

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OUTREACH — ARCHDIOCESE of CHICAGO — AWARENESS - SERVICES - PREVENTION



Good News About the Fight to End Domestic Violence

Fall 2017

## Second Archdiocesan Mass Draws a Crowd

On September 30, 2017, the Archdiocese of Chicago Domestic Violence Outreach (ACDVO) held its second annual *Mass to End Domestic Violence* at Holy Name Cathedral. Approximately 1,000 people attended and heard Fr. Louis Cameli, Cardinal Cupich's Delegate for Mission and Formation, give a moving homily for victims and advocates. Mass began with a procession of ministry members holding signs representing each of the 110 Chicago-area parishes that have invited Fr. Chuck Dahm to preach on domestic violence at all their weekend Masses. A reception in the cathedral hall followed the Mass. Next year, the Mass will be offered on October 6, 2018.

*(Right: Fr. Charles W. Dahm, O.P., Director of Domestic Violence Outreach, thanks Mass to End Domestic Violence participants.)*



*Volunteers from parishes with domestic violence ministries in the Chicago area hold up signs naming the 110 parishes that have had weekend preaching on domestic violence. Approximately 1,000 people attended the annual Mass to End Domestic Violence at Holy Name Cathedral on September 30th.*

## Pope Francis on Domestic Abuse

In the *Joy of Love* (Nos. 54, 104), Pope Francis shows himself a champion in defending women victims. He states forcefully:

"I think particularly of the shameful ill-treatment to which women are sometimes subjected, domestic violence and various forms of enslavement, which, rather than a show of masculine power, are craven acts of cowardice. The verbal, physical, and sexual violence that women endure in some marriages contradicts the very nature of the conjugal union.... If we must fight evil, so be it; but we must always say "no" to violence in the home.

## ACDVO is now on Facebook



Check out ACDVO's new page at [www.facebook.com/domesticviolenceoutreach](https://www.facebook.com/domesticviolenceoutreach).

Help us grow our followers by liking our page, encouraging friends to visit, and sharing

interesting content with others. Social media messages are a wonderful way to break the silence and spread awareness!



# ACDVO Activities

## Parishioners Applaud, Clergy Resist

Across the Archdiocese, after my weekend preaching on domestic violence, parishioners commonly applaud." A pastor asked one Sunday after seven Masses: "Do you always get applause after your homilies?" I said, "No, only when I preach about domestic violence." The faithful are so happy to finally hear about a problem they recognize as neglected by the Church.

As parishioners leave, they thank me profusely with comments such as: "About time the Church has addressed this problem." "I wish I had heard this sermon 25 years ago when I was abused and the Church told me I had to stay." "Thank God the Church is finally speaking about the real world; thank you." "You described the abuse I lived for 20 years."

Why do most priests not preach about domestic violence and resist my request to preach in their parishes? Some priests don't see the problem, and if they haven't spoken about it, victims think they are unsympathetic and will not approach them. They remain ignorant and clueless. Others think it is controversial. But once I preach in their parishes, they are amazed at the positive response. Finally, some think a new ministry will be more work for them, but in reality it is parishioners who carry this ministry. Let's work on educating our priests and helping them be advocates for victims and their children.

*Fr. Chuck Dahm, O.P., Director*

## Seminarians Trained

On November 15, 2017, ACDVO offered all 190 seminarians at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein a 3-hour workshop on domestic violence. The presentation included ACDVO's Domestic Violence Training PowerPoint, a study of the 2002 USCCB letter on domestic violence against women, "*When I Call For Help*" and testimony from a survivor. We are happy future priests of the archdiocese and many other dioceses received training on how to appropriately address this important pastoral issue.

## ACDVO Offers Training Sessions

ACDVO has offered domestic violence training for 45 parishes, parish clusters and parish staffs. These workshops, usually spanning about 4 hours, develop an emotional and intellectual basis for understanding ministry to victims and perpetrators and for recognizing prevention as critical for an effective ministry. Our training provides sound, evidence-based information, multi-media materials, regularly updated resources and links to our website: [www.domesticviolenceoutreach.org](http://www.domesticviolenceoutreach.org).

If you are interested in Awareness, Services & Prevention Training in your parish, contact Sheila Morrow, Training Committee Chair, at [Sheila.morrow17@gmail.com](mailto:Sheila.morrow17@gmail.com).



## Parishes Assemble in September

Twice each year, ACDVO convenes representatives from parishes with active domestic violence ministries. These bi-annual assemblies provide a forum to assess the needs of our growing network of ministries, to share news of creative parish responses and to deliver ongoing education.

On September 16, 2017, over 75 people assembled at Holy Name Cathedral to hear Sheriff Tom Dart speak about Cook County's efforts to curb human trafficking. Dart emphasized that this abuse, which principally targets young, vulnerable women, is rampant, existing in every suburb and neighborhood. He urged parishes to work with young people to help them avoid this trap.





