

# Domestic Violence

## Homily Tips Fall 2025

Msgr. JohnENZler and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., encourage priests to speak about domestic violence in a homily in September or October and use materials provided below to alert suffering families that help is available.

Catholic families deserve to be safe and loved at home. Yet 1 out of 4 women, 1 out of 7 men have experienced severe physical violence in an intimate relationship: being kicked, beaten, choked, burned, having a weapon used against them. (CDC 2017)

Msgr.ENZler invites pastors to use the homily tips included here to encourage parishioners to seek help if they or family members suffer harm at home.

You are invited to send a copy of your homily to [Laura.YeomansDV@CC-DC.org](mailto:Laura.YeomansDV@CC-DC.org) for possible publication on the Catholic Charities and Catholic for Family Peace websites.

### Catholic Parishioners Speak Out

"My mother lost two baby boys due to my dad's physical, mental, emotional abuses.  
We were like baby birds in a cage."

"I honor my grandmother who suffered 18 years of abuse."

"I was stalked for a couple of months by a guy I no longer wanted to date. It was so bad that I had to change my phone number."

"My grandpa hit my grandma. "

"I lived in an abusive marriage for 21 years, both physical and emotional. "

"He said he would kill my child if I try to leave."

**2025 Parish Domestic Violence Materials Available**  
at [www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace](http://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace):

- Restroom flyers
- Victim counseling resources
- Homily tips
- Bulletin inserts, Prayers of the Faithful

Catholic Charities

924 G. St. NW

Washington, DC 20004

[Teresa.Villanueva@CC-DC.org](mailto:Teresa.Villanueva@CC-DC.org)

[Laura.YeomansDV@CC-DC.org](mailto:Laura.YeomansDV@CC-DC.org)

[www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace](http://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace)

# Sunday of the Twenty-third Week in Ordinary Time: September 7, 2025

## Responsorial Psalm

**Psalm 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 and 17**

**R. (1) In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.**

You turn man back to dust,  
saying, "Return, O children of men."  
For a thousand years in your sight  
are as yesterday, now that it is past,  
or as a watch of the night.

**R. In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.**

You make an end of them in their sleep;  
the next morning they are like the changing grass,  
Which at dawn springs up anew,  
but by evening wilts and fades.

**R. In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.**

Teach us to number our days aright,  
that we may gain wisdom of heart.

Return, O LORD! How long?  
Have pity on your servants!

**R. In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.**

Fill us at daybreak with your kindness,  
that we may shout for joy and gladness all our days.  
And may the gracious care of the LORD our God be ours;  
prosper the work of our hands for us!  
Prosper the work of our hands!

The Psalmist today reminds us that in every age, in every situation God has been and is still today our refuge and strength. "Teach us to number our days aright that we may gain wisdom of heart." And what is that Godly wisdom? "Fill us at daybreak with your loving kindness, that we may shout for joy.....and may the gracious care of the Lord be ours.." This call to kindness and wisdom applies to all of our lives including our family life.

Did you know that 1 out of 4 women and 1 out of 7 men suffer severe physical harm at home? Mothers, grandmothers, daughters beaten, punched, choked, threatened. If you know someone suffering in this way, know that our parish is ready to support families seeking safety. God is our refuge and strength and we will walk with families suffering harm at home to find safety.

Through the grace of God and the sacraments, through counseling, developing safety plans, and learning new relationship skills, family members in danger can get to safety, and abuse can stop.

If you need help, the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops recommends calling the National Domestic Violence Hotline 1 (800) 799-7233.

# Sunday of the Twenty-fifth Week in Ordinary Time: September 21, 2025

## Reading 2      [1 Timothy 2:1-8](#)

Beloved:

First of all, I ask that supplications, prayers,  
petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone,  
for kings and for all in authority,  
[that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life  
in all devotion and dignity.](#)

This is good and pleasing to God our savior,  
who wills everyone to be saved  
and to come to knowledge of the truth.  
For there is one God.

There is also one mediator between God and men,  
the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as ransom for all.  
This was the testimony at the proper time.  
For this I was appointed preacher and apostle  
— I am speaking the truth, I am not lying —,  
teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

[It is my wish, then, that in every place the men should pray,  
lifting up holy hands, without anger or argument.](#)

In this time of uncertainty many families in our parish community are struggling with unemployment, financial distress, harm toward women, children and sometimes men.

