

J.M.J.

Blessed be God in His angels and in His saints!

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we approach the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the infamous case which paved the way for no-fault abortion, and as we face the possibility of health care legislation passing that would significantly set back the pro-life cause, the love of Christ compels me to remind you of the importance of applying spiritual means in this battle. Saint Paul's words to the Ephesians especially apply to us who preach the Gospel of Life to a world entrenched in the culture of death. He says, "For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12).

Certainly, peaceful protests such as the upcoming March for Life and contacting our representatives are important tasks that we must not neglect, but we must also remember to make use of acts of penance. Christ Himself reminds us that there are certain things that can only be accomplished through prayer and fasting (cf. Mark 9:29).

The United States bishops, including our own Bishop Higi, have declared this Friday, the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, to be a day of penance in reparation for the atrocities of abortion. In light of the serious threats we now face in defending every life from conception until natural death, I am asking all of you to live out with greater urgency the Church's teaching regarding Fridays being penitential days on this coming Friday as well as every Friday. Prayerfully consider beginning or increasing your level of penance on Fridays in defense for life. This could include adding any of the following that you are not already doing on Fridays – attending Mass, going to adoration, reading the Bible, fasting from food, TV, internet, or any other attachment that you may have and offering it as a sacrifice for the intention of defending and promoting life.

Through our acts of penance each Friday, may we more closely be united with Christ who suffered and died for our sake. Through them, may we echo Saint Paul's words as we engage in this spiritual warfare: "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church" (Colossians 1:24).

Mary our Mother and St. Patrick our Patron pray for us!

*Fr. Ted Dudzinski*

