



Dear Mr. Hollowell,

We sincerely appreciate your continued commitment to the dignity of human life in Ohio. Your letters both highlight the vulnerability of life in the womb. The Catholic Church will never falter in our mission to see the face of Christ in every defenseless person. Our command to serve the poor, the incarcerated, and the preborn is a single commission to find Christ “in the least of these.”

As the official voice of the Catholic Church in Ohio on matters of public policy, the Catholic Conference of Ohio advocates in the General Assembly to advance the Church’s social teaching. This includes protecting the dignity of life in the person on death row, the terminally ill, and the child in the womb. For this reason, we are supporting HB 259 and SB 101 to abolish the death penalty in favor of life without parole. These two bills remain our best strategy for eliminating capital punishment in Ohio. Additionally, we are vigilant regarding the possibility of future legislation aiming to legalize assisted suicide. We will oppose any such bills vigorously.

Moving forward from Issue 1, the Catholic Church in Ohio will support women and children so that abortion becomes unthinkable. Catholic ministries for women needing housing, material support, and personal accompaniment demonstrate our commitment to life. Additionally, the Catholic Church in Ohio will advocate relentlessly for innovative pro-life, pro-family policies. Our pro-life advocacy must respond to the grave concerns affecting women in need so that we convert the hearts and minds of our neighbors to the gospel of life.

We will prepare for future initiatives to create constitutional protections for human life by showing our consistent witness of love for women and children in need. Pro-Life organizations, including the Catholic Conference, have considered the prudence of putting forward amendments to counter the culture of death. There is a broad consensus that we must first focus on converting a culture that does not recognize our witness. In the meantime, diocesan and parish ministries serving those on the margins must become a model for laws that provide public support for mothers and fathers preparing to care for children. See *The Way Forward* document to read about our fundamental principles for Catholic advocacy post-Issue 1.

Please continue to advocate and pray for women in need and vulnerable children in your community. We welcome your continued thoughts and recommendations and would be happy to meet with you to discuss further.

Sincerely in Christ,

Brian Hickey  
Executive Director