



DIocese OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

September 29, 2009

Dear Friends,

October is Respect Life month. While October 4 is designated Respect Life Sunday, the challenge to respect life in all forms and build and sustain a culture of life is always with us.

Our efforts at respecting life and building a culture of life are based on our belief in the intrinsic dignity of every human person. Our commitment to sustain and support life begins at conception and continues through natural death.

In a brochure on building a culture of life, Cardinal Justin F. Rigali, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, reminds us that each individual has immeasurable value and worth, from the person next door to the unknown person living miles away. Cardinal Rigali explains, "That is because God created each of us in his image by the outpouring of his infinite and unconditional love. In return he asks only that we share that love with others, beginning with those most in need – the poor, the vulnerable..."

In our commitment to promote respect for life and the culture of life, we give prominence to the defense of the unborn, however, we must remember that building a culture of life requires us to care and protect all people. It is gratifying to witness the effort and outreach in support of life occurring in our parishes and through the many programs and services of Catholic Charities West Michigan.

In a special way, I thank those who work so tirelessly to respect life and promote a culture of life and I ask for your prayers that we may be God's faithful people.

With prayerful good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley
Bishop of Grand Rapids