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“I am fearfully, wonderfully made” – The Unborn
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Each precious unborn in the mother’s womb proclaims through the Holy Spirit of God, “I give you thanks that I am fearfully and wonderfully made,” and “truly you have formed my inmost being -- you knit me in my mother’s womb.” Psalm 139

That the precious unborn children of God are truly human beings, persons, has been our Catholic belief for ages and recently scientific technology has over and over confirmed our belief that a new human being begins at conception.

We rejoice with gratitude to God that the Supreme Court has overturned Roe v Wade and in so doing, has implicitly recognized that the unborn are persons. In doing away with Roe v Wade, the Court has acted on the condition of the decision in 1973. We remember what the court admitted in that decision, “if...personhood (for the unborn) is established the appellant case of course collapses for the fetus right to life is then guaranteed by the 14th amendment.” The appellant case has collapsed! We are now experiencing a truly historic victory for human life. Medical science over and over in recent years recognizes that there is a new human being in the very act of conception which has always been our biblical belief. Never once has the Supreme Court declared abortion as a constitutional right nor as a human right as some falsely claim. Human rights are given to us in our human nature by our creator and no government can take away these rights. Hence, as we move into the future after Roe v Wade, governments, and courts at a national and state level must respect and protect the tiny unborn persons made in God’s image and they must never be deprived of life and liberty. The 14th amendment clearly states: “nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, and property...nor deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the law”. This respect and love for the dignity for human life must be shown to each person from the womb to the tomb.

So, as abortion continues to be discussed and debated, personhood of the unborn is the compelling issue. All pro-lifers must strongly and clearly preach and protect this fundamental life issue of the sacredness of personhood. Governments exist to protect God-given inalienable rights, the first of which is the right to life. Flowing from our belief and scientific evidence, both Pope St. John Paul II and Pope Francis have clearly stated that we must have great love and support for each new child of God and the mother. Both Popes have stated that abortion is murder and Pope Francis compares abortion to the hiring of a hitman to kill an innocent human being.

Already some 26 states have enacted laws to prohibit abortion and hopefully many more will follow their example. At a national and every state level there are laws that condemn killing human beings which the unborn are. Recognizing the personhood of each unborn, demands that no government, no state would act contrary to this legal fact prohibiting the killing of an innocent person, which is a crime. Sadly, at a presidential level, and many state levels there are efforts that want to undo the divine and natural law which says, you shall not kill. And many still falsely promote the evil of abortion as healthcare for women. Our own president is considering declaring abortion a public health emergency. The speaker of the house is trying to enshrine abortion on demand in federal law. We bishops and all pro-lifers must send an unmistakable message to these pro-abortion leaders that we will never let these horrible death plans be enacted. Abortion is the opposite of women’s healthcare and is an extreme violation of human rights that come from God. Medicine is to be an act of mercy but abortion in effect falsely says it is brutal killing in the name of mercy.

Those who espouse the chant, “my body, my choice” need to carefully understand what is stated already that a new human life begins at conception which both mother and father should lovingly respect. There is now “another body” with an eternal soul in the mother’s womb, distinct from the mother with a complete DNA for life, but yes dependent on a mother’s love and care for nourishment, care, and protection. This little one shouts out, “I am fearfully, wonderfully made”. The “choice” to be made is before conception not once the life of a tiny person begins. For a mere human to claim as a human right to destroy this tiny person usurps divine authority and demeans the loving care of our God and creator who carefully and tenderly knits each child in a mother’s womb. Personhood of the unborn is the fundamental issue along with the true meaning of motherhood as the abortion discussion continues.

Now the urgent issue for all pro-lifers, beginning with the bishops, is to show more concern for all women who are struggling with a pregnancy issue. Pope Francis stresses the closeness, the compassion and tenderness we must have for all pregnant women and those considering an abortion decision and offer them spiritual, human, social and financial means to assist them with their many needs and to encourage them to save their babies. For unborn babies, living boys and girls, people do not have to be religious to recognize that it has been our logic, our constant biblical belief and now with scientific proof and the constant teaching of our Catholic church that a human being begins at conception.

With all my brother bishops, and all pro-lifers, we joyfully welcome the Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v Wade. This ruling is indeed a historic day in the life of our country. For nearly 50 years, America has enforced an unjust law which has permitted some to decide who can live or die. This policy has resulted in the deaths of tens of millions of pre-born children who were denied the right to even be born. Roe was wrong about motherhood as it was about the constitution. We bishops mourn the loss of these precious little ones whose lives have been taken since 1973 through brutal abortion while expressing our closeness to every woman and man who has suffered grievously from abortion. We assure them of our prayers for healing and pledge them our compassion and support. We bishops supported by our priests and people, appeal to all elected officials to enact laws and policies that promote and protect the most vulnerable among us. With love in our hearts, we strive to peacefully educate and persuade our neighbors about the injustice of abortion.

And working together, we offer holistic care and counseling to pregnant women and to work for alternatives to abortion including adoption, foster care and public policies that truly support families. Every diocese should bring together our people at a parish level, to service God’s great plan of love for each unborn and born person. And, for families and to build a society and an economy that supports marriages and families where every woman has the support and resources, she needs to bring her child into this world in love. All pro-lifers need to work together to support pregnancy resource centers which aide both mother and child. This is the time for all followers of Christ to provide holistic help for mothers and fathers to welcome and care for God’s precious, tiny, unborn persons and to assist them throughout childhood. This is also the moment for healing wounds and repairing social divisions; it is a time for shared reasoned reflections and civil dialogues. In this manner, we fulfill America’s great promise to guarantee the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all people.

Personhood, the sacredness of each person, is the main principle as we open our hearts, minds, and hands to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. As we now set out with new courage and conviction, to use every gospel means for every state to deny the killing of the unborn. All pro-lifers need to work with governors and elected officials of each state to enact legislation that will provide financial, social, human support for all women during pregnancy, covering hospital costs, and providing the necessary health, financial and educational assistance for each newborn child throughout childhood. Bold legislators and courageous governors and informed voters need to work together. A model for this is the state of Texas, when the governor and the elected officials issued the “Heartbeat Bill”. They also provided millions of dollars in assistance to mothers and children throughout pregnancy, birth, and for healthcare and education of all children.

As shepherds of our people in the USA, we are deeply disturbed that our president has chosen to use his power as the nation’s chief executive to promote and facilitate and even codify abortion in our country, rather than offering resources for pregnant women in need. Our president and his political supporters are seeking every possible avenue to deny unborn children the most basic human and civil life, the right to life. We pray and encourage our president and his supporters to increase support to care for mothers and babies rather than seeking to facilitate destruction of defenseless and voiceless human beings. As we support the personhood of the unborn and born, we keep in mind the words of Justice Samuel Alito supported by Justice Clarence Thomas, “the constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision”. The Dobbs decision returns the profoundly moral question to the states, giving them the authority to protect human life through a democratic process and the ability to empower pregnant women by providing them with the resources they need to flourish. It presents an opportunity for America to return to a culture of life that values families, women, and motherhood.

God created the human person in the divine image and likeness as the pinnacle of all creation. Each of us shares in the image of God’s glory. Through Christ, God further revealed to us the dignity of all human life. Christ’s sacrifice on the cross powerfully demonstrates God’s desire for us to share in eternal life with him. The value of human life must be truly great for the son of God to make it the instrument of our salvation. Human life as a gift from God is sacred and inviolable. May we commit ourselves to Christ and his mother with urgent prayer, fasting, dialogue and pastoral action so that our country and every state will uphold the dignity of each unborn child. **THE UNBORN ARE COUNTING ON US.**