



# DIocese OF GRAND RAPIDS

*Office of the Bishop*

January 11, 2010

My dear friends,

Friday, January 22 marks the 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision that legalized unrestricted abortion in our country. On this anniversary, I ask you to remember in a special way those who work tirelessly to uphold and defend the dignity of all human life – from conception through natural death.

Throughout the years individual parish communities, many pro-life groups, pregnancy resource centers, Catholic Charities agencies and others have provided practical assistance, education and support to women and families facing difficult pregnancies. Others pray, march, counsel, and work with legislators. They have saved lives and changed hearts and minds.

However, we are presently facing an urgent call to make our voices heard insisting that health care reform protects the lives, dignity, consciences and health of all people. As this legislation moves in to its final stages, parishioners are urged as faithful citizens to inform your legislators that you oppose language that would support abortions.

I am grateful to the young people and other representatives from our diocese participating in the Annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. this year. I thank all the students who are attending the march including those from our Catholic high schools, Aquinas College and Grand Valley State University; members of the Right to Life groups, and the many individuals and parish groups participating from our diocese. These representatives along with all those supporting every stage of human life, from conception through natural death, provide courageous witness for all Christians.

As we continue our work to protect human life and create a culture of life, I invite you to pause in prayerful thanksgiving for those who work unselfishly to support and sustain God's greatest gift – the gift of life itself.

With gratitude and prayerful good wishes,

Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley  
Bishop of Grand Rapids