



May 11, 2023

## **Message re: March for Life 2023**

My dear friends,

During the month of May, we think particularly of our Blessed Mother, who is a constant source of hope and inspiration for all of us. We ask for her powerful intercession and gentle guidance as we face the many challenges before us each day.

In remembering with devotion Our Lady, the Mother of our spiritual family, the Church, it is also fitting that this month we pray for the sanctity of all life. The National March for Life and other local events remind us of our call to build the Kingdom of Christ which includes publicly affirming the sacredness of life from the moment of conception to natural death.

In a number of contemporary worldviews and approaches to life and living, we note, regrettably, that access to abortion and euthanasia often rests on the false assumption that life is a disposable commodity that can be done away with when it is inconvenient or burdensome to ourselves or others.

This month is an ideal time for us to turn to Mother Mary, the woman and mother who said Yes to the Lord, the Giver of life and conceived the Son of God but who likewise remained with and accompanied the Lord Jesus to the very end; she is an example for us, a spiritual companion along the journey of life and faith. We pray earnestly for new mothers and families, those struggling with an unplanned pregnancy and for those who have experienced the pain and anguish of abortion. The dignity of the human person and the value of human life are for us core beliefs, cornerstones of our moral fibre as Christians and consequently we passionately continue to enhance, promote, defend and celebrate the gift of life that comes to us from God himself, our loving Creator.

At the other end of life's journey, we are reminded of those persons who are experiencing suffering in many ways, often with enormous physical pain and great anguish; these, our brothers and sisters, may at times even feel pressured to seek euthanasia to end their lives. We lift them up in prayer along with those who care for them and show them love. Euthanasia is certainly not the answer to life's hardships, pain, suffering, despair and illnesses. The Lord does not abandon his own in time of need. With Christ, there is always hope and new beginnings. In a special way, we pray also for those persons living with disabilities or terminal illness. We firmly and actively advocate for increased access to palliative care and compassionate support that will allow those suffering or isolated to live with dignity and experience the Lord's presence and help through the Church's ministries.



Every life, all life, is a gift - it is our responsibility to care for people who are marginalized, especially those who have often been told that life is no longer worth living.

Let us charitably and thoughtfully seek new opportunities to foster a culture of life and a civilization of love in our archdiocese and throughout our country.

May the Blessed Mother, whom we venerate with special devotion in the month of May, continue to inspire us to live by faith trusting in the Lord's plan, and to intercede for us with her Son, Jesus, the author of life.

Sincerely Yours in Jesus with Mary,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Francis Leo".

Most Rev. Francis Leo  
Archbishop of Toronto