

## RESPECT LIFE HOLY HOUR REFLECTION FOR OCTOBER, 2024: What is Freedom?

### THE AMENDMENT TO THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION STATES:

Article 48: **That every person, as a central component of an individual's rights to liberty and equality, has the fundamental right to reproductive freedom, including but NOT LIMITED TO the ability to make and effectuate decisions to prevent, continue, or end one's own pregnancy. The state may not, directly or indirectly, deny, BURDEN, or abridge the right unless justified by a compelling state interest achieved by the least restrictive means."**

### THE BALLOT will say (not required to match amendment language):

#### Question 1 - Constitutional Amendment (Ch. 245 of the 2023 Legislative Session)

##### Declaration of Rights – Right to Reproductive Freedom

The proposed amendment confirms an individual's fundamental right to reproductive freedom, including but NOT LIMITED TO the ability to make and effectuate decisions to prevent, continue, or end the individual's pregnancy, and provides the State may not, directly or indirectly, deny, burden, or abridge the right unless justified by a compelling State interest achieved by the least restrictive means.

For the Constitutional Amendment

Against the Constitutional Amendment

This November Marylanders will be asked to vote on Question 1 - The Right to Reproductive Freedom Amendment (The language of the law passed by the House and Senate, and how it will appear on the ballot are provided above.) Because the proposed amendment is on *Reproductive Freedom*, I decided to check out Pope Benedict XVI's take on "freedom".... what it means... what limitations can be imposed on it, and who has the authority to limit it, etc. I thought reflecting on the word (if we can agree on the meaning of the word) would help me and others discern whether "individual reproductive freedom" is something Marylanders should impose on themselves as part of our Constitution. In my research I came upon a Word on Fire contributor, Father Billy Swan, who wrote an article on the subject while honoring Pope Benedict XVI just days after his passing. Interestingly enough he also references *Gaudium et Spes* by Pope Paul the VI, who became pope just as the sexual revolution erupted in the early 60s. Let's pray that we are on the cusp of a new era.

Here is the link to the article. There is much on which to reflect...

<https://www.wordonfire.org/articles/contributors/joseph-ratzinger-and-human-freedom/>

St. John Paul II and Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us!!!