

Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos “The Old Catholic Marianists”

Statement on Abortion

PREAMBLE

Christians affirm that human yearning for reality and meaning can be satisfied only by the knowledge of and a relationship with a personal God who alone can change human nature and liberate from the bondage of self-indulgence.¹ Human worth is a consequence of being made by and in the image of a personal God² - who is sovereign over history and places us within the framework of God’s continual acts in history.³

The dominant philosophy of this age opposes this world and life view and asserts the dignity and worth of people and their capacity for self-realization through reason apart from the supernatural and sovereign involvement of a personal God.⁴

Clear lines of confrontation between these two opposing faiths are not always easily discerned by the Christian community, both individually and corporately. Cultural conditioning, ignorance of God’s revealed will, and sin all mitigate against a clear perception of many ethical and moral issues. Nevertheless, we affirm the authority and witness of God’s revelation in Scripture and the heritage of Church history regarding the dignity and sanctity of all human life and oppose anything that would blur or lessen its value.⁵

We humbly recognize the complex presuppositions, realities, and implications of ethical/moral decision-making and confess our own sinful silence in failing to act where the lines of conflict are obvious.⁶ We accept the challenge to confront the pragmatism of this age and seek to move away from past indifferences and the subtle seductive power of this age.⁷ We, therefore, affirm that abortion on demand for reasons such as personal convenience, social adjustment, economic advantage, genetic defect, or physical malformation is morally wrong.⁸

STATEMENT

We believe that all human life is a gift from God and is therefore sacred.⁹ The Lord has created all life sacred and cherishes all lives: including all those which have been marked by the effects of the fall of nature, resulting in physical and mental abnormalities.¹⁰ We believe that God has told us, in Scripture, what our attitude should be towards the unborn.¹¹ Specific blessings have been conferred upon unborn infants, pre-eminently in the incarnation of Jesus Christ.¹² Scripture clearly states that God provided penalties for actions which result in the death of the unborn.¹³ The fetus is not a growth or piece of tissue in the mother's body, nor even a potential human being, but a human life who, though not yet mature, is growing into the fullness of the humanity it already possesses.¹⁴ The humanness of the fetus is confirmed by modern medical science. From the moment of conception a unique genetic code distinct from both parents is established, sex is determined and the only requirement for development into an adult human being are time and nutrition.

Thus, we affirm that the moral issue of abortion is more than a question of the freedom of a woman to control the reproductive functions of her body. It is a question of moral responsibility involving at least two human beings at different stages of maturity. Abortion transcends issues of personal, economic, and social convenience or compassion. No woman gives birth to herself. She gives birth to a child that is a distinct body and personality from herself. Consequently, even if we agree that every woman has a right to do with her own body as she sees fit,¹⁵ we cannot conclude that she therefore has the right to take the life of her child. However, in the rare situation when the life of the unborn child mortally threatens the equal life of the mother, the mother is not required to sacrifice her life.¹⁶ We believe that the Church is commissioned to declare and demonstrate this high regard for human life, the reality and complexity of the sinful human condition, and God's forgiveness through grace and the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.¹⁷ The community of Christian believers furnishes the context out of which this declaration and demonstration grow.¹⁸ It is the responsibility of the Church to insist that society not adopt a policy that would deny the sanctity of human life and lead people to take life lightly. The Church must advocate the protection of the freedom of those who cannot protect themselves. The Church must therefore seek to protect the unborn child's freedom to live.¹⁹ In addition, Christians must reach out to those who are confronted with the crisis for which abortion seems a

solution with the offer of a Biblical alternative, providing the practical care and compassion needed.²⁰

CONCLUSION

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the only adequate answer to the terrible spiritual, moral, and social dilemma confronting the society that legalizes abortion and the parents contemplating abortion. Christians are called to live in active tension with culture, neither becoming complacent toward evil nor proponents of it but promoting the truth of God's revelation.²¹ The current state of affairs in our society compels Christians to share in the responsibility for the tragedy upon us, to promote justice and propagate the promises of grace.²² Christians have a responsibility to be involved in the legislative process of our democratic society for the purpose of guarding the freedom of the unborn.²³ The Church also has the obligation to educate its own constituents and society itself concerning the complex issues surrounding abortion and equip people with a Biblical alternative.²⁴ God has commissioned the Church to experience and express the redemption that is available in Christ Jesus. Therefore, it is precisely to those who are in trouble and despair that the Church has to present the message of forgiveness and redemption. Even those who have sinned must be sheltered by Christian love and assured that no one is beyond the scope of God's forgiveness.²⁵ The Church must also create alternatives and share the burden of caring for the lives of those brought into the world under difficult circumstances.²⁶ May God's grace and wisdom prevail as we seek to work for an end to abortion.

1 Phil. 3:8-11; I Cor. 6:9-11

2 Ps. 139:14; Gen. 1:26, 21

3 Job. 38:4; Is. 9:6,7; 11:1-9; 46:9,10; Ps. 72:1-11; II Pet. 3:11-14

4 Gen. 4:11, 12; Rom. 1:18-32; I Cor. 1:18-20; 2:14

5 Prov. 14:34; 29:18; Mt. 28:18, 20

6 Prov. 24:11,12

7 Eph. 2:2; II Cor. 4:3, 4

8 Ex. 20:13

9 Ps. 127:3; 139:13-16

10 Ex. 4:11; Jn. 9:1-3

11 Ex. 21:22, 23 (NIV)

12 Jer. 1:5; Lk. 1:15; Gal. 1:15; Mt. 1:20

13 Ex. 21:22-25
14 Job 10:8a, 10-12
15 I Cor. 6:13b, 19, 20
16 Ex. 22:2, 3; Jn. 15:12, 13
17 Ps. 32:1, 2; Rom. 5:1, 6-11
18 I Jn. 3: 11-22
19 Mt. 25:40, 45; 28:18-20
20 Jas. 1:27; 2:14-17; Ps. 106:3; Prov. 24:11,12; Amos 5:15,24
21 Mt. 5:10-16; Heb. 11:36-38
22 Gen. 1:28a; Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15
23 I Tim. 1:8-11
24 Hos. 4:1-6
25 I Jn. 1:9; Mk. 3:28
26 Jas. 1:27; 2:14-17; I Jn. 3:17