



MINNESOTA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

Statement of the Catholic Bishops of Minnesota in Response to the U.S. Supreme Court’s Ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson*

June 24, 2022

Along with women and men across our nation who respect the inherent dignity of each human life, the Catholic bishops of Minnesota give thanks to God on this historic day as the Supreme Court ends the injustice of the *Roe v. Wade* decision. We are grateful that the Supreme Court has returned to state Legislatures and federal officials the ability to protect preborn children and save mothers and fathers from the untold pain of abortion.

For almost 50 years, *Roe* grievously denied one of America’s founding principles: that all men and women—irrespective of their stage of development—are created equal, with God-given rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Forgetting this self-evident truth has resulted in the death of over 60 million preborn children and the wounding of millions of mothers and fathers.

Welcomed in Life

As a Church, we have been committed to providing help to every mother and father dealing with a crisis pregnancy, so they are not forced to choose abortion. We are proud that many of our Catholic faithful work in crisis pregnancy centers that create nonjudgmental networks of support for women. These centers offer shelter, housing assistance, free diapers and clothing, pregnancy and parenting classes, community referrals, childcare, and other charitable assistance. Through our continued efforts to respect the well-being of both the mother and the child, we have been honored to accompany countless women and men tempted to choose abortion. We have been privileged as well, through post-abortion healing retreats, to help parents who have chosen abortion to work through the pain they so often suffer.

To further support our work, the Catholic bishops of the United States have launched a nationwide initiative, Walking with Moms in Need (walkingwithmoms.com), to create additional avenues of support for mothers in our communities by way of Catholic parishes, ministries, and crisis pregnancy centers. We also pledge that our Catholic churches will be a sanctuary for women in crisis pregnancies. Any woman in a crisis pregnancy who comes to the door of a Catholic church in the state of Minnesota seeking assistance will be supported and, at a minimum, referred to resources where she can get help.

The Church’s contribution to public life walks with the two feet of justice and charity. Our direct assistance to women in crisis pregnancies through charitable and philanthropic efforts is fundamental in our endeavor to build an authentic culture of life. But we also commit to working in our state Legislature to ensure that every child is welcomed in life and respected by the law.

Respected in Law

Unfortunately, the landscape in Minnesota is shaped by our own version of *Roe v. Wade*. The 1995 *Doe v. Gomez* decision of the Minnesota Supreme Court characterized the state right to an abortion as a “broader protection” than *Roe*, including the right of low-income women to a taxpayer-funded abortion. Sadly, *Gomez* is unlikely to be overturned without a change in federal law or a state constitutional amendment.

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Despite Minnesota's legal landscape, we should continue to find ways to place reasonable limits on the availability of abortions, especially after viability (Minnesota is one of the few states without limitations on post-viability abortions). We should also put in place, and keep in place, measures to help protect women from further serious injury arising from the risks already involved with an abortion. Such protections include, among other things, licensing abortion clinics and requiring that chemical abortions be procured only through a physician.

To limit the demand for abortion, the state should also commit its resources to ensuring that women have the support they need to choose life. Some pregnancy centers are supported in part by the state's Positive Alternatives Grant Program, which promotes healthy pregnancy outcomes and assists pregnant and parenting women develop and maintain family stability and self-sufficiency. In a budget that will reach \$60 billion by 2024, our state allocates only \$3.375 million for these services, even though the need is much greater. The most recent round of funding requests totaled roughly \$6.5 million.

The prospect of *Roe* being overturned has already sharpened partisan division on the abortion question. As bishops, however, we have no interest in engaging as partisans, and we will continue to work to build common ground rooted in the principles articulated above. This is a matter of prenatal justice—giving to both mother and child that which is their due, namely, support and protection.

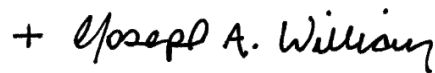
But make no mistake: we will rigorously oppose efforts to expand the abortion license in Minnesota and we will work with people on both sides of the aisle to prevent Minnesota from becoming an abortion sanctuary state.

Abortion advocates want people to believe that abortion promises liberation, but instead, it leads to sadness, pain, and the death of a human being. To quote one pro-life leader, "Abortion says 'I sacrifice your life for my convenience.' But Love says, 'I sacrifice my convenience for your life.' Only love will lead to fulfillment." Let us be a credible witness to the Gospel of Life by sacrificing ourselves for the sake of others, both born and unborn.

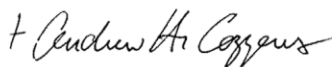
We ask all Minnesotans to join our efforts to combat a throwaway culture, foster prenatal justice, and create a state where love prevails.



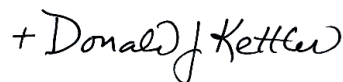
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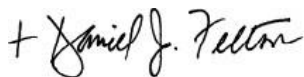
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