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1 October 2024

*Memorial of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus
Virgin and Doctor of the Church*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we commence Respect Life Month, we celebrate the gift of life on the memorial of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, affectionately known as “The Little Flower.” A Virgin and Doctor of the Church, she guided her life by the belief that “every flower created by [Our Lord] is beautiful” and part of “Our Lord’s living garden.” Despite her littleness, she knew herself loved by Him and reflected this in the way that she loved and served those around her.

Today, we live in a country in which the law does not recognize our “littlest” ones as loved, important, or valued. In the eyes of society, they do not have any rights because they are not visible.

Fortunately, we are no longer under *Roe v. Wade*, and our elected representatives now have the authority to reduce or eliminate abortion completely. However, today we must confront the consequences left behind by this fifty-year regime, which has unfortunately led many Americans, including Christians, to accept some form of abortion.

While it is vital to confront all threats to human life, I, along with other U.S. Bishops, emphasize that “abortion remains our pre-eminent priority as it directly attacks our most vulnerable brothers and sisters, destroying more than a million lives each year in our country alone.”

We may feel surrounded by the darkness of death, and the enemy of our souls may try to convince us that there is nothing we can do. However, Saint Thérèse reminds us that “Our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, nor even at their difficulty, but at the love with which we do them.”

This month we can transform our everyday mundane tasks—such as cooking dinner, writing a challenging college paper, taking out the garbage, and driving patiently in traffic—into meaningful prayers. By offering these small sacrifices with love, we can strengthen our prayers for the mother considering abortion, for the centers offering life-giving options to pregnant mothers, for the child at risk of losing his or her life, or for the medical staff at abortion clinics who may not fully understand the impact of their actions.

Importantly, as citizens, we have the ability and the right to influence the legislative process that effects abortion laws in our Commonwealth and in our Nation, by bringing our properly formed consciences into public discourse. Voting is another solemn obligation we have, and is a means to express our faithful citizenship.

Please join me in praying that, through the intercession of Saint Thérèse, we may bring awareness to the evils of abortion and courageously fight for the rights of the most vulnerable.

Fraternally yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Alfred A. Schlert".

✠ Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert
Bishop of Allentown