Timothy shows us the Lord's path, "that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity....It is my wish that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands, without anger or argument."

In every place, including our homes we have the same calling. But did you know that 1 out of 4 women and 1 out of 7 men suffer severe physical harm at home? Mothers, grandmothers, daughters beaten, punched, choked, threatened. If you know someone suffering in this way, know that our parish is ready to support families seeking safety.

The Psalm today calls us to remember the Lord lifts up the poor. The Lord lifts up those suffering harm at home and helps them get to safety.

Through the grace of God and the sacraments, through counseling, developing safety plans, and learning new relationship skills, family members in danger can get to safety, and abuse can stop.

If you need help, the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops recommends calling the National Domestic Violence Hotline 1 (800) 799-7233.

# Sunday of the Twenty-seventh Week in Ordinary Time October 5, 2025

## Reading 1 Hab 1:2-3; 2:2-4

How long, O LORD? I cry for help  
but you do not listen!

I cry out to you, "Violence!"

but you do not intervene.

Why do you let me see ruin;

why must I look at misery?

Destruction and violence are before me;

there is strife, and clamorous discord.

Then the LORD answered me and said:

Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets,  
so that one can read it readily.

For the vision still has its time,

presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint;

if it delays, wait for it,

it will surely come, it will not be late.

The rash one has no integrity;

but the just one, because of his faith, shall live.

## Responsorial Psalm

### Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

**R. (8) If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;

let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

**R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us bow down in worship;

let us kneel before the LORD who made us.

For he is our God,

and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

**R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:

"Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,

as in the day of Massah in the desert,

Where your fathers tempted me;

they tested me though they had seen my works."

**R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

"How long, O Lord? I cry for help but you do not listen! I cry out to you, 'Violence!' The desperation is clear. The psalmist cries out for rescue.

How many of us, of our neighbors might cry out in a similar way?

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness month. The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops reports that 1 out of 4 women in this country have suffered severe physical violence at home; being beaten, choked, punched, kicked, threatened with a weapon.

"Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife and clamorous discord. Then the Lord answered me..."

We as community of God are called to be part of helping friends and family suffering abuse. If you know someone suffering threats and beatings at home, help is available.

If you find yourself raising your fist in anger or know someone who raises his fist to his wife and children, help is available. "If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts." "For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather of power and love and self-control."

Through the grace of God and the sacraments, through counseling, developing safety plans, and learning new relationship skills, family members in danger can get to safety, and abuse can stop.

For more information, please see the note about the National Domestic Violence Hotline in the bulletin. 1 (800) 799-7233.

"If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts. Oh, that today you would hear his voice."

# Sunday of the Thirtieth Week in Ordinary Time October 26, 2025

## Reading 1

**Sir 35:12-14, 16-18**

The LORD is a God of justice,  
who knows no favorites.  
Though not unduly partial toward the weak,  
yet he hears the cry of the oppressed.  
The Lord is not deaf to the wail of the orphan,  
nor to the widow when she pours out her complaint.  
The one who serves God willingly is heard;  
his petition reaches the heavens.  
The prayer of the lowly pierces the clouds;  
it does not rest till it reaches its goal,  
nor will it withdraw till the Most High responds,  
judges justly and affirms the right,  
and the Lord will not delay.

## Responsorial Psalm **Ps 34:2-3, 17-18, 19, 23**

### R. (7a) **The Lord hears the cry of the poor.**

I will bless the LORD at all times;  
his praise shall be ever in my mouth.  
Let my soul glory in the LORD;  
the lowly will hear me and be glad.

### R. **The Lord hears the cry of the poor.**

The LORD confronts the evildoers,  
to destroy remembrance of them from the earth.  
When the just cry out, the Lord hears them,  
and from all their distress he rescues them.

### R. **The Lord hears the cry of the poor.**

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted;  
and those who are crushed in spirit he saves.  
The LORD redeems the lives of his servants;  
no one incurs guilt who takes refuge in him.

The Lord is a God of justice, he hears the cry of the oppressed, the poor, the orphan. The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; and those who are crushed in spirit he saves.

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. 1 out of 4 women, 1 out of 7 men have suffered severe violence at home: being beaten, kicked, punched, choked, burned or threatened with a weapon. More families suffer emotional and verbal threats and abuse.

