

March for Life, Indianapolis and D.C. (Jan. 14, 2018)

Bishop Timothy L. Doherty

People from our area again will travel to Washington for the annual March for Life. This one will be on Jan. 19. For Catholics of all ages, there are opportunities for Mass, prayer, and learning about the sacredness of human life which begins at conception. The public aspect of marching is a way to remind ourselves that each human life deserves protection, each has value.

Regional Masses and marches are becoming more common. Ours will be in Indianapolis on Monday, Jan. 22. We begin with noon Mass at St. John the Evangelist, blocks south of the Statehouse on Capitol Avenue. This event is co-sponsored by the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, and Right to Life of Indianapolis. Other churches and organizations will participate. The march begins at 1:30 p.m. after the Mass. The general schedule is found by visiting our Web site: www.dol-in.org.

The local marching day has some important features. Many of our young people can't afford the time or money to devote to the Washington events. Indy is more accessible and can attract whole families. It is important that we who go to Indianapolis will acquire a real sense of our own state legislature. Our elected state officials influence a wide range of life, safety and health issues. While we will not see the abolition of abortion on demand anytime soon, it is morally necessary to keep our stance before our legislators — and ourselves.

It is surprising how many people travel to our state capitol for shopping, entertainment or museum hopping, but have not visited the Statehouse. Finished in 1888 for \$1.8 million, it was renovated for \$11 million in 1988 to 1995. It contains the governor's office and the chambers of the House of Representatives and the Senate. It also is home to the offices and main chamber of the Indiana Supreme Court.

Our presence on Jan. 22 is both an exercise of faith and of citizenship. We are motivated by our love for God and love for defenseless human beings who deserve our advocacy. The Gospel takes on a hard edge sometimes when it translates to public action. Author Michael Eric Dyson helps us to conceptualize this: "Justice is what love sounds like when it speaks in public."