

Heart Breaking News

The unexpected words... "Your baby has a serious medical condition" at a routine prenatal visit is devastating. Yet, as prenatal testing becomes more routine, thousands of parents will be told that their unborn baby has a condition that will likely result in early death.

Where to Turn?

While some women are encouraged to terminate their pregnancy, many will decide to carry their babies to term regardless of the predicted outcome. These families can find hope and support through The Promise, a local initiative committed to honoring each child through pregnancy and delivery with full dignity, compassion and love.

The Promise provides care to patients and their loved ones regardless of gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age.

THE promise

pittsburgh's perinatal palliative care initiative

a program of Catholic Palliative Services



The Promise
Pittsburgh's Perinatal Palliative Care Initiative
is a program of
Catholic Palliative Services
a division of Catholic Hospice Inc.



Catholic Hospice

1.866.933.6221 toll free
724.933.6222 telephone
724.933.6225 fax
www.catholichospicepgh.org

Catholic Hospice Inc. is a registered 501 (c)(3)



**A person's a person,
no matter how small.**

-Dr. Seuss



**Before I formed you
in the womb I knew you,
before you were born,
I set you apart.**

Jeremiah 1:5



Our Promise

To honor and celebrate the life of every child with compassion, love and dignity.

To support parents in their decision to carry their child to term despite an adverse prenatal diagnosis.

To uphold biblical teachings on care of the seriously ill as outlined by Pope John Paul II



We are here to help...

The Promise—Pittsburgh's Perinatal Palliative Care Initiative is a prolife program of Catholic Palliative Services committed to walking alongside families, who even with a poor prognosis for their unborn and newly born infants have embraced their journey with hope and optimism.

The Promise supports that all human life is a gift from God. No matter what the age of an individual, as Christians, we accept this gift with full responsibility. The Promise respects the dignity and sacredness of briefly lived lives while providing a safety net for families as they work through their sorrow.

With guidance from perinatal and neonatal experts, The Promise's interdisciplinary team supports parents in making informed and meaningful plans for their baby's birth, life and death.

Families benefit through The Promise's unique model of comfort care that promotes not only the best practices in end of life medical care, but in supportive psychological care as well. Our specialized program supports that issues regarding death and dying are not solely geriatric issues, and that when new life is quickly followed by death, perinatal palliative care can support the unique needs of this very young patient population.

Focusing on managing physical, emotional, spiritual and psychological symptoms, the perinatal palliative care plan begins at diagnosis. The plan includes the development of birthing arrangements, preliminary medical decisions in preparation for labor & delivery and the post partum period, and home hospice care planning.

Genesis 9:13 – 16

I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the promise between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds...I will see it and remember the everlasting promise between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.

Interventions and supportive care include...

-  Respecting the parents' choice to continue the pregnancy
-  Creative specialized birth plans for various scenarios
-  Coordinating & providing one-on-one birth preparation & tours of the delivery area
-  Discussing ways to celebrate and welcome baby
-  Offering families an opportunity to see and hold their child, with supportive preparation and discussion
-  Hands on experience with baby (bathing, dressing, singing, reading)
-  Memory making activities (collecting photos, locks of hair, foot and handprints, ID bracelet, etc.)
-  Allowing the family to have as much time with baby as they wish
-  Discussing postpartum recovery, including milk supply
-  Acknowledgement and validation of the parents' sorrow
-  Discussing decisions needed after the baby's death (e.g., autopsy, disposition of the body, funeral or memorial service)
-  13 month bereavement support following infant loss
-  Appropriate referrals to community bereavement sources if needed