Post *Roe*, Fighting for the Unborn is More Important than Ever

This Thursday, January 22nd, the Bishops of the United States have dedicated as a special day to the protection of unborn children. January 22nd marks the day of the *Roe. vs. Wade* decision, which was thankfully finally overturned, and the bishops have now continued now post *Roe* to bring attention to the importance of fighting for life. As we all know, the killing of the unborn is still widespread, in particular in our own state where radical pro-abortion legislation has become the law, permitted up until birth.

The *Dobbs* decision was a welcome thing we have prayed for years. But especially in Minnesota we have more work to do to change hearts and minds.

It is so important for us as Catholics to speak up and get involved. How can we do this?

One is by educating ourselves, knowing the extensive development within the first weeks and months of the child. On top of this, we should educate ourselves on the laws and just how many radical abortion laws have been passed in our own state and also educate ourselves on where candidates stand on the issue as we are voting. The more we know, the more we can use that knowledge to change minds and hearts.

Secondly, forgiveness and compassion. It's what we preach as a Church, and it's what we must live out. We have to strive to reach out to help those who were hurt by abortion, by taking the time to talk with them when they seek our help or encourage them to seek counseling for healing. We should also pray both for the victims of abortion, but also for those involved in the killing of unborn children.

Third, we need to get involved. We have an amazing Pro Life group here at Saint Joe's, consider joining them. Twice a year we have the "40 hours for Life" event where people from different parishes each take time to pray peacefully in front of the Planned Parenthood in Saint Paul. There is also a summer pro-life event our parish is involved in "Walk for Life" that supports pro-life causes. We should also consider life issues when we go to a caucus or vote for someone, and these are coming up in February as we enter an election cycle in our state. We can also get involved by helping support Pro-Life centers that offer free ultrasounds to women, and with groups who help support mothers in need with baby formula, clothing and resources to help them choose life.

Fourth, don't be afraid to argue. People will sometimes get very emotional or angry on the topic, along with any important issue. After we've equipped ourselves with the knowledge, we can engage in deeper conversations with people. These might entail pushback, and anger, but they might get people to think and eventually change hearts and minds - but only if we are not afraid.

Lastly, we need to strive to create a culture of life. Maybe we know someone who has an unplanned pregnancy or is worried about how to pay for their child. We need to respond with love towards them, giving them support, helping them find the resources to choose life, and to affirm their role as a parent and to help them on their journey.

As Christians, may we never give up the fight for life, and be vigilant in seeing abortion laws and the attitudes of some in society not as something that will never change, or seeing those who are in favor of abortion as the enemy, but rather through prayer, action, compassion and dialogue remember we have so much power to save lives and change hearts.

Have a blessed week!

Fr. Paul