

Family & ProLife News Briefs

May 2025

Family Life, Fertility, Adoption vs. Abortion

Family Size: Two Kids or Five?

A friend of mine recently announced her pregnancy to a gathering of friends. She was grateful, but slightly overwhelmed, especially since this baby will be joining a growing troop of small children. Unfortunately, she is looked down upon by those with their socially acceptable one or two kids.

Back in 2023, Gallup found that the ideal desired number of children was around two to three, a number higher when compared to recent history. Author Bernard Bell notes in *Crisis in Education*, 2 to 3 children “is the smallest number that is desirable if the children are to help educate each other.” Many in America think that kids in large families won’t have the educational opportunities that children in smaller families have. But Bell is saying the opposite: **children with more siblings are at an educational advantage.**

- Families with many children have constant interaction between multiple ages, giving the younger siblings many occasions to glean from what the older ones are learning.

- Older siblings have more opportunities to teach the younger key life lessons – perhaps even help them with schoolwork which broadens their own understanding.

- Some research suggests that the farther down the birth order line one goes, **the more**

- innovative/creative the children get.** Without large families, we may be missing out on some successful entrepreneurs & those who question the status quo – something particularly helpful as the struggle continues between totalitarian elites and the folks in middle America.

- Children with lots of siblings are a step ahead in interpersonal relationships. One study found that the more siblings one has, the more their odds of divorce decline.

- Other studies “show that children from larger families are more likely to be altruistic.”

Rather than being idiotic for having a large family, my friend may actually be the smart one for giving her children numbers of siblings, thus bringing them **many overlooked advantages.** Yes, children are messy, loud and needy ... but they also help us as adults to think more long-term, grow less selfish, and even ponder God and His ways. That big family may just be one of our most powerful weapons in the quest for cultural renewal. [Annie Holmquist, *Why Big Families Aren't the Bane of America's Existence*, excerpt, www.IntellectualTakeout.org, 4/10/25]

But What About Infertile Couples?

- You are not defined by infertility, loss, or the perceptions and judgments of others who don't know your story or understand the weight of this cross.

- You are God's own beloved child.

- Your marriage matters, and its goodness, holiness, and worth are not measured by your family size, but by the love you nurture in it.



Two AI's Debated Abortion

Content creator Jon Oleksiuk designed two artificial intelligence (AI) models, training one to think as pro-choice ob-gyn ‘**Dr. Choice,**’ the other as ‘**Dr. Life,**’ a pro-life neonatologist, asking the question: “How should we understand the beginning of human life; and at what point should it be protected?”

Dr. Choice opened the debate, agreeing that life begins at conception. But the fetus, despite being alive, is not officially yet a person. Personhood begins when one displays self-consciousness and a capacity for complex experiences. Since the cortical activity necessary for this complex form of consciousness begins at around 24 weeks, a fetus can be ethically aborted before that period. When given the choice to sacrifice a baby or a petri dish of zygotes, everyone will choose to sacrifice the zygotes. This, Dr. Choice claimed, proves that we innately know that abortion is morally permissible. If a fetus were truly a person, miscarriages ought to be morally and legally equivalent to accidental death. Since nobody sees miscarriages in this way, fetuses in early periods of gestation are not officially recognized as people. Further, since a fetus cannot exist independently until around the 24-week mark, it should not be considered a true individual before that point. Dr. Choice's final argument: Nobody is compelled to sustain others in life-threatening situations even when the purpose is to save lives. Since we are not forced to donate our organs to save others' lives, why should a pregnant woman be forced to carry a child that burdens her? By preventing victims of rape and incest from terminating a pregnancy, we infringe on their autonomy and cause unnecessary trauma.

Dr. Life responded by declaring that we must establish an unchanging standard by which we judge what is and is not a person, noting that **every standard Dr. Choice gave in defense of abortion was an arbitrary milestone.** Since an unconscious person is not a lesser human being than a conscious person, consciousness is not a feasible standard for testing abortion's morality. Dependency is just as flawed, as we respect the lives of those on life support. Reporting that the Univ. of Alabama successfully delivered a baby at 19 weeks of gestation, Dr. Life noted that the standard of viability is changing due to advances in medical technology. Finally, responding to the rape argument, the AI declared that though such women should be given emotional support, the personhood of fetuses should not depend on the conditions of their conception. The inherent nature of human life provides an objective, unchanging standard for judging personhood: Since fetuses are alive from the moment of conception, we must protect them, or risk denying a person their human dignity.

In an 8-6 decision for Dr. Life, notable AIs who voted for Dr. Life were Grok 2, Llama 3.2, and Gemini 1.5 Pro., while Chat GPT 01 and Yi Large didn't. It was refreshing to hear a **debate without emotional appeals, personal attacks,** or any animosity at all - just logic. Listening to the arguments raised by such AIs may convince others of the inherent worth of each human life. To watch the debate, visit YouTube.com: [watch?v=czbLw6zvppQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=czbLw6zvppQ) [Blake Schaper, *Human Life Review* blog, excerpt, April 2025]

Infertile Couples *(continued from p. 1)*

■ Individually and together, you and your spouse possess gifts and a capacity for love that gives life in the world in ways no one else can.

