

Baltimore Basilica to be Illuminated in Honor of Maryland Death Penalty Repeal

The interior and exterior lights of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore will be lit beginning at dusk on May 2, 2013 and will remain illuminated overnight in honor of the Thursday signing of legislation repealing Maryland's death penalty.

Archbishop William E. Lori testified in support of the legislation to repeal the death penalty at hearings in the Maryland Senate and House of Delegates. Auxiliary Bishop Denis J. Madden served on the 2008 Maryland Commission on Capital Punishment.

The Basilica, whose cornerstone was laid in 1806, opened in 1821 as the first Catholic cathedral in the United States. It served as the lone Cathedral church of the Diocese of Baltimore from 1821 to 1959, the year the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen opened and the two were designated co-cathedrals.