

KICKOFF RALLY PRAYER SERVICE
FEB. 15, 2024, 6:30-7:30PM

Opening Song: *Christ, Be Our Light*

Longing for light, we wait in darkness
Longing for truth, we turn to You
Make us Your own, Your holy people
Light for the world to see

Refrain: Christ, be our light
Shine in our hearts
Shine through the darkness
Christ, be our light
Shine in Your church gathered today

Longing for shelter, many are homeless
Longing for warmth, many are cold
Make us Your building, sheltering others
Walls made of living stone **Refrain**

Many the gifts, many the people
Many the hearts that yearn to belong
Let us be servants to one another
Making Your kingdom come **Refrain**

Petition One: For an end to the evil of abortion.

Reflection: At every stage and in every circumstance, we are held in existence by God's love. The presence of an illness, disability, or other challenging situation never diminishes the value of a human life. God does not call us to perfection of appearance or abilities, but to perfection in Love. Christ invites us to embrace our own lives and the lives of others as true *gifts*.

Abortion tragically rejects the truth that every life is a good and perfect gift, deserving protection. This violent practice ends the life of a human being at its very beginning and horribly wounds all those involved. But Christ came that we "might have life and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10), taking on human flesh for the sake of our redemption. May our culture experience the power of God's transforming Love, that all eyes may be opened to the incredible beauty of every human life.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, You ARE the Author and Giver of all Life. We ask that You send the Holy Spirit and all your warrior angels to drive out the demons of abortion, euthanasia, infanticide, and capital punishment from our state, our nation, and from the world, so that the current Culture of death will be replaced by a new and powerful Culture of Life...in JESUS' Name we pray. Amen.*

Petition Two: May each person suffering from participation in abortion find forgiveness, hope, and healing in Christ.

Reflection: Countless children's lives have been ended by abortion, and countless parents and family members suffer guilt, grief, and regret—often in silence. Yet God's greatest desire is to forgive. No matter how far we have each strayed from His side, He says to us, "Don't be afraid. Draw close to my heart." Be assured that it is NEVER too late to seek God's forgiveness!

Consider the parable of the Prodigal Son. After repenting of sinning against his father, he returns from far away to seek forgiveness and work as a servant. But his father sees him approaching, runs to warmly embrace him, and hosts a banquet to celebrate his return. So, too, does God welcome all His children who come to Him with contrite hearts, no matter how serious, or how small (in our eyes), the sin. Let us turn confidently to Our Lord, Who is Love and Mercy.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, send the Holy Spirit upon EVERY person suffering from participation in the abomination of abortion. May He reveal to them how much You Love them, and lead them to where they can find hope, healing and forgiveness in Christ...in JESUS' Name. we pray. Amen.*

Petition Three: May every pregnant mother receive compassionate care and support as she nurtures the life in her womb.

Reflection: When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, she opened her heart to receive his message that she would conceive the Son of God in her womb. As a young bride who had not yet lived with her husband, Mary knew that her pregnancy presented many challenges. Despite this knowledge, she faithfully responded, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38).

Like the Blessed Mother, women who unexpectedly become pregnant often face significant challenges. They, too, are called to place their trust in God and faithfully respond to His *gift* of new life. And we are called to walk with them in their time of need. As Jesus taught us, when we love and serve others, we are loving and serving Him.

May all expectant mothers be encouraged by Mary's example and receive support and grace in lovingly welcoming their children into the world.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, surround EVERY pregnant woman in crisis with a hedge of protection from the enemy, and a strong network of emotional, spiritual and financial support that she needs to choose life for her baby...in JESUS' Name we pray. Amen.*

Petition Four: May EVERY father of a preborn child lovingly support the mother of his child in welcoming new life.

Reflection: Fatherhood has its origins in God, who chose to reveal Himself to us as Our Father, sending his only Son for the sake of our salvation. Fathers, therefore, have a special role "in revealing and in reliving on earth the very fatherhood of God." Fathers are called to exhibit "generous responsibility for the life conceived under the heart of the mother." They are uniquely entrusted with the protection and defense of both mother and child and, in this way, in safeguarding the sanctity of human life.