Marieta, a parishioner at St. Rose of Lima, suffered 15 years of beatings at home, while caring for three beautiful children. She was cut off from family and friends. Crushed in spirit, the violence became more cruel and life threatening. Marieta feared her husband would kill her. She prayed to the Virgin Mary and Jesus to help her. God was present to her and an elderly woman helped her escape.

God does not want women, children, or men to suffer violent abuse at home. The Lord hears them and from all their distress he rescues them.

Just as an elderly woman helped Marieta, we can offer helping support to families suffering harm. You can help save lives.

Check in our bulletin today for the National Domestic Violence Hotline. 1 800 799-7233

With the grace of God and the sacraments, with counseling and safety planning, families can get to safety and abuse can end.

# Homily about Family Peace/Domestic Abuse

Msgr. JohnENZler, CEO of Catholic Charities DC

11/13/2022

This Sunday all the priests of the parish are speaking about an important issue that's rarely addressed from the pulpit. Some people call it family peace. Others call it domestic abuse. It deals with the sadness of relationships broken by physical, mental, and emotional abuse by another. While women seem to experience it more often, at times men are abused as well. This is a chance for us to think about this issue and to know that the priests here at St.

Bartholomew's are ready and willing to help you if anyone needs any particular assistance. I hope that you'll stop at the table at the back of the church when you leave and pick up the materials.

I will share you some statistics that will shock you, I'm sure. 1 out of 4 women in this country at some time in their lives have been severely abused. 1 out of 4 women, and nationally 1 out of 7 men. Even more shocking is this statistic. In the Vietnam war we lost more than 58,000 soldiers, armed forces died in Vietnam. At the same period of time, 53,000 individuals were killed by domestic abuse. Imagine, almost equal. So, the Vietnam War got all of our attention, lots of headlines, lots of concerns and this particular scourge we didn't think about. 53,000 people in this country died of domestic abuse during that time.

In one of our first meetings there was a story about a family in PG County with a woman who got married. She was happily married for a while and then her husband began to be difficult, abusive. She went to her dad and said "Dad, my husband is not behaving well." Dad said, "Stay with him, relax it's only been one year. Don't worry. It will be fine." It got worse and worse so she finally went to her dad and said, "I can't do it anymore." Her father said, "You come home." She came home to her dad's house and over the years when she was home her husband acted perfectly: kind, generous, apologized - all the things you would do if you had this bigger problem. Sadly, she went back to him and within one week she died. He killed her.

It's a difficult scourge. It's not just in poor places. It says 1 out of 4 women, even women here have been abused. It's not just abuse we have at home, sometimes it's date rape in college. It's ways we don't take care of each other. So as a church and Catholic Charities we are doing a better job of speaking about this issue. But it's not just me today, all the priests have spoken about this today. Your pastor Fr. Mark Smith was on the committee with us when we first began. He still supports us and spoke about this this morning. We're trying to do our best to stay faithful to education, to bring you something to think about. To think about how it is that we can help people who might be in our midst who find themselves in a situation of abuse.

I helped a family before I came here. A woman called me and said, “I come home at night and my husband locks me out of the house. Can’t get in. I’m on the front porch. Can’t get in. It’s controlling and abusive behavior.” It’s not just downtown, not just in Southeast DC, not just in Prince George’s. It’s right here in our own county that people have abusive situations that are very difficult to deal with. So today I’m asked to say a few words about this, mostly education for you, so that you are aware of the fact that the church is trying to do its best to make a difference for people who may face this particular challenge. Let me read you a definition:

Domestic violence encompasses any kind of behavior used to control an intimate partner through fear or intimidation. Includes physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, economic abuse. Happens to spouses living in households, but not always. Also happens to teenagers, bullying and abuse, date rape is also abuse.

Many of us were trained like the dad was when his daughter came home. We came to believe there is no turning back. There are a lot of priests that would say to someone who has been abused, “You must stay.” You made a promise. You are committed. I’m here to tell you that is not the Church teaching anymore. The Church sees the fact that sometimes the abusive behavior is such that you should not stay.

I want to read what the US Bishops said in a letter back in 2002 said about this, what would happen if you are abused, “We emphasize that no person is expected to stay in an abusive marriage. Some abused women believe that church teaching on the permanence of marriage requires them to stay in an abusive relationship. They may hesitate to seek a separation or divorce. They may fear that they cannot re-marry in the Church. Violence and abuse, not divorce, break up a marriage.”

