

Spiritual Adoption Prayer Program
Parishes, Schools and Parish Religious Education Programs (rev. 6/2002)

"I came so that they may have life, and have it abundantly" - John 10:10

"One who saves a single life saves the world entire" - The Talmud

Spiritual Adopt-A-Baby Program

Before beginning the program, explain the purpose:

To have the school/parish religious education program community pray for babies in danger of abortion;

To educate children about the development of the unborn child over the nine-month period before birth;

To pray for guidance for the parents of the unborn child;

To pray for the entire Church community that we continue to provide needed social services to assist both parents and children.

Decide how your school or parish religious education program will participate in the program by:

Each child spiritually adopting a baby;

Each class spiritually adopting a baby;

The whole school/parish religious education program spiritually adopting a baby.

Distribution copies of pledge cards with prayer to each child:

Agreeing on a spiritual name for the baby and print the name on the card. Perhaps the children would like to choose the name of a patron saint to make the spiritual adoption more personal.

After collecting the pledge cards with the spiritual adopted babies' name on it, place the pledges in a special container to be either: kept in the classroom at your prayer table, placed on the Altar of Repose, or at the Blessed Mother statue during a special Mass, possibly during October, Respect Life Month.

Suggesting a time of day to say the prayer or add the prayer to your class prayer time.

Every month after the program begins:

Place an announcement in your school/parish religious education program bulletin or make a special announcement with a reminder to continue praying for their spiritually adopted unborn child.

Place the enclosed monthly bulletin inserts, with information on the development of the unborn child, in your school/parish religious education program bulletin. You can also make a special announcement or place these bulletin inserts on the class bulletin board.

Adapt this program to meet your school/parish religious education program class needs. REMINDER: In an effort to avoid confusion and the misconception of "buying a baby", we would strongly suggest you stress Spiritual Adoption.

ADOPT-A-BABY-MONTHLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prayer of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen

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

Information on the developing baby was taken from: Why Can't We Love Them Both, Dr. and Mrs. John C. Willke, 1997 Hayes Publishing Company, Inc., Cincinnati, Ohio.

ONE MONTH DEVELOPING BABY

Your spiritually adopted baby has been quite active over the past month. Already your baby is 10,000 times bigger than at conception. Your baby has developed the foundations of his/her brain, spinal cord, and nervous system by the 20th day. The heart began to beat on the 21st day. The heart is pumping blood through its own circulatory system and the blood type can be different from his/her mother.

During the next month, your baby is most vulnerable to being aborted. Pray that the Lord of Life might move the heart of the mother to give her child the most precious gift of all - the gift of life.

TWO MONTH DEVELOPING BABY

Your baby is making progress developing all of his/her external features and internal organs. The brain is functioning at 40 days. The mother can hear the heartbeat now on an ultrasonic stethoscope. The milk-teeth buds are present at 6 ½ weeks. And it has been reported that a two-month old baby can suck its thumb.

From this moment onward, your spiritually adopted baby grows and refines his/her body. But everything needed to survive once born is already present by the end of the eighth week.

THREE MONTH DEVELOPING BABY

Your baby is quite active in the womb now - although his/her mother won't feel it for another couple of months. If the mother's womb had a window, you could watch your spiritually adopted baby squint, swallow, and move his/her tongue. The baby can make a tight fist if you touch his/her palm.

The baby is breathing fluid which will be continued until birth. The baby obtains the oxygen his/her body needs through the umbilical cord. The baby you are praying for weighs one ounce. What a miracle!

FOUR MONTH DEVELOPING BABY

Well your little baby now weighs 6 ounces. He/she has fingernails and eyelashes. The baby has his/her own unique fingerprints which will remain the same all life long. His/her taste buds are working.

The baby's sense of hearing is developed and present at 14 weeks. There are no major developments anymore. Your spiritually adopted baby is already well-formed internally and externally. All that is needed now is time to gain weight and grow strong. What a miracle!

FIVE MONTH DEVELOPING BABY

Your spiritually adopted baby weighs over one pound now. The mother can feel the baby move now. Before the baby was too small for her to feel. Although the baby swam with ease in its watery world, he/she needed to be big and strong enough to kick hard against the outside wall and dent it - the inside wall of the uterus has no feeling.

We are mid-way through the pregnancy now. Your prayers have helped your baby's mother continue with her pregnancy and seek the help she needs.

SIX MONTH DEVELOPING BABY

Your spiritually adopted baby is developing quite beautifully now. His/her weight is approaching 2 pounds. A baby who is born prematurely at this time has a very good chance of surviving. The medical advances in caring for extremely small newborn infants are extraordinary indeed.

Justice O'Connor has remarked that the Roe v. Wade decision is on a collision course with itself. Each passing year, we witness medical advances that allow our medical professionals to save younger and younger premature infants.

SEVEN AND EIGHT MONTH DEVELOPING BABY

You're in the home stretch with your spiritually adopted baby. The baby is completely formed and has been since 8 weeks. All he/she is doing now is gaining weight - and making the mother uncomfortable. She's not worried now. In a short time, her baby will be born. She has planned to bring the baby home or to place the baby for adoption. Either way, she knows she can receive the assistance she needs from Catholic Social Services.

Your baby's mother appreciates the prayers you have said for her and her baby throughout the pregnancy. It hasn't been easy, but your prayers have given her the grace to seek the help she needs.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY SPIRITUALLY ADOPTED BABY

Your spiritually adopted baby was born this month - nine months after his/her mother conceived.

The only change at birth is a change in the external life support system of the baby. The baby is no different now than before birth except that the baby breathes and eats differently. The baby is truly a miracle. The baby began as a 46 chromosome cell and has developed over the past nine months into this unique human baby. Never before in history, nor ever again, will anyone exist who is just like your spiritually adopted baby.

Your prayers saved the baby's life.

Prayer of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen:

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

Announcement Prior to the Start of the Spiritual Adoption Program

The Spiritual Adopt-A-Baby Program will begin on _____.
(Date)

Everyone loves the beauty and innocence of a baby. As an expression of our love and concern for babies, our school will participate in the Spiritual Adopt-A-Baby Program.

The children of _____, will have the
(School/Parish Religious Education Program Name)

opportunity to "spiritually" adopt a child who is newly conceived this month. You see, not all newly conceived babies are allowed to be born. In fact, almost 4,400 babies lose their lives to abortion each day. It is these babies, who are in danger of having their lives ended before birth, that you are being asked to "spiritually" adopt.

You may "spiritually adopt" a child individually or as a class by signing up with your teacher/catechist. You will be asked to name the child for whom you will be praying, thereby giving the baby the humanity he or she deserves. You will be asked to pray for your unborn child and for all the unborn children. The power of prayer is great.

You will receive monthly reports describing your baby's development and your child will be born 9 months from today.

There are millions of unborn babies desperately in need of your prayers. Won't you please "spiritually adopt" one unborn child and share the love for life that God has given you?

SPIRITUAL ADOPTION REGISTRATION FORM

Mail to:
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
Secretariat for Catholic Life and Formation
Respect Life Office
Department for Pro-Life Activities
222 No. 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103
OR
Fax: 215.587.3561

Parish or School or CCD (circle all that apply) _____

Name: _____
(Fill in Name)

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address (if different from above) _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Approximate number of participants: _____

Quantity of pink prayer cards needed: _____

Quantity of blue prayer cards needed: _____

Do you need a program booklet? Parish or School (circle one)

Donations gratefully accepted!!