



BUILDING UP THE COMMON GOOD

Opportunities to Respect and Protect All Human Life

On June 24, 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the 1973 Roe vs. Wade case, thus removing the constitutional right to abortion. The Supreme Court decision does not ban abortions, but it provides opportunities for dialogue and discernment about how to assist women, protect the unborn, and begin anew. The Catholic community welcomes this opportunity. We share with other people of good will the conviction that all human life must be respected and protected from conception to natural death. Life is a gift of God entrusted to our care. To be truly pro-life means that it is never enough to oppose abortion; the Church is also called to address root causes that lead to abortions and to find ways to support both women and children so that all may flourish. As a community of faith, we must be instruments of accompaniment and healing.

We offer the following resources to help parish leaders and Catholic school principals form their faith communities and equip catechists, teachers and parents to engage in conversations with children, youth and one another about respecting and protecting all human life, through the lens of faith and grounded in compassion.



May Catholics work tirelessly to support mothers in need, helping them obtain all the necessities of life.

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Statement of Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, archbishop of Chicago, on the Supreme Court's Decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization

June 24, 2022

Español | Polski

Today, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its ruling in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, which overturns the court's tragic 1973 decision that removed legal protection for unborn children. We welcome this important ruling and the opportunity it creates for a national conversation on protecting human life in the womb and promoting human dignity at all stages of life. This moment should serve as a turning point in our dialogue about the place an unborn child holds in our nation, about our responsibility to listen to women and support them through pregnancies and after the birth of their children, and about the need to refocus our national priorities to support families, particularly those in need.

The Catholic Church brings to such a conversation the conviction that every human life is sacred, that every person is made in the image and likeness of God and therefore deserving of reverence and protection. That belief is the reason the Catholic Church is the country's largest provider of social services, many aimed at eliminating the systemic poverty and health care insecurity that trap families in a cycle of hopelessness and limit authentic choice.

We also come to this dialogue as Americans, knowing that the principle that all human beings are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights is enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, and that first among these is the right to life.

Make no mistake, because this ruling regrettably will have little impact on abortion in Illinois, as there are virtually no restrictions here, we will continue to advocate strongly for legal protections for unborn children. And we will redouble our efforts to work with all to build a culture that values the inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all.

This ruling is not the end of a journey, but rather a fresh start. It underscores the need to understand those who disagree with us, and to inculcate an ethic of dialogue and cooperation. Let us begin by examining our national conscience, taking stock of those dark places in our society and in our hearts that turn to violence and deny the humanity of our brothers and sisters, and get to work building up the common good by choosing life.

The 1973 Decision and the 2022 Ruling

"The recent Supreme Court decision Dobbs v. Jackson overturned the Supreme Court's 1973 decision Roe v. Wade. That earlier decision removed legal protection for unborn children in our nation...This Supreme Court decision does not ban abortions, but it does redirect our nation, particularly the states, to a conversation and decision-making process about how best to protect the unborn. Therefore, the decision Dobbs v. Jackson is not the conclusion of the issue, but an opportunity to begin anew." (**Pulpit Points #1 and #3**)

The following resources will help to educate and form catechists, teachers and parents about the facts of the Supreme Court decision Dobbs v. Jackson. This factual information, along with some talking points, will prepare adults to engage in conversations with children, youth and one another about this current topic.

Dobbs v. Jackson Resources

Dobbs v. Jackson Fact Sheet

Offers a clear explanation of the Dobbs case, what the overturning of Roe v. Wade would mean, the implication of differing state laws and more. (**note:** this fact sheet was published before the 2022 Supreme Court ruling, but is still helpful to understand the facts of the decision)

Dobbs Clergy Resources

Tools for clergy and suggestions for use in preparation for the U.S. Supreme Court Ruling in the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization. (**note:** these resources were published before the 2022 Supreme Court ruling, but are still helpful to understand the facts of the decision)

17 Simple Talking Points on the Final Decision

This site offers 17 clear, concise talking points on the Supreme Court's final decision.

The Sanctity of All Human Life

"This ruling is a challenge and an opportunity for Catholic citizens to call for and contribute to a national conversation on protecting and promoting human dignity at all stages of life. This moment should serve as a turning point in our dialogue about the place an unborn child holds in our nation, about our responsibility to assist women through unplanned and difficult pregnancies and after the birth of their children, and about the need to refocus our national priorities to support families, particularly those in need. It is time for the nation to live up to the oft-invoked but seldom actualized family values it claims to cherish. As citizens we have an important role to play in shaping public policy that gives every individual the dignity they deserve as children of God." (**Pulpit Points #4**)

The following resources are provided to inspire and form individuals and communities to value life at all stages. With this foundation of the Catholic conviction on the sanctity of all human life, adults will be able to engage in dialogue about the importance of protecting and promoting human dignity.

Human Dignity Resources

How to Build a Culture of Life

This article provides inspiration to respond to the lack of respect for human life by exploring topics including the true identity and mission of Christians to build a culture of life.

