

The Good News about Life

"I think in particular of our need to speak to the hearts of young people, who, despite their constant exposure to messages contrary to the Gospel, continue to thirst for authenticity, goodness and truth. Much remains to be done, particularly on the level of preaching and catechesis in parishes and schools, if the new evangelization is to bear fruit for the renewal of ecclesial life in America."

- Pope Benedict XVI, meeting with U.S. bishops, Washington, DC, April 16, 2008

Part ONE

Script is divided into parts for SPEAKER A (also responsible for the props & technology) & SPEAKER B.

Approximate timing is based on a 70 minute talk + 5 minutes for questions.

Pages marked with ∞∞∞∞∞ could be abbreviated or eliminated if time is running short.

LIST OF MATERIALS & PROPS

- Chocolate syrup, milk (kept cold so someone can drink it), clear glass, and spoon
- *Watch Me Grow* brochures
- *How to Talk to a Friend Who's Had an Abortion* brochures
- *Pregnancy Resource Center* brochures
- Baby Feet pins
- Declaration of Independence
- Quotes/Bible Verse cards
- *God Doesn't Make Mistakes* Sign
- *Pledge Card* (blog story) and pledge cards
- Useful Websites handout & *10 Things* brochure
- Fetal Models
- Contact Information (optional)

When you arrive:

- Set up powerpoint where you can change it regularly
- Hand out cue cards for kids to read during the talk
- Get handouts ready so you can hand them out as they come up
- Set out fetal models

INTRODUCTION

We're here because Archbishop Lori has asked us to go out to schools and faith formation classes and talk to you – young people – about the awesome message the Church has about life and love.

Bear with us, because some of the things we'll be talking about are difficult. We want to be sure you have the right information to make good choices.

The *Good News* about Life

Archdiocese
of Baltimore



It's a COUNTERCULTURAL message

- a message of life and purity
- a healthy, hopeful, respectful, charitable approach to sexuality
- an alternative to the unhealthy attitudes we are bombarded with regularly

We're going to talk about

- life
- love
- relationships
- choices
- the Holy Spirit
- sad realities like abortion, pornography
- human sexuality
- Jesus Christ
- how we can be MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

WHO WE ARE

(please update slide with family pictures of the speakers)

Both speakers share a little bit about yourself – what you do, if you're married, children, etc, just so the kids understand where you are coming from.



WHAT ARE YOU FACING?

You're heading into high school soon, lots of changes are coming.

As you making these transitions, what choices might you or your friends face dealing with behaviors or relationships or faith?

What are you facing?



(you may have to help them out and give them some ideas – alcohol, how to respond to peer pressure, relationships, etc)

As you face these choices and as we discuss them today, we'd like you to keep St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians in mind.

Invite a student to read cue card:

*"Do you not know **that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit** within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body."*¹

One thing **we can all agree on is that we want to find happiness.** How to find it is where people disagree.

¹ 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

WHAT YOU MAY BE FACING (2)

- Sex

- We'll talk a lot more about sex later, but the truth is that **sex before the full commitment of marriage doesn't respect the gift of our sexuality.**



- All too often, what comes with sex before the full commitment of marriage is Teen pregnancy
 - About **750,000 teen girls become pregnant each year** – that means 750,000 teen mothers, 750,000 teen fathers, 750,000 (or more) babies, 1.5 million families.
- Sadly, something else very often tied to sex outside of marriage is Abortion
 - Approximately 3,000 **abortions are performed each day in the United States** alone. The World Health Organization estimates about 125,000 each day around the world.
 - There have been over 55 million abortions in the US alone since *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. If you break that down, it's
 - over 783 M&T Bank Stadiums (Raven's Stadium) filled to capacity
 - more than 9 ½ times the population of Maryland
 - if we were to honor every child lost through an abortion procedure in the United States from 1973 to the present day with just one second of silence, we would be silent for 1 year and 288 days.

show VIDEO → Abortion, Gone (40 seconds)

(flip forward in the PPT to the video and then flip back to continue)

We'll talk more about this later, and hear from a woman who has had an abortion. Most women and many men experience some post-abortion trauma.

- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's)

- **Each STI can be contracted by only one instance of sexual contact (not just intercourse).**

- What are you facing?
- Sex
 - Unplanned Pregnancy
 - Abortion
 - Sexually Transmitted Infections
 - Binge Drinking
 - Illegal Drug Use
 - Smoking
 - Suicide



- Binge Drinking and Alcohol Poisoning

- Some advice: **If you're at a party** where there's alcohol, leave. If those who are drinking are of legal age, just carry something non alcoholic. Never, ever, put a glass down. Does anyone know why?
 - because date rape drugs or other drugs can be slipped into your glass or can.



- Illegal Drug Use

- Scientists explain it like this – **that repeated drug use can reset the brain's pleasure meter.** Things that used to be exciting like eating ice cream or going on roller coasters are less exciting. It's harder to find the feeling of happiness.

ROLE PLAY: Ask a kid to respond to your offering him marijuana. We have to not just know what we believe, but be ready with the words to explain it.



- Smoking

- Tobacco use is the **single most preventable cause of death and disease in the US**

- Suicide

- 13.8% of teens seriously considered suicide; 6.3% attempted (that's 1 in 16)

Often, friends know first if someone is considering suicide. **If your friend might be in danger, get help right away.** Often a teacher is the best person to turn to. They can get help quickly and quietly.



Each of us is *entrusted* to the other.

See if anyone knows the story of Cain & Abel and ask them to share.

Basically, Cain kills Abel because of jealousy. God finds Cain and asks where his brother is. Cain says, I don't know, am I my brother's keeper? And God says YES!



We are our brothers' (and sisters') keepers.

There's a story in Chicken Soup for the Soul that goes a little like this. There was a young guy who left school one day with a HUGE backpack full of stuff. He was kind of different and kept to himself. Someone walking home asked him if he needed any help because his bag was so heavy. As it turned out, he had packed everything in his locker because he was planning to go home and commit suicide. That simple act of kindness saved his life.

INFLUENCES

Who and what influence you (for good or bad)?



- peer pressure
- movies
- television
- music
- parents
- coaches
- pastors
- **Satan**
- Social media
- Others?

Who and what influence you?

Have you ever been singing the lyrics to a song, sort of unconsciously, and then realized that the words you were singing were pretty sketchy or racy? Sometimes we don't even realize what's we're absorbing from the culture.

You make the decision about whether or not to allow these influences into your life – right now. It's never too late to make good choices.

approximately 15 minutes

ABORTION DEFINITIONS

Since abortion is such a BIG DEAL, and happens so very often in our country, the Church has a lot to say about abortion, so we're going to talk about it today.

First let's tackle a few basic definitions as we get started.

(don't read the screen, just give the more casual descriptions below)

legal - [lee-guh l] - permitted by law; lawful

moral - [mawr-uh l] - of, pertaining to, or concerned with the principles or rules of right conduct or the distinction between right and wrong; ethical

conception - [kuh n-sep-shuh n] - fertilization; inception of pregnancy

embryo - [em-bree-oh] - the young of a viviparous (bringing forth living young) animal, especially of a mammal, in the early stages of development within the womb, in humans up to the end of the second month

fetus - [fee-tuh s] - the young of an animal in the womb or egg, especially in the later stages of development when the body structures are in the recognizable form of its kind, in humans after the end of the second month of gestation

abortion - [uh-bawr-shuh n] - also called voluntary abortion, the removal of an embryo or fetus from the uterus in order to end a pregnancy

- 1) Legal: permitted by law; lawful
- 2) Moral: what's right & wrong; ethical
 - a. **Not everything that is legal is moral**
 - b. **What's an example of something in our nation's history that was legal, but immoral?**



In *Dred Scott* in 1857, the Supreme Court held that rights and privileges conferred by the Constitution do not apply to the Negro race. **Slavery** was legal, but it would never be moral.

No one has the “right” to do “wrong”

- 3) Conception: fertilization; inception of pregnancy.
 - a. the moment that sperm meets egg and a new human life is created
- 4) Embryo: humans up to the end of the second month in the womb
- 5) Fetus: the young . . . in humans after the end of the 2nd month of gestation
 - a. In Latin, fetus means “offspring”
- 6) Abortion: method of terminating a pregnancy
Everyone agrees that abortion is the killing of whatever a woman is carrying during the 36-40 weeks of pregnancy.

EMBRYO

An average pregnancy lasts 36/40 weeks. *So what does a woman carry for 36/40 weeks?*

Embryology teaches us that at the moment of fertilization, each embryo (remember – human in the womb during early development) is a

- **DISTINCT,**
- **LIVING,**
- **and WHOLE human being.**

At the moment of conception, there is **DISTINCT, LIVING, WHOLE** human being.



