

Why Is It a Church Issue?

Reverence For All Life:

“Violence and abuse, not divorce, break up a marriage. The abuser has already broken the marriage covenant through his or her abusive behavior.”

ForYourMarriage.org

The church bases all of its stands on the gospel of Jesus Christ, who asks us in all ways to “love one another as I have loved you.” All of our reverence for life is grounded in the belief that each of us is created uniquely and specially by a loving God. Therefore, each person is worthy of love and respect so that he or she can be the person God wants them to be. When a person is subjected to abuse, neglect or violence, the person cannot thrive, or experience in his or her heart how much the person is loved so much by God.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has recognized the need for all church members to right the wrongs caused by family violence. In the USCCB’s letter “*When I Call For Help: A Pastoral Response to Domestic Violence Against Women.*” (www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/domestic-violence) Although it focuses on women as victims, what the bishops say about violence can apply to any situation in which power is used over a vulnerable person resulting in abuse.

The bishops write to many audiences:

Women

Pastors, parish personnel, educators, and others who are “first responders”

Men who abuse

Society at large

The letter encourages us to find ways to break the cycle of violence, much of which is learned behavior.

The letter also strongly states that no one is expected to stay in an abusive relationship or marriage.

Effect on Children:

One of the most tragic and long lasting effects of domestic violence is the damage it does to children on their emotions, feelings of isolation, security, physical safety, fear of adults, a sense of not being protected, torn loyalties. Even if they are not subject to physical or sexual abuse, they are victims nonetheless when they witness violence against a parent or another family member. The church in recent years has made strong statements regarding the protection of children in abusive situations. The same vigilance and advocacy needs to be applied to domestic violence which affects all family members and their community.

Suffering in the Community:

The knowledge that a neighbor, a family member, a parish member is suffering is something that weighs on each compassionate and caring member of a community. All of us need to be educated in our heads and hearts about how to respond appropriately and safely to the suffering of others. Sometimes in cases of domestic violence it takes 6 or 7 attempts before a partner can finally extract him/herself from a relationship.

Whether you are a community or family member, friend, or a victim of domestic violence yourself, here are some resources to help:

24 hours Crisis Lines/Líneas Telefónicas disponibles 24 horas

National Domestic Violence Hotline 7873224	1-800-799-SAFE (7233)	TTY-1-800-
Utah Domestic Violence Line	1-800-897-LINK (5465)	
National Sexual Assault Hotline	1-800-656-HOPE (4673)	

Statewide Assistance

Utah Domestic Violence Counsel (UDVC)
Salt Lake City, UT
801-521-5544
www.udvc.org

For the Deaf/Deaf Blind or Hard of Hearing/Para Personas Sordas/Sordas y Ciegas o Con Dificultades de Escuchar

Sego Lily Center For The Abused Deaf (SLCAD)
1-888-328-5486 (TTY, Fax, voice-listen for prompts)
www.slcad.org

For Assistance in Salt Lake Area/Asistencia en la Area de Salt Lake

Salt Lake Area Family Justice Center
Salt Lake City, UT
801-236-3370
www.familyjusticecenter.org/details/salt-lake-area-family-justice-center

YWCA Salt Lake City
322 East 300 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84111
801-537-8604 (available 24 hrs/disponible 24 horas)
www.ywca.org/saltlakecity

South Valley Sanctuary
801-255-1095 (available 24 hrs/disponible 24 horas)
www.southvalleysanctuary.com

Immigration Services for Victims of Violence
Holy Cross Ministries
801 261 3440 ext. 749

Sexual Assault Victims/Victimas de Asalto Sexual

Rape Recovery Center
2035 South 1300 East
Salt Lake City, UT 84105
801-467-7273 (available 24 hrs/disponible 24 horas)
www.raperecoverycenter.org