■ Wherever your path ultimately leads you, there are two things I know for sure: First, that Jesus loves you more than you can ever fully comprehend. And second, when it feels like no one else understands, know that Springs in the Desert is your community, a place for you to find belonging. [Ann Koshute, Springs in the Desert, email excerpt, 4/26/25]

No “Illegitimate” Children

“Just because a child is born of unwed parent does not mean the child is ‘illegitimate.’ Every child that has been born, regardless of circumstance, is a **unique child of God**” wrote Brother David Sommer, a member of Missionary Servants of The Most Holy Trinity (Stirling, NJ) who was, himself, adopted. “My biological parents were teens who made a big mistake. They realized they could not raise me as their child and did the best thing they could: gave me up for adoption. We **cannot judge any parent who has had to give up a child for adoption**, for whatever reason. The parent has brought new life into the world and God continues to bless these parents who have given their child a real home and chance at life. For those who suffer & regret the mistake they made, God does not condemn but forgives and loves you.” [handout, Br. Sommer, brodavest@yahoo.com, April 2025]

IF ADOPTION was close to Jesus’ heart it was because he had lived it, and ... that was because of Joseph. [Spencer Klaven, email Letter #213, 3/20/25]

Most Abortions in America are Coerced

Contrary to the ‘reproductive freedom’ narrative, most abortions in America are coerced. Pro-life advocates filed a lawsuit in federal court in Minnesota, arguing that the state’s abortion law violates the 14th amendment of the U.S. Constitution by allowing abortions for **mothers who were coerced** into the procedure. The state has one of the worst abortion policies, with no limits on how late into a pregnancy an unborn child can be killed.

“The voices of the women of Silent No More back up the claims made in the suit” said Janet Morana, executive director of Priests for Life, and co-founder of Silent No More. “Many, if not most, women felt pressured by husbands, boyfriends, parents, employers or even abortionists to abort babies whom they did not want to kill.”

A 2023 study revealed that some **60% of women** who had abortions describe the procedure as being inconsistent with their own values and preferences. One of four women say they were forced to end the lives of their children. [newsletter excerpt, *Frank Pavone Reports*, Feb. 2025]

Resource to Overcome Addiction

Addictions come in many forms: drugs, alcohol, pornography, and more. At the heart of iTHIRST is an understanding that there is a spiritual dimension to the disease of addiction that cannot be met by clinical professionals, but only by the spiritual consolation and guidance that the Church can provide. The iTHIRST initiative empowers dioceses, parishes, and communities to become a resource for those suffering from addictions. Visit their website for more information: <https://ithirstinitiative.org/>

Campaign to Change Hearts and Minds

“We did not get to this place of confusion overnight, nor will we return to reason so fast. It takes small steps to train the mind to think through fundamental basic truths about Human Life to finally reach a place of intuitive understandings we once took for granted.” So states the website www.WeTeachThink.com, a not-for-profit educational marketing company that designs **billboards, television commercials, and social media**. Its first marketing campaign is www.humanfromdayone.com where several of their videos may be viewed.

Catholic Dating is Challenging

In a special series of articles, the *National Catholic Register* (2/9/25) explored the issue of dating, marriage prep, and how the pendulum is swinging. One article, “Why College Students Are Afraid of Marriage.” by Prof. Tim O’Malley at Notre Dame, observes that many students from divorced parents are **scared to repeat that mistake**. They’re also **afraid of being ‘ghosted’** in the early stages of a relationship. Plus many students treat any kind of commitment lightly, whether it is to an employer, their church or another person.

Prof. O’Malley teaches that the past need not be repeated. Human beings possess the freedom to change situations. Also, the myth of professional achievement vs. personal happiness is widespread but isn’t true. Personal flourishing is connected to relationship. Others help make possible one’s achievement. Instead of waiting to get serious until one’s career is established, having all debt paid off, and having enough money to buy a home, it is enormously beneficial to face life’s issues with a partner to support and help. Dependency can be very good.

Jonathan Liebl, in “It’s a Tricky Time to Date,” explains that Catholic dating is mapped largely on an already dysfunctional general dating model with online dating, fewer communal meeting spaces and networks, and the prevalence of casual sex. For faithful young Catholics, there is the additional challenge of finding a partner who also wants to pursue a holy marriage.

Dating apps like Hinge and Catholic Match do connect people but give “the mirage of options” that are not real. Surveyed Catholic singles expressed a desire for more Church-sponsored programs for singles. A book that may be helpful is by Hoover Canto: *Pretty Good Catholic: How to Find, Date, and Marry Someone Who Shares Your Faith*.

In 1993, there were 325,789 Catholic marriages in the U.S. In 2023, there were 111,245, a drop of 66%.

An article by Jack Figge describes the recommendations of Mario Sacasa, a Catholic relationship counselor who hosts the podcast *Always Hope*. “Find that balance between spending time with your significant other while making time for other friendships and to grow as an individual. Do not cross any sort of physical or intense emotional boundaries in the early stages of a relationship. Go on dates, **spend quality time together**, do activities that help you explore each other’s personalities. You should feel comfortable talking about relationship issues with your significant other.”

This monthly newsletter is used by dozens of churches as a bulletin insert and as a handout. Since 2013 it has had over 30,000 readers and is now posted on three diocesan websites. To receive each month’s free issue in your inbox, email Frank Tinari, Ph.D. at tinarifr@shu.edu