



June 20, 2017

Dear Friend in Christ,

At a time when global religious persecution is on the rise, as tragically underscored by the brutal murders of 24 Coptic Christians in Egypt just last month, and government restrictions on religion are occurring with troubling regularity, the Catholic Church's annual religious freedom campaign, Fortnight for Freedom, holds special meaning this year. Therefore, I invite you to take part in this important initiative in the Archdiocese of Baltimore and to join me for the nationally televised opening Mass at the Basilica of the Assumption in downtown Baltimore on Wednesday, June 21 at 7 p.m.

The theme for this year's Fortnight for Freedom is "Freedom for Mission." Sadly, there have been efforts by governments at all levels, as well as by institutions and individuals, to curb the public expression of religion, thereby reducing religious freedom to the freedom to worship. We are being told, in effect, to practice our faith within the walls of our churches. This, of course, runs counter to the example of Jesus Christ, whose public ministry continues to be a model for not only the Catholic Church but all Christian churches.

The Fortnight for Freedom seeks to call attention to the various threats to our religious liberty before this first and most fundamental freedom we enjoy as faithful Americans is no longer available to our children and to future generations.

I hope to see you on the 21st, and pray you'll join me in prayer for our Church and for our Nation.

Faithfully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads '+ William E. Lori'.

Most Reverend William E. Lori
Archbishop of Baltimore

