

Oppose Question 1

HOMILY RESOURCE | MARYLAND 2024

These homily ideas focus on Gospel passages for several Sundays from August to early November.

The key themes and talking points that we have found best change hearts and minds regarding the Reproductive Freedom constitutional amendment, on the Maryland ballot this fall, are (1) protection of women, (2) protection of conscience rights and (3) protection of the most vulnerable. These homily ideas are centered broadly around those themes.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2024

[Jos 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b](#) | [Eph 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32](#) | [Jn 6:60-69](#)

Gospel Summary

- In this Gospel, many of Jesus' disciples struggle to accept His teaching on the Eucharist. When confronted with this challenging doctrine, some disciples choose to leave. This moment highlights the challenges of faith, especially when it goes beyond human understanding. Faith calls believers to trust in Jesus even when His words are hard to grasp, recognizing that His teachings are life-giving.
- When many of the disciples have left, Jesus turns to the twelve and asks if they would also like to leave. Peter responds by saying "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." Peter's response reflects the deep faith and commitment required to follow Christ. The Gospel emphasizes the necessity of remaining faithful to Christ, even in times of doubt or difficulty.

Key Themes

- Jesus' discourse in the Gospel emphasizes the value of life: He offers His flesh and blood for the life of the world. This reflects the intrinsic value of every human life, both born and unborn. As Christians we are called to protect and cherish all life, recognizing that each person is made in God's image and likeness.
- The unborn and pregnant women, especially those facing difficult circumstances, are some of the most vulnerable in our communities today. We have a duty to protect and support them. Protecting the unborn and supporting pregnant women are concrete ways we can live out our faith and follow Jesus' example of love and sacrifice.
- Just as Jesus' teaching on the Eucharist was difficult for many to accept, protecting the vulnerable, including the unborn and pregnant women, can be a challenging effort in our society. True faith requires us to embrace difficult teachings and trust in God's wisdom and love, even when societal norms push us in other directions. This November we will have the ability to exercise our right to vote and make our voices heard on an important issue that seeks to undermine protection for women and their unborn children; please vote against Question 1.



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SUNDAY, SEPT. 1, 2024

[Dt 4:1-2, 6-8](#) | [Jas 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27](#) | [Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23](#)

Gospel Summary

- In this week's Gospel Jesus challenges the Pharisees and scribes who are overly focused on external rituals and traditions, such as the washing of hands, while neglecting the inner moral and spiritual conditions of their hearts. Jesus emphasizes that what defiles a person is not what enters from the outside, but what comes from within – the thoughts, intentions, and actions that stem from the heart.
- Jesus' teaching calls for an authentic faith that prioritizes love, justice, and purity of heart over the mere external observance of rules. He warns against hypocrisy. The Gospel invites believers to examine their hearts and align their lives with God's will, seeking true holiness.

Key Themes

- Jesus teaches that true purity comes from within; so, too, does the value of human life. The dignity of every person, including the unborn, elderly and vulnerable, is intrinsic and must be recognized and protected. We are called to look beyond external factors and see the inherent worth of every human being, defending life at all stages.
- Jesus' message reminds us that actions and attitudes toward others stem from the heart. To protect women, we must cultivate a culture that honors their dignity, provides them with the necessary support and ensures their safety and well-being. Our actions towards women, especially those that find themselves in difficult circumstances such as an unplanned pregnancy, must reflect a heart committed to justice, compassion and respect.
- In the Gospel Jesus challenges the legalism of the Pharisees, reminding us of the importance of conscience and inner conviction. Believers must have the freedom to live out their faith in the public square without coercion, especially in areas like healthcare where these rights are increasingly challenged, as we are seeing in Maryland this year with Question 1, which will be on the ballot in November. If this constitutional amendment passes healthcare worker conscience rights likely will be threatened or taken away, harming them and women who would like options in choosing medical experts.



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SUNDAY, OCT. 6, 2024

[Gn 2:18-24](#) | [Heb 2:9-11](#) | [Mk 10:2-16](#) or [10:2-12](#)

Gospel Summary

- In the Gospel Jesus reaffirms the sanctity and permanence of marriage. He rejects the Pharisees' permissive stance on divorce, emphasizing that marriage is a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman. Jesus' words highlight the original intention of marriage as a sacred bond that reflects God's love and commitment to His people.
- Jesus blessed the children brought to Him and tells His disciples that the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like children. He teaches that anyone who does not receive the Kingdom of God with the innocence, trust and humility of a child will not enter it.

Key Themes

- Jesus' teaching on marriage underscores the value of life from its beginning in the family. By affirming the permanence of marriage, He affirms the protection of life within the family unit, particularly children who rely on stable, loving environments. This teaching encourages Catholics to advocate for the protection of all human life, from conception to natural death, and to support families as the foundation of a well-ordered society.
- The Gospel highlights Jesus' stance against divorce, which protects the dignity of women who could be left vulnerable and marginalized by divorce (especially in the time in which Jesus lived). His teaching upholds the equal value of both spouses in marriage and challenges practices that harm or degrade women. The Gospel pushes each of us to continue defending the dignity, rights and well-being of women in all areas of life, including within marriages and families. We will have the opportunity to put the Gospel message into action into by choosing to protect women by voting against Question 1, which would enshrine abortion into our state constitution.
- Jesus' teaching on the importance of adhering to God's divine plan for marriage and family is often in conflict with current societal norms; therefore, it is more important than ever that conscience protections are protected, especially in professions where moral dilemmas regarding marriage and family life may arise such as healthcare, education and legal fields.



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SUNDAY, OCT. 13, 2024

[Wis 7:7-11](#) | [Heb 4:12-13](#) | [Mk 10:17-30](#) or [10:17-27](#)

Gospel Summary

- Jesus challenges the rich young man to go beyond simply following the commandments, to give up his wealth to follow Him completely. The young man's reluctance to part with his possessions reveals the difficulty of detaching from material wealth in favor of spiritual riches. True discipleship requires total trust in God and a willingness to let go of anything that stands in the way of following Him with your whole heart.
- Jesus reassures His disciples that those who sacrifice for His sake will receive much more in this life and the next. This promise underscores the Christian hope in eternal life and the rewards of living a life dedicated to Christ, even when it involves sacrifice and hardship. Jesus reminds us that earthly riches are fleeting, but the treasures of heaven are everlasting.

Key Themes

- The call to prioritize spiritual wealth over material possessions can be related to the protection of all human life. The dignity and value of human life should never be compromised for financial gain or convenience. The Gospel invites us to advocate for life, especially the most vulnerable, and to reject the societal pressures that place material wealth above human dignity.
- The Gospel encourages us to consider the ways in which societal wealth and power dynamics affect women, particularly those who are poor or marginalized. Jesus' call to detach from wealth and focus on spiritual values invites each of us to work for the protection of women, ensuring they have access to resources, opportunities, and support, especially those women who find themselves faced with an unplanned pregnancy.
- The rich man's struggle to follow Jesus' call highlights the tension between societal expectations and personal faith. In a world that often prioritizes wealth, status and material success, Catholics are called to live out their faith even when it conflicts with societal values. This is never truer than when it comes to living our faith and convictions in the public square.

We have a duty and right to make our voices heard this election season and I hope we all will take that duty seriously. Please make sure you get out and vote and please pay special attention to Question 1 on the ballot this year. This ballot initiative would enshrine abortion in Maryland's Constitution. Maryland is already one of the most permissive states in the country when it comes to abortion access. By voting against Question 1 we are saying we do not believe that abortion should be a fundamental right protected by the constitution and we should allow commonsense protections that protect women and their health.