



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

January 23, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Over the past few months, our Holy Father Pope Francis has devoted a handful of his Wednesday General Audience reflections to Acts of the Apostles. In his latest reflection on this remarkable book of Sacred Scripture (1/15/20), Pope Francis issued a powerful invitation, “let us ask the Holy Spirit to renew in each one of us the call to be courageous and joyful missionary disciples of Christ. In this way, we – in the footsteps of Paul – will fill our world with the Gospel and make our communities places of fraternity where all can encounter the risen Lord.” This invitation has great meaning for us now as we set out on our pilgrimage to the March for Life.

If we do not invite the Holy Spirit into our hearts, will this journey take on its full meaning and yield the same impact? How efficacious will our pilgrimage be if we do not live it as courageous and joyful missionary disciples?

According to Pope Francis’ invitation, during and after our journey to the March for Life, let us rely on the Holy Spirit, recalling that it is the Spirit who inspires every good deed. Let us be courageous, bearing in mind that we march, in a way, in solidarity with St. Paul and the Apostles whom we read of in the Book of Acts. Let us be joyful, for despite our present reality in this “valley of tears,” we are a people of assured hope. Finally, as disciples of the Only-Begotten Son of God, let all of our actions show forth Jesus Christ, the Good News, our perfect example! If we do all these things together in prayer, we will surely be closer to “fill[ing] our world with the Gospel and mak[ing] our communities places of fraternity...”

We have committed ourselves to the important task of advocating for a greater respect for all human life. I ask the Lord’s blessing upon our travels and this work of advocacy, and I look forward to being with you on Friday in Washington, D.C.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci, D.D.
Bishop of Manchester