



ARCHEVÊCHÉ
ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE
ARCHIDIOCÈSE DE SAINT-BONIFACE ARCHDIOCESE

BUREAU DE L'ARCHEVÊQUE
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

February 25, 2013

Dear Pastors and Parish Life Directors,

In February 2012, you received from the Archbishops of Manitoba a letter entitled *Pastoral Initiative for the Life and Family*. In that letter we advised that the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops determined that the time was right to lead a renewed effort to proclaim the dignity of each person and the vital importance of the family.

There will be an annual national week during which each parish in Canada is invited to celebrate life and family. The bishops' hope is that this new initiative will strengthen our voice through our one witness. In Manitoba our tradition has been to observe a week for life in February. This year, in cooperation with Life's Vision (formerly League for Life) we will celebrate *Respect for Life and Family Week* from **May 12 to 19, 2013**. The Archdiocese of Winnipeg, the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface and the Archeparchy of Winnipeg have formed a committee to assist in the preparation for this National Week. The theme of this year's celebration will be: **Celebrate Family, Nurture Life**.

We are requesting that all parishes use this week to promote the culture of life and family in their respective communities. We do so in recognition that the family is the leaven of transformation for a world desperately in need of Good News. The family is the "domestic Church" and is a gift to the wider community. The society of tomorrow is formed in the family.

During the national week, parishes are asked to organize activities and events which encourage parishioners to honor and celebrate family. Around mid-march, 2013, the committee will be providing each parish with further materials. These materials will include a pastoral letter from us, liturgical intentions and prayers, and suggestions for activities and events that can be utilized by the parishes. Recognizing the uniqueness of each parish there may be activities and events that the parishes will implement that differ from the suggestions we provide. We encourage parishes to explore ideas that will best reflect family life in their respective parishes.

We will be providing an e-mail address so that each parish can share the celebrations undertaken in their parishes. We are partnering with Life's Vision in this endeavor and Life's Vision will also be providing pamphlets and other resources to assist in your planning.

Each year we will choose a special theme to address marriage and life issues. We face many challenges: issues around the beginning and ending of human life, reproductive technologies, poverty, adoption and renewed support for the family, the cradle of life.

...2

We thank you for all your efforts expended on this initiative. In working together, promoting and celebrating the family, may our parishes continue to grow as communities of life and love.

Sincerely in Christ,

† V. James Weisgerber
Archbishop of Winnipeg

† Lawrence Huculak, OSBM
Archeparch of Winnipeg

† Albert LeGatt
Archbishop of Saint Boniface