

New Albany bishop leads 1,000 in Walk for Life around state capitol

ALBANY, NY – Albany's new bishop led about 1,000 pro-life activists in a Walk for Life around New York's state capitol building June 17. Catholics from the diocese, which had been directed for nearly four decades by a bishop known for his progressivism, see the new bishop as a "springboard of new energy" for the pro-life movement in the city.

"It's just wonderful to have someone in our corner who is committed to the cause."

Organized by local Catholics Jason and Teri Kippen, and assisted by the New York State Council of the Knights of Columbus, the Walk was led by Bishop Edward Scharfenberger, who [succeeded](#) Bishop Howard Hubbard in February.

Scharfenberger, who also led a prayer service prior to the walk, told LifeSiteNews that he participated "because the issue was important. They invited me and so I joined. It was wonderful to participate in this."

Theresa Schweigert, Respect Life Coordinator at St. Madeleine Sophie Church, said she was "so grateful to our new bishop for leading us in such a beautiful prayer service and procession."

"Bishop Scharfenberger's initiative reminds us once again that we Catholic Christians must be a visible witness of the Gospel of Life," said Schweigert. "By taking our Catholic Faith out into the streets, and as in this case a Rosary Procession past the

seats of government for both the City of Albany and the State of New York, we become the salt and light that Jesus taught about in the Sermon on the Mount."

Bishop Edward Scharfenberger delivers the homily at the prayer service before the Walk for Life. Michael Schweigert / Citizens Concerned for Human Life

Teri Kippen told The Evangelist, the Albany diocese's newspaper, that the pro-life movement in the diocese has been "a little lackluster" but she believes Bishop Scharfenberger's involvement in their efforts can be "a springboard of new energy."

"It's just wonderful to have someone in our corner who is committed to the cause," she said.

Scharfenberger [visited](#) an abortion clinic in April, and has engaged in Facebook discussions with pro-life activists.

Bishop Edward Scharfenberger leads Albany's Walk for Life. Michael Schweigert / Citizens Concerned for Human Life



Bishop Hubbard famously [held a Mass in 2011](#) for the Catholic Association for Lesbian & Gay Ministry, a Catholic organization that had been banned from meeting in other dioceses because it dissents from Catholic teaching on same-sex relationships. That year, he also said it would not be "[appropriate](#)" to deny New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo Communion over his pro-abortion stance.

Additionally, Albany's first female mayor, Kathy Sheehan, who [publicly supports](#) same-sex "marriage" and abortion, [served](#) as the diocese's communications director under Hubbard.

At the same time, in the 1980s Hubbard [took the state of New York to court](#) over its licensing of two Planned Parenthood abortion clinics.

Scharfenberger's family has a history of pro-life activism. His nephew, Jon, worked for Students for Life of America [before his untimely death](#), and ran the Students for Life group when he attended Ave Maria University.

Jason Kippen told LifeSiteNews that the Knights of Columbus played an enormous role in the Walk's success. Not only did they [pay \\$800 in fees](#) to help get the Walk going, Kippen says the Knights "sponsored the event, got the permit, and paid for a million-dollar insurance policy for the Walk itself."

