



### What does the Catholic Church teaches about domestic violence?

The U.S. Catholic Bishops have made clear 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.”

### What the Bible says

Abusive men may take a text from the Bible and distort it to support their right to batter. They often use Ephesians 5:22 (“Wives should be subordinate to their husbands as to the Lord”) to justify their behavior. This passage (v. 21-33), however, refers to the mutual submission of husband and wife out of love for Christ. It means that husbands should love their wives as they love their own body, as Christ loves the Church. The Catholic bishops condemn the use of the Bible to support abusive behavior in any form. Men and women are created in God’s image. They are to treat each other with dignity and respect.

### What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is any kind of behavior that a person uses, or threatens to use, to control an intimate partner. The two key elements are threat and control. Domestic violence can take various forms:

**Physical** – Violent actions such as hitting, beating, pushing, and kicking. In many cases physical abuse becomes more frequent and severe over time.

**Sexual** – Includes any sexual acts that are forced on one partner by the other.

**Psychological** – Includes a wide range of behaviors such as intimidation, isolating the victim from friends and family, controlling where the victim goes, making the victim feel guilty or crazy, and making unreasonable demands.

**Emotional** – Undermining an individual’s self-esteem, constant criticism, insults, put-downs, and name-calling.

**Economic** – Examples include limiting the victim’s access to family income, preventing the victim from working or forcing the victim to work, destroying the victim’s property, and making all the financial decisions.

**Why do women stay?** Women often stay with their abusers because of fear. They are afraid that the abuser will become more violent if they try to leave. Some fear that they will lose their children. Many believe that they cannot make it on their own. Some abused women believe that the abuse is their fault. They think that they can stop the abuse if they just act differently. Some cannot admit that they are abused women. Others feel pressured to stay in the relationship. They may feel cut off from social support and resources. Abused women often feel that they are alone, and have nowhere to turn for help.

**Why do men batter?** Abusive men come from all walks of life. They may be successful in their career and respected in their church and community. Abusive men often share some common characteristics. They tend to be jealous, possessive and easily angered. Many abusive men believe that women are inferior. They believe that men are meant to dominate and control women. Typically, abusive men deny that the abuse is happening or they minimize it. They may blame their partner for the abuse, saying, “You made me do this.”

### Domestic violence and the permanence of marriage

Some abused women believe that Catholic Church teaching on the permanence of marriage requires them to stay in an abusive relationship. They may hesitate to seek a separation or divorce. They may fear that they cannot re-marry in the Catholic Church. In When I Call for Help: A Pastoral Response to Domestic Violence Against Women, the Catholic bishops emphasize that “**no person is expected to stay in an abusive marriage.**” Violence and abuse, not divorce, break up a marriage. The abuser has already broken the marriage covenant through his or her abusive behavior. Abused persons who have divorced may want to investigate the possibility of seeking an annulment.

(All of the above is from [foryourmarriage.org](http://foryourmarriage.org) – An initiative of the USCCB)

### Prayer - National Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October)

*Lord, this day and night, there are people living in fear and pain.*

*Children, women and, yes, men, too, for whom home is not a place of peace, but of terrible violence.*

*Bring your strength to all victims of domestic abuse.*

*Help them find the inner courage to reach out, call for help, and find a place where they can begin to heal.*

*Help us, too, to be instruments of your peace and to assist the victims with finding safety and hope for a better future.*

*Lord, may your protective love enfold all who suffer and bring them through these dark days and nights.*

*From now on, may your light outshine any doubt, despair, or hurt.*

*And bring these dear ones through their trials to the kindness and goodness they justly deserve.*

*In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.*

(beliefnet.com)

**Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Catholic Church**  
**Spiritual Adoption Program 2014**  
**Month 4**

In the January, 2014 Life Notes, we invited all parishioners to join as one voice in prayer in the Spiritual Adoption Program. (See brochures in Pro-Life information rack.) The following prayer was recommended by Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen to be said every day for a period of one year to spare the life of a baby in danger of abortion:

*“Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I love you very much.  
I beg you to spare the life of the unborn baby that I have spiritually adopted,  
who is in danger of abortion.”*

For new readers, during the next nine months, we will highlight the developmental stages of our spiritually adopted parish baby. Please refer to online sources of hearts4life.org & lifeissues.org

***Saturday, April 5, 2014 – Hi, Holy Rosary people. I am your spiritually adopted baby.  
I’m now growing into my fourth month of life in my mommy’s womb.  
It is called a second trimester. It’s so comforting in here. My nostrils and toenails become visible.  
I can suck my thumb, turn somersaults and have a firm grip. All of my organ systems are  
functioning. From now on, I will be busy growing in size and maturity.  
Thank you all for your continued prayers for me, my mommy and my daddy.  
(Taken from lifeissues.org)***

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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Ongoing – Prayerful witness at Affiliated Women’s Service (see truthandcompassionindy.com for schedule)  
April 8 - Divorce and Beyond: Program for Separated and Divorced (archindy.org/family/divorce.html)  
Now til April 13 - Spring 40 Days for Life  
April 23 & 24 - Icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa Tours Indianapolis (more info in bulletin)  
April 26 – Faithful Citizenship Rosary Rally

**Resources for victims of domestic violence/Opportunity for Action**

- The National Domestic Violence Hotline provides crisis intervention and referrals to local service providers. Call 800-799-SAFE (7233) or 800-787-3224 (TTY). E-mail assistance is available at ndvh@ndvh.org. In some communities, cell phones programmed to 911 are made available to abused women.
- When I Call for Help: A Pastoral Response to Domestic Violence Against Women  
<http://dft.ba/-whenicallforhelp>
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence - <http://www.ncadv.org/>
- The Julian Center for Women & Children in Indianapolis - [juliancenter.org](http://juliancenter.org)  
**Local 24/7 crisis hotline (317) 920-9320**
- Sheltering Wings (Hendricks Co.) - [shelteringwings.org](http://shelteringwings.org)
- Holy Family Shelter (<http://www.archindy.org/cc/holyfamily/index.html>)
- St. Jude House: Family Violence Prevention Center & Shelter, Crown Point, IN - [stjudehouse.org](http://stjudehouse.org)

**Our Lady, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, pray for us.**

*Life Notes is a publication of the Holy Rosary Pro-Life Committee  
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