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Statement on Policy Disqualifying Transgender Individuals from Military Service
July 28, 2017



Saint Pope John Paul the Second wrote that, “Every individual, precisely by reason of the mystery of the Word of God who was made flesh (cf. Jn 1:14), is entrusted to the maternal care of the Church.” This care extends from the time an individual is conceived, until natural death, and every point of life in between. It is offered regardless of personal choices or conditions, because Christ offers salvation to all people.

Earlier this week, citing a detriment to military readiness and the cost associated with gender reassignment surgeries and therapies, President Trump banned individuals who identify as transgender from serving in the military in any capacity.

Certainly military readiness is of utmost importance to our service men and women who selflessly risk personal safety to defend the values and freedoms of our Nation. The President’s announcement and the prevailing response, however, fail to address the essence of the issue - the dignity of the human person.

The dignity of the human person is rooted in the fact that people are created in the image and likeness of God – God who in the fullness of his divinity assumed humanity to redeem the world. A recent conference, titled “Framing a Catholic Response to Gender Ideology” held this past May at Saint John Vianney Theological Seminary in Denver, noted that gender ideology undermines basic Christian anthropology by defining the person as a disembodied mind and the body as a mere instrument. A Catholic response to gender ideology considers multiple insights including medical, psychological, philosophical, theological, pastoral, and legal perspectives. The Church honors human dignity by drawing near in order to accompany people.

Sexual orientation and gender identity issues reflect a rapidly increasing and incorrect societal attitude that individual behaviors in life should pursue immediate and personal choices rather than eternal truth. In extending the maternal care of the Church to the faithful of this Archdiocese, it is opportune to reaffirm that personal choices in life, whether regarding the protection of the unborn, the sanctity of marriage and the family, or the acceptance of a person’s God-created biology, should be made not solely for a penultimate reality on this earth but in anticipation of the ultimate reality of sharing in the very life of God in heaven.