

With gratitude to the Diocese of Ft. Worth, Texas for sharing this.

Spiritual Adoption Program for 7th and 8th Grade

The following describes the Spiritual Adoption Program, a program that is been used at many Catholic schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth to teach young people about the sanctity of life and to help them gain a greater appreciation for the culture of life. **This program only takes one minute a day to pray and 5 minutes a month to go over the baby development posters and pass out pro-life reminders.**

1. Spiritual Adoption Program

- ❖ Each student "**spiritually adopts**" one unknown, unborn baby who is in danger of abortion for nine months. The student can name their baby. The class says a **prayer** every day asking God to allow this child to be able to experience the fullness of life, as God intended. (students are given a **laminated prayer card** to be used every day, see end of document; view prayer cards at <http://www.archbalt.org/family-life/respect-life/spiritual-adoption/resources-for-spiritual-adoption.cfm>)
- ❖ For each of the nine months of the school year a **poster** is hung on the classroom wall corresponding to the month of the unborn child's development. The poster includes information on the child's development at that particular month. (view posters at <http://www.archbalt.org/family-life/respect-life/posters/index.cfm>)
- ❖ When the child development poster is presented each month, the students are given a **respect life reminder**. These reminders include items with pro-life messages: refrigerator magnets, bookmarks, rulers, precious feet pins, pencils, etc.
- ❖ At the end of each month the students receive a **thank you card** from their baby telling them how they are doing (*I am starting to kick my mother!*) and expressing gratitude for their prayers. (view thank you cards at <http://www.archbalt.org/family-life/respect-life/spiritual-adoption/resources-for-spiritual-adoption.cfm>)
- ❖ At the end of the 9 months the students **celebrate the birth of their child** with a pizza party and a baby shower.

2. Optional activities to promote the building of a culture of life

- ❖ Once each semester a **local pro-life leader is invited to speak** to the students about their work in the Respect Life area. Speakers have included Chuck Pelletier, director of the Fort Worth Catholic Crisis Pregnancy Center, and the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal who pray at the local abortion centers.
- ❖ **Essay contest** – The students are asked to write an essay on a respect life topic during the second semester and prizes are awarded.
- ❖ **Respect life article** – each month the teacher reads a story or current event article to the class regarding respect life.

❖ **Public Policy** – The students participate in a letter writing campaign to remind legislators about the number of children killed by abortion.

❖ **Baby Steps Video** – Students watch the Baby Steps 5 minute video of a 4D sonogram.

3. Additional information:

Volunteers from the diocese (Martha Jacobi and Tricia Hunter) will provide the school with:

- ❖ Laminated prayer cards
- ❖ Baby development posters
- ❖ Monthly reminders packaged in 9 labeled bags for each of the nine months of the program
- ❖ Monthly “thank you” cards from the baby to the students thanking them for their prayers.
- ❖ The cost is \$5 per student, but diocesan financial assistance is available.

As indicated above, the program only takes a minute a day to implement and an additional 5 minutes at the beginning of the month to review the development poster and pass out the monthly reminders and thank you notes.

4. Resources for the program

❖ The prayer cards, thank you notes and baby development posters are all available on the Archdiocese of Baltimore’s website at <http://www.archbalt.org/family-life/respect-life/spiritual-adoption/resources-for-spiritual-adoption.cfm>.

❖ The reminders that are given to the students each month can be purchased at Heritage House 76, or they can be custom ordered at such sites as www.4imprint.com (pens, pencils, magnets) or www.speedywristbands.com (custom silicone bracelets) or any other site that sells inexpensive custom promotional items. In 2012, for example, we ordered 600 large silicone bracelets with “TEXANS FOR LIFE!” for a total cost of \$125 at speedy wristbands. We ordered yellow and black pens with “SMILE YOUR MOM CHOSE LIFE” at 4 imprint for \$.30 per pen.



Heritage House items:

book marks: <http://www.hh76.com/Y20V/#/22/> .06/each (pack of 100) (sale)

Pens & Pencils: <http://www.hh76.com/Y20V/#/18/> Pencils .21/ea (pack of 100); pens .030/ea
Watch Me Grow brochure: from Linda Brenegan (443-799-3978), .20/ea
silly bands: Heritage House .15/ea
Precious Feet Pin: .60/ea (sale or purchase of 1000)
silicone bracelets: .20/ea www.speedywristbands.com
mints with a message: Heritage House .10/ea
magnets: Heritage House .60/ea
stickers: Heritage House, .04/ea (roll of 500 2" stickers-\$20)
ruler: Heritage House, .80/ea

Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

Unfortunately, since the Roe vs. Wade decision in 1973, the number of abortions in the United States has increased to 1.3 million annually. This year we will begin a program that was introduced by the late Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen which encourages the spiritual adoption of an unborn child by praying that one particular but unknown child's life be spared abortion and be allowed to continue to live. The program will help inform and educate children about the dignity and sacredness of all human life from conception to natural death.

As part of the Spiritual Adoption Program each student is asked to make a personal commitment to pray daily for one unborn child who is in danger of being aborted. Each student will "spiritually adopt" one unknown baby for the next nine months. The class will pray for these children that they will be carried to term and experience the fullness of life, as God intended.

While this child will remain unknown to his or her 'spiritual parent', God knows who the child is. Many children have found that naming 'their child' helps to keep them focused on the reality that their prayers are helping to save a particular baby from the harm of abortion.

In addition to prayer, the other aspects of the program will include:

- Educating the students about the development of the unborn child. A poster will be presented each month showing a beautiful picture of the unborn child and describing significant facts about the size and development of the unborn child.
- Providing the students with a monthly "respect life" reminder.
- Celebrating the birth of their child at the end of the 9 months with a baby shower where the students bring diapers, wipes, a new item of clothing, etc. to be donated to the local crisis pregnancy center.
- Possibly invite a pro-life leader from our area to speak to the student about their ministry.

Thank you for helping your children grow in awareness and appreciation for all life that God has so lovingly created.