



Seek the Lord

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In the Gospel according to St. John, Jesus emphasizes that He came so we might have fullness of life (cf. Jn. 10:10). Most significantly through His Paschal Mystery, but also through every aspect of His life, Jesus worked for our good so that we might have life in abundance, both in this world and for all eternity. It is important to remember that Jesus did this not for humanity as a collective whole, but rather for each one of us as unique, irreplaceable individuals. Each person is perfectly loved by God and, therefore, each human life is precious and immensely valuable. It is for this reason that the Catholic Church constantly upholds the sanctity and dignity of all people at every stage of life, without exception.

On November 7, 2023, Ohioans will have the opportunity to demonstrate how our state views the sacredness of life and the dignity of women. On November's ballot will be Issue 1, a proposed amendment (deceptively named "The Right to Reproductive Freedom with Protections for Health and Safety") to the Ohio Constitution that would enshrine the "right" to take the lives of innocent children in the womb while harming women and families in the process. (Please see page 13 for details.)

Some may assert that the Catholic Church should not be involved in politics. However, the defense of life and care for women compels our participation in this critical moral issue. As Catholics, we cannot remain silent on Issue 1. The Church must not sit on the sidelines when confronted with such a clear threat to human life and dignity and the primacy of the family. We must reject this extraordinary and dangerous attempt to radically reshape Ohio through a constitutional amendment that does nothing to aid women, strengthen the family or promote life.

But our responsibility to uphold and promote the value, beauty and dignity of every human life is by no means limited to the November vote. God invites each of us to work with Him to lovingly support those in need and to build up a culture of life in our society. This is a work that takes many forms. Generous women and men volunteer countless hours at pregnancy support centers, assisting women in need with material resources and personal accompaniment, both during pregnancy and after their child is born. Prayer groups give public witness to the value of life. Networks of physicians, counselors and other healthcare staff ensure quality care for both mothers and preborn children. Services are available to assist expectant mothers with housing, employment and education. Others help match parents and children through adoption and provide assistance and support to mothers who make this difficult choice.

We know that care for expectant mothers and their children touches on the beginning stages of life, but God calls us to foster a culture of life extending across the whole timeline of human experience. We nurture and educate children so they can have the opportunities necessary for fruitful and fulfilling lives. Young people must be encouraged to not only grow in their faith, but to also learn to defend and share that faith in its richness and beauty. Immigrants and refugees need to feel the embrace of being welcomed into our communities. We reach out and visit the sick and those in prison so they too know they are loved.

Helping others to know and experience God's love is at the core of creating a culture of life. Let us collaborate with the Lord so every person may have the peace (Jn. 14:27), joy (Jn. 15:11) and fullness of life (Jn. 10:10) which only God can provide.