



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

October 1, 2023

Dear Friends in Christ,

Today the Catholic Church begins Respect Life Month. The theme this year is “Radical Solidarity,” which means we are courageously pro-woman, promoting a choice that truly protects, accompanies, and supports women and their children. This is and has always been the work of the Church. We must remain engaged, especially after the numerous challenges to life that we have seen in Michigan.

Last November, voters passed Proposal 3, a citizens’ initiative to amend the Michigan constitution to establish a new right to reproductive freedom, including the right to abortion. Just last month, Michigan lawmakers introduced the Reproductive Health Act, a series of legislation in which supporters of abortion have said they are seeking to repeal informed consent for abortion, as well as requirements that abortion clinics meet basic health and safety standards. These measures are not in “radical solidarity” with women. These common-sense measures need to remain to protect the health and safety of women seeking an abortion in our state.

As Catholics, we are called to stand for and create a consistent ethic of life in our communities. This work has never been more important than now. How can you get engaged?

- Sign up for the Catholic Advocacy Network through the Michigan Catholic Conference. Their weekly e-blast will provide you with legislative updates from Lansing and where the Catholic Church stands in her support or disapproval of the legislation.
- Join me and thousands of other Catholics for the State March for Life on Nov. 8 in Lansing. The March is one way we can use our voices on behalf of defenseless children in our state.
- Volunteer at a Catholic Charities West Michigan baby pantry, a pregnancy aid center, or with your parish’s respect life group. Catholic Charities West Michigan’s baby pantries provided approximately 550,000 diapers to more than 1,000 parents last year alone. What a way to witness to life!

During this Respect Life Month, let us reflect more deeply on the sacredness of every human life. I invite you to visit the diocesan website (grdiocese.org) for more information on Respect Life Month resources to support your efforts. Saint Maximilian Kolbe, pray for us!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak
Bishop of Grand Rapids