"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you." -Jeremiah 1:5

None of us came *from* an embryo. **Each of us *was* an embryo.**

None of us came *from* an embryo. **Each of us *was* an embryo.** Just as each of us was a fetus, and an infant, and a toddler, and a child.

(ask the student with the card from Jeremiah to read)

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you." Jeremiah 1:5



THE SLED TEST

Some people may accept that science, and say OK, I believe that the unborn are distinct, living, and whole human beings, but they are just different. Abortion is still OK because they're not the same as you and I. So we explain the SLED test.



The only differences between that zygote or embryo and you today are: Size (S), Level of development (L), Environment (E) & Degree of dependency (D)

If we say that size makes someone more valuable, then are we saying that larger people are more valuable than smaller people? Men are generally taller than women. Are they more valuable?

If we say that level of development determines value, are we saying that you were less valuable last year (when you knew less and could do less) than you are this year? Does anyone have a baby sister or brother? What can they do? Not so much. Does that make them less valuable than other humans?

If we say that your environment affects your value, then am I more valuable over here (walk to one side of the room) than over here (walk to the other side of the room)? That my value changed when I got out of bed and went to the kitchen for breakfast? The unborn are in their mothers' wombs rather than out in the world in their mothers' arms, but that only matters if environment changes your value.

What about dependency? This may be the toughest one. Are people who are dependent on other people or things less valuable? Does anyone here wear glasses or contacts? Then you're dependent on those. Do you know anyone with a walker or wheelchair? Then they're dependent. Do you know anyone (maybe a little sibling or older grandparent) who needs help being fed or changed? They're dependent. Can any of you drive to the grocery store, pay for food, and take complete care of yourself? If dependency makes us less valuable, we're all in trouble.

To discriminate against the unborn for any of these reasons is not just wrong, . . . it makes no sense.

ABORTION

Close your eyes. Think of the word abortion. What other words come to mind. What does abortion mean to:

(pause and encourage them to shout out their answers)

- a teenager who just found out she's pregnant
- the unborn child
- a mother of a teenage boy who just got his girlfriend pregnant
- a woman who has had an abortion



When we talk about abortion (and I hope you are brave enough to do so – if no one ever talked about slavery or the Holocaust maybe they'd still be going on today), **we have to always speak with charity** and understand that the word abortion means very different things to different people. **That doesn't mean it is right for some and wrong for others.** You never know the wounds of the person you are talking to.

The truth doesn't change, but each person comes from a different place. The goal is to share the truth, not to alienate people.

God willing, one day we will no longer be talking about abortion, but only the *Good News* about life.

The responsibility to bring an end to abortion is in all of our hands.

(ask student with John Paul II cue card to read)

"the task of accepting and serving life involves everyone; and this task must be fulfilled above all towards life when it is at its weakest."

(ask student with Benedict XVI cue card to read)

"No one who looks realistically at our world could think that Christians can afford to go on with business as usual, ignoring the profound crisis of faith which has overtaken our society. Each of us, in his or her state of life, is called to work for the advancement of God's Kingdom. Each of us has a mission, each of us is called to change the world, to work for a culture of life, a culture forged by love and respect for the dignity of each person."
Pope Benedict XVI

Repeat: *Each of us has a mission, each of us is called to change the world, to work for a culture of life, a culture forged by love and respect for the dignity of each person.*

(click to advance to slide of Pope Francis)

And Pope Francis says: *"We need to avoid the spiritual sickness of a church that is wrapped up in its own world: when a church becomes like this, it grows sick. It is true that going out on to the street implies the risk of accidents happening, as they would to*



any ordinary man or woman. But if the church stays wrapped up in itself, it will age. And if I had to choose between a wounded church that goes out on to the streets and a sick, withdrawn church, I would definitely choose the first one."

First, who's the Church? (all of us)

When Pope Francis talks about the streets, what does he mean? Maybe to Mother Teresa they were quite literally the streets of Calcutta. **Where are your "streets"?** (ask them to share)



For you, maybe it's the locker room, or when a friend starts talking about what she did on Friday night, or when you see your sister or brother making bad choices. It can be uncomfortable or awkward sometimes to stand up for what is right, but that's what it means to be the Church!

HOLY SPIRIT

It's not always easy to be the Church, to stand up for what's right – to talk to a friend about a relationship she's in, to defend someone who's being gossiped about, to stand up for someone who's being bullied. But we have help.



