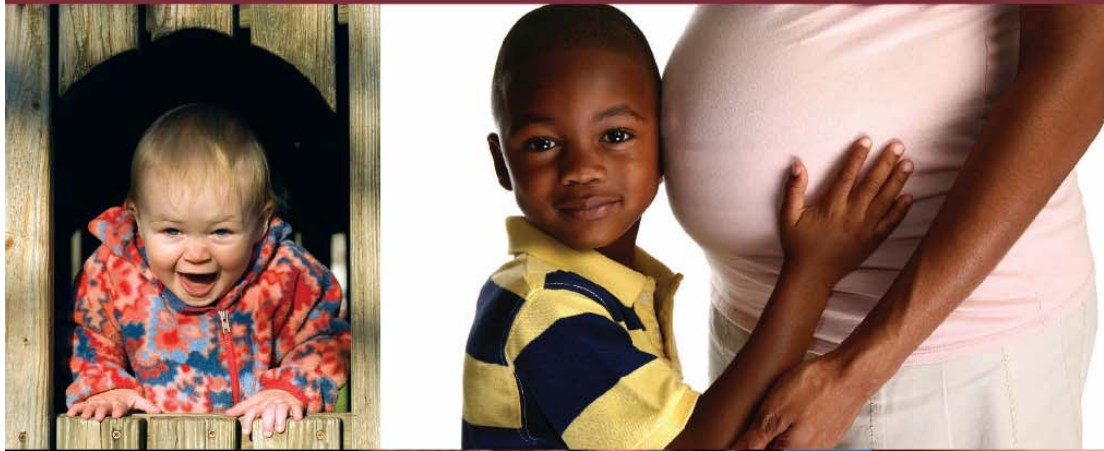




EVERY CHILD  
BRINGS US GOD'S SMILE

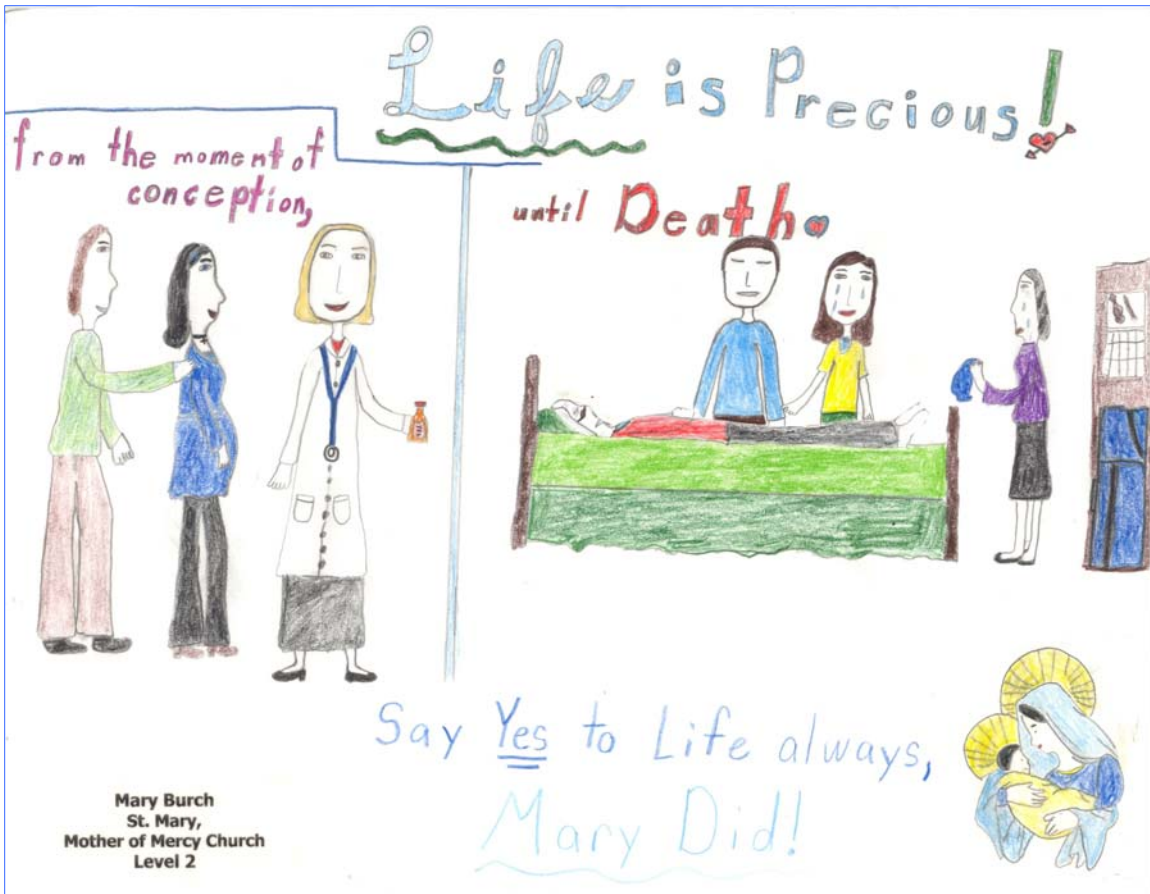
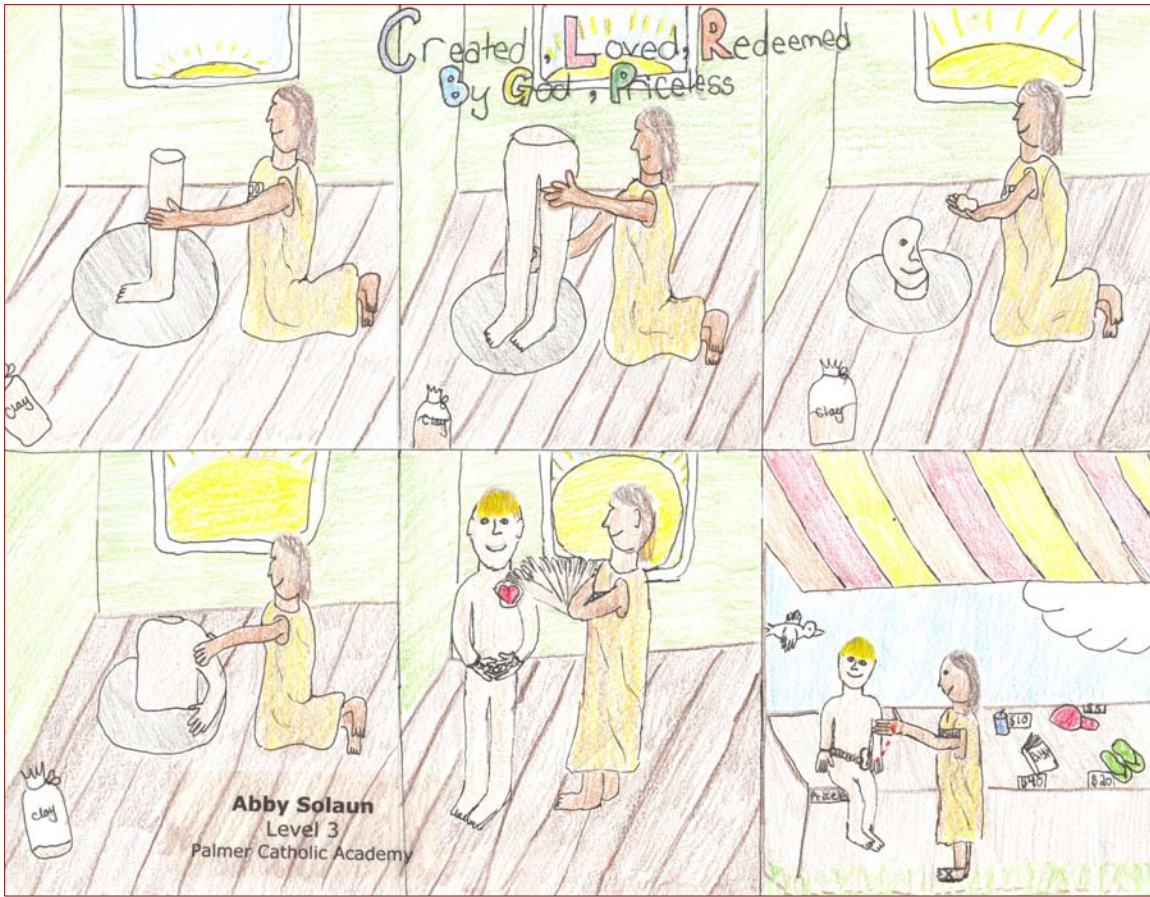
POPE BENEDICT XVI



RESPECT LIFE

2010 Respect Life Contest Poster

Sample Art



## Sample Essay

The Infant in My Womb Leaped for Joy - Luke 1:41-45

Maggie Maguire  
Assumption Catholic School  
Level 3

"When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit." Life is so precious and giving, that no one should ever take it away. Abortion kills the unborn, not allowing them to have a life and experience God's grace. The Fifth Commandment, "You shall not kill," states that it is a sin against the Church to have an abortion. If a pregnant woman decides she does not want her child, she should not kill him/her. Instead, the mother should let the child live, allowing another family to adopt him/her. When Mary was given the responsibility to be Jesus' mother, she didn't let God down. She believed in the Lord and realized that her Son was important to God, and to the world. It is in the same way that every child is important to God and has a special place in His heart. Since everyone is important, why let God down?

