

# Abandoning fetus alive after abortion was 'barbaric,' archbishop says

VATICAN CITY - The death of a fetus who survived an abortion but was wrapped in a sheet and left to die should shake people's consciences, said Italian Archbishop Santo Marcano of Rossano.

The abortion was carried out April 24 at a hospital in Cosenza in the Archdiocese of Rossano. About four hours later, the hospital chaplain went into the operating room to pray for the fetus and saw the sheet move. The chaplain, Father Antonio Martello, called for help and the baby was transferred to a nearby hospital with a neonatal intensive care unit. The baby died April 26.

Italian prosecutors have opened an investigation to determine whether medical personnel violated Italian law, which requires medical care and treatment of babies who survive an abortion. The mother, who was 22 weeks pregnant, asked for an abortion because the fetus was malformed.

Archbishop Marcano told Vatican Radio April 29, "We need to begin to reflect on how the practice of abortion is favoring a superficial and unjust approach to the intangible value of human life."

"This episode must truly shake people's consciences. It is not possible that a fetus aborted at the 22nd week, still alive, is left to die," the archbishop said.

"This is something truly abhorrent. I would define this as barbaric," he said.