It’s important to know that if you are married to someone who is abusive that you are not stuck, that you should come and talk with a priest and talk about that. Because in fact the Catholic Church says an annulment is probably going to work. It was not a sacrament. What’s an annulment? An annulment doesn’t say you weren’t married. An annulment says it wasn’t a valid marriage. There’s a difference. In some cases, an annulment says you were married, you have kids, but it wasn’t a true sacrament. You got a present there, but God wants you to move on. That was a concern for many people clearly in an abusive situation. It’s hard to make that commitment to call it a sacrament. Recently in the National Catholic Reporter Fr. Charles Dahm spoke about the need to welcome people who come who need an annulment because they find themselves in very abusive situations.

So today later Laura Yeomans from Catholic Charities will say a few words. She is retired but frankly does this because she loves to take care of people in need and to advocate for this. But this is something you should think about. Should we as a church put together a little committee, a little group that might be willing to talk about this so that we can be a church that provides support for those who find themselves in need.

Let me say this to you. If anybody knows anyone who is being abused you can come to any of the priests, Oscar, myself and Fr. Mark. And I promise we'll listen, react and do the best we can to help you. Because this is a bad situation when people find themselves suffering abusive behavior in an untenable situation. Pray for those who are being abused. Pray for those who are abusers. Pray for those who need help and assistance and make sure that we don't forget that this is one of the issues within Respect for Life.

Again, this is not a normal homily for Sunday. I did not address the scriptures, nor talk about the wonder of our gospel for today. Rather we talked about an issue that affects so many people today and I suspect some people in the church this morning. Please know again that the church cares deeply about all that suffer domestic violence, and we the priests of this parish are ready and willing to help you in any way we can. Thank you for your attention today. When you leave, please stop at the table set up by our domestic abuse violence committee and learn more about these issues and possibly even volunteer to be a part of this committee that will work with this issue here in the parish in the months to come. May God root out all abuse from our families. We pray for the abusers. We pray for the abused. May God bring all families peace.



**Homily About Domestic Violence**  
**27<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)**  
**October 2, 2022**  
**St. Joseph Church, Beltsville**  
Luke 17:5-10

*Introduction*

Today is Respect Life Sunday and October is Domestic Violence Awareness month. In our first reading from the prophet Habbukuk, he laments that there is destruction and violence all around him: *“How long, O Lord? I cry for help but you do not listen!”* The tone of desperation is clear. How many of us, of our neighbors or parishioners might cry out in a similar way?

When we talk about Respect Life Sunday, we are certainly passionate about protecting the unborn at every stage of their development. But it also means respecting the God given dignity of every human life from conception to natural death. And National Domestic Violence Awareness month is an essential part of this respect that we give to all human life.

What is Domestic Violence? Domestic Violence is any kind of behavior that a person uses to control an intimate partner through fear and intimidation. It includes physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, and economic abuse.

The USCCB reports that 1 out of 4 women and 1 out of 7 men in this country have suffered severe physical violence at home, being beaten, choked, punched, kicked, or threatened with a weapon.

We as a community of faith are called to be part of helping friends and family suffering abuse. If you know someone suffering threats and beatings at home, help is available. My experience on the Priest Advisory Committee on Domestic Violence has helped me tremendously in my ministry in support of these persons and families. I share this with you because **I want you to know that I am approachable if you are dealing with this issue and need a safe place to talk about it. I want you to know that St. Joseph’s is a parish community that cares for those who are suffering with domestic violence.**

If you find yourself raising your fist in anger or know someone who raises his fist to his wife and children, help is available. Through the grace of God and the sacraments, through counseling, developing safety plans, and learning new relationship skills, family members in danger can find safety and the abuse can stop.

As we reflect on faith, it’s important to mention that **this type of suffering is not a punishment from God for your past sins.** It is never God’s will that any person be abused in this way. And this is where faith in God becomes even more essential. In this case, it means believing that God loves you and would never leave you or forsake you.