Another serious problem in our society is euthanasia, or killing of those who are hospitalized. Many people die from euthanasia, and have no choice about it. Whether they are on a feeding tube, or life support, no one knows how they are doing or if they will survive. The only person who knows what will happen is God. God watches over all of His children and protects them. However, no one is making the right choice if they kill someone. Rather than be killed, God allows everyone to die a natural death.

Life always has ups and downs. Never let others make you feel bad about yourself or make you feel unwanted. Committing suicide should never be an option. Never fall into temptation and hide from your problems. Running away does not solve anything, and neither does suicide. Always face your fears, and don't let meaningless problems come between you and God. No one was put on earth to be killed. Everyone has a reason for living, and life should not be wasted on careless mistakes you cannot undo. Listen to God and do not forget that He is looking out for you.

Murder is another act committed which disobeys the Fifth Commandment. When someone is purposely killed in any way, it seriously affects the world and God. The killing of innocent people around the world needs to be stopped. In the Visitation of Mother Mary to Elizabeth, Mary and her cousin celebrated life; they did not take it away. We should follow their example of bravery and be strong enough to endure all that God has in store for us.

## **Optional Section SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL**

This section is for teachers who would like supplemental ways to bring the life issues into their classrooms.

These materials are not required for those participating in the Respect Life Contest and can be used anytime during the year to supplement textbook material.

If you have material or suggestions you would like to share concerning life issues, please forward to Lorraine Allaire at [lalla001@jaxhealth.com](mailto:lalla001@jaxhealth.com) or fax to 904-308-4087.

### **Respect Life Lesson Guides Grades Kindergarten, 1 & 2**

Give the children an opportunity to explore the world of living things. Make them aware that all living things are constantly growing and changing—especially people.



Explain that God planned the cycle of change for all living things. As people live and grow each one continuously fulfills God's plan.

1. Point out familiar things in your environment that are growing and changing. What can a person do that a tree, plant or flower cannot?
2. If a child is expecting a new family member, let them share how their family is getting ready.
3. Discuss other stages and situations in life—teenagers, grandparents, people with disabilities, family members in nursing homes, disabled family members.

