

Intercession

May all people embrace the truth that every life is a good and perfect gift and is worth living.

Prayers

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection

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 circumstance never diminishes the value of a human life. For God does not call us to perfection of appearance or abilities, but to perfection in *love*. Christ invites us to embrace the lives we have been given, for as long as they are given, as true gifts.

Our relationships on this earth are meant to help us grow in God's perfect love. Everyone we encounter is a gift, not because of what they can do or accomplish, but because of who they *are*—a beloved child of God. May each of us experience the power of God's transforming love, that our eyes may be opened to the incredible beauty of the people the Lord places in our lives.

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

Take a break from television, movies, and social media today. Consider spending some of that time reflecting on today's message.

Pray the short prayer "Every Life is Worth Living," reflecting on how you can bring Christ's love to others today.

*Heavenly Father, thank you
for the precious gift of life.
Help us to cherish and protect
this gift, even in the midst of fear,
pain, and suffering.
Give us love for all people,*

*especially the most vulnerable,
and help us bear witness to the
truth that every life is worth living.
Grant us the humility to accept
help when we are in need,
and teach us to be merciful to all.*

*Through our words and actions,
may others encounter the
outstretched hands
of Your mercy.
We ask this through
Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

Offer some other sacrifice, pray the Rosary, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today's intention.

One Step Further

Our culture is obsessed with perfection—a superficial perfection. Social media, magazines, and television are staged and edited to depict seemingly perfect lives. When life doesn't seem to measure up to these standards, we may doubt our worth or God's love.

In "A Perfect Gift" (www.usccb.org/perfect-gift) one parent shares about the experience of raising a child with Down syndrome, contrasting it with what onlookers might perceive: "It's like looking at a stained-glass window from the outside: The colors look dark, and you can't quite make out the figures. From the inside, however, with the sun shining through it, the effect can be brilliant. From inside our family, love illuminates our life with Charlie.* What may seem dreary to others, perhaps even unbearable, is actually filled with beauty and color." Every life is a gift.

**Name changed for privacy.*

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