



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM
PRO FAMILIA

2013/317 – II/1

March 23, 2013

Your Excellencies,

I have read the letter you sent on February 25, 2013, to the bishops of the United States with respect to the planned March 26 March for Marriage in Washington, DC; and I am deeply grateful for your witness to the beauty and value of Catholic belief and practice, which sees in marriage and the family a unique resource for the good of all humanity.

I am certain that the support that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is giving to the March—through sponsorship by the USCCB Initiative “Marriage: Unique for a Reason”—will be a significant factor in its success.

It is also very encouraging to note, from the list of the March sponsors that I have seen, the significant ecumenical religious component of the endeavor, whose purpose is to make the public aware of the significant marriage questions that the United States Supreme Court will be discussing on the day of the March and thereafter, and to incentivize “prayer, witness and sacrifice” with respect to those questions.

I think it is important as well that the March is being held during Holy Week, because that time in the life of the Church not only makes us more aware of the great sacrifice that Jesus made in giving His life for us, it also reveals how He did so in the context of relationships that are mirrored in the life of every family: the loving obedience of the Son to his Father, the provident love in the Father’s plan for salvation that would bring the Son out of suffering and into glory, the faithfulness of a mother’s love as Mary stood beneath the cross on which her Son was dying; and the protective love, learned from Saint Joseph, that Jesus showed his mother when, just before dying, he entrusted her to Saint John, and Saint John to her, as mother and son. Please be assured that the Pontifical Council for the Family stands continuously ready to assist you, and all the bishops, as you preach the Gospel to the families under your care, and strengthen them in their love and commitment to each other and to Jesus.



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM
PRO FAMILIA

With the promise of my prayers for the fruitfulness of your ministry and my best wishes for a blessed and happy Easter season, I am

+ Vincenzo Paglia
President of the Pontifical Council for the Family

Most Reverend **Kevin C. Rhoades**
Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend
Chairman USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth

Most Reverend **Salvatore J. Cordileone**
Archbishop of San Francisco
Chairman USCCB Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage

cc.:

H.E. Timothy Cardinal Dolan, President, USCCB
H.E. Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, Apostolic Nuncio
H.E. Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., Archbishop of Philadelphia
Monsignor Ronny E. Jenkins, General Secretary, USCCB