

**REMARKS AT THE YOUTH RALLY AND MASS FOR LIFE
CAPITAL ONE ARENA, FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2020**

My Dear Young People:

As the Apostolic Nuncio, the Holy Father's personal representative in this country, I am very happy to be here with you at the Capital One Arena on this day on which we give thanks to God for the Gift of Human Life and during which we participate in the Annual March for Life, showing our solidarity with the unborn in this throwaway culture.

In 2013, Pope Francis said: **"The victims of this culture are precisely the weakest and most fragile human beings – the unborn, the poorest, the sick and elderly, the seriously handicapped, etc – who are in danger of being 'thrown away,' expelled from a system that must be efficient at all costs."** (SPEECH TO DELEGATION FROM THE *DIGNITATIS HUMANA*E INSTITUTE, 7 DECEMBER 2013)

Five years later, remembering the 70th anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the Holy Father remarked:

"At a distance of seventy years, it is painful to see how many fundamental rights continue to be violated today. First among all of these is the right of every human person to life, liberty and personal security. It is not only war or violence that infringes these rights. In our day, there are more subtle means: I think primarily of innocent children discarded even before they are born, unwanted at times simply because they are ill or malformed, or as a result of the selfishness of adults. I think of the elderly, who are often cast aside, especially when infirm and viewed as a burden..." (ADDRESS TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, 8 JANUARY 2018)

Last year, his language was even stronger in speaking of the problem of abortion, saying, **"The problem is a human problem. Just two questions will help us understand this clearly. Two questions. First: is it licit to eliminate a human life to solve a problem? Second: is it licit to hire a killer to resolve a problem? I leave the answer to you. This is the point. Don't blame religion for a human issue. It is not licit. Never, never eliminate a human life or hire a killer to solve a problem. Abortion is never the answer that women and families are looking for."** (ADDRESS TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE *YES TO LIFE*, 24 MAY 2019)

My friends, you are capable of offering women and families a real answer to their problems – love! You are capable of giving yourself to the defense of human life in all its stages! The Holy Father is close to you and believes in you, and in spirit, he marches with you – for Life!

It is my privilege to read to you a Message from the Secretariat of State on behalf of the Holy Father, prepared for all of you gathered here in the Archdiocese of Washington, as well as for those assembled this morning in the Diocese of Arlington: