

# *Sanctity of Human Life Sunday*

Sunday January 17, 2016

"Indeed, the very hairs of  
your head are all numbered."

- Jesus (Luke 12:7)

## *2016 Pastor's Handbook*



LOUISIANA  
RIGHT TO LIFE

# Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

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### Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

January 17, 2016

In Louisiana, we encourage churches to observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. We have provided these resources to make your observance of Sanctity of Human Life Sunday even more special.

Visit [www.ProLifeLouisiana.org/Sunday](http://www.ProLifeLouisiana.org/Sunday) to access all our resources and to request our FREE SOHLS Bulletin Card Inserts!



# Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

*Dear Pastor,*

The sanctity of human life in Louisiana is in grave danger. All in the name of profit, abortion facilities right here in our state extinguish the lives of thousands of unborn babies each year. And Planned Parenthood, caught on video discussing its practice of selling baby body parts after abortion, is expanding in Louisiana.

**But we know the truth:** All human lives are priceless, created in God's image. Luke 12:7 tells us God even knows the number of hairs on our heads, and we can be confident this divine promise extends to the weakest among us, the unborn.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is a great chance for you to deliver a positive and uplifting message about the priceless value of human life. This handbook provides ideas to assist you in promoting the gift of life by informing, equipping and motivating your congregation to help serve the cause of life in your area.

We hope this information helps you discuss the Sanctity of Human Life more effectively with your congregation. Thank you for your willingness to stand for the unborn!

For Life,

*The Louisiana Right to Life Team*

“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”

– *Luke 12: 6-7*



# *Sanctity of Human Life Sunday*

## *What is the Sanctity of Human Life Sunday?*

On Jan. 22, 1984, President Ronald Reagan designated the third Sunday of January as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. Churches around the United States still use this day to raise awareness in their congregations about core life issues, such as abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, embryonic stem cell research, infanticide, and more. Pastors can take this opportunity to teach what the Bible says about the sanctity of human life and what the church can do to minister to the vulnerable in our society.

## *Why the Third Sunday of January?*

The third Sunday of January falls in close proximity to the anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision on Jan. 22, 1973, that legalized abortion in all 50 states, in all nine months of pregnancy, and for virtually any reason (or no reason at all). With other events happening in January across our nation to call attention to the life issues, along with occasional media coverage, you will be able to magnify a timely pro-life message to your congregation.

## *Should Churches Observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday?*

Pastors, elders and church leadership should utilize the timely opportunity of Sanctity of Human Life Sunday to shine the light of Jesus Christ and dispel the darkness of the culture of death. By setting aside time to remember the lives lost to abortion and the women hurt by abortion, we can take a step toward a day when abortion and all life-destroying actions will be unthinkable in America. This document should provide numerous ways, both large and small, to implement Sanctity of Human Life Sunday in your church.



# Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

## *Does Society Value the Lives of Unborn Human Beings?*

It is estimated by the Guttmacher Institute that more than 1 million abortions take place in the United States each year. The Guttmacher Institute states that 21 percent of all pregnancies (excluding miscarriages) end in abortion. The innate dignity of human life is assaulted by legal abortion. It is estimated that more than 56 million abortions have occurred in the United States since 1973.

In addition to abortion, infanticide has a long history in the United States. While infanticide is currently considered a much bigger taboo than abortion, it still takes place today. There have been cases around the country in which children have survived abortion attempts and then were left to die. Jill Stanek, a nurse who used to work in the Chicago-area Christ Hospital, discovered that her hospital was participating in infanticide and brought the atrocity to national attention with her witness. The Grand Jury report on abortionist Kermit Gosnell brought to light one employee's disturbing testimony that hundreds of born-alive children were killed in Gosnell's clinic under his direction.

Clearly, our society is not placing enough value on the lives of children preparing to be born. Whether individuals incorrectly think they are not living human beings or go ahead with abortions despite recognizing the humanity of those babies, abortion and infanticide is a violent act which occurs far too often in our society.

And now, assisted suicide is expanding in the United States, most recently with it recently legalized in California. Human life is being attacked from conception to natural death in America.

What can we do as individuals, families, and a church to help our society value human life in all of its stages?



# Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

## *God's Word about Sanctity of Human Life*

“As you read through the Bible, you won't find the word abortion anywhere. But that doesn't mean Scripture is silent about it, for the core truths we've already seen in the gospel concerning who God is, who we are, and what Christ has done speak directly to the issue of abortion.”

- *David Platt, Director of International Missions, Southern Baptist Convention*

**What does the Bible say about Abortion?** The Bible does not contain the word “abortion,” but the message is clear throughout: Human life is precious in the sight of God. As Genesis tells us, God created human beings “in his image,” and it is bestowed on each person in their “mother’s womb” (Psalm 139). Moreover, through the incarnation of Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, human life was joined to God in an even more sacred manner. And we can’t forget that Jesus’ life began as an innocent baby in his mother’s womb. Even John the Baptist, also an unborn child at the time, recognized this sacred dignity as he “leapt” in his mother’s womb on his first meeting with our Savior.

With the dignity of human beings established, the powers of sin and death seek to destroy innocent human life, just as Pharaoh did in the waters of the Nile, or Herod in the city of Bethlehem. And over the years as human life has been attacked in different ways, leading to the systematic destruction of life through abortion in modern times, we can trust that God desires for us to protect the innocent, since we know that God “hates hands that shed innocent blood” (Proverbs 6:16-17). Also, there are strict prohibitions on the unjust taking of life in Hebrew Law (Numbers 35:30, Deuteronomy 13:6-9, Genesis 9:6).

Finally, during his ministry, Jesus said in Matthew 19:14, “Let the little children come unto me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” If God sees the value of children, including the unborn, then surely Christians must take a stand against the taking of their lives.



# Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

## Additional Verses to Support a Biblical Pro-Life Position

Truly children are a gift from the Lord; the fruit of the womb is a reward.

- *Psalm 127:3*

Thou shalt not kill.

- *Exodus 20:13, Deuteronomy 5:17*

God... from my mother's womb had set me apart and called me through his grace.

- *Galatians 1:15*

You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit.

- *Job 10:12*

Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.

- *Psalm 127:3*

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

- *Psalm 139:13-16*

The word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.

- *Jeremiah 1:4-5*



# Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

## *Sanctity of Human Life Sunday in Your Church*

Churches can be involved in Sanctity of Human Life Sunday in three ways: **Awareness, Asking, and Acting.**

### **Awareness from the Pulpit**

- **In Your Sermon / Message:** Take this opportunity to discuss the issue of abortion and other life issues during your message to your congregation. We have provided some scripture verses above that can serve as an inspiration for your message. Visit our SOHLS page online at [ProLifeLouisiana.org/Sunday](http://ProLifeLouisiana.org/Sunday) for links to example pro-life sermons.
- **Distribute SOHLS Cards:** Louisiana Right to Life offers free postcard size “Sanctity of Human Life Sunday” cards to distribute in your church or place in your bulletins. You can request those from [ProLifeLouisiana.org/Sunday](http://ProLifeLouisiana.org/Sunday).
- **Share a Personal Testimony:** Identify a congregation member or guest speaker with a personal testimony, especially those women who have been hurt by abortion and have found healing and forgiveness, and ask them to share their story with others.
- **Discuss in Sunday School / Small Groups:** Recommend that your Sunday school and Bible study leaders discuss abortion and other pro-life issues with their groups. Encourage these small groups to discern ways God is calling your congregation to take a further step in protecting human life.
- **Invite an Expert:** Invite a local speaker from a pro-life organization to give a message to your congregation. Louisiana Right to Life can assist in providing or helping to identify the right presenter.



# Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

- **Enlighten Your Youth:** Plan a special “Life Night” for your youth group that focuses on the pro-life cause. Invite a speaker or local group to visit with your youth and plug them into local pro-life efforts. Louisiana Right to Life’s youth team offers engaging “Pro-Life 101” presentations designed for youth. You can also promote upcoming Pulse Immersion Camps sponsored by Louisiana Right to Life to train student pro-life leaders. [www.ProLifePulseLA.com](http://www.ProLifePulseLA.com)
- **Play a Pro-Life Video:** Play pro-life videos during your worship service. We offer a great video called the “Miracle of Life” that you can download and play at no cost. Visit [www.ProLifeLouisiana.org/Sunday](http://www.ProLifeLouisiana.org/Sunday) for access to the video.

## Asking God’s Help as a Community

- **Intercessory Prayer:** In connection to your message, your church can participate through prayer and intercession on behalf of mothers and the unborn.
- **Prayer at Home For Life:** Ask participants to incorporate prayer for life in their daily prayer over the next week. The Sanctity of Human Life Sunday card is a great resource to encourage people to take home and use as a prayer.

## Acting to Protect the Vulnerable

- **Help a Pregnancy Center or Adoption Agency:** Find a local pregnancy center and/or adoption agency to partner with in your community. Pregnancy Centers provide free services to pregnant women to assist them both before and after birth. You may run drives for supplies or take up special offerings to help fund their efforts. To find a list of all pregnancy resources in Louisiana, visit [www.ADifficultChoice.com](http://www.ADifficultChoice.com) or [www.ProLifeLouisiana.org/Centers](http://www.ProLifeLouisiana.org/Centers).
- **Create Adoption / Foster Care Awareness:** Work with an adoption agency or other resource to promote the availability of foster care and adoption.



# Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

- **Participate in Outside Events:** Promote and participate in local, statewide, and national pro-life events, such as the Louisiana Life March gatherings held in multiple areas across the state. Learn more at [www.LALifeMarch.com](http://www.LALifeMarch.com).
- **Sign a Petition:** Discuss state or national policy related issues and have your congregation sign petitions or write letters to elected official to request they take some specific action for life.

## *Resources for You and Your Church*

- **Visit** our Sanctity of Human Life Sunday in Louisiana webpage at [www.ProLifeLouisiana.org/Sunday](http://www.ProLifeLouisiana.org/Sunday) for a full list of resources, including links to outside Bible study suggestions and sermon notes.
- **Sign up** for Louisiana Right to Life's email list to stay in touch about what is happening in the local and national pro-life movement! [ProLifeLouisiana.org](http://ProLifeLouisiana.org)
- **Become** a Louisiana Right to Life Luminary Member Church for as little as \$50 a year. You will receive copies of our educational Luminary publication for distribution to your congregation.

## *We Are Here for You*

Louisiana Right to Life's team is always available to discuss ideas or provide advice to your church. Our team is available to visit your church to train your staff and volunteers or to provide pro-life messages or educational presentations. Contact us!

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