

**DIOCESE OF BUFFALO**

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**THE CHANCERY**

September 2020

My Dear Diocesan Family,

**“Live the Gospel of Life”** has been a consistent theme of St. John Paul II and Pope Francis and one that has particular urgency today. This year’s theme for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Respect Life Program fills us with encouragement and hope and calls us to love, defend and celebrate all human life. It calls us to joyfully follow the example of Christ, to love without limits, and further, to act on that sense of true Christian charity.

We know that we live in a world full of threats to the sanctity and dignity of human life. However we also know that through prayer, education, responsible citizenship and pastoral care of all human life, especially the most vulnerable and in need of our love, we transform our society into a culture of life; we know that all things are possible in Christ. We can protect the unborn, serve those faced with disabilities, care for the sick and dying, and stand against violence, and we can do so with compassion, charity and justice.

We celebrate October as Respect Life Month, but we are reminded all year round of the sacredness of life and the joy of love. Our Office of Pro-Life Activities, the St. Gianna Pregnancy Outreach Centers, the Mother Teresa Home and the Project Rachel Ministry along with our pastors, parish Respect Life Coordinators, and members of our “Vine and Branches” committee stand ready to implement this program and partner with each of you in defending and celebrating human life. Together we commit ourselves to the sanctity and dignity of all human life at all stages, through our Office of Pastoral Ministries.

Through prayer and through the celebration of Mass and the Sacraments, we can know and love God better and open our hearts to all human life. In Pope Francis’ Day for Life Greeting, he reminds us “Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.”

I invite and encourage each of you to join me in prayer on Respect Life Sunday, October 4, 2020 at your parish as we celebrate the Eucharist. We look forward to the opportunity to bless babies, expectant mothers and families immediately after Mass. This is also a reminder to please consider your second collection to support our Diocesan ministries that directly have served over 1,500 families at the 5 locations of the St. Gianna Pregnancy Outreach Centers and the Mother Teresa Home.

Be assured of my prayerful and grateful best wishes as together we work to promote all life and to “Live the Gospel of Life.”

Yours sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend Edward B. Scharfenberger,  
Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Buffalo

“The secret of happiness is to live moment by moment and to thank God for all that He, in His goodness, sends to us day after day.” ~ **St. Gianna Beretta Molla** ~