# Ministries Raise Awareness in October



*Some parishes displayed the beautiful quilt composed by Diane O'Brien from squares embroidered by survivors, a masterful and moving work of art.*

**St. Mary Parish** in Riverside organized a forum, "Don't Look Away," including a domestic violence attorney, an emergency room nurse, a physician who is a survivor and advocate, and Fr. Chuck Dahm, O.P. from ACDVO. The St. Mary's Domestic Violence Committee obtained sponsorship from many churches, schools and civic organizations as way of gaining support and spreading the word. Before the forum, St. Mary's pastor hosted an ecumenical dinner for area clergy to share their experiences and work on domestic violence.



*Many parishes displayed red Silent Witness figures, which can be made in-house or obtained on loan for local use.*

## Parishes Display Creativity

October saw many parishes organize activities to mark Domestic Violence Awareness month. Their creativity and commitment to break the silence about domestic violence were evident across the archdiocese. Some examples are:

At **Sacred Heart Parish** in Palos Heights, the parish Domestic Violence Committee organized a Sunday afternoon panel with Silent Witness silhouettes representing women, men and children murdered in domestic violence. People who knew the victims gave testimonies to their struggles, suffering and violent deaths. Several survivors of domestic violence followed with testimonies of their struggles to free themselves. A very powerful event. A variety of domestic violence agencies distributed information about their services.

**St. Cletus Parish** in LaGrange held a similar Silent Witness vigil on October 27. In Northbrook, three parishes, **St. Norbert/Our Lady of the Brook, St. Catherine Laboure and Our Lady of Perpetual Help** focused the Saturday 5:00 pm Mass on domestic violence and followed with a procession led by a bagpiper and Silent Witness figures to the church hall (a rain option) for a "Shine the Light" candlelight vigil.

**St. Francis Xavier** in LaGrange held a prayer service in which a survivor of domestic violence gave a powerful testimony of her successful struggle to free herself from abuse. Many, moved to tears, roundly applauded her courage.

**St. Edmund and Ascension** in Oak Park and **St. Luke** in River Forest organized a Sunday afternoon walk to end domestic violence. They gathered in a park and walked through River Forest on a route marked with purple ribbons and lawn signs giving statistics and information about domestic violence.

At **St. Paul of the Cross Parish**, the Domestic Violence Committee spoke after Communion at all Masses. They emphasized that domestic violence is present and rampant in Park Ridge, being the most frequent 911 call that local police receive. They also encouraged people suffering to seek help from the local domestic violence agency. Young candidates for Confirmation distributed the committee's brochure at all the exits after Masses.



# Your ACDVO

## Parish Signage Brings Awareness to Communities



*Many parishes placed signs in front of their churches during October to alert their communities to the problem. Pictured are St. James in Arlington Heights and St. Edmund in Oak Park, where St. Luke and Ascension used the same format in front of their churches. The Lake movie theater even displayed a sign on their marquee.*



## Gala Benefit: March 23, 2018

ACDVO will hold its second Gala Benefit on March 23, 2018, at The Diplomat West in Elmhurst. The first Gala Benefit last March was enormously successful: more than 390 people attended, creating a festive atmosphere while raising over \$51,000 to fund 3 part-time assistants and operations. It raises hope to empower victims and expand parish-based ministries, especially since the archdiocese does not financially support this ministry. This year we will award several grants to agencies working with victims. Mark your calendars for an exciting evening of excellent food, an open bar, a silent auction, raffles, plus dancing. The cost will again be only \$80 per person with tables of 8.



## ACDVO Helps Obtain State Funding for DV Programs

ACDVO's Public Policy Committee contributed significantly to the passage of the Illinois State budget this summer which included the \$18.6 million owed to domestic violence programs throughout the state. Committee members alerted the archdiocesan network of parish domestic violence committees to contact legislators and urge their support for passing the bill. This was our first effort to show some muscle throughout the network, and the various domestic violence agencies in Cook County and Lake County are very appreciative of our efforts.

## End of Year Donations

As you pray for those in need this Christmas season, please consider an end of year donation to support the work of the Archdiocese of Chicago Domestic Violence Outreach. The archdiocese provides no funding for our work, but supports us morally and with some administrative services. All donations go 100% to our work on domestic violence. Donations should be to Domestic Violence Outreach and sent to 1914 S. Ashland, Chicago, IL 60608, or made with a credit card on our website—click on "Support" on the left side of our homepage: [www.DomesticViolenceOutreach.org](http://www.DomesticViolenceOutreach.org).

*Thank you so much.*

**Many thanks** to all who support our archdiocesan ministry as well as ministries in their parishes. Your generous contributions help us fight domestic violence by raising awareness, connecting victims to services and promoting prevention. We need your support to be most effective. Contact Fr. Charles W. Dahm, O.P., at 1914 S. Ashland Avenue, Chicago, IL 60608, 312-713-7752, [cdahm13@gmail.com](mailto:cdahm13@gmail.com), [www.DomesticViolenceOutreach.org](http://www.DomesticViolenceOutreach.org).