

USCCB invites Catholics to take part in '9 Days for Life' Jan. 19-27

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The 10th annual “9 Days for Life” novena, sponsored by the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, takes place this year from Jan. 19-27.

Catholics nationwide are invited to take part in this novena for the protection of human life.

“This pro-life novena is an opportunity for recollection and reparation in observation of the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* – the Supreme Court decision that made abortion legal throughout the United States,” said a news release. “The overarching intention of the novena is the end to abortion.”

Novenas in the Catholic Church consist of prayers or actions over nine successive days. Each day of “9 Days for Life” has a prayer intention accompanied by a reflection, educational information and suggested daily actions “to help build a culture of life,” according to the 9daysforlife.com website.

All are invited to sign up at the website to receive the novena in English or Spanish via email or text message or access it online. Participants can share their pro-life witness and invite their social networks to pray on social media with the hashtag #9DaysforLife.

A resource kit is available and features the daily prayer intentions and reflections, among other materials.

The novena encompasses the annual Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children on Jan. 22, which is the anniversary of the 1973 *Roe* decision.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ pro-life committee

first launched “9 Days for Life” in 2013 to mark *Roe’s* 40th anniversary.

Here’s an example of a day’s intention, prayers and reflection:

For Day 1, the intention is: “May the tragic practice of abortion end.” This is followed by prayers: Our Father, three Hail Marys and the Glory Be.

The reflection for the first day reads in part: “At every stage and in every circumstance, we are held in existence by God’s love. The presence of an illness, disability, or other challenging situation never diminishes the value of a human life. God does not call us to perfection of appearance or abilities, but to perfection in love. ... Abortion tragically rejects the truth that every life is a good and perfect gift, deserving protection.

“Christ invites us to embrace our own lives and the lives of others as true gifts. ... May our culture experience the power of God’s transforming love, that all eyes may be opened to the incredible beauty of every human life.

Participants are then asked to choose one of two reparations:

- Take a break from television and movies today. Consider spending some of that time praying with today’s reflection.
- Pray the short prayer “Every Life is Worth Living,” reflecting on the gift of human life.

Finally, each day offers “One Step Further.” On Day 1 this “step” is a link to an article titled “Another Look at Abortion,” which provides a basic overview and summarizes key points on the abortion issue to “help you be better prepared to witness to the sanctity of human life.”