

Join Us For a Fortnight For Freedom

[View with images](#)



Tuesday, May 21, 2013

Dear Friends in Christ,

Recently, you may have read in the news about a number of issues within our own Archdiocese that should raise concern for all us who are proud to call ourselves Catholic Americans.

Earlier this spring, Johns Hopkins University's Student Government Association was widely criticized for denying official club status to the anti-abortion student group, Voice for Life. It was only after much public outcry and scrutiny in the media that a panel of student judges reversed this decision.

Such selective stifling of our constitutional freedoms to speech and religion is eerily similar to the attempts by Baltimore City to enact an ordinance that seeks to compel pro-life crisis pregnancy centers to post signs referencing abortion. Two lower court decisions have agreed with the Archdiocese and representatives of these centers that such an ordinance targets these centers purely because they are pro-life.

And, in early May of this year it was announced that two residents of Carroll County are filing a lawsuit in federal court to prevent the County's Board of Commissioners from beginning its meetings with a prayer. They are being represented by a lawyer for a group whose goal is to promote "a progressive society where being good without a God is an accepted way to live life."

These are just three examples of the many ways in which God and all things of God are being marginalized, and those who believe in God are asked to practice their faith solely behind the closed doors of a church. This is the heart of our argument against the proposed HHS Mandate which is scheduled to go into effect this August when many religious employers, businesses operated by people of faith, and individuals will be forced to violate their religious principles to comply with the new healthcare law.

For these reasons, the Catholic bishops of the United States have called for

a Fortnight for Freedom in the days leading up to the Fourth of July. This is a time when we as Catholics – people who believe in the Constitution and the freedoms guaranteed by it – can come together to pray, study, and prayerfully act in support of those freedoms, most especially the freedom of religion.

This will begin with an opening Mass here in Baltimore, the Premier See, at our Basilica, a shrine to religious freedom erected under the guidance of Archbishop John Carroll, whose family was instrumental in the earliest days of both our Church and our Nation, and with the interest of our Nation's third president, Thomas Jefferson, who had direct influence over the designing of America's First Cathedral.

I hope you will join me at the Mass, which will take place on June 21st at 7 p.m. More information about the Mass, a list of events, resources, and other opportunities for marking the Fortnight for Freedom can be found at www.archbalt.org/fortnightforfreedom.

Faithfully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William E. Lori". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend William E. Lori
Archbishop of Baltimore

Archdiocese of Baltimore
320 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)