Ask the students - **what is the first Sacrament we receive?**

Baptism

Ask the students - **and what gift do we receive at Baptism?**



The Holy Spirit

Fill a clear glass with milk. Invite a volunteer (who likes chocolate milk) to pour chocolate syrup into the glass.

This glass of milk is you. The chocolate syrup is the Holy Spirit. See what happens – it all drops to the bottom. That's not what we're looking for.

Ask - **how do we actually make chocolate milk?**

You have to stir it up.



Ask the volunteer stir it up. Then tell him or her to sit down and enjoy the chocolate milk.

It works the same with the Holy Spirit. We have the gift of the Holy Spirit, but we need to shake it up in our lives

Ask the students – **how can we do this?**

prayer and fasting, reading the Bible, learning about our faith, having those tough conversations with people, Confirmation, etc.



approximately 30 minutes

THE “WHO” OF ABORTION

Some of those “tough conversations” may be about abortion. So we need to know the facts.

Ask the students - **who’s involved in abortion?**

The mother & the father.



Every child has a mother and a father. Each embryo or fetus shares $\frac{1}{2}$ of his or her DNA with both mom and dad. Still, fathers have absolutely no say in the decision about abortion.

Planned Parenthood

We hear a lot about Planned Parenthood in the news. This is not just a place for women’s health, as many people believe. In fact, it is the **nation’s largest abortion provider.**

If a friend ever mentions going there for something, please help her to find a health clinic that truly respects and cares for women and children.

Years ago, a father approached a young woman who was praying outside an abortion facility and said that his girlfriend was upstairs. He had pleaded with her, begging her to have his child and he would raise the baby. She had the abortion anyway and this father could do nothing to stop her.

THE “WHEN” OF ABORTION

Abortion is legal in the United States through all 9 months of pregnancy up until moments before birth.

In 1973, when abortion was legalized throughout the country, the Supreme Court said “We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins.”

What does science (embryology) say? We’ll get to that.

THE “WHERE OF ABORTION”

Abortion is legal in all 50 states and in most countries around the world. Different states and countries have regulations and restrictions.

The “When?” of Abortion



THE “WHY” OF ABORTION

Here in the US, abortion is legal for virtually any reason.

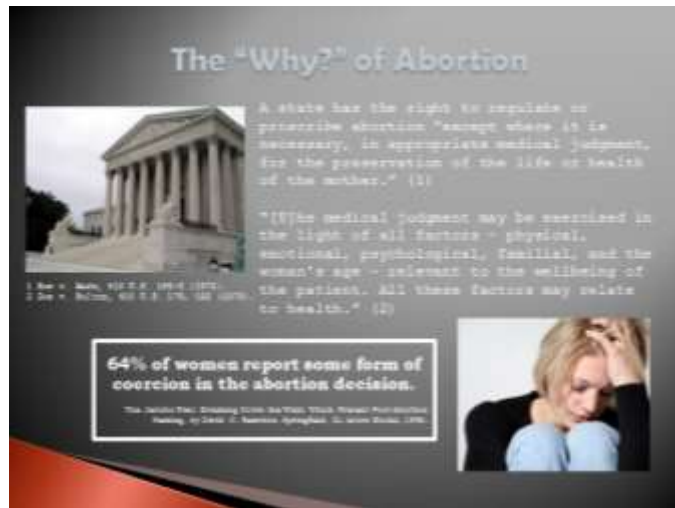
Those who support abortion often talk about CHOICE – freedom of choice, a woman’s choice.

And yet, many women report that they have abortions not because of choice, but because they felt they had no other choice. Statistics show us that 64% of women feel pressure to abort

Ask the students - **what are some sources of pressure to women who are pregnant?**

Parents, Boyfriend/husband, Doctor, Bosses or school officials, Nurses and counselors at the abortion clinic, poverty, wanting to finish education, misinformation

