

Infanticide:

Do my thoughts reflect those of Christ and his Church?

CATHOLIC TEACHING AND INFANTICIDE

Infanticide is the killing of an infant. The Catechism of the Catholic Church 2258 explains, "Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being."

SCRIPTURE AND THE HOLY INNOCENTS

The Feast of the Holy Innocents is a day in which the Church recalls and honors those baby boys whose lives were taken in a murderous rage by Herod who was frightened by the coming of the Christ. The Holy Innocents are numbered by the Church among Christ's martyrs. The Baby Jesus was saved from this slaughter when the angel of the Lord warned Joseph of the danger.¹

*"...behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.' Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, 'Out of Egypt I called my son.'*¹

*"When Herod realized that he had been deceived by the magi, he became furious. He ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had ascertained from the magi. Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation; Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be consoled, since they were no more'" (Matthew 2:16-19).*¹

¹Bickerstaff, Michael. "Remembering the Holy Innocents." *Integrated Catholic Life*™, 28 Dec. 2018, www.integratedcatholiclife.org/2018/12/deacon-bickerstaff-we-remember-the-holy-innocents/.

'St. Augustine has this to say about Herod's persecution of Jesus and the Holy Innocents.

"And while he thus persecutes Christ, he furnished an army (of martyrs) clothed in white robes of the same age as the Lord.

"Behold how this unrighteous enemy never could have so much profited these infants by his love as he did by his hate; for as much as iniquity abounded against them, so much did the grace of blessing abound on them.

"O blessed infants! He only will doubt of your crown in this your passion for Christ, who doubts that the baptism of Christ has a benefit for infants. He who at His birth had Angels to proclaim Him, the heavens to testify, and Magi to worship Him, could surely have prevented that these should not have died for Him, had He not known that they died not in that death, but rather lived in higher bliss. Far be the thought that Christ who came to set men free did nothing to reward those who died in His behalf, when hanging on the cross He prayed for those who put Him to death." (St. Augustine, quoted in the Catena Aurea)

From the very beginning, the world rebelled against Our Lord and sought to kill Him, just like it did to His prophets before Him. In years and millennia that follow His coming, the world continues its attack against Him by attacking His followers.

So, on this sacred Feast of the Holy Innocents, we honor their sacrifice and memory and we offer glory and honor to our God. But we are also called to learn from their lesson. These innocent children did not have to die. Their death was not God's Will.

Satan and his evil designs continue to wage war against the Holy Will of God. Many have been lured into his evil. These innocent children had to die because their death was ordered by a powerful man who loved himself more than he loved God. Such men and women continue to attack the holy ones of God even in our day.¹

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FACTS ABOUT INFANTICIDE

'Female infanticide is the most common form of infanticide, both nowadays and in the past. This practice is mainly due to the fact that, in some cultures, males are considered to be socially more valuable than women. Moreover, female infanticide is sometimes related to the control of the population.

For example, the UN World Report on Violence Against Children conducted among 1,000 women in India revealed that infanticide was the cause of 41% of deaths among newborn girls.²

'The one-child policy took shape in the late 1970s, when Mr. Deng and other leaders concluded that China's growing population threatened to stifle economic growth. The restrictions went into effect in cities, but in the countryside, many families continued to have two or more children. The government has also exempted ethnic minorities.

As the years went on, harsh official campaigns to fine and punish couples who violated the rules, and sometimes to force abortions, became a source of public discontent.³

'By 2020, the National State Population and Family Planning commission projects that in China, males of marrying age will outnumber females by at least 30 million.⁴

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

'The fact is, it is not as unusual for children to be left to die after a failed abortion as some might think. Right now in Philadelphia, abortionist Kermit Gosnell is on trial for the murder of seven infants who were born alive. According to District Attorney [Seth Williams](#), Gosnell "induced labor, forced the live birth of viable babies in the sixth, seventh, eighth month of pregnancy and then killed those babies by cutting into the back of the neck with scissors and severing their spinal cord." Prosecutors said that Gosnell ended hundreds of pregnancies in this way. "[These killings became so routine](#) that no one could put an exact number on them. They were considered 'standard procedure.'"

Across the border in Canada, the government reports that between 2000 and 2009, [491 babies were left to die](#) after they were born alive during abortions. There are no similar statistics here in the United States, but according to the [Abortion Survivors Network](#) there are an estimated 44,000 abortion survivors living in the country today. How many more did not survive for lack of medical care?⁵

RECENT UPDATES

- On Jan. 22, [the chamber of the New York legislature](#) filled with cheers as the state further codified abortion up until the moment of birth with the Reproductive Health Act. The One World Trade Center was then lit pink to celebrate Gov. Andrew Cuomo's signing the bill into law.⁶
- By February, Virginia Del. Kathy Tran [introduced an equally grievous bill](#), known as The Repeal Act, to allow for an abortion to occur in the third trimester for any reason.⁶
- [The Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act](#), currently sponsored by Sen. Sasse as both S.130 and S. 311, would amend the federal criminal code to require any health care practitioner who is present when a child is born alive following an abortion or attempted abortion to, first, exercise the same degree of care as reasonably provided to any other child born alive at the same gestational age, and second, ensure that such a child is immediately admitted to a hospital. The bills currently enjoy the co-sponsorship of over 45 Senators, including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.).⁶

² López, Natalia. "Infanticide." *Humanium*, 2015, www.humanium.org/en/infanticide/.

³ Buckley, Chris. "China Ends One-Child Policy, Allowing Families Two Children." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 29 Oct. 2015, www.nytimes.com/2015/10/30/world/asia/china-end-one-child-policy.html.

⁴ Powell, Bill. "Gender Imbalance: How China's One-Child Law Backfired on Men." *Newsweek*, 31 Mar. 2016, www.newsweek.com/2015/06/05/gender-imbalance-china-one-child-law-backfired-men-336435.html.

⁵ Thiessen, Marc A. "Marc Thiessen: Planned Parenthood Defending Infanticide." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 8 Apr. 2013, www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/marc-thiessen-defending-infanticide/2013/04/08/36e44294-a061-11e2-9c03-6952ff305f35_story.html.

⁶ Staff, Policy. "What's Happening with the Debate on Infanticide in Congress?" *ERLC*, 8 Feb. 2019, erlc.com/resource-library/articles/whats-happening-with-the-debate-on-infanticide-in-congress.