



ARCHDIOCESE FOR THE MILITARY SERVICES, USA  
Office of the Archbishop

“Truly you have formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother’s womb. I give you thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made; wonderful are your works.”

- Psalm 139:13-14

28 April 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our Lord chose to offer salvation to the world by becoming enfleshed in the womb of His mother, our Blessed Mother. Mary’s witness of carrying God incarnate communicates that human life is a gift to be praised, shared, and celebrated joyfully (see Lk 1:39).

In the genius of the divine detail, preserved through the writing of Saint Luke, God reminds us that even the preborn know Him. John the Baptist leapt in his mother’s womb at the arrival of our Lord. Blessed, indeed, was the fruit of Mary’s womb (Lk 1:41-42).

Jesus’ incarnation reaffirms that human life truly is created in God’s image and likeness (Gen 1:26). Each human person is a treasure, uniquely formed and known by God (see Ps 139:14-16). Each life deserves to be protected and loved, at every stage, from conception to natural death.

God assumed the fullness of our humanity in order to offer us salvation. Authentic proclamation of the Gospel, therefore, demands the protection of all human life, for in this way, we profess that the very life of Jesus Christ, our Savior, which began in the womb, and ended on the cross, encompasses our lives as well. To deny the life of a baby *in utero* is to deny the Incarnation, and thus, the very source of our hope for salvation.

I write today deeply saddened that last week, in a 51-48 vote, the Senate let stand the Administration’s new Department of Veterans Affairs’ rule that provides for abortion at Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers in certain circumstances. In parallel, the Administration is also implementing a Department of Defense policy which mandates federal funding for abortion travel and compels military commanders to authorize such undertakings.

The policy and rule, now in effect, are morally repugnant and incongruent with the Gospel which the faithful are commissioned to share throughout the world (Mt 28:19). Moreover, the new DOD policy and VA rule fail to incorporate basic

conscience protections, thus creating First Amendment pitfalls for military commanders and VA employees.

With this letter, I implore the faithful of this Archdiocese to continue to advocate for human life and to refuse any participation in the evil of abortion. As Pope Francis instructs, our defense of the innocent unborn must be “clear, firm and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of development.”<sup>11</sup> He has referred to the crime of abortion as hiring a hitman.

We must also be mindful of our Christian duty to exercise radical solidarity with mothers and families experiencing a challenging pregnancy. As Pope Francis further points out, the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged are “equally sacred.” We must see the face of Jesus in all people and accompany anyone considering abortion by making personal tithes to support those in need, and through advocacy for policies and programs directed toward building up the family and showing particular care for vulnerable people, such as immigrants and low-income families.

Finally, I also encourage wide participation in, and support for, compassionate, post-abortive healing ministries, such as Project Rachel, so that those who have experienced abortion may receive healing and spiritual renewal through Christ’s infinite mercy.

With renewed prayers for the protection of human life and in thanksgiving for your efforts to promote a culture of life throughout the world, I remain

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Timothy P. Broglio". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

(The Most Reverend) Timothy P. Broglio, JCD  
Archbishop for the Military Services, USA

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<sup>11</sup> Pope Francis, *Gaudete et Exultate*, no 101.