*“Increase our Faith”*

I love how the apostles simply ask the Lord in today’s Gospel: *“Increase our faith.”* Jesus responds that if we have *“faith the size of mustard seed, we could say to a mulberry tree, ‘be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey us.”* Here Jesus uses an exaggeration or

hyperbole in order to make a point. A mustard seed is about the size of a grain of sand. Jesus is saying **even the smallest amount of faith can lead to extraordinary things.**

Jesus is saying that **we need to begin to exercise our faith rather than waiting around for it to just happen. Faith is supernatural** because we cannot acquire it by ourselves. However, it is **increased through prayer and continual exercise.**

There's a story about a man named Fidelis (Fidelis means faith). One day Fidelis was walking through the jungle and heard something behind him. He turns around and sees this lion, who is charging after him, to eat him. Fidelis tries to outrun the lion but he doesn't see a cliff and falls over about 100 feet down. There's another drop of 700 feet below that. On the way down there's a branch and Fidelis grabs hold of it and is just hanging there afraid. He cries out, "Hello, hello." Suddenly a voice yells back "Hello, hello." Fidelis yells, "Can you help me, help me!" Then the voice says, "Don't you want to know who I am?" Fidelis says, "I don't really care who you are, just help me." The voice replied, "I am the Lord your God. Do you trust me?" Fidelis says, "Yes, yes I trust you! Please get me down from here!" And the Lord God says, "Okay, first let go of the branch." And Fidelis looks up as he hangs there for his life and yells: "Is there anybody else up there?"

**I love this story because it illustrates that faith is a real relationship to God.** It means that we know who He is. Faith is an attitude of confidence and trust in God because we believe that God is our Father. It's **letting go of the branch** (so to speak) and **trusting in God completely.** This weekend we celebrate the feast of St Thérèse of Lisieux and this is what Cardinal Basil Hume wrote of her:

*"In 1987 I visited St. Thérèse's room in the Carmel of Lisieux. By the door of her room, scratched into the wood, she had written, "Jesus is my only love." That was not written in exaltation but in near despair. She was thus crying out to her Beloved that even when she experienced nothing but absence, emptiness, darkness, she clung to the assurance of being loved and carried in his arms. That is faith at a heroic level – that is trust, clinging to God when everything in our experience would seem to contradict his very existence, or at least his love for us."*

St. Therese of Lisieux's experience reminds me of St. Teresa of Calcutta, who also felt a similar abandonment and absence of God's presence in her life. These beautiful women remind us that faith is not ultimately a feeling. **Faith is an act of the will; it's a choice we make to trust in God no matter what the circumstances in our lives. When we make an act of faith, we trust that God is working behind the scenes for our good.**

### *Conclusion*

What about us? Is your faith the size of mustard seed or are you like Fidelis, holding on to the branch? If I'm really honest, there are some days it's like a mustard seed and there are other days when I'm still holding on the branch like Fidelis. Most days it's much stronger than that, but to be human is to experience those times that really test our faith. It's in those weaker moments that we can all pray like the apostles: *"Lord, increase our faith."*

**- Reverend Robert G. Maro, Pastor**

**St. Joseph Catholic Church, 11007 Montgomery Rd, Beltsville, MD 20705  
301-937-7183 x417**

# CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE – F.A.Q.



## What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is any kind of behavior that a person uses to control an intimate partner through fear and intimidation. It includes physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, and economic abuse. Some examples: battering, name-calling and insults, threats to kill or harm one's partner or children, destruction of property, marital rape, and forced sterilization or abortion.

[www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace](http://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace)

Written by Fr. Rob Maro  
Archdiocese of Washington, D.C.

## What if my suffering is a just punishment for my past sins? Could it be part of God's will?

No. God is not teaching you a lesson and would never want someone to abuse you. This image of a harsh, cruel God runs contrary to the Biblical image of a kind, merciful, and loving God.

## Does the Church expect me to stay in an abusive marriage?

No. The Church's Code of Canon Law 1153 states clearly: "Spouses ordinarily have the duty to live married life together, but a legitimate cause excuses them from doing so. If either of the spouses causes grave mental or physical danger to the other spouse or to the offspring or otherwise renders common life too difficult, that spouse gives the other a legitimate cause for leaving, either by decree of the local ordinary or even on his or her own authority if there is danger in delay."

**YOU DON'T DESERVE TO BE ABUSED!**

## I'm afraid that if I leave this marriage I won't be able to re-marry in the Church. Is that true?

No. You could re-marry in the Church if you are granted an annulment, which determines that the marriage bond is not valid. Any Catholic priest can assist you in getting this process started.

