



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

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OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

July 20, 2023

Dear Friends in Christ,

The parish and Archdiocesan phase of the Synod process confirmed the reality of a number of pastoral needs in the Archdiocese. For those of you engaged in day-to-day pastoral ministry, many of these needs came as no surprise. Among them was the need to minister to those who may identify as LGBT and their families. Today, having considered the matter for some time and following a great deal of prayer, study, and consultation, in my office as shepherd and teacher, I am issuing, ["Like Every Disciple: Guidelines for Pastoral Accompaniment"](#).

While the document offers important guidelines to be followed regarding the accompaniment of those persons who identify as LGBT, the bulk of the document offers a spiritual and pastoral vision for approaching this particular need in the life of the Church in our time. In issuing this document, which is addressed to pastoral leaders, I want to provide those of you who are ministering in our parishes and schools with a way of approaching this ministry that is rooted in the life-giving tension we often find between charity and truth.

Allow me to offer one final thought. It is often the case that we think of ministry in our parishes in terms of establishing groups, conducting meetings, or developing projects. In considering this document you might think that what is proposed here would suggest forming a new "group" within the parish. Just as we have in other ministries, I would suggest that we need to think beyond those models and seek new ways of accompanying individuals in our parishes and schools along the path of discipleship. As such, accompaniment individuals who identify as LGBT is not just about forming a group but rather about considering ways that pastoral ministers and parish communities can help those who identify as LGBT to encounter the Lord Jesus and, like every disciple, to follow him along the path of life.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Faithfully in Christ,

Most Reverend William E. Lori
Archbishop of Baltimore