

Greetings in Christ, all!

Each time our culture attempts to normalize an evil, we as Catholics need to take the time to see why something is good or bad, right or wrong, moral or immoral. This way, our response to the questions that arise are, in the words of Scripture “strong, loving and wise”.

As your Pastor, I feel a significant but life-giving weight to share with you the truth and beauty of our Catholic faith, particularly when the world around us is telling us something quite different. This is such a time, so this is such a letter. I am going to give the Catholic teaching on abortion, as best I can.

Before we get into it, I want to be sure and let you know that, if you are reading this and have participated in an abortion in any way, God loves you. I pray that right now, as you read this, you sense the love our God has for you and His hunger to heal you of this wound. It is exceedingly rare that anyone does an evil for evil sake: sometimes, we feel desperate, sometimes, we decide without thinking...all of us have sinned and fallen short, but no one reading this is beyond the reach of Our Fathers mercy: Have Hope! Come to Him through the Sacrament of Reconciliation and receive the mercy that He is literally dying to give you. You belong to God and nothing can change that: let Him heal you.

Why do Catholics oppose abortion?

The Catholic Church has, from its beginning, equated abortion to nothing less than the taking of an innocent human life. We'll start with the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

2270 Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception.

From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person --among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life.

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you.

- Jer 1:5, Ps 22:10

My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth.

- Psalm 139:15

2271 Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion.

This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion, that is to say, abortion willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law:

You shall not kill the embryo by abortion and shall not cause the newborn to perish.

- Didache 2,2

God, the Lord of life, has entrusted to men the noble mission of safeguarding life, and men must carry it out in a manner worthy of themselves. Life must be protected with the utmost care from the moment of conception: abortion and infanticide are abominable crimes.

- GS 51: 3

Don't be distracted!

I have discussed this issue extensively with people and often, others will ask questions about abortion that take us from the core issue. Ultimately, there is only one question that matters in this discussion: are we talking about a human life?

If the being in the womb is a human, then this is not primarily an issue about bodily autonomy.

If the being in the womb is a human, then no law can give a person a right to take that life.

It's that simple, morally speaking.

To me, we have to ask three questions:

1. If that which is in the womb is not human, what is it?
2. When does it become human?
3. Who makes that determination?

The way our laws work right now, it is quite literally true that the being in the womb is only human if a more powerful human determines it to be so. Folks, that is an exceedingly dangerous position to take. As Christians, we recognize that giving another human the power to confer or revoke personhood always has dreadful and long-lasting consequences for the individual and for society.

What about the death penalty and immigration? What about all the other issues we face?

Those issues and many, many others are important, too. This is why I embrace the battle cry that we must be more than anti-abortion, we must be Pro-Life.

With that, let's be clear: there is no moral equivalent in American politics right now that matches up to abortion. For example, there were 25 executions in the US last year. We average that many abortions every 11 minutes.

Again, if we are talking about a human, abortion is the taking of a human life. If we are not talking about a human, what is it?

Father, I totally disagree with you on this.

Then pray for me. I do not type that to be trite or dismissive, I mean it: pray for me and know I will pray for you. In our prayer for each other, we will assume the best of intentions and ask God to change our hearts to make them more like His.

What can we do?

First, and you will grow weary of me saying/typing this, but we must pray. We must pray like mad for God to end this legalized horror in our country. We must pray that God hold back His judgement on us. We must pray for the many lost who procure abortions because they simply don't see better options or because they were desperate or deceived. We must pray for them, that they seek and receive mercy from God and us.

Second, we must be Pro Life. You and I need to live in our human community as shining examples of people who respect all life. The way we talk, the way we act...all of it must shout that we believe each person we encounter is filled with the dignity of God. We are not called to be solely anti-abortion, but Pro-Life.

Third, we must be ready. In my lifetime at my parents' house, they took in dozens and dozens of people who needed help. They didn't go to abortion clinics waving "Abortion is murder" signs, they offered to help. They sacrificed financial and emotional comfort to help others. As a priest, I have been blessed to encounter many such people in every parish I've served and I invite us to continue doing the same and step up our game!

There's lots more to say, but I only have so much time/space to get after this. I hope you read these words with the intent with which I offered them: a heart full of love and a desire to guide us to think with the mind of God. Please pray that, as a Parish Family, we grow each day in our willingness and ability to sacrifice for love and for life and to stand by the desperate, the frightened, the lowly and the needy.

God is calling, let's answer with love and vigor.

Your priest,

Fr. Joseph J Krupp