

Notre Dame protesters sent clear message

I felt compelled to respond to a letter-writer's claim (CR, May 14) that "it seems like for Catholics, the only lives that matter are the ones of the unborn babies." The writer cited President Bush's support for capital punishment and for "starting the war in Iraq."

My understanding of church teaching on abortion is that it is always wrong, but on capital punishment and war, there are situations where society can and may need to employ these actions in order to protect and defend lives. Further, as Father Frank Pavone of Priests for Life said in explaining why he was demonstrating at Notre Dame, "In 2008, there were 37 people put to death by capital punishment and just today there will be 37 babies of 21 weeks (5 months) or more gestation - the size of a large banana - crushed and dismembered." This statistic should both shock and sadden anyone.

As far as having "our blessing," I would say President Obama received a large outpouring of support from the crowd hearing him speak at Notre Dame. Although Father Jenkins voiced church teaching against abortion, the honorary degree he conferred upon President Obama sent a conflicting message. It was only the minority of Catholics who demonstrated against the ceremony who voiced a clear and unequivocal message about the church's teaching on abortion.