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**DIOCESE OF
ROCKFORD**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bishop David Malloy to Celebrate Mass For Life Jan. 22

HUNTLEY, Ill.—Traditionally at this time of year, the diocese along with a variety of schools and parishes would be preparing for a pilgrimage to the annual March for Life in Washington, Jan. 27-29.

But like most other large gatherings, the annual March is being overshadowed by the coronavirus and concerns for the health and safety of those who would participate. Even though the March will still take place, most events are being held virtually and many dioceses are not sponsoring group travel including the Rockford Diocese. (For more on the National and State Marches for Life visit <https://marchforlife.org/national-march-for-life/>)

However, for the past eight years, not only has Bishop David Malloy attended the March, he has celebrated Mass in the diocese before pilgrims head to the nation's capital to join others in the annual national witness for life. Pilgrims may stay home, but the Mass will be celebrated.

"This will be the first year since I have been here (as bishop of the Rockford Diocese) that I was not planning to go to Washington with our young people and others to March for Life. This issue is so important and the spiritual practice of that annual Mass is so valuable that I wanted to try to keep it alive," Bishop Malloy said.

With the coordination of the Life and Family Evangelization Office and Father Christopher DiTomo, along with his parish team at St. Mary Huntley, a Mass for Life will be celebrated in person and streamed to the public from the parish.

The Mass will be celebrated at St. Mary Parish Huntley on Jan. 22 at 6:30 p.m.

According to Pastor Father DiTomo, under diocesan protocols during the current pandemic, the parish can accommodate a maximum of 300 persons. This takes in to account social distancing. Face masks and advance registration for the Mass are required. Those wanting to participate in the Mass in person should go to <https://www.stmaryhuntley.org/january-mass-sign-up/> and sign up. For those wanting to participate online go to <https://www.stmaryhuntley.org/>

With a new administration being sworn in on Jan. 20, the March for Life was scheduled a week later than usual. And according to Bishop Malloy, it is another reason to stand up and witness for life.

“We know that over 60 million of our brothers and sisters have not been born since the 1973 decision of Roe v Wade. That is the toll of abortion. President-elect Joseph Biden has signaled the desire of his administration to make a pro-abortion policy the law of the land. As Catholics, including those who have recently voted for candidates who expressed support for abortion, it is up to us to stand up for the right to life so that 60 million more do not perish,” Bishop Malloy said.

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About Catholic Diocese of Rockford

Established in 1908, the Diocese of Rockford is comprised of 105 parishes in Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, JoDaviess, Kane, Lee, McHenry, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside and Winnebago Counties in Northern Illinois serving a Catholic population of more than 400,000. For more about the Catholic Diocese of Rockford, visit rockforddiocese.org