

**Domestic Violence Awareness Month 2014**  
**ACTIVITY IDEAS**



FOR YOUR PARISH

Cut and distribute purple ribbons with a pin to members of the faith community to wear, explaining to them that purple is the color of victims of domestic violence. Wearing the ribbon gives witness to their opposition to domestic violence and provides them an opportunity to explain their position when people ask about the ribbons they are wearing.

Eucharistic ministers and lectors might wear purple ribbons in October as a sign of their solidarity with victims of domestic violence.

Hold a candle light and prayer vigil for victims/survivors of domestic abuse and their families.

Illuminate your parish church or part of it with purple lights.

Post announcements about domestic violence or some aspect of it on the parish marquee.

Display a banner visible to passers-by on your parish campus that supports victims of domestic violence and states a zero tolerance for violence within the faith community.

Ask your pastoral staff to preach on domestic violence abuse one weekend in October (with advance prep/support from the parish domestic violence outreach committee).

Have a parish Domestic Violence Committee member speak about domestic violence in announcements at every Mass and lead congregation in pledge and prayer for non-violence in the home.

Prepare one prayer of the faithful for each Sunday in October to invoke God's love and comfort for those who suffer violence in their own homes and for the conversion of perpetrators.

Members of DV Ministry bring gifts in the offertory procession at Mass, together with a symbol of non-violence and peace (to be placed at the foot of the altar or some other appropriate place).

Host a table near or in the gathering spaces featuring various brochures and a parish prayer of non-violence.

Plan a pre campaign bulletin article that features your parish activities for the month of October. Schedule a Domestic Violence Campaign Weekend to highlight awareness and education in your parish.

Include an article on Domestic Violence in each October weekend bulletin. Can easily obtain articles or paragraphs on line by googling domestic violence.

Insert a notice on domestic violence awareness facts and the City/Statewide Hotline in your congregation's bulletin: 1-877-863-6338.

Feature four local and/or national organizations such as Sarah's Inn, South Suburban Family Shelter, Life Span, WINGS, Between Friends, National Domestic Violence Hotline and the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline.

Update parish website with information on Domestic Violence Awareness with links to local and national resources.

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Cuff the trees or fences on the parish campus with purple bands.

Contact an agency that provides services to victims/survivors of domestic violence for a wish list of supplies for their clients. Post the wish list for donation in the parish bulletin. Have a collection of these items in your congregation and donate them to the agency.

At Sunday services, ask members to write prayer intentions for victims on strips of two different colors of purple paper in the pews, gather and link them in a chain to be hung in the vestibule or another significant place.

During Eucharistic Adoration, arrange for a prayer intention to be offered specifically for victims and families who experience domestic violence. Invite a representative from every parish organization to attend this service.

Request a special mass on a weekday evening in October at 7:00 pm to pray for healing and an end to domestic violence. Invite all parishioners. DV Ministry members will be available after the liturgy serving refreshments and hospitality and hosting a table with brochures & resource information.

Partner with an agency in your community to host a speaker for your youth group on healthy teen dating relationships. To learn about Domestic Violence Organizations in your area see the resource list in the Domestic Violence Manual on the Archdiocese website.

Draw and cut out life-size silhouettes of women on cardboard. Paint them black. On each cut out image, write a victim's plea for domestic violence stop across the chest. Carry these images in a procession to a significant place and/or at Mass and display in the sanctuary during Mass or in the church vestibule.

Draw and cut out shapes of children's clothing on colored construction paper. Write a child's plea for peace in their home. Hang the clothing shapes on a clothesline with small clothespins. Display in the parish office or vestibule of the worship space.

Hold a parish gathering to view a video / documentary on domestic violence. Invite a community educator from a local domestic violence services agency to facilitate a brief discussion following the film.

Throughout the month of "Novembering"—intercessions at the liturgies for the victims of DV who have died.

Ask parish junior high students to create healthy teen dating/ non-violence posters for display in school lobby and parish gathering spaces.

**FOR YOUR COMMUNITY**

Invite your local schools to have students create their own media campaign on how to recognize domestic violence and what the community can do about it.

Talk with local radio stations about getting information "on air" about DV awareness month .

Select 1 to 3 agencies or individuals to receive achievement awards for helping victims of DV or for their efforts in taking a stand against domestic violence. Examples of agencies/individuals; law enforcement, community agency, county attorney, volunteers, a school, etc.

Hold a cooking contest and the proceeds go to your parish-based domestic violence outreach program. Examples; chili, BBQ, pies, ice cream.

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Take artwork created by survivors and have displays with the pieces around your parish and/or community.

Create your own list of 31 statements, facts, etc., to post each day on Facebook page or your website .

Encourage others to create “posts” on their social networks about healthy relationships.

Take posters/music that portray negative messages about women, violence, etc., and create posters that reframe those messages into positive statements.

Talk with community partners and agencies to see if they will put in purple lights for the month of October or display purple ribbons in their stores/agency/business along with your brochures.

Collaborate with agencies within your community and have training on recognizing, helping and preventing intimate partner violence .

**Pets against Violence:** A fun walk for pets and their owners. The purpose is to raise awareness of the correlation between pet abuse and domestic violence. People can register for the walk with or without pets. Tables can be sold to vendors for a set amount to display their products or services. Local organizations can be asked to develop posters with statements about pet abuse and domestic violence and held up during the walk.

**Halloween Treat Bags:** A unique way to connect Halloween and domestic violence education and prevention. Have your local hotline number or contact information on Halloween treat bags. Your agency can distribute light reflective Halloween bags with a domestic violence message to local elementary school children.

**“Let’s Have Coffee”:** Approach a local coffee shop to sponsor a small group discussion on domestic violence. Invitations can be sent out to local elected officials, business owners, church and neighborhood leaders, law enforcement officials and domestic violence advocates. The program can involve a brief presentation by the local DV services agency followed by a facilitated discussion on domestic violence.

Inquire if your local bakery will make a purple donut or use purple frosting during the month of October for DVAM. Put a jar out to raise money for your local DV services program at the same time.

Make cookies – make them purple, use purple frosting, use purple sprinkles and take them to your police officers, county attorneys, medical personnel, etc., in your community.

Request to exhibit a DV Awareness Poster & bookcase display at your local library.

**Purple lights:** Shine a purple light on your porch during October, and when people ask you about it, let them know why domestic violence awareness and dating abuse awareness are important to you.