



Diocese of Worcester  
Office of the Bishop  
49 Elm Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

On the weekend of January 24-25, 2009, I am asking that a postcard campaign be launched in all the parishes of the Diocese of Worcester to make our congressional representatives aware of our moral opposition to the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA) that may be reintroduced in Congress within the next weeks or months.

During our annual bishops' conference held in Baltimore this past November, the bishops of the United States voted unanimously to mobilize our Catholic faithful to state publicly their ethical objections to FOCA or to any other legislative or executive order that would further erode the legal protection that the unborn child in the womb should have.

Why are we bishops so concerned about FOCA? The answer is that FOCA is the most radical and morally insidious piece of legislation that has ever been placed before Congress. Its intention is to create by federal statute a fundamental right to abortion. If passed and signed by the president, as Mr. Obama promised to do during the recent presidential campaign, this law would sweep away over 300 federal, state and local laws and regulations that have been passed to protect the life of unborn children. Indeed the legislative intention of FOCA is far more radical than the Roe v. Wade decision of 1973.

The responsibility of government is to protect the lives of all, especially the weakest and most vulnerable. The innocent unborn child deserves that his or her God-given right to life be safeguarded. Some disturbing implications of FOCA, or any other law or executive order like it, are that taxpayers would have to pay through their tax dollars for abortions that they find morally wrong. FOCA would also require all states to permit "partial birth" and other late term abortions. Moreover, such legislation would invalidate any laws protecting the conscientious objection to abortion of physicians, hospitals and other medical personnel. FOCA would also deny parents the chance to be involved in their minor daughter's abortion decisions.

Our postcard campaign during the weekend of January 24-25 will provide the Catholic community in the United States an opportunity to manifest to our congressional delegates our unified moral opposition to laws that would support a multi-faceted attack on the right to life of pre-born babies. As your bishop, I would ask you to consider prayerfully your participation in this pro-life effort and to see your signature on your postcard as your moral response to the words of Jesus that we will all hear on the day of our personal judgment, "I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers and sisters, you did it for me." (Mt. 25:40)

Asking the powerful intercession of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of the Church, for the success of our efforts on behalf of the sanctity of all human life, born and unborn, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus, S.T.D.  
Bishop of Worcester