



DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE - SOUTH BEND

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November 11, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As you may have heard, the United States Supreme Court will begin hearing oral arguments on December 1st in the case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. The specific question the Court will consider is whether a state may enact limits on abortion before viability, the point at which the baby is capable of living outside his or her mother's womb. This is what the Mississippi law in question did in prohibiting abortion after 15 weeks gestation, except in cases of medical emergency or severe fetal abnormality. Mississippi's law is consistent with what more than 90% of countries around the world already do.

In deliberating the *Dobbs* case, the Supreme Court will consider the correctness of its previous rulings in *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. These rulings essentially legalized abortion on demand through all nine months of pregnancy and severely restricted the ability of states to enact legislation to protect human life in the womb and to safeguard women's health. This has made the United States an extreme outlier in abortion policy, being one of only four countries, including China and North Korea, that allows the abortion of a child at any time during a woman's pregnancy.

Given the significance of the *Dobbs* case and its potential outcome, the USCCB Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities is participating in a campaign called Pray for Dobbs (www.prayfordobbs.com) which aims to unite Christians across our nation in praying and fasting for the Supreme Court justices as they deliberate this case, a decision in which is expected next June.

As we begin the holy season of Advent, I would like to encourage all of the Catholic faithful in our diocese to join me in participating in this prayer and fasting campaign until a decision is handed down in this case. I recommend choosing a time of day to say a prayer for this intention, or perhaps to pray the Rosary or the Divine Mercy chaplet, and to undertake some kind of fast once a week, such as skipping a meal or limiting yourself to one full meal, or fasting from something else like television or social media for that day. Fridays have long been observed as days of sacrifice in the Catholic tradition in honor of the Lord's sacrifice on Calvary, so you might consider making Fridays your day of fasting. This campaign would be beautiful to undertake as a family or with a group of friends, co-workers or classmates to help support each other in this effort on behalf of restoring the protection of the law to these least of our brothers and sisters before they are born.

May Our Lady, the Mirror of Justice, intercede for the justices of the Supreme Court as they deliberate this important case.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Kevin C. Rhoades

Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades
Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend

KCR/dl