Women are often given inadequate counseling about their abortions



RESOURCES FOR MOMS & DADS

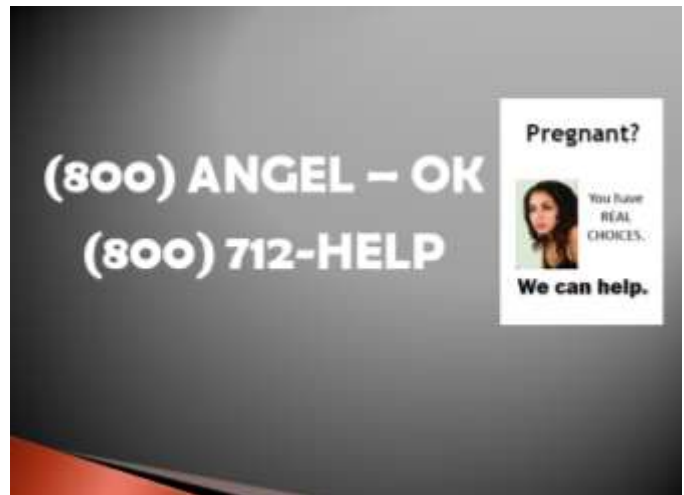
Have any of you heard of a pregnancy help center?

With that whole list of pressures and challenges we just named, a woman who has just found out she is pregnant can be overwhelmed.

There are so many resources for moms – financial help, maternity clothes, healthcare, pregnancy tests, sonograms, parenting classes, maternity housing, support as they finish their education, etc.

If anyone you know is ever experiencing an unplanned pregnancy, please share resources. Two good numbers to know are 800-ANGEL-OK, 800-712-HELP.

Pass out the HANDOUT → Pregnant? You have real choices.



THE “HOW” OF ABORTION

There are many different methods of abortion that range from pills to surgeries. All are complicated and involve risks to women (both physical and emotional). All are fatal to the child.

Even the birth control pill can cause the death of a newly conceived embryo. The morning after pill is even more likely to cause an abortion. Later in pregnancy, the procedures are surgical.

It’s important to remember, that though late term abortion is the most gruesome, even a very early medical abortion ends the life of a human being – no less unique or human than a 28 week old fetus.



REVIEW

Who? The unborn, mothers, fathers, families, and abortion providers.

3,000 each day in the United States.
That makes roughly 250 abortions during this 2 hour presentation.

- 125 if it's one hour
- 188 if it's 1 ½ hours
- 312 if it's 2 ½ hours)



And all of us, who are responsible for building a culture of life.

When? During all 9 months of pregnancy

Where? In all 50 states and most countries around the world.

Why? Legal for virtually any reason. In practice, more often than not, pressure or coercion is involved.

How? Many different medications and procedures, all of which can potentially physically or emotionally scar the parents and all of which end the life of a child.

approximately 45 minutes

THE TOUGH QUESTIONS

Some people will say, OK, I agree that abortion is bad, but what about if the woman was raped or the child has a disability? It *must* be OK then, right?

Rape, Incest, Disabilities, and Life of the mother are difficult issues and should always be approached with compassion and love for both mother and child.

The "Tough" Questions



None of these issues warrants taking the life of an unborn human being.

Imagine I have a 2 year old in front of me (hold out your hand to a toddler height to illustrate). If the issue is privacy, may I kill him in the privacy of a bedroom or clinic? If the issue is poverty, and I have a large family on the brink of bankruptcy, may I kill the youngest member to ease my financial burdens? If the issue is rape, and he starts to look like his father (the rapist), can I kill him? Do any of you wear contacts? Do you use an inhaler? Then you have a disability. What disabilities warrant taking your life?

show VIDEO → Abortion, Unwanted (1 min, 30 seconds)

In the case where the mother's life is endangered, steps can be taken to save the mother, even if they result in the death of the child only if the conditions for double effect are satisfied.² An example would be at the scene of an accident and you're an EMT. You see two victims and one is easier to get to. In trying to save the first victim, you move something in the vehicle that causes more harm to the 2nd, not intending to harm the 2nd person, but just to help save the first.

² Double effect is "the principle that says it is morally allowable to perform an act that has at least two effects, one good and one bad. It may be used under the following conditions: 1. the act to be done must be good in itself or at least morally indifferent; by the act to be done is meant the deed itself taken independently of its consequences; 2. the good effect must not be obtained by means of the evil effect; the evil must be only an incidental by-product and not an actual factor in the accomplishment of the good; 3. the evil effect must not be intended for itself but only permitted; all bad will must be excluded from the act; 4. there must be a proportionately grave reason for permitting the evil effect. At least the good and evil effects should be nearly equivalent. All four conditions must be fulfilled. If any one of them is not satisfied, the act is morally wrong." CatholicReference.net, "Double Effect" (2011), taken from Fr. John Hardon's *Modern Catholic Dictionary*, <http://www.catholicreference.net/index.cfm?id=33215>.

