

OHIO RELIGIOUS COALITION FOR REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE (A)



January 28, 2021

# WHY WE SUPPORT THE PRO-ABORTION DIRECT ACTION AT ST. JOSEPH'S CATHEDRAL

[Clinics \(/blog/category/Clinics\)](/blog/category/Clinics/), [Action Alerts \(/blog/category/Action+Alerts\)](/blog/category/Action+Alerts/)

*BACKGROUND: On January 22, 2021, a group of local leaders who care deeply about reproductive freedom and justice entered St. Joseph's Cathedral in Columbus, Ohio, during a mass explicitly dedicated to anti-abortion ideology. As the mother church of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Columbus, St. Joseph's holds a special significance as the seat of authority for the Roman Catholic Church in this region and is often the site of special services presided over by Diocesan Bishop Robert Brennan, the principal cleric of the diocese. What follows is the official statement of the Ohio Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice concerning the events of this direct action at St. Joseph's Cathedral. **To take action, click here** (<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/tell-bishop-brennan-to-stop-the-chaos-at-clinics/>).*

As faithfully pro-choice advocates for reproductive health, rights, and justice, we at Ohio RCRC lament a lot of things. but let us be clear: the momentary and nonviolent

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interruption of an anti-abortion mass at St. Joseph's Cathedral in Columbus is **not** one of them.

We lament the *conditions* that have brought about the urgent need for these public demonstrations — aggressive anti-abortion extremism threatening clinics and terrorizing patients in Ohio, all wrapped in the thin veneer of religious faith.

We lament that many institutions of power and wealth seek to have peace where there is no justice far more earnestly than they seek to have justice where there is no peace.

We lament that the Roman Catholic Diocese of Columbus has made a business out of harassment of pregnant people, promoting diocesan fundraising events for deceptive fake clinics, targeting youth with anti-abortion tourism field trips, and using tithes from their flock to fund hate-filled legislative agendas that seek to strip freedom of choice away from all people — regardless of their faith or consent to be governed by Catholic dogma.

And we lament that Roman Catholic leaders in our region have shown far more interest in speaking up for the sacredness of their right to enjoy quiet cathedral worship than for the rights of people in our state to have the final say over their own health care.

We recognize that the ears of leaders in the Diocese of Columbus have been pierced by the cries of the people they have actively oppressed for decades — cries that lament the harm being done in the name of Christ.

Whenever people stand up and cry out against the diocese's near-constant stigma, harassment, and abuse, we firmly pledge to listen, to uphold their witness, and allow ourselves to be changed by their prophetic and holy lament.

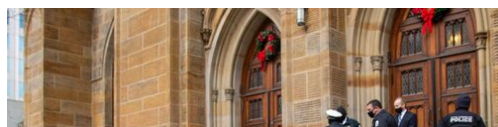
Whether in the sanctuary of St. Joseph's Cathedral or on the Statehouse steps, we trust that honest words spoken in truth and righteous anger will transform hearts and renew relationships in necessary ways.

We pray that diocesan leaders are moved by these cries to take action. Namely, we pray earnestly that the diocese, at the direction of Bishop Robert Brennan, will call for faithful Roman Catholics to cease their harassment of abortion clinics in our region and disavow any effort to deceive, coerce, co-opt, harass, intimidate, malign, or otherwise harm people seeking to access reproductive healthcare.



(<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/tell-bishop-brennan-to-stop-the-chaos-at-clinics/>)

*Photo by Larry Pishitelli*



Struggle is a pathway to peace — a peace that is not merely the absence of conflict, but the presence of justice.

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- **Clergy for Choice**  
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(<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/tell-bishop-brennan-to-stop-the-chaos-at-clinics/>)

Photo by Paul Becker

Until the Diocese of Columbus halts their sustained harassment of abortion clinics, their leaders should expect the same treatment in return, and they should not expect sympathy from Ohio RCRC or from the vast majority of our state's population who have consistently and nonviolently stood firm for dignity and bodily autonomy.

When you harass patients & clinics one day and pray for God to bless your abusiveness the next, be sure the chaos you sow will undoubtedly follow you back to church.

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## TAKE ACTION: Tell Bishop Brennan to Stop the Chaos at Clinics

(<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/tell-bishop-brennan-to-stop-the-chaos-at-clinics/>)

Tagged: St. Joseph's Cathedral (</blog/tag/St.+Joseph%27s+Cathedral>), Bishop Robert Brennan (</blog/tag/Bishop+Robert+Brennan>), Catholic (</blog/tag/Catholic>), clinic harassment (</blog/tag/clinic+harassment>), abortion (</blog/tag/abortion>), dignity (</blog/tag/dignity>), bodily autonomy (</blog/tag/bodily+autonomy>)

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Until the Diocese of Columbus



(</blog/support-ohios-religious-voice-for-choice>)

## SUPPORT OHIO'S 'RELIGIOUS VOICE FOR CHOICE' (</BLOG/SUPPORT-OHIOS-RELIGIOUS-VOICE-FOR-CHOICE>)

As Ohio's trusted "religious voice for choice," we continue to educate and mobilize people of faith across the Buckeye state to stand up for

