

Preparation Suggestions/Tips For 2026 March for Life Participants

Please arrive at Holy Spirit Church on Thursday, January 22, between 8:00-8:30 pm to sign in, check in and get your handouts. The church has requested that we park in the lower parking lot, away from the main entrance to the church, so please park there for overnight parking. During check-in, Eucharistic Adoration will be occurring in the sanctuary. Please be quiet and respectful and feel free to participate.

There will be a prayer service in the church at 9:00pm. There will be some announcements after the prayer service. We will begin boarding the buses immediately after the announcements, around 9:45pm. Please DO NOT board the buses before being instructed to do so. You will NOT be allowed to board the buses unless a Bus Captain is present, so please do not try to board early. Buses roll at approximately 10:00pm. There will be one additional pick-up location in Bath, NY.

You will be traveling to and from Washington on a US Coachway bus. Your bus captains will be Gerry Sander (585-503-3256) [Bus 1] and Jim Lajoie [Bus 2].

You will need cash for the following:

- One food stop returning from Washington (Wegman's Market Café)
- Bus driver tip – suggested \$5 per passenger.
- You may wish to purchase articles at the Shrine Gift Shop in the lower level.
- Along the March, there will be people with buckets collecting donations for the March for Life.
- You will need to travel to the Washington Mall via your own transportation. The easiest is Metro Rail. I will send out information about this separately. The cost of a card is \$2 admin fee plus fare (~ \$3).

You may choose to bring snacks or special foods, if you have diet restrictions. We will provide some snacks and water on the trip. You may bring snacks to share with others on the bus. Food trucks may be available around the Washington Mall.

Be sure to bring any required medicines/prescriptions.

You should bring your cell phone, if you have one. It is the best way to communicate during the March. USE TEXT TO CONTACT ME, NOT PHONE, and put your name in the text. It is difficult to hear phone calls and often there is poor reception with so many people in one place. Cell phone numbers will be recorded by your bus captain when you register for the trip. Electrical outlets are available on the bus, so bring your charging cords and an extra battery. Outlets are limited, so please share. Take photos and use the hashtags #WhyWeMarch on your social media posts.

The buses will have lavatories. Try to use them sparingly, if possible. What goes on the bus, stays on the bus.

The buses are Wi-Fi equipped, but don't expect it to be fast or consistent.

The buses will have DVD players, and we will be watching something on the bus. Please bring DVDs, if you want your choice of movie to be considered. Please limit movies to G and PG ratings, as there are many youths on the buses.

You may want to bring a blanket and pillow for the bus ride. The bus seats can get uncomfortable after many hours, so you may want to bring a cushion upon which to sit. Backpacks are allowed, as the March is on public streets/parks.

It can't hurt to bring your rosary! We will be praying the "Rosary for Life" on the bus.

You should wear comfortable shoes/boots and warm clothing that protects you from cold, snow and rain. You may also wish to bring along an extra pair of socks. If you get too cold during the March, you can always duck into one of the Smithsonian buildings to get warm! Hand warmers can be useful.

It's recommended that you dress in layers...and of course bring gloves and a hat. We will provide red and white scarves for most of our participants to make it easier to identify our group. If you have one of these scarves from past years, please bring it with you as we may not have enough for everyone.

Items that you don't wish to carry with you during the March can be left on the bus, but you will not have access to them after drop-off at the Basilica and until pick-up after the march. Drivers are not responsible for lost or stolen items.

You may bring your own signs, home-made or other, but be aware that, once the bus drops us off at the Basilica, you will need to carry them all day. There are many organizations handing out signs at the March.

If you plan on visiting any of the Smithsonian Museums while in the Washington, DC area, please be aware of their security policies found here: <https://www.si.edu/visit/guidelines>.

Please Note:

While walking and riding the metro in DC, please be respectful of residents and commuters. Let's show the Nation's Capital how passionate, polite, and respectful pro-lifers really are!

Do not leave trash or signs on the grounds of the National Mall, Supreme Court, or Capitol. This is our Nation's Capital, and we should treat it with dignity and respect. If trash bins are full, please carry your trash or sign with you until you find an available trash bin.

Do not engage with counter protesters. Once again, please be respectful of all people and stay focused on the cause of promoting and celebrating life, lovingly and graciously.

We anticipate arriving back at Holy Spirit around 1:00am on Saturday, January 24.

Important Information about riding the Metro:

The closest Metro station to the Basilica is **Brookland-CUA Red Line**. Tickets are available at self-pay kiosks in station or on the SmarTrip app. More info at <https://smartrip.wmata.com>

To get to March:

Walk to Brookland-CUA Metro Station.

Board **RED LINE** towards **SHADY GROVE** (end of line destination)

Exit train at **METRO CENTER METRO STATION**

Transfer to one of these trains:

Orange Line towards **NEW CARROLLTON** (end of line destination) or

Silver Line towards **LARGO** (end of line destination) or

Blue Line towards **LARGO** (end of line destination)

Exit at either **FEDERAL TRIANGLE METRO STATION** or **SMITHSONIAN METRO STATION**.

I would recommend using Smithsonian.

The March for Life Rally should be a short walk from the Metro station.