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Archbishop's Pastoral Message on Sanctity of Life

"Each of us is loved ... each of us is necessary"

The Catholic Church takes very seriously, its responsibility to speak on behalf of the voiceless and most vulnerable among us. Protecting children is an intrinsic part of who we are. The obligation to safeguard unborn children belongs to all human beings, not only Christians or people of religion.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI reminds us why this sacred duty is so important. "We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution," Pope Benedict said in 2005. "Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary."

Therefore, as we enter Holy Week this Lenten season, I ask all people to please pray for our unborn brothers and sisters and those who might be contemplating abortion.

A person is no less of a human being because they are not visible in the same way that the rest of us are. A person who cannot reason nor talk is still a human being. They are precious, unique and deserving of love and life as individually willed by our Creator.

Jesus Christ tells of the significance of the gift of life in numerous passages of the Bible. Here are but two:

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations." – Jeremiah 1:5

"And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fertile and multiply.'" – Genesis 1:28

Nothing is so powerfully absolute as the Word of God describing the sacredness of His creation. Yet tragically, since the inception of Roe vs. Wade in 1973, millions of unborn

children have been – and continue to be – considered unnecessary and therefore diminished, discarded and destroyed through abortion.

However, efforts to stem abortion are beginning to bear fruit across the country.

We're all praying for the Holy Spirit to fill our United States Supreme Court Justices. In June they are expected to rule on a landmark law in Mississippi that restricts most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy. Their ruling would have major impact on Roe vs. Wade.

We thank God for groundbreaking legislation adopted by Texas which bans abortion of any unborn child with detectable fetal heartbeats. More states have launched similar countermeasures against abortion.

Today, as the Archbishop of Agaña, I feel positive regarding a bill that is being introduced in the 36th Guam Legislature that models much of the same legislation pioneered by Texas.

We shall study the final version of “The Guam Heartbeat Act of 2022” and provide testimony when a public hearing is scheduled. However, after a preliminary review, I am optimistic that the Archdiocese of Agaña will support the bill since it would save lives of unborn children by prohibiting abortion when a heartbeat is detected in an unborn child.

Our Catechism of the Catholic Church in part, states our teaching on abortion:

2270 Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life.⁷²

As long as it adheres to Catholic teaching, we expect to fully support “The Guam Heartbeat Act of 2022”. Thank you.

Sincerely in Jesus Christ,



The Most Rev. Michael J. Byrnes
Archbishop of Agaña