



Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland

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Bishop Robert P. Deeley's Statement on Planned Parenthood

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Through the summer months, in addition to the beautiful weather we have experienced, we have witnessed a sickening series of videos showing some Planned Parenthood leaders discussing the harvesting and sale of fetal organs and tissue. This is an attack on the dignity of the human person. The videos clearly display the dehumanizing effect that abortion and the scandalous trade of human body parts have on women who have abortions, and the unborn children whose lives are ended before they see light. This is not healthcare for women.

The videos are shocking and remind us of a basic truth that many would prefer to forget: the fetus is a human person waiting to be born. "It's a boy," coldly says one of the individuals shown looking over the remains of these aborted children. This barbaric practice is a crime against humanity. The convenience of one human person should not be a source of such evil to another.

Abortion is the taking of a human life. As painful as it is to see these videos, we cannot become complacent about their content, which shows us what happens when we devalue the humanity of any person, including the unborn. Pope Francis has called abortion the product of a "widespread mentality of profit, the throwaway culture, which has today enslaved the hearts and minds of so many." People have dignity and, in the words of the Holy Father, "are worth far more than things and are above price."

I call on those who distribute the resources from the taxes we all pay to examine this issue and remove any funding which supports such evil as the harvesting of organs from an unborn child. Contrary to what Planned Parenthood would have the public believe, there are many ways that healthcare for women is already provided each and every day in this country—healthcare that is respectful of both women and the unborn. Yes, perhaps more genuine healthcare can be provided if resources were to be reallocated. Our elected officials should act to cease funding Planned Parenthood.

While it is the firm teaching of the Catholic Church that life is to be respected and valued at all times, from conception to natural death, the Church also wants to respond with kindness and care to the hopelessness of those who might have experienced an abortion. At this moment, it is particularly important for women who find in these videos painful reminders of their past to know that help and healing is available. For them in particular, I want to remind all of the supportive work of Project Rachel, the Church's post-abortion healing ministry which offers compassionate assistance to anyone suffering from the loss of a child by abortion: mothers, fathers, grandparents, and others. If you or someone you know want to move beyond the pain through confidential help, contact the diocese's Office of Lifelong Faith Formation at (207) 321-7885.