



The **Catholic Bishops**  
of **Alberta** and the  
**Northwest Territories**

Les **évêques catholiques**  
de **l'Alberta** et des  
**Territoires du Nord-Ouest**

8421 - 101 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6A 0L1 | T 780.469.1010 F 780.465.3003

**Re: Alberta March for Life, May 8, 2014 in Edmonton**

April 7, 2014

Dear Faithful People in Christ,

Human life is a wondrous and beautiful gift of God. Since God has created members of the human race in His image and likeness, every man, woman and child is endowed with an inalienable dignity.

In our country, we are witnesses to the sad truth that human dignity is not always honoured. The obvious and most tragic example of this is abortion. It is manifest also in embryonic stem cell research, which destroys a human embryo, and in the promotion of euthanasia and assisted suicide. In these practices, death is chosen over life. Their tragic occurrence calls us to speak out clearly in defence of life. We must assert clearly and respectfully that, in keeping with human dignity, the only choice is life!

Once again, we shall have an opportunity to make our voices heard. On behalf of the Bishops of Alberta, I invite you to join with us on Thursday, May 8th of this year for a peaceful march through Edmonton in defence of the beautiful gift of human life. Our witness will be strengthened by that given by our brothers and sisters participating the same day in the National March for Life in Ottawa and in other marches elsewhere in Canada.

We shall begin with Mass at St. Joseph's Basilica at 10:30 a.m., and then make our way to the grounds of the Alberta legislature. Following some initial speeches at 1:00 p.m., we shall march through downtown Edmonton, and then return to the legislature grounds for concluding talks and prayer. In addition, there will be Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Joseph's Basilica throughout the duration of the march. This will provide an opportunity for those unable to march to join with us, and to implore the Author of Life for the conversion of hearts and the protection of life at all stages.

It is vitally important that we take every opportunity to stand up for the precious gift of life whenever it is threatened. The March is a very important and increasingly urgent act of witness before society to the beauty and dignity of human life. In accord with the directives given to the whole Church by His Holiness, Pope Francis, in *Evangelii Gaudium*, our March must be joyful and celebratory of the wondrous gift of life, since all that we do as Christians must radiate joy. Please come and join in all the events planned for the day of the March. Come and celebrate before others the gift of all human life from its beginning to natural end, and pray that it will one day very soon be honoured by everyone at every stage and in all circumstances.

We hope to see you there!

Yours sincerely in our Lord,

Most Reverend Richard W. Smith  
Archbishop of Edmonton

President, Catholic Bishops of Alberta and the Northwest Territories