

## Ten Ways to Prevent Domestic Abuse

The U.S. Bishops, in their Pastoral Statement, *When I Call for Help* (1992, 2002) called on the faith community to work vigorously to prevent domestic abuse. The NCCW Service Commission offers you this Pray-Learn-Act approach to promote family peace and prevent family abuse. (August 2014)

1. Pray for all those touched today by domestic abuse and violence: victim survivors, the children who have witnessed and or experienced abuse and violence, the abuser, the extended family, church family, and the greater community. May they know that God is with them and that they can ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. May each person experience God's message of love and hope through our interaction with them.
2. Pray for the souls of those who have died by domestic abuse - an average of three people a day in the United States - and for the person who killed them. Pray also for their loved ones: any children, the parents and any siblings, extended family, church family, and community that they may experience God's compassionate love in the way we respond to them.
3. Pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance as to how you, your Council, and or parish can use your gifts to help prevent and address domestic abuse, especially among adolescents and young adults.
4. Learn the Church's response to domestic abuse by reading the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)'s Pastoral Statement, *When I Call for Help*, which identifies 25 things, we can do to address domestic abuse.
5. Learn how to recognize, respond, and refer people to the National Domestic Violence Hotline (800-799-SAFE (7233) who are experiencing domestic abuse.
6. Learn how the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW)'s addresses the issue by using the DV Prevention Resource Kit and the websites listed on the Service Commission brochure.
7. Learn more about the issue by accessing the Faith Trust Institute, National Domestic Violence Hotline, National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, National Resource Center on Sexual Violence, and your state coalition against domestic and sexual violence websites. See, "Opening Doors: When Faith-based Communities Respond to Domestic Abuse" on the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence's website (MNADV.org).
8. Act by working with parish priests to implement as many of the Bishops 25 suggestions as possible, especially placing "When I Call for Help" resource cards and booklets in confessionals, church restrooms, and other places in your church.
9. Act by contacting your local domestic abuse response agency to learn how you, your Council, or parish, can support their efforts. Invite them to be a speaker. See St. Rita Ministry at Holy Family Catholic Church in Orlando, FL for inspiration.
10. Act on the Holy Spirit's urging as to what you, your Council, and parish can do to address domestic abuse. Tell us about your efforts by writing to us at [nccw01@nccw.org](mailto:nccw01@nccw.org).

Service Commission 2014