



project rachel

Peace starts here

Respect Life

ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

OFFICE OF MARRIAGE FAMILY AND LIFE

328 West Kellogg Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55021 651-291-4506

Post Abortion Outreach in the Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis

History

In 1978 the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis began receiving phone calls from individuals suffering from post-abortion trauma. After considerable planning, the *Marian Project* was founded. It was the first formal outreach to women or men who were suffering emotional and spiritual devastation after their abortion. In 1984 The U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Pro-Life Committee formalized the Diocesan outreach program for post abortion resources and called it *Project Rachel*.

Since its inception, the *Marian Project* has continued its mission. Today, with nearly one in five pregnancies ending in abortion¹ the need for this outreach is greater than ever.

*Starting in 2011 the Post Abortion Outreach in the Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis will be called ***Project Rachel***. This will align with the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' program.

What follows is a 2011 resource for all Parish Respect Life/ACCL Groups within our Archdiocese.

Your will find:

1. Introduction to Project Rachel
2. Information about Post Abortion Stress
3. Suggestions for creating awareness in your community

¹ Nearly half of pregnancies among American women are unintended, and four in 10 of these are terminated by abortion. Twenty-two percent of all pregnancies (excluding miscarriages) end in abortion. Facts on Induced Abortion in the United States, <http://www.guttmacher.org>.

Introduction to Project Rachel:

Project Rachel is the Catholic Church's outreach for confidential ministry for anyone who desires healing after an abortion. This includes mothers and fathers of children lost to abortion, grandparents and other relatives, health care providers, and many others. Abortion crosses all boundaries of race, age and socio-economic position.

Project Rachel's mission is to provide confidential and compassionate referral services and awareness. Resources are available for spiritual, emotional, and psychological healing to anyone who has been impacted by abortion. Striving to convey God's forgiveness and mercy we hope to restore and empower lives.

Project Rachel Services Include:

- Dedicated phone number: 651-291-4515
- Dedicated e-mail contact RespectLife@archspm.org

To put people in touch with someone who understands, listens to their story and talks through any questions.

- Confidential referrals for individualized counseling with a Project Rachel priest or counselor.
- Ongoing parish awareness and education.
- Website www.hopeafterabortion

Project Rachel and Rachel's Vineyard:

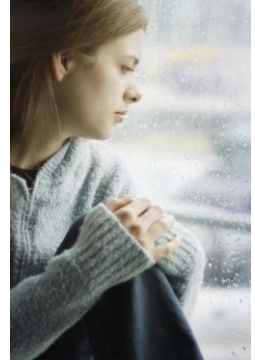
The names may be confusing, but *Project Rachel* and *Rachel's Vineyard* are two different outreach programs which provide healing for post-abortive men and women. *Project Rachel* provides one to one support. *Rachel's Vineyard* is a weekend Retreat. Clients may be referred to either program for healing.

For more information about Rachel's Vineyard see www.rachelsvineyard.org.

Facts about Abortion and Post –Abortion Stress

- Roughly 1 in 5 pregnancies end in abortion. [1]
- At least half of American women will experience an unintended pregnancy by age 45, and, at current rates, about one-third will have had an abortion.
- 70% of women choosing abortion believe that abortion is morally wrong. They are choosing against their consciences because of some pressure from others or circumstances which make them feel they have no other choice. [2]

The women who choose abortion and suffer from the pain of that choice are our daughters, wives, sisters, relatives, friends...



- Women encounter various sources of pressure & manipulation – from parents, boyfriends, husbands, doctors, bosses, school officials, nurses, and counselors at abortion clinics
- The suicide rate for women in the year following their abortion is 6-7 times higher than the average [3]
- Women have an increase in clinical depression following abortion, even after taking into account the factors of age, race, marital status, income, and prior psychiatric state.
- There is a 30 % increase in anxiety disorders in women following abortion. [3]

Men also suffer after their participation in an abortion with unresolved guilt, shame and grief and need to hear about the good news of healing in Project Rachel.

We are called to reach out to these men and women to help them find healing.

[1] Nearly half of pregnancies among American women are unintended, and four in 10 of these are terminated by abortion. Twenty-two percent of all pregnancies (excluding miscarriages) end in abortion. Facts on Induced Abortion in the United States, <http://www.guttmacher.org>.

