



Office of the Bishop

DIOCESE OF SAINT JOHN
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Dear Faithful of the Diocese of Saint John,

We have lived through so much in the past several months as a global society, and there are many issues that have demanded our urgent attention. We have seen the devastation wrought by the pandemic, as well as a rise in incidents of racism and terrorism. But the most fundamental issue facing our world and which demands our most urgent attention is the respect and protection of human life at all stages, from conception to natural death.

Pope Benedict rightly stated that, “the concerns for non-violence, sustainable development, justice and peace, and care for our environment... cannot, however, be understood apart from a profound reflection upon the innate dignity of every human life from conception to natural death: a dignity conferred by God Himself and thus inviolable.” (Sydney, Australia, July 17, 2008) A consistent life ethic – one that includes respect for the poor, the environment, an end to racism, etc... – must be founded on the preeminent issue of respect for the unborn, and the protection of all people in the most vulnerable stages of life. All other social goods will flow from a culture that rightly has as its source the respect for the sanctity of human life. Yet, as is obvious, these issues are very much eroding in our world, which sees abortion as a fundamental human right to be pushed at all costs, and “Medical Assistance in Dying” falsely promoted as end-of-life care. Never has the need to defend the dignity of human life been so urgent.

Advent will soon be upon us and with that, on the second Sunday of Advent (December 5), our annual Diocesan Pro-Life collection in support of various organizations that assist women dealing with unplanned pregnancies, and educate and advocate on behalf of the most vulnerable members of our province.

I am asking all of the faithful to prayerfully consider a donation in support of this important cause that, like so many, has suffered significant financial shortfall in its fundraising efforts due to the Covid-19 pandemic. You can contribute to this special collection on Sunday December 5 using envelopes marked, “PRO-LIFE OFFERING”. The monies collected will be sent to support the efforts of such organizations as Birthright and New Brunswick Right to Life in the three regions of our Diocese (Fredericton, Saint John, and Miramichi). This collection is taken only once a year, and as the need is so great, I ask you in Christian charity to respond as generously as you are able.

Please join me, dear faithful, in keeping this cause in prayer. In a world clouded with uncertainty, let us pray that the fundamental right to life will be protected, valued and upheld. Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the unborn – pray for us!

Yours in Jesus with Mary,

✠ Most Reverend Christian Riesbeck, CC
Bishop of Saint John

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