



## MEMORANDUM

DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

TO: All Pastors and Administrators  
FROM: Bishop John O. Barres  
DATE: January 18, 2019  
RE: Life Issues on January 22, 2019

This Tuesday, January 22, 2019 marks the 46<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision of *Roe v. Wade*. Tuesday is also the National Day of Prayer for the legal protection of unborn children. I want to bring to your attention several related points.

First, I want to express my thanks to the many parishes in our Diocese who participated earlier today in the March for Life. It brings me great joy to see over 30 buses filled with pilgrims from our Diocese make the long trek down to DC, braving the winter weather to give witness in the public square to the “Gospel of Life”. I am particularly heartened by the nearly 700 students from our nine Catholic High Schools, and many more who attended through their parish, who were enthusiastically vocal and courageous on Constitution Avenue as they too demonstrated strong support for every human life at every stage of life. Speaking to many of them during the pre-march gathering, they are manifestations of what Pope Francis expresses in *The Joy of the Gospel* when he says, *Whenever we make the effort to return to the source and to recover the original freshness of the Gospel, new avenues arise, new paths of creativity open up, with different forms of expression, more eloquent signs and words with new meaning for today’s world. Every form of authentic evangelization is always ‘new’.*

Secondly, in New York State it appears likely that on the January 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary, Governor Andrew Cuomo will sign into law the tragic and dangerous “Abortion Expansion Act” (aka Reproductive Health Act). Mentioned in the Governor’s State of the State address, this act would remove all impediments to late term abortions. I will share with you the statement by the New York State Bishops when it is made available. Thank you and your parish for its engagement of our elected officials by sending messages to them about this horrific legislation through the New York State Catholic Conference Catholic Action Center (CAN) – to send them a message visit (<https://www.nyscatholic.org/nys-catholic-conference-action-center/?vvsrsrc=%2fcampaigns%2f58392%2>)

In recognition of the National Day of Prayer for the legal protection of unborn children, I will celebrate the 7:45AM Mass in St. Agnes Cathedral. This Mass will be offered for all children who have died, born and unborn, all of whom are in God's merciful loving care.

On January 22<sup>nd</sup> I urge you and your parish to pray for the continued perseverance and commitment to the mission of all those involved in our extraordinary Diocesan Pregnancy Resources which include support for pre-natal care and counseling, Gabriel’s Courage for those who are expecting a child with a life limiting illness, Gianna Center Care for fertility and infertility and Project Rachel ministry resources for those suffering abortion loss, crisis pregnancy and post abortion healing.

Please join with me in prayerful solidarity in your parishes on Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> as I celebrate Mass on the National Day of Prayer for the legal protection of unborn children. This Mass will air that day on the Catholic Faith Network at 8:30AM, 12:30PM and 11:30PM.