

Baltimore archdiocese ready for March for Life

Thousands of Catholics from the Archdiocese of Baltimore will converge on the nation's capital Jan. 22 to rally in support of the sanctity of life during the 37th annual March for Life.

Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien will march side by side with archdiocesan groups along Constitution Avenue as they prayerfully make their way to the Supreme Court Building. Auxiliary Bishops Denis J. Madden and Mitchell T. Rozanski will also march part of the route after attending a youth "Rally for Life" at the Verizon Center that morning.

Parishes and schools from throughout the archdiocese are sending buses to the march, and many will offer special prayers at their morning Masses calling for the enactment of laws that recognize the right to life from conception to natural death.

"We have to make our voices heard," said Linda Brenegan, Respect Life coordinator for the Archdiocese of Baltimore. "I think lawmakers pay attention. They have to. I don't see how they can ignore the hundreds of thousands of people who show up - people who will be voting in the next election."

Brenegan said she is concerned about making sure health care reform does not come at the expense of human life. She wants lawmakers to protect the conscience rights of health care workers who oppose abortion, and she called for the elimination of a health care amendment sponsored by Sen. Barbara Mikulski that would broaden abortion coverage.

"The Mikulski Amendment would define abortion as preventative care," Brenegan said, "and preventative care would be federally mandated for all insurance - public and private. That is very frightening."

Brenegan said she hopes the vote on health care reform happens after the march so that lawmakers hear from pro-life constituents.

An estimated 1,500 young people from the Baltimore archdiocese are expected to attend the youth “Rally for Life” at the Verizon Center.

Scott Miller, coordinator of adolescent faith formation in the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, said he attended the first March for Life in 1974. He remembers more adults attending that day.

“That’s not the case anymore,” Miller said. “This is a young people crowd. It’s young people celebrating life together and celebrating faith together.”

Miller said the archdiocese has developed a special pro-life curriculum that will be used in schools and parishes for young people who are not attending the March for Life.

St. Mary, Hagerstown, is hosting a Rock for Life Concert Jan. 16 featuring the band, Alakrity. St. John Neumann in Annapolis will have Life Week activities starting with Joia Farmer in concert Jan. 15.

Two Youth Rallies for Life will be held Jan. 21, each from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Peter, Libertytown and St. Mary, Hagerstown.

“Our young people are much more receptive to a respect life message,” Miller said.

Matt Palmer contributed to this story.

Catch a bus to the March for Life

The following parishes will send buses to the March for Life on Jan. 22. Reservations required for all buses. Contact the parish at the numbers listed for more information.

St. Agnes, Catonsville

Departs 10:30 a.m.; 410-322-1481

St. Andrew by the Bay, Annapolis

Departs 10:30 a.m.; 410-757-4132

St. Ann, Hagerstown

Departs 10:30 a.m.; 301-733-0410 ext. 11

St. Bartholomew, Manchester

Departs 9 a.m.; 410-239-3324

Church of the Good Shepherd, Glen Burnie

Departs 9:30 a.m. 410-255-8839

Catholic Community of St. Francis Xavier, Hunt Valley

Departs 10:45 a.m.; 410-527-1045

St. Ignatius, Hickory

Departs 9:30 a.m.; 410-836-9646

Immaculate Conception, Towson

410-337-2692

St. John the Evangelist, Severna Park

Jan. 21 (for vigil Mass) departs 4 p.m.

Jan. 22 (March for Life) departs 11 a.m.; 410-729-7814

St. John Neumann, Annapolis

Departs 10:30 a.m.; 410-263-0253

St. Joseph, Cockeysville

Departs 10 a.m.; 410-692-6125

St. Joseph, Sykesville

Departs 6:30 a.m.; 443-920-9113

St. Joseph, Emmitsburg

Departs 9:30 a.m. 717-337-1303

St. Louis, Clarksville

Departs 10 a.m.; 410-531-1320

St. Mary Magdalen, Bel Air

Departs 9 a.m. 410-838-6969 ext. 143

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Ilchester

Departs 10 a.m.; 410-750-7577

Our Lady of the Fields, Millersville

Departs 10 a.m.; 410-451-6778

St. Peter, Hancock

Departs 8:30 a.m.; 301-678-6689

St. Peter the Apostle, Libertytown

Departs 10 a.m.; 301-829-2888

Church of the Resurrection, Ellicott City

Departs 10:15 a.m.; 410-418-4915

Sacred Heart, Glyndon

Departs 9:30 a.m.; 443-881-4695

St. Timothy, Walkersville

Departs 9:30 a.m.; 301-845-8043

St. Ursula, Parkville

Departs 11 a.m.; 410-665-8517