnerable to violence by an intimate partner.
- On average, more than three women and one man are murdered by their intimate partners in this country every day.
- Most intimate partner homicides occur between spouses, though boyfriends/girlfriends have committed about the same number of homicides in recent years.
- Over 900 Elder Abuse complaints are filed each month in Orange County.
- In Orange County, 26.3% of women surveyed said they have experienced domestic violence; the state average is 20.5%.”

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## Reading 1: Jeremiah 31: 7-9

- God heard the cries of Israel and promised to “gather them from the ends of the world, with the blind and the lame in their midst, the mothers and those with child...departed in tears, but I will console them and guide them; I will lead them to brooks of water, on a level road, so that none shall stumble.”
- For those of us dealing with the pain of domestic violence, do we know that God hears our cries, promises consolation and guidance, and wills to gather us and place us on firm footing?
- How are we as a Church, as a parish, reaching out to those whose lives are being and have been scattered by domestic violence? If God is present to those struggling, should we not also be present there, to experience the presence of God and to offer a helping hand as the Body of Christ?

## Responsorial Psalm 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6

- Like Israel in captivity, many women and some men are held captive by domestic violence. How do we as a Church partner with the living Lord to restore their fortunes?
- God offers hope to those “go[ing] forth weeping...They shall come back rejoicing.”

## Reading 2: Hebrews 5:1-6

- Jesus is an advocate for those suffering domestic violence, a high priest who knows our trials and empowers us to overcome them.

## Gospel: Mark 10:46-52

- When the blind man Bartimaeus summoned the courage to cry out for help, some tried to rebuke and silence him. “But he kept calling out all the more...” When Jesus heard and called him, others encouraged him to “Take courage...” How do we encourage or discourage others from taking courageous steps to find rescue or healing?
- Jesus actively listens and stands ready to respond to our needs: “What do you want me to do for you?” Our Lord offers healing and hope and invites us to follow him in offering this healing and hope to others.