## But aren't we supposed to forgive and turn the other cheek, especially if they are sorry and promise to reform?

Forgiveness doesn't mean you need to subject yourself to abuse. Remorse and begging forgiveness are manipulative methods often used by abusers to control their victims. Abusers rarely stop abusing; in fact, the abuse will almost always get worse as time goes on. Help is available. Call 1-800-799-7233 or one of the local agencies listed.

## Are there any local agencies that can help?

Calvert County – Center for Change  
(410) 535-5400 x 384

Charles County – Center for Abused Persons  
(301) 645-3336

District of Columbia – DC SAFE 1 (800) 407-5048

Montgomery County – Family Justice Center  
(240) 773-0444

Prince George's County – Community Crisis Services  
(301) 731-1203

St. Mary's County – Southern MD Center for Family Advocacy  
(301) 373-4141

**NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE: 1-800-799-7233**

# RESPUESTA CATÓLICA A VIOLENCIA DOMÉSTICA – F.A.Q.



**Catholic Charities**

ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

Inspiring Hope, Building Futures.

[www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace](http://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace)

Escrito por Fr. Rob Maro

Archidiócesis de Washington, D.C.

## ¿Qué es la violencia doméstica?

La violencia doméstica es cualquier tipo de comportamiento que una persona usa para controlar a su pareja íntima a través del miedo y la intimidación. Incluye abuso físico, sexual, psicológico, verbal y económico. Algunos ejemplos: palizas, insultos y apodos, amenazas de muerte o daño a la pareja o a los hijos, destrucción de bienes, violación conyugal y esterilización o aborto forzado.

## ¿Qué pasa si mi sufrimiento es un castigo justo por mis pecados pasados? ¿Será parte de la voluntad de Dios?

No. Dios no te está dando una lección y nunca querría que alguien abusara de ti. Esta imagen de un Dios duro y cruel es contraria a la imagen bíblica de un Dios bondadoso, misericordioso y amoroso.

**¿Espera la Iglesia que me quede en un matrimonio abusivo?** No. El Código de Derecho Canónico de la Iglesia 1153 establece claramente que: “Los cónyuges ordinariamente tienen el deber de vivir juntos la vida matrimonial, pero una causa legítima puede excusarlos de hacerlo. Si cualquiera de los cónyuges causa un grave peligro mental o físico al otro cónyuge o a la descendencia o hace que la vida en común sea demasiado difícil, ese cónyuge da al otro una causa legítima para separarse, ya sea por decreto del Ordinario del lugar o incluso por su propia cuenta, bajo su propia autoridad, si hay peligro inminente.”

## USTED NO MERECE SER ABUSADO!

## Me temo que si dejo este matrimonio no podré volver a casarme por la Iglesia. ¿Es eso cierto?

No. Puede volver a casarse por la Iglesia si se le concede una anulación, que determina que el vínculo matrimonial no es válido. Puede solicitar ayuda a cualquier sacerdote católico para iniciar.

## Pero, ¿no se supone que debemos perdonar y poner la otra mejilla, especialmente si se arrepienten y prometen reformarse?

El perdón no significa que debas someterte a abuso. El remordimiento y la petición de perdón son métodos de manipulación que suelen utilizar los abusadores para controlar a sus víctimas. Los abusadores rara vez dejan de abusar; de hecho, el abuso casi siempre empeorará con el paso del tiempo. Hay ayuda disponible. Llame al 1-800-799-7233 o a una de las agencias locales enumeradas.

## ¿Hay alguna agencia local que pueda ayudar?

¡Sí! Existen agencias del Condado de Prince George que ayudan:

**Condado de Calvert - Centro Para El Cambio**  
(410) 535-5400 x 384

**Condado de Charles - Centro Para Personas Maltratadas**  
(301) 645-3336

**Distrito de Columbia - DC Linea Para Victimas**  
24 horas/día 1 (844) 443-5732

**Condado de Montgomery - Centro de Justicia Familiar**  
(240) 773-0444

**Condado de Prince George - Centro de Crisis Familiar**  
(301) 731-1203

**Condado de Santa María - Centro de la Defensa De la Familia**  
(301) 373-4141

301-731-1203.

**Línea Nacional de Violencia Doméstica 1-800-799-7233**