



Dear Friends in Christ,

As faithful Catholics, we believe that every person is made in God's image and likeness and thus has inviolable dignity and deserves respect and protection. Our Catholic social teaching reflects this belief on issues ranging from immigration and the environment to healthcare, poverty and the death penalty. Preeminent among these issues is the most fundamental right of all, the right to life. We are called by our faith to uphold human dignity at all stages of life, from natural conception to natural death.

This upcoming election, Maryland voters will be asked to vote on Question 1, the so-called "Reproductive Freedom Amendment." Question 1 seeks to enshrine abortion in the Maryland State Constitution, an action that is both unnecessary and harmful given Maryland's already permissive abortion laws. It is harmful because it would divert resources away from efforts that promote the well-being of women, children and families. Allow me to explain.

By enshrining abortion in the Constitution, we would fail to address the root causes for why so many women feel abortion is their only option. As Catholics, we must advocate for policies that provide comprehensive solutions such as greater access to healthcare, support for struggling families, better education about life-affirming options and efforts to reduce social and economic inequalities.

The Church continues to accompany women and their babies and continues to partner with public and private organizations to ensure that their choice of life is not lonely or seemingly insurmountable. Ensuring access to resources and support services for these women is crucial if we are to build a society that values all human life. Practical support such as healthcare, childcare, affordable housing, education, and economic assistance can help women to refuse to end the life of their unborn child because they feel they have no other options or fear being alone.

Rather than taking the extreme step of enshrining the legality of abortion in the Maryland Constitution, we should work to create a culture where no woman feels as though she must choose between the life of her child and a bright future.

When we vote against Question 1, we do so not to limit anyone's rights but to foster a society of solidarity and respect for life, one where women are honored, the gift of life is cherished, and the needs of mother and child are met.

With gratitude for your prayerful consideration and with my own prayerful best wish, I remain,

Faithfully in Christ,
Most Reverend William E. Lori
Archbishop of Baltimore