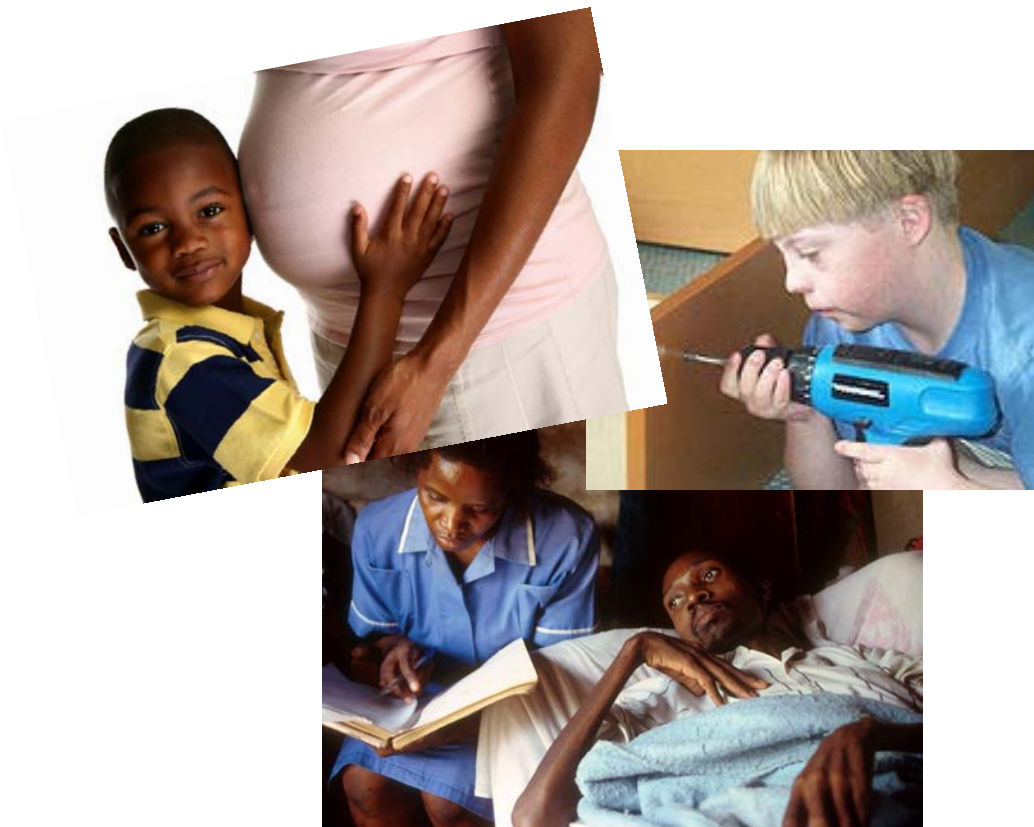


4. Talk about "ME" and what changes have taken place (growth, appearances, etc.)
5. Have children compose a prayer about the gift of life and share it.
6. Have children share mementos of when each was a baby. Have them mention times that were especially enjoyable or important in their families or in our community (birthdays, parish activities, sibling's events). Let them know that the family is God's plan. Discuss how all children start very small and grow inside the mother. Once each is born they continue their growth in a family. Share that God gives each one a purpose in life.
7. Relate that children are born and mature into people who think and act for the benefit of helping others.

### **Information on Life**

All human life is sacred from the moment of conception until natural death. God calls us to love one another. We give and receive respect as a sign of that love.

Expecting respect for ourselves and each other fosters an understanding of the need to respect life in all forms: the unborn, the sick and elderly, those with special needs and anyone who may seem different from ourselves.



## Respect Life Lesson Guide Grades 3, 4 & 5

Help the children become aware that each child is unique in the sight of God and this uniqueness is best developed in the family. A child's abilities and talents will be enhanced in life if those who care for them are sensitive to the gift that each child brings to life.



1. Explain that each child has a special family that they have been placed in on this earth. Ask them to name their family members. Ask them something particular about each person.
2. Ask the children what makes them feel good about being in their families. Ask them why they feel this way.
3. Ask children to tell about special experiences (birthday parties, picnics, visits with extended family or friends).
4. Talk about how they have grown and matured in life. Discuss reversing the attention from themselves to helping others. Instead of visiting a relative to play, do they go over to help with a new baby or to visit a sick person?
5. Ask the class to write down some important thoughts about themselves and family members or to compose prayers about how they are thankful for the gift of life.
6. Stress that caring and loving others is a reflection of God's love. Ask if they can see this reflection in how they behave and how others behave toward them.
7. Ask the children to share mementos of themselves and their families when they were babies. They can share pictures or a story from a family event.

## Information on Life

From the moment of conception, God has made you unique. At a specific time, he placed you in a family and He has a plan that only you can fulfill. As you grow and mature, your gift of self, developed with the help of your parents will allow you to mature into the image of God himself. You will reflect God to others by helping those within your family and respecting yourself as His unique and sacred creation.



## **Respect Life Lesson Guide Grades 6, 7 & 8**

Give students an opportunity to explore their feelings about the world around them and the family in which they live. Share that God is the source of life and we are dependent on Him. Help students to understand that life is lived fully only when we realize that we are stewards of life and its gifts and that each of us is accountable to God.

1. Point out the most valuable gifts (life, breathing, faith, seeing, etc.) the students have received. Have them add to your list. Ask where the gifts come from.
2. Discuss how respect for the uniqueness of each individual life is experienced in the family and ultimately in the community. For example, even twins are unique.
3. Discuss the extended family. Discuss similarities and differences in families such as physical characteristics. How does sharing similarities (same color eyes, hair, etc. as my aunt or cousin) contribute to a mutual love of those within the family? How does respect for differences help us recognize the uniqueness of God's creation? Students can create a "family tree" of similarities and differences.
4. Discuss that people are more than their physical or mental capabilities. Talk about the disabled, the elderly, the homeless, the mentally ill, etc. Ask them to share their perception of these groups. Allow time for group discussion. Show how these persons must be respected and viewed as part of God's plan for His creation.
5. Have students tell about civic activities in the parish community or school. Include service projects for Confirmation. How do these add to respect for life? How do they respond to what we are called by God to do?
6. Have panels of students discuss Catholic teachings on life topics (physician assisted suicide, unborn, embryonic stem cell research, in vitro fertilization, euthanasia, abortifacient nature of the birth control pill).

### **Information on Life**

We, the people of God, are stewards of life and are accountable for what we have been given. To fully experience this gift of life we must share what we have been given and respect all life. We do this when we understand that life is sacred and a gift from God our Creator.