

September 26, 2006

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

Once again, this October we will observe Respect Life Month in our parishes. The Church in the United States has set aside this month as an opportunity to reflect on the gift of life and how we might refocus our energies personally, and as a Church, to bring about greater respect for this gift in our families, communities, county, and in our world. This year, the U.S. Bishops have proposed the theme, *Created, Loved, Redeemed by God, An Invitation to Respect All Human Life*. All parishes should have already received a set of materials on this theme. I encourage you to make use of these resources throughout the month.

All life is sacred. All people have been created in the image and likeness of God. Life comes from Him and belongs to Him. War, discrimination, substance abuse, social and economic injustice, and other forms of violence against the sanctity of life need to be addressed with persistent dedication. Of particular importance, the more direct forms of violence that pose an immediate threat to the existence of life are abortion, euthanasia, so-called assisted suicide, destroying human embryos for research, and capital punishment.

The Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, recently wrote in his Encyclical Letter, *Deus Caritas Est*, “the Church is alive with the love enkindled by the Spirit of Christ.” The Lord shares His love with us and, through that love, we are able to labor for Him to create a just ordering of society that respects the wonder of life from conception to natural death. It is fitting that we engage the life issues, each in his or her own way. Our work becomes our witness and we trust that the love we show will inspire others to do the same. Asking God’s blessings upon you and your loved ones, I remain

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Adam Cardinal Maida
Archbishop of Detroit