

## Rejoice in the Lord

By Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.  
Archbishop of Newark

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### Reflection—A Nourishing Mother

Pope Francis has said that his favorite image of the Church is “mother.” This is “the face of the Church,” the pope says. It is an image he would like the Church to display more often.

What do we mean when we say that the Church is our mother? Pope Francis answers this question by describing what mothers do for their children. “A mother teaches how to walk in life,” the pope says. “She teaches how to do well in life; she knows how to direct her children; she seeks always to indicate the right way in life to grow and become adults.” She is an alma mater (a nourishing mother) as opposed to a harsh or cruel teacher who seeks to impose her ideas on us.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is our Church’s model for all things, but most especially in her motherhood.

From the beginning of his pontificate, Pope Francis has called attention to the Blessed Virgin Mary’s role as “a gate that exactly follows the form of Jesus: the gate of the heart of Jesus, demanding, but open to all.” As a gateway, Mary not only shows us the way to her son, Jesus, but she also intercedes for us, making it easier for us to seek and find him.

According to the Holy Father, Mary “welcomed [Jesus] with all her heart and followed him every day of her life, even when she did not understand, even when a sword pierced her soul.” In her role as mother of God, and our mother, Mary nurtures and protects us. She argues on our behalf even, or especially, when we have sinned and lost our way. “Mary is the mother,” Pope Francis says, “and a mother’s main concern is the health of her children ... Our Lady guards our health ... helps us grow, face life and be free.”



**THE CHURCH IS A MOTHER  
WHO TEACHES, GUIDES  
AND HELPS US TO GROW.**

What took place most singularly in our Mother Mary also takes place within us, spiritually, when we receive the word of God with a good and sincere heart and put it into practice. It is as if God takes flesh within us; he comes to dwell in us, for he dwells in all who love him and keep his word. Pope Francis says it is not always easy to understand this, but really, it is easy to feel it in our heart.

Especially during the month of October, we honor the Blessed Virgin and ask her to intercede for our Church that she may be a nurturing mother like Mary.

Sincerely yours in Christ the Redeemer,



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.  
Archbishop of Newark

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Guest Commentary

## **Prolife and the next generation**

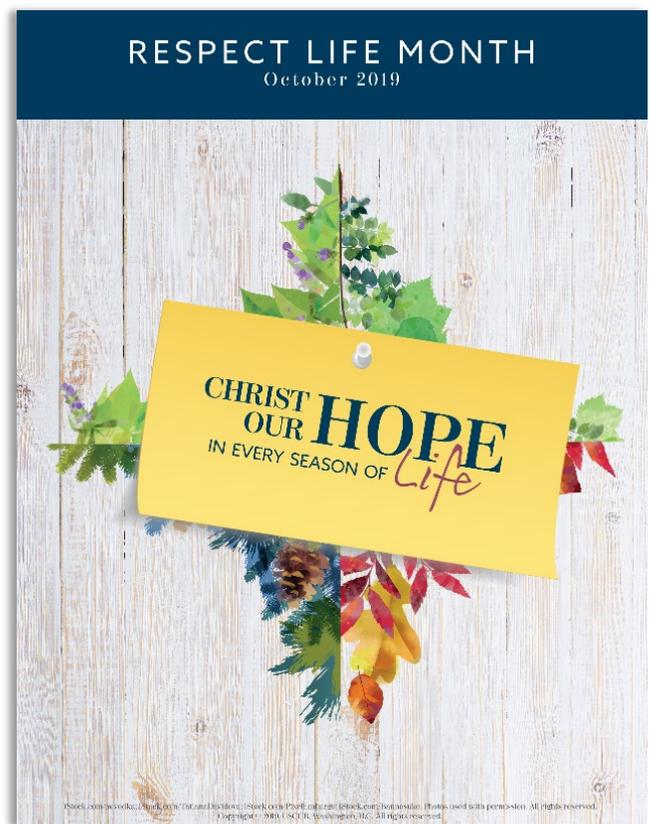
**By Sister Constance Veit, Director of Communications for the Little Sisters of the Poor**

For American Catholics, October is Respect Life Month and this year's theme is Christ Our Hope: In Every Season of Life.

So, for those of us soon-to-be-seniors, let's ask ourselves – while we still have time – if we seek wisdom and eternal values. Let's ask ourselves if we believe that anxiety about the future can be overcome. Let's ask ourselves if we are more focused on others than ourselves, if we believe that there is more joy in giving than in receiving, and if we try to show love not only in words but in actions. These are the lessons that millennials and Gen Z are waiting for us to teach them, even if they don't know it.

While we still have time let's follow the advice of Pope Francis: "Growing older means preserving and cherishing the most precious things about our youth, but it also involves having to purify those things that are not good and receiving new gifts from God so that we can develop the things that really matter."

This is how we will teach the young to face the future with hope!



# FORWARD IN *Faith* TOGETHER

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## *Our Road Ahead*

### UPDATE --

#### Highlights of the Pastoral Vision

*“I envision a future where lay people are fully engaged in the life of our Archdiocese at all levels and where parishioners of every age play direct and decisive roles in our worship, our faith formation, and our service to those in need. I also see priests united with one another and with the people they serve. I see deacons, consecrated men and women, and lay people who feel prepared and empowered, build up the Body of Christ that is the Church of Newark.”*

– Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.

#### What is *Forward in Faith Together: Our Road Ahead*?

- A broad pastoral vision that maps out the future of the Archdiocese in six pillars.
- A positive path forward for the faithful, clergy, and the Archdiocese while simultaneously addressing crucial challenges of the past and present.
- It includes more incisive leadership roles for the laity in the Archdiocese.
- This pastoral vision seeks to strengthen unity among the clergy and their parishioners.
- It also emphasizes lifelong faith formation and education, and the ongoing formation of clergy.

#### The six pillars of this vision are:

- Protection of the Faithful
- Accountability, Transparency, and Communication
- Archdiocesan Pastoral Planning
- Lifelong Faith Formation and Education
- Ongoing Formation and Support of Clergy
- Active Engagement of the Laity

#### Key accomplishments to date:

- Acknowledged past abuse of minors and seminarians by clergy.
- Continued Child and Youth Protection training sessions.
- Published independent audited financial statements to our website.
- Enhanced communications and social media outreach.
- Held the Convocation of Priests in June 2019.
- Ongoing training programs to engage the laity in the mission of the Church.

Details about *Forward in Faith Together: Our Road Ahead* are available on our website at **Forward.RCAN.org**. Thank you for your continued prayers and engagement with our Church.

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*As Pope Francis stated, we are resolved to “follow the path of truth wherever it may lead” and create a road forward towards healing for all who have been harmed by abuse. We know we cannot proceed with healing until we have acknowledged the suffering and injury and cleansed the deep wounds from the past.*

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## A Message from Pope Francis: Words of Challenge and Hope



“Whenever we encounter another person in love, we learn something new about God.”

“The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven, and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel.”

“God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy.”

“It is not 'progressive' to try to resolve problems by eliminating a human life.”

— Pope Francis, selections from  
**The Joy of the Gospel: Evangelii Gaudium**

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### My Prayer for You

My prayer for this local Church is that we will take Jesus' words to heart and act on them. Let's set aside our hesitation and fear. Let's work together, trusting that if we do what our Lord asks us to do, the results will be truly amazing! Amen. †

**Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.**

