

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/100420.cfm>

March 6, 1857 was a very dark day in American history. By a 7-2 vote, the United States Supreme Court declared that black people were not legal persons. Rather, they were property. They could be used, sold, beaten, even killed. Slavery was upheld.

Fortunately, in 1868 the 14th Amendment to the Constitution secured the rights of blacks to full personhood. Slavery was now overturned, and the equality of all people before the law was upheld.

Notice, the law did not GIVE black people this equality. They always had it! GOD made them equal. What happened with the 14th Amendment was that the law recognized the rights the slaves had from God. Thankfully, human law was brought into line with God's law. And yet, we are obviously still reeling from the effects of slavery and racism.

But another dark day came on January 22, 1973. By another 7-2 vote, the United States Supreme Court said that this 14th Amendment DOES NOT APPLY to children in the first nine months of life; that is, the nine months they live in their mother's wombs.

Therefore, during this time, during the entire nine months of pregnancy, the court said a mother may end the life of her child by abortion. By this "Roe vs. Wade" decision, abortion was made legal in all 50 states.

This was never requested or approved by the American people. It was decided by seven men and imposed on all of us.

These seven men declared that the pre-born child is not a person, and therefore is not entitled to have their life protected by law! A whole category of human beings was once again denied protection, just as in the previous century.

The social justice movement, highlighted by the slogan “Black Lives Matter”, is front and center in our culture today. But the sad irony is, why don't the lives of the 1,000 black babies killed every day in this country by abortion matter?

Why do we keep making the same mistake? The fact is that babies in the womb have just as much right to live as the rest of us and are just as much "persons" as the rest of us. Everyone knows this instinctively.

At the moment of conception, a new being is formed which has the exact number of chromosomes that any human being has in each cell: forty-six. Encoded on these chromosomes is all the genetic information for the new individual; completely unique and different from any other person.

When was it decided that you would be male or female? When was the color of your skin or eyes decided? All at the moment of conception! This is not religious dogma; these are not quotes from the Bible or the Catholic Church.

These are scientific facts that can be found in any biology book in the world! There has never been a person with exactly the same code before, and there never will be one again; that person is unique from the very first instant.

Let's talk more about this special uniqueness that each human being possesses. Jeremiah chapter one, verse five reads: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you..."

God knows us even before we are conceived! And he has a special and unique plan for each one of us. And we are conceived in God's image and likeness! Precious, special and loved; unique and beautiful in his eyes.

This is what came to my heart as I read our second reading from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians:

"whatever is true, whatever is honorable,
whatever is just, whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious,
if there is any excellence
and if there is anything worthy of praise,
think about these things."

Now think for a moment about the children who were never even given a chance at life outside the womb. This to me is one of the most tragic consequences of abortion. How many of them were destined to be scientists, physicians, presidents, popes, and even great saints?

Which of them was destined to find a cure for breast cancer, or maybe even COVID-19? Not to mention the potential contributions of THEIR children and grandchildren! What gaping holes are being left in our society because they were never allowed to live the life decreed to them by God.

You and I, as Christians and simply as decent human beings, have a moral obligation to do something about this, for the sake of the babies AND for the sake of the mothers. They are also victims of abortion; they suffer too, and we are called to love and protect them.

Post-abortive women frequently suffer from guilt, depression, drug abuse, promiscuity, multiple abortions, suicide and any number of other mental and physical health issues. Abortion can literally destroy a woman's life!

For those who have had abortions, spiritual healing is available through counseling and by encountering the full depths of God's mercy and grace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

We are being told by those who support abortion that to respect women we must give them the "choice". This does not respect women. Instead, we should respect them by coming to their assistance if they are in a difficult situation.

We must see to it that they have what they need to give life to their child. If a woman is in a "crisis pregnancy", let's help her by eliminating the crisis, not by eliminating the pregnancy.

The Catholic Church in Colorado is front and center in supporting women both during and after pregnancy. Catholic Charities Marisol Services provides comprehensive care including health care, housing, and human services for those in need.

Our country has taken a seriously wrong turn by making abortion legal. It is time for Christians to love these women and their babies so much that the so called "option" of abortion will be unthinkable. After all, shouldn't a mother's womb be the safest place of anywhere in the world for a precious, developing baby??

You probably haven't noticed, but it is election season. And this year the people of Colorado have the opportunity to ban late-term abortion by voting YES on Ballot Proposition 115.

Colorado is one of only seven states that allow innocent children to be killed right up to the moment of birth. While this late term abortion ban will not ban abortion entirely, it does protect children who at 22 weeks gestation are able to live outside the womb. At this stage of life, the baby has all the fundamental characteristics of a fully formed human being and is able to perceive pain and perform sophisticated behaviors. To think about how these aborted babies suffer is truly heart-breaking.

It is the duty and obligation of faithful Catholics to take part in shaping the moral character of our community, our state, and our country. At the heart of the Church's moral and social teachings are the truths of human dignity and the sacredness of every human life from conception to natural death.

In 1868 we corrected a horrible wrong. In 2020 we have the opportunity to begin to correct the 1973 wrong of the Roe vs. Wade decision. Please, vote to help make that a reality.

Eternal God, You have revealed Yourself as the Father of all Life. Bless our families and bless our land, that we may have the joy of welcoming and nurturing the life of which You are the source and the Eternal Father.
Amen.