

40 Days for Life Sidewalk 101

To get the full background of this movement and a complete understanding of the three elements of it (prayer and fasting, outreach and peaceful vigil) I encourage you to visit www.40daysforlife.com

Sign up to participate in the prayer campaign at:

www.40daysforlife.com/iowacity and click on "Create a Log-in/Sign-up"

By signing up for a calendar time slot, you agree to abide by the statement of peace.

Once registered, you will receive a daily devotional for the next day from the National 40 Days for Life. Reading them is helpful in setting a proper spiritual tone as you approach the sidewalk or even simply pray in private for an end to abortion. There are many dimensions to this that require our prayerful consideration. The devotionals are the best way to make sure we are covering them all.

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO OUT THERE?

The public aspect of our local campaign is the prayerful and peaceful vigil being held outside of Emma Goldman from 8am-8pm each day of the campaign. The primary purpose of the vigil is prayer. People choose to do this in a variety of ways. Some prefer silent individual prayer, intercessory prayer and others prefer to pray together out loud. Participants may access prayers, devotionals, and scripture off their electronic devices. Rosaries are frequently said. Many people print off the daily devotionals and read them out loud for the benefit of all those praying on the sidewalk.

DO I HAVE TO TRY AND SIDEWALK COUNSEL?

You are not required to speak to anyone. Some people will feel called to reach out to facility patrons, employees or even passersby. That is fine, but not an expectation. Some people feel more comfortable having information to hand out. **There is a supply of brochures at The Newman Center on the corner of Clinton and Jefferson Streets, about a block away from the clinic- they are located on a table to the left of the reception desk. There are newly updated cards for Informed Choices Medical Clinic that include a map to the clinic.** There is also a publication called "This is NOT your only choice." You may read it here <http://www.humanlife.org/StreetMag.php>.

DO I HAVE TO HOLD A SIGN?

No. If you would prefer to hold a sign you are welcome to either make one or request a sign from me. Please be careful in selecting a message that conveys the truth IN LOVE. The official signs put out by 40 Days for Life say, "Pray to end abortion." Do not bring signs with messages of condemnation or shocking images of abortion. Although those images have their place in the pro-life movement, a 40 Days prayer vigil IS NOT an appropriate place to use them.

40 Days for Life Vigil signs are available for you to hold while praying - they are located under the table at the Newman Center (see above)

WHAT IF I AM CONFRONTED?

Remember that just because someone wants to engage you, you are not obligated to be drawn in. If you ever feel threatened do not hesitate to call 911. Be not afraid. Almost all of the time people just walk on by. Occasionally they may make a comment without stopping to get a response or they may express an angry outburst which may be related to past hurt feelings or emotional turmoil. Our response should be one of loving compassion and prayer, not judgment or condemnation. Rarely does someone approach our volunteers with a desire to have a conversation. When it does happen, it has been my experience that God was careful in selecting just the right people to handle the situation to be on the sidewalk. Before you arrive at the sidewalk and during your time there, constantly ask God to prepare you for whatever will arise.

WHERE CAN I STAND?

You may be on the sidewalk or the grass between the sidewalk and the street. You may NOT set foot on the grass between the sidewalk and the facility or on the sidewalk or path leading up to the facility. You may NOT park or even walk through either of their parking lots. You may NOT be on the sidewalk blocking access to the alley next to the facility. We must always leave the sidewalk open for free passage of pedestrians. It is best to stand in single file along the edge of the sidewalk just to make sure there is plenty of room to walk or ride a bike past. You will see all kinds of reactions to your presence by people on the sidewalk.

WHERE CAN I PARK?

The closest parking is metered street parking, which can be a little tricky to come by depending on the day.

DO I HAVE TO USE THE ON-LINE VIGIL SCHEDULE?

The on-line vigil schedule is the best way to sign up to pray. If you would rather, you are always welcome to e-mail me and let me know which hours you want to cover and I will enter you on the master schedule. No one can see your name on-line but me. PLEASE, PLEASE let me know what your plans are. It is important to keep track of what hours are covered, what hours still need to be covered, and who are the active participants in the current campaign.

WHAT IF I CAN'T COME WHEN I AM SCHEDULED?

If it's last minute, please call or text me at **319-855-8475**. That way I can let the other volunteer know and I can also remove you from the official schedule for that hour.

WHAT IF I SHOW UP AND NO ONE ELSE COMES?

It is best if at least two people can be present. You are less vulnerable if you have someone with you. Having a partner also provides you with a witness in the event you are accused of being on Emma Goldman's property, blocking the sidewalk, etc. If your partner does not show up (keep in mind that people are sometimes late), you are welcome to spend your hour or prayer in one of the nearby churches. The Newman Center (corner of Clinton and Jefferson) will be unlocked. I believe some of the other churches are locked during the day.

CAN I COME EVEN IF I'M NOT SCHEDULED?

Of course! Please let me know if you came to pray when you weren't on the schedule. It is simply helpful from the standpoint of being able to track participation.

WHAT IF I STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Feel free to contact:

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Thank you for your prayerful participation!