

# Statement of the Bishops of Florida on the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

January 22, 2026

On this day of prayer and penance, we call to mind the essential truth that every human being possesses an inalienable dignity. We praise God, our Creator, whose plan for human flourishing begins in the womb and provides the foundation upon which a healthy and just society thrives. We also cry out to the Lord for mercy upon a culture that too often fails to recognize the sacredness of human life in its most vulnerable stages of development.

We commend the vital resources and accompaniment provided to expectant mothers and their families by pregnancy support centers – many supported by the Florida Pregnancy Care Network – as well as by parishes and other ministries. Likewise, we are heartened by the successful outcomes of abortion pill reversals, which stand as powerful testimonies to the gift of God's mercy and the resilience of human life.

Positive medical advances and generous acts of charity remain signs of hope. Yet, thousands of unborn children still lose their lives each month, and countless mothers, fathers, and families continue to be wounded by the tragedy of abortion. While official reports demonstrate a decline in abortion in Florida since the Heartbeat Protection Act, which extends crucial protections to children at about six weeks of gestation, there is concern that illicit chemical abortions have risen. Increased availability of abortion drugs not only disregards the fate of the unborn child but also the physical and psychological risks posed to women and minor girls. While the number of abortions taking place is uncertain, what is clear is that much work remains to protect against abortion.

Every child is a gift of God, no matter how conceived. Marriage and procreation stem from God's creative power and love for humanity. The desire to parent a child is good; however, not every means of pursuing that good is morally acceptable. Even with their impulse

towards procreation, methods to circumvent infertility – such as in vitro fertilization (IVF) and surrogacy – stand in stark contrast to the pro-life teachings of the Church, and we oppose their practice. IVF, in particular, entails a large-scale destruction of unborn life. It transfers the conception of new life from the loving union of a mother and father in the sacrament of marriage to the marketplace and the laboratory. We already see how this market logic is producing dystopian effects, as companies advertise eugenic practices of selecting children for their traits such as intelligence, height, skin color, and sex, deeming some human beings as less valuable.

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To obtain the full protection of unborn life, we seek not only to strengthen our laws but also to transform our dominant culture. Our society has increasingly lost sight of the truth that every person is loved and cherished by God. As family life suffers and fewer couples enter marriage, the beauty of authentic, faithful, and life-giving marital love is less understood and less celebrated. Far from denigrating sexuality, the virtue of chastity elevates and protects it within the call of each human being to enjoy God's abundant life.

Human life at every stage of development reflects the image and likeness of God and must never be diminished or discarded. The destruction of unborn life is a grave wrong inflicted on the most defenseless and weak among us, and on society itself. Let us remedy this injustice and ask the Lord to deepen our conviction in the value of every life.

**Most Rev. Thomas G. Wenski**  
Archdiocese of Miami

**Most Rev. Gerald M. Barbarito**  
Diocese of Palm Beach

**Most Rev. Gregory L. Parkes**  
Diocese of St. Petersburg

**Most Rev. William A. Wack, C.S.C.**  
Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee

**Most Rev. Frank J. Dewane**  
Diocese of Venice

**Most Rev. John G. Noonan**  
Diocese of Orlando

**Most Rev. Erik T. Pohlmeier**  
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