

# **CDC report shows continued decline in U.S. abortion rate**

WASHINGTON — The archbishop who chairs the U.S. bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities cheered news that the abortion rate in the United States continues to shrink, as does the number of abortions overall.

"I am gratified that the number of abortions in the United States continues to decline," said Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, in a Nov. 26 statement. "The reduction in the number of abortions is due to many factors, from declining rates of sexual activity, especially among teens, to pro-life legislative gains."

According to a report issued Nov. 21 by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, the drop in both abortions overall and the abortion rate has declined each year for a decade.

The CDC said the abortion rate in 2015 — the last year for which statistics are available — is at 11.8 abortions per 1,000 women ages 15-44. The rate has dropped eight of the past nine years since 2006's rate of 15.9; the rate of 15.6 held steady in 2008.

"The efforts of the staff and volunteers at crisis pregnancy centers, as well as pro-life educational efforts, are to be commended," Archbishop Naumann said in his statement.

The overall number of abortions also continued to slide. The 2015 number of reported abortions was 638,169, about one-fourth less than the 852,385 reported in 2006. It is down 2 percent from 2014's figure of 652,639.

“At the same time, we cannot be content with hundreds of thousands of abortions occurring annually in our nation,” Archbishop Naumann added.

Over the past decade, the ratio of abortions to live births has also trended downward. The ratio rose slightly from 2007 to 2008, and held steady in 2010 based on 2009’s figures, but has declined from 2006’s 233 abortions per 1,000 live births to 2015’s 188 abortions per 1,000 live births.

The number of legal abortions in the United States peaked in the 1980s before beginning a slow but steady decline, interrupted only by the slight rise in, or holding steady of, numbers in the late 2000s.

The CDC’s numbers are not complete. They do not include California, Florida, Maryland, New Hampshire and Wyoming because they either “did not report, did not report by age, or did not meet reporting standards,” the CDC said.

The abortion rate is highest for women in their 20s. Women ages 20-24 had an abortion rate of 19.9, and women ages 25-29 had an abortion rate of 17.9 per 1,000 women in their age group. Together, they accounted for close to 60 percent of all abortions.

White women had an abortion rate close to one-fourth that of black women. White women accounted for an abortion rate of 6.8, while black women had an abortion rate of 25.1. The CDC report, though, noted that abortion rates, ratios and numbers have gone down among all racial and ethnic groups.

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