Walking with Moms: Go Deeper Educational Materials

As part of the nationwide effort, *Walking with Moms in Need*, the USCCB Secretariat of Pro-life Activities provides these educational materials to help the faithful reflect on the teachings of *Evangelium vitae* and *Evangelii gaudium*. These materials can be used to help Catholics better understand the Gospel call to go to the peripheries and bring hope and help to those in need.

Respect Life: Faith Formation Leader's Kit

The Faith Formation Leader's Kit offers teachers and catechists age-appropriate ideas for engaging students in pro-life dialogue through bulletin boards, ideas for reflection, prayer and "action guides" for year-round integration within the classroom.

Respect Life: Action Guides

These action guides provide actionable, ready-to-go parish resources created to complement existing parish life. Structured around six main calendar occasions, these action guides are designed to help you take advantage of natural opportunities to highlight and integrate Respect Life themes in your parish, school or ministry. Each action guide includes sample timelines, bulletin announcements, intercessions, homily helps, activities and more to help you build a culture of life.

Students For Life of America: Fetal Development

Visit the Students for Life of America “Learn” website for educational information on fetal development, abortion facts, how to defend your stance, abortion alternatives and other life issues.

Heart2Heart Educational Program for Teens

The Heart2Heart Program provides a free online library of professionally filmed videos on various pro-life issues, ranging from abortion to end-of-life. Each video is accompanied by a teacher’s guide in order to arm educators with the resources they need to teach pro-life values in their classrooms.

Our Responsibility

“To be truly pro-life means that it is never enough to oppose abortion and provide legal protection for the child in the womb. It is also essential for the Church to address root causes that lead to abortions and to find ways to support both women and the children they carry, so that both mothers and children may flourish. We need to find practical ways to stand with and support women who face the challenges of a difficult pregnancy. In fact, we have a history of providing help in many ways. We need to redouble our efforts.” (**Pulpit Points #5**)

The following resources offer inspiration to equip individuals and communities in addressing root causes that lead to abortions, as well as to take action in supporting women who face the challenges of a difficult pregnancy.

Resources to Help Mothers and Children Flourish

Respect Life Reflection: Called to Serve Moms in Need

This short reflection from the USCCB connects our personal call as Christians to live out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy with care for moms and respect for life.

Into Life: Love Changes Everything

The Sisters of Life and the McGrath Institute for Church Life teamed up with CampCampo Films to create an original 12-part video series based on the work of the Sisters serving women who are pregnant. Journey with the Sisters of Life as they explain what it means to walk with a woman who is pregnant and vulnerable. Learn what it means to deeply listen to and understand the heart of another, how to rejoice in the beauty of the individual person and what it means to truly accompany someone into God’s life and freedom.

Walking with Moms: Prayer Guides

These prayer guides are available to help you regularly pray for mothers in need in your parish community. Each guide features a different prayer intention, short reflection, suggested actions and more.

Poverty and Abortion: A Vicious Cycle

This brief article explores some research and statistics about how poverty can lead to abortion and how abortion affects poverty; reminding us of the importance to help encourage our government and other institutions to support life.

Local, pro-life organizations

These Chicago-area organizations offer a variety of programs, events and wish lists that individuals and communities can donate to in their efforts to support women who are experiencing a difficult pregnancy.

Aid for Women Chicago | Illinois Right to Life

The Well of Mercy Chicago | Womens’ Care Center of LaGrange

The Women’s Centers for Greater Chicagoland – Changing Hearts. Saving Babies.

Dialogue and Cooperation

“The Church also needs to stand ready—as it has in the past—to accompany those women who have had abortions, have regretted their decision, and have been deeply wounded by the experience. As a community of faith, we must be instruments of forgiveness, reconciliation and healing.” (**Pulpit Points #6**)

The following resources provide inspiration and guidance to support communities in being instruments of forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing while accompanying women who have had an abortion.

Resources for Dialogue and Cooperation

Roe Reversal Amends Law: Time to Amend Hearts

This brief article explores the importance for us to be particularly sensitive to people who may have their consciences awakened about the reality of the abortions they may have had or helped in some way someone else to have, and to reach out to them as messengers of God's infinite mercy.

Walking with Moms: Parish Resources

The resources on this website are provided to help guide parishes as they work to better serve pregnant women in need, including a comprehensive Parish Action Guide.

Hope and Healing After Abortion

The Sisters of Life offer Hope and Healing After Abortion, helping women to experience the peace and healing that comes when they are able to share their burdens with another. The Sisters of Life offer a safe, confidential and non-judgmental environment that can allow post-abortive women to enter into Jesus' healing embrace.

Project Rachel

Project Rachel provides resources and prayers to help with healing after abortion, along with a comprehensive database for finding help throughout the United States.

And Then There Were None: Prayers and Printables

The non-profit organization, And Then There Were None, provides financial, emotion, spiritual, and legal support for anyone wishing to leave the abortion industry. The site offers downloadable prayers for former clinic workers, our government, pro-life leaders and more.

Jesus said, “I have come that they might have life and have it in abundance.” In this important moment for our nation, we pray for the gift of abundant life and that we would take up our responsibility to foster it both as believers and as citizens. (**Pulpit Points #7**)