[2] *The Jericho Plan: Breaking Down the Walls Which Prevent Post-Abortion Healing*, by David C. Reardon. Springfield, IL: Acorn Books, 1996

[3] Key Abortion Facts: <http://www.theunchoice.com/pdf/FactSheets/KeyFactsSheet.pdf>

Creating Awareness of the Project Rachel Outreach

We encourage parishes to include Project Rachel awareness as part of their ACCL/Respect Life Committee ministry. This outreach includes awareness, education and pastoral ministry.

Simple ideas to promote Project Rachel in your parish community:

(1) *Distribute Project Rachel Business Cards*

Leave Project Rachel business cards in brochure racks and restrooms in your parish. Often women and men are embarrassed to admit a past abortion, so a restroom is a non-intimidating place to pick up a card. Inexpensive business card holders and brochure racks are available at most office supply stores. Samples of cards are available from the Respect Life Outreach. Cards can be printed locally by your committee or contact our office to order them. Ask your pastor if he would like these cards placed in the Confessional to be available to clergy during Confession.

(2) *Offer Brochures*

Project Rachel has a beautiful, sensitive brochure available that provides an overview of the ministry and reaches out to women and men in need. Include some of these in your church bulletin rack or on a table with other literature. To order additional brochures contact RespectLife@archspm.org.

(4) *Put Project Rachel on your Parish Website*

Ask your pastor if he would be willing to link to the Project Rachel website from your parish website.

Link to www.hopeafterabortion.org

(5) *Pray for post abortive men and women.*

Specific volunteer roles include:

- Include prayers for the post abortive in your daily prayers
- Include prayers for Post abortion healing at your adoration chapel or elsewhere
- Include prayers for healing as part of your Mass intentions
- Excellent prayers can be found at <http://www.hopeafterabortion.com/prayers/index.cfm?page=healing>
-

(6) *Offer Project Rachel Education*

Various groups in your parish might be interested in hearing about Project Rachel (Knights of Columbus, Women's Groups, Bible Studies, Sodality, etc). If you would like to do the presentation yourself, a PowerPoint and notes are available. Contact our office for speaker ideas.

Utilize the "Hope After Abortion" parish educational display posters to create awareness. (See the following page)

(7) *Include Weekly Bulletin Announcements*

Include information about Project Rachel in the weekly bulletin. Periodically include more detailed information (statistics, retreat dates, etc).

Suggestions for weekly bulletin inserts are available by contacting our office.

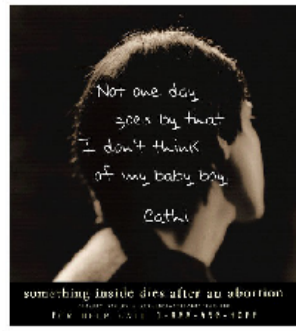
Office of Marriage Family and Life
Archdiocese of St. Paul Minneapolis

Hope After Abortion

*In Ramah is heard the sound
of moaning,
of bitter weeping!
Rachel mourns her children,
she refuses to be consoled
because her children are no
more.*

*Thus says the LORD:
Cease your cries of mourning,
wipe the tears from your eyes.
The sorrow you have shown
shall have its reward...
There is hope for your future.*

Jeremiah 31:15-1



Office of Marriage Family and
Life

328 West Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55102

651-291-4506
wilsons@archspm.org

The Respect Life Parish Outreach has poster displays depicting the "Hope After Abortion Project" offering hope and healing to those suffering from the aftermath of an abortion. Four (2' x2') poster board displays, along with stands are available for use to set up in a church gathering space, meeting, or for an educational and pastoral outreach. The poster displays work best when coordinated with support materials from Post Abortion Resources.

To arrange for use of the "Hope After Abortion" Outreach Displays:

1. Contact Sonya at 651-291-4515 or flomos@archspm.org for dates the displays are available for use.
2. Contact the Respect Life Outreach for brochures and flyers on Post Abortion Resources.
3. Arrange a date to pick up and return posters to the Marriage Family and Life office.
4. Plan your Event!



Respect Life
Office of Marriage Family and Life
328 West Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55021
651-291-4506