

# **January 22, 2014 - March For Life Vigil Mass - January 21, 2014 - Homily by Cardinal Seán O'Malley, OFM Cap., Archbishop of Boston and Chair of the Pro-Life Committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**

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**Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception  
Washington, DC**

Excerpt:

Where there are community and solidarity, more humane solutions present themselves when there is a difficult pregnancy. When the abortion decision of the Supreme Court was handed down, the logical response of our Pro-Life Movement was a resolute call for “Adoption, not abortion”. The truth is each year there are fewer and fewer adoptions while the number of abortions is over a million. Many young Americans don't know anyone who is adopted, and if they do know someone, it is probably someone from China, Russia or Guatemala – giving the impression that entrusting a child to an adoptive family is not something Americans do.

The history of adoption is not always a glorious one. There is a popular film in the theaters right now portraying some of the worst practices of the past. *Philomena*, portrayed by Dame Judi Dench, tells the story of a young girl forced to give up her baby. It is a tragic history.

We need people to hear the good stories of adoptions of courageous birth mothers and generous adoptive families that have truly provided a loving family for an adopted child. In Boston we are making adoption part of a pro-life curriculum for our young people.

The majority of women who succumb to abortion are poor. Poverty is a dehumanizing force that leads people to feel trapped and to make this horrible choice. The Gospel of Life demands that we work for economic justice in our country and in our world. In a society where the rich are getting ever richer and the poor poorer, abortion looms ever larger. Planned Parenthood was founded to eliminate the poor.

We can rescue unborn babies from abortion by rescuing their mothers from a life of poverty and hopelessness. Pope Francis challenges our complacency and indifference to the oppressive poverty that spawns so many abortions.

Yes, the Catholic Church's consistent life ethic is a great service to society. It is our task to witness to the truth that love, compassion and solidarity can build a just society that will be safer for the poor, the unborn and those on the periphery.

tears.