



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

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OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

December 9, 2020

Dear Monsignor/Father,

I pray that you are having a blessed Advent Season. To be sure, during this extraordinary year there is much that we patiently anticipate during this season of preparation.

As with so many plans over the past year, the 47th Annual March for Life, which memorializes the legalization of abortion through the Supreme Court decision *Roe vs. Wade*, will also look different. However, this year's theme, *Together Strong: Life Unites*, is most certainly fitting for a year such as this one. Even as our country continues to experience the devastating effects of this pandemic, so many strive to respond in a manner that respects the inviolable dignity of *every human life*.

Since we are not able to gather in our usual numbers, this year will include additional opportunities for parishes to become more knowledgeable and involved in meaningful pro-life advocacy. Our annual Life is Beautiful Mass has traditionally initiated the events that led up to the March for Life. While we will not include the rose procession in remembrance of lives lost to abortion, we will recognize the recipient of the Culture of Life Award. The Mass will be livestreamed from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on January 24 at 10:45 AM. Due to occupancy limits within the City of Baltimore, I encourage you to share this Mass *virtually* with your parishioners and memorialize the anniversary *locally* by surrounding your sanctuary with roses.

In preparation for this special week, the Respect Life Office will provide your parish respect life coordinators with opportunities to engage their local committees and parishioners in keeping with appropriate safety precautions.

On **Monday**, four senior living sites throughout the Archdiocese will look forward to receiving donations for their residents, particularly those living in memory care units.

On **Wednesday**, I will host a virtual event for teens throughout the region, providing direction and encouragement to engage our youth in pro-life advocacy work.

On **Thursday**, young adult groups and respect life committees will deliver resources to local pregnancy centers and share volunteer opportunities with their parishes.

Finally, on **Friday** morning, I will celebrate the Closing Mass for the Vigil for Life at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, which will be televised on EWTN at 8:00 AM. Also, for those who are unable to attend, or who have not yet experienced a March for Life, the Respect Life Office Coordinator, Erin Younkins will be "live" on social media throughout the day providing updates to our Archdiocese from the March.

The Respect Life Office has created resources for your parish, which can be found at www.archbalt.org/life-is-beautiful-2021. If you or your staff have questions or need additional information, please contact Erin Younkins at erin.younkins@archbalt.org.

While there is much work to be done, even still, there are many reasons for great hope. I am most grateful for your support and prayers, especially as I prepare to begin my term as the Chair for the Respect Life Committee of the USCCB in the coming year.

Faithfully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William E. Lori". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend William E. Lori
Archbishop of Baltimore