



A message to the faithful of the archdiocese from Archbishop Michael Jackels

14 December 2021

Pray for the end of abortion

Follow the science. Who hasn't heard *that* said more than once during this pandemic, often *by the Catholic Church*, about vaccinations, vaccines, and public safety measures?

But before the pandemic, it was said *to the Catholic Church*, by people who regard us to be anti-science; funny, that, when many branches of modern science were pioneered by Catholic priests, for example: astronomy, genetics, and the big bang theory.

Funny too given how we do indeed follow the science, when we teach that, if you have sex, don't be surprised if in nine months you're rocking the results in a cradle; if you're not open to the possibility of a baby, don't have sex. Science. Simple.

The doctrinal office of the Catholic Church has taught that modern genetic science recognizes that a fertilized ovum is a new human identity, which is neither that of the father nor of the mother (*Donum vitae*, 1987).

That's why abortion is an unparalleled tragedy: an indefensible act against a defenseless unborn human person.

There are efforts, all the way to the Supreme Court, to outlaw abortion after when a heartbeat can be detected, or when the child in the womb can feel pain. Nevertheless, even before those markers, it's still a human being.

Abortion advocates will defend themselves by claiming: my body, my choice. In response, I would say to them: but it's not just about you; there's someone else affected; the child *in utero* has rights that compete with the mother's.

Out of respect for human life and dignity, we pray and work to protect life from womb to tomb; the right to life is called the first and most important human right.

But we also pray and work for issues like protecting the earth and providing shelter. These issues aren't any less eminent or important; where else will the babies saved from abortion live?

Life is sacred, in and of itself, but also because of God's plan for each person, for how the fabric of each person's life will enrich the tapestry of world events. For example...

I heard a rabbi at a pro-life rally say that child saved from abortion could be the Messiah. He quoted the Talmud against abortion: save one life, and you save the entire world. The idea is that, when we defend the rights and dignity of people on the periphery, like the poor or the unborn, all people are lifted up as a result.

Follow the science. Follow too the star that led shepherds and kings to the stable in Bethlehem, to bend the knee before Jesus, Son of God, the Messiah who saved the world.

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