

CCSJ calls on the nation to observe *Respect for Life Week* from Saturday 6 Oct. to Saturday 13 October 2012.

During the 3rd sitting of Synod in the Catholic Archdiocese of Port of Spain in 2009, one of the strategies that was suggested by those gathered was that each year the Archdiocese should observe a week when we will focus on Respect for all Life. This is the 3rd year that the Archdiocese will be observing *Respect for Life Week* (RFLW). The week will run from Saturday 6 October to Saturday 13 October 2012.

While this is an initiative organised by the Catholic Church, The Catholic Commission for Social Justice (CCSJ) calls on citizens to focus during RFLW on ways in which we can all Respect Life. RFLW offers us all an opportunity to re-commit ourselves to promote

- the sanctity of life and the dignity of each human person; and
- environmental ecology

as key elements to achieve authentic development for our citizens and for all of creation.

Leela Ramdeen, Chair of CCSJ, says:

“As we move forward into our 51st year of Independence and our 37th year as a Republic, let us strive to foster respect for all life. Recent reports of rape, incest, child abuse, domestic violence, gang warfare, and senseless murders show how little respect we have for life. We cannot remain as silent bystanders and observe the daily assaults on human life. If our consciences are well-formed, we will discern the signs of the times and work together to build a civilization of love. Love is the answer to many of the problems that plague our country. Many of us say we love God, but we fail to see Him in our neighbour. We can be agents of change; we can transform our society for the better. It is time for all people of goodwill to put their love into concrete action and build our nation. And let us not forget the power of prayer to change hearts and minds. We ask each citizen to join us in prayer and action, particularly during RFLW.”

Blessed John Paul II rightly said in 1990 that “The ecological crisis is a moral issue. We have a moral duty, as stewards of creation, to care for, preserve, develop and restore the environment. We are one human family and while we seek to address environmental issues that impact on us now, let us remember that we are not to hand over to future generations God’s creation depleted of its resources. The “common good” includes a concern for those who will come after us.

RFLW will be launched on Saturday 6 October at Assumption Parish Centre, Maraval, with the Sir Ellis Clarke Memorial Conference from 4:00 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Speakers include Archbishop Joe Harris C.S.Sp.; His Excellency Archbishop Nicola Girasoli, Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop; and Fr Garfield Rochard. All are invited.

Further information and a Calendar of Events for the week are available from Leela Ramdeen on 299 8945.