As evidenced in our world today, the role of the father “is of unique and irreplaceable importance.” Often women choose abortion because they do not have the support of the child’s father, or—even worse—the father of the child pressures her to make the decision to abort. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge with compassion that men can also be overwhelmed by an unexpected pregnancy and that society increasingly tells them that they should have no say in their children’s lives. In the face of these false messages, we pray that fathers of preborn children will find courage in the example of Saint Joseph—who embraced the role of father amid very difficult circumstances—and offer loving, life-affirming support to the mothers of their children.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, give EVERY father of a preborn child the courage and Fortitude he needs to joyfully take up his new role as a father, and to support and protect both the mother of his child and the precious preborn child within her womb...in JESUS' Name we pray. Amen.*

Petition Five: May EVERY pregnant mother choosing adoption receive grace and support in embracing this loving option.

Reflection: Mothers placing their children for adoption often face many challenges along the way. One of the greatest obstacles can be perceiving adoption as abandonment. But a mother who determines that making an adoption plan is best for her child isn’t deserting her child. Rather, she is following the example of Christ’s sacrificial love on the Cross in choosing a life-giving option that she has determined is ultimately in the best interest of her child, even at great cost to herself. The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us that, in the face of fears and trials, we can “hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm” (Heb 6:18-19). We pray that each expectant mother will be filled with “the peace of God that surpasses all understanding” (Phil 4:7) as she decides which life-giving option is best for her child. Let us all cling fast to the anchor of hope, for we have received “a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, ‘Abba, Father!’” (Rom 8:15).

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, may EVERY pregnant woman choosing the option of adoption for her child, receive the emotional, spiritual and financial support she needs to follow through with this loving option...in JESUS' Name we pray. Amen.*

Petition Six: May all who support or participate in abortion experience a conversion of heart to seek and receive the Lord's boundless mercy.

Reflection: When God fashioned the human person in His own image and likeness, He destined us for eternal life with Himself. Yet because of the sin of our first parents, death entered the world. The book of Genesis recounts the first occasion in which a person takes the life of another, as Cain violently kills his brother Abel. This instance of brother rising up against brother "at the very dawn of history is thus a sad witness of how evil spreads with amazing speed."

Since this time, disregard for human life has continued to spread. When we, like Cain, allow sin to find a place in our hearts, we become blinded to the truth. Sometimes this blindness might be so deep that we fail to recognize the undeniable humanity of preborn children. We may even tragically believe the lie that abortion is an act of compassion. But we know that "life, especially human life, belongs only to God: for this reason whoever attacks human life, in some way attacks God Himself." Let us pray that all who support abortion will encounter the transforming love of the Father and, with repentant hearts, seek His mercy.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, send the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of conversion, upon all those who support or participate in the abomination of abortion, including all pro-abortion, law-drafting members of government, all abortionists, all abortion clinic staff, all the women who have had abortions, and all those who have pressured these women to have abortions. May He prepare their hearts to accept Your gift of repentance, conversion, and reconciliation with You, Lord God...in JESUS' Name we pray. Amen.*

Petition Seven: May all preborn children be protected in law and welcomed in Love.

Reflection: Today, we mourn the many children's lives ended by abortion and remember in prayer those who suffer the aftermath. We pray that children in their mothers' wombs would again be protected in law and do penance in reparation for abortions that have been committed in our world. In one of his many Papal Encyclicals, *The Gospel of Life*, Pope

John Paul II wrote, “may an impassioned plea rise to God, the Creator and lover of life, from every Christian community, from every group and association, from every family and from the heart of every believer.” May that prayer arise in our hearts today and each day forward until every human being is protected in law and welcomed in love.

Prayer: *Father and maker of all, you adorn all creation with splendor and beauty, and fashion human lives in your image and likeness. Awaken in every heart a reverence for the work of Your hands, and renew among your people a readiness to nurture and sustain your precious gift of life. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.*

Petition Eight: May civic leaders work for the protection of all human life, in every stage and circumstance.

Reflection: The Declaration of Independence boldly affirms that first among our inalienable rights is the right to life, given to us by our Creator. Yet despite being so solemnly proclaimed, the right to life is today threatened and often denied, particularly at the moments when life is most fragile. Our laws should—first and foremost—protect life. Even with the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, many states still do not recognize children in their mothers’ wombs as persons and still claim that abortion is a right. Further, many political leaders work actively to increase access to abortion. Some falsely describe it as health care and even as a basic human right. Laws and policies that legalize or promote an intrinsic evil like abortion violate the virtue of justice. Those who work as public officials and civic leaders have a duty to serve the common good, and therefore have a profound obligation to safeguard this most fundamental right to life. Through our own prayer, witness, and civic participation, we can encourage our leaders to truly answer their call to protect the rights of all people. For “there can be no true democracy without a recognition of every person’s dignity and without respect for his or her rights.”

