

RESPECT LIFE MONTH NOVENA

October 13-21

Day 1: October 13

Intercession: May every person's life be protected and cared for from conception to natural death.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: God has loved you from all eternity and longs for a close relationship with *you*. In Scripture, He says, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you" (Jer. 1:5). God has made you in His image and likeness, allowing you to share in and reflect His own glory. You were chosen by God, created *out of love* and *for love*. Your life is sacred, unique, irreplaceable, and good. And this reality is true for every human person. Each time we encounter another, we are standing on holy ground.

Human life is sacred at every moment and in every circumstance. The vulnerability of new life, the frailties of old age, and the challenges we face in between never diminish our God-given dignity. The life each of us has been given is always worth living. It is a gift that we are called to cherish and protect because God has willed us to exist through His love. And the same is true for the lives of others. Understanding our own goodness and dignity helps us see the sacredness of *every* human person. In response, we are called to treat each person accordingly—to welcome, care for, protect, and defend the gift of every person's life from its very beginning to its natural end.

Acts of Reparation (*Choose one.*)

- Fast from one meal today.
- Pray the Rosary (or a decade) for today's intention (usccb.org/how-to-pray-the-rosary).
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today's intention.

One Step Further: In 1995, Pope St. John Paul II wrote *Evangelium vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*). This prophetic encyclical reaffirmed the value and inviolability of human life and urged all people to respect, protect, love, and serve every human life. Learn more about the essential teachings of this profound document in, "The Gospel of Life: A Brief Summary" (respectlife.org/gospel-of-life-summary).

Did You Know? Today is the anniversary of the "Miracle of the Sun," which tens of thousands of people saw near Fatima, Portugal on October 13, 1917. It was part of a series of apparitions during which Our Blessed Mother appeared to three children with a message pleading for mankind's conversion and penance. She also foretold the assassination attempt against Pope St. John Paul II, which occurred on the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima in 1981. He attributed his survival to her intercession, and the bullet that came closest to his heart is now in a crown on a statue of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal.