



Pope to US March for Life: Healthy societies protect human life

Pope Leo XIV sends a message to participants in the 2026 March for Life in Washington, D.C., encouraging young people “to continue striving to ensure that life is respected in all of its stages.”



Article published on Vatican News on 22 January 2025

By Kielce Gussie - Vatican News

Extending a warm greeting to the thousands set to participate in the 2026 March for Life in Washington, D.C., in the United States, Pope Leo XIV assured them all of his spiritual closeness in a message.

He added his heartfelt appreciation for this “eloquent public witness to affirm that ‘the protection of the right to life constitutes the indispensable foundation of every other human right’.”

Referring to his address to members of the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See early this month, the Pope outlined what a healthy and truly progressive society looks like—“it safeguards the sanctity of human life and works actively to promote it.”

Pope Leo speaking to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See on January 9 (@Vatican Media)

With this in mind, he encouraged young people in particular to continue working to ensure that life is respected and protected in all its stages “through appropriate efforts at every level of society, including dialogue with civil and political leaders.”

Pope Leo prayed that Jesus will accompany all those who peacefully march on behalf of the unborn. “By advocating for them”, he said, “please know that you are fulfilling the Lord’s command to serve him in the least of our brothers and sisters.”

Closing his message, the Pope entrusted all the participants, and all who support them through prayer and sacrifice, to Mary Immaculate—the Patroness of the United States of America.

52 years of the March

The first March for Life took place in January 1974—solemnly marking the one-year anniversary of the United States’ Supreme Court decision to legalize abortion. Its goal: lobby Congressional leadership to find a legislative solution to the ruling Roe v. Wade.

50 years later, the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade with the historic Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization case. This gave states more freedom to enact pro-life laws.

March for Life participants at the United States Capitol in 2023

With this, the focus of the March for Life has shifted. “The goal of the national March for Life is to not only change laws at the state and federal level, but to change the culture to ultimately make abortion unthinkable,” according to the March’s official website.