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, being a politician amidst today's atheistic, secular society is so difficult! Give these men and women the Wisdom and Courage they need to fight fearlessly against the Culture of death and draft laws that protect EVERY human person's "right to life" from conception to natural death...in JESUS' Name we pray. Amen.*

Petition Nine: May all who defend life find strength and renewal in the Holy Spirit.

Reflection: God has carefully, tenderly created every person in His own image and likeness, to be in a loving relationship with Himself. From each tiny child knit within a mother's womb, to every person approaching death, all are loved perfectly and completely by God: "It is therefore a service of love which we are all committed to ensure to our neighbor, that his or her life may be always defended and promoted, *especially when it is weak or threatened* [emphasis added]." In a world in which those who are most vulnerable are so often overlooked and disregarded, Christ calls us to embrace and uphold the unconditional dignity of every human life. In answering this call, we help to build "a new culture of Life, the fruit of the culture of Truth and of Love." May the Holy Spirit continually renew us as we strive to faithfully defend God's gift of Life.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, You know so well how tiring and discouraging it can be for those of us who are Pro-Life, as we face negativity even from those in our own church communities. As we come into holy Presence each day in personal prayer, send the Holy Spirit upon us to refresh us, to fill us with new energy, and to show us new strategies for building a Culture of Life...in JESUS' Name we pray. Amen.*

Petition Ten: For the defeat of the very radical pro-abortion ballot initiative right here in sunny Florida, and for our deliberating Florida Supreme Court Justices.

Reflection: The time for letting others do the work is over! If EVERY Pro-Life American and Christian does NOT step up and tell others how radical and blood-thirsty this ballot initiative is, then we will be forced to live with the long-lasting, dire consequences of our inactivity or silence. This is a pivotal moment in our state's history, make no mistake, but God offers us Hope for this pivotal moment. In Philippians 4:13, we read, "I can do ALL things through Christ, Who strengthens me." So, let's move forward with holy boldness, knowing that God is with us and that He has already won the Victory! By JESUS' Resurrection, God has conquered the power of death, and, therefore, the power of abortion. Whatever little

(or not so little) we do to defeat this pro-abortion ballot initiative, God will multiply for the building up of a Culture of Life.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, You know our hearts and minds are overwhelmed with the seriousness of the situation, and with the lack of workers for the cause of Life. We need You, Lord, to cause Pro-Lifers (active and inactive) across "The Sunshine State" to rise up and speak against this evil ballot initiative to others. Make fruitful our efforts to educate fellow Christians and fellow voters, so that this radical pro-abortion ballot initiative will be defeated...in JESUS' Name we pray. Amen.*

We now add a special prayer for our Florida Supreme Court Justices.....

For Chief Justice Carlos G. Muñoz, Justice Charles T. Canady, Justice Jorge Labarga, Justice John D. Curiel, Justice Jamie R. Grosshans, Justice Renatha Francis, and Justice Meredith L. Sasso, we pray....

Heavenly Father, we ask You to surround our Florida Supreme Court Justices with a mighty and holy hedge of protection as they deliberate, following Feb, 7th's Oral Arguments to determine the validity of the petition for a very radical pro-abortion ballot initiative to be included on our November 2024 Florida ballot. Send Your holy warrior angels to guard and protect them from the evil influence of bribery or threat of loss of life. We ask You to cover each one of them, their families and their homes with the Precious Blood of JESUS. We ask you to give them Godly Wisdom, discernment of hidden evil agendas, and also the courage needed to stand up for Your precious gift of Life and reject this proposed evil ballot initiative...in JESUS' Name we pray. Amen.

Closing Song: Here I Am, Lord

I, the Lord of sea and sky
I have heard my people cry
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save

I, who made the stars of night
I will make their darkness bright
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night
I will go, Lord, if you lead me
I will hold your people in my heart

I, the Lord of snow and rain
I have borne my people's pain
I have wept for love of them
They turn away

I will break their hearts of stone
Give them hearts for love alone
Who will speak my word to them
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night
I will go, Lord, if you lead me
I will hold your people in my heart

*Those who would like to stay and pray the Rosary, are welcome to do so. Those who need to leave, may now quietly turn in their Prayer Service handout and go home.