ADOPTION

Unplanned pregnancy is never easy. From the moment of fertilization, a new distinct, living, and whole human being exists and the mother and father are parents to that human being. However, not all mothers and fathers are ready to raise a child. Adoption is always an option – though not easy, sometimes it is the most loving option.



show VIDEO → Imagine (1 minute)

WHEN DOES LIFE BEGIN?

People may have different answers, but **there is only one truth.**

WE SAY the unborn (in any stage) is a baby, a human being.

SOME SAY the unborn zygote, embryo, and fetus (which are just scientific names for early human development) are

- Products of conception
- Blobs of cells, clumps of tissue
- Potential humans

LAW SAYS

Well, it depends.

The **Supreme Court** said we need not resolve this difficult question of when life begins.

The Declaration of Independence says

We declare these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”

We were created the moment that sperm met egg and a new, distinct, whole human life came into existence. Thomas Jefferson knew that we were created *equal* and had the inalienable right to life.

The *Gospel of Life* says “’ **Right from fertilization the adventure of human life begins**, and each of its capacities requires time—a rather lengthy time—to find its place and to be in a position to act.”

What does **SCIENCE** say?

When does life begin?



WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

If you're not planning on being pregnant anytime soon, and you haven't been an unborn person for quite some time, why bother to know this?



Take a look at this video. It's from the movie *Juno*. Juno has recently found out she is pregnant and is on her way to have an abortion when she meets a classmate outside the facility.

show VIDEO → Juno, fingernails (1 minute)

Juno goes on to keep her baby and offer the baby to a family through adoption. In the video, the girl talking to Juno shared all kinds of info, but the thing about her baby having fingernails seemed to make an impression.

You never know what might affect someone. If you share this information about how we all were created and grew up with someone (maybe your friend's mom or your aunt is pregnant and you share a cool fact; maybe someone says they're for abortion and you share a fact, etc), they may share it with another person and another and maybe eventually it is shared with someone considering abortion.

It's pretty amazing how we developed and how God created us. It's definitely worth sharing!

Pass out the HANDOUT → Watch me Grow!

FETAL DEVELOPMENT

Hold up the appropriate fetal models while you're sharing the facts.

From the moment of conception, all 46 chromosomes are present, gender is determined, and a new unrepeatable human being comes into the world.

At just 3 weeks, the heart begins to beat

Brain waves can be recorded in the second month (8 weeks). At this time all body systems are present (small, but present)

At 10 weeks, the unborn has fingernails.

At 12 weeks, buds for baby teeth are present.

At 19-20 weeks, some babies are viable, meaning they can live outside the womb with medical intervention. This is constantly changing with technology.

At 28 weeks, fetus can open and close his eyes, suck his thumb, and cry.

show VIDEO → Miracle of Life (3 minutes, 30 seconds)

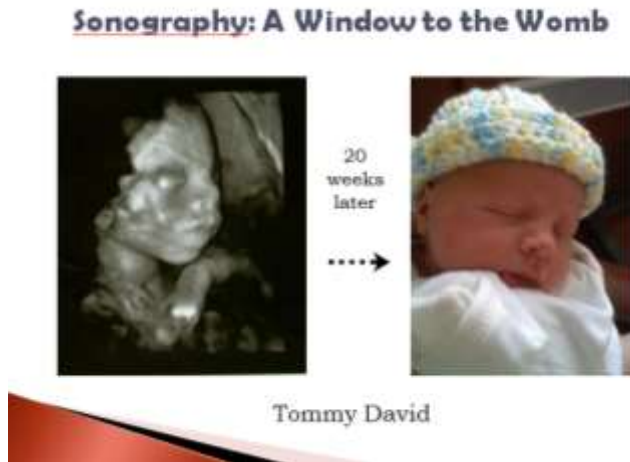
∞∞∞∞ (omit description, just show video)



SONOGRAMS

With the development of sonography, particularly 3D and 4D sonography, more and more people are able to recognize visually the humanity of the unborn.

It's like a window to the womb.



approximately 60 minutes

POST-ABORTION STRESS

Studies indicate that following abortion, many women experience serious psychological effects

These include:

- 6-7 times higher suicide rates
- 65% increase in clinical depression
- 30 % increase in anxiety disorders

70% of women choosing abortion believe that abortion is morally wrong. They are choosing against their consciences because of some pressure, from others or circumstances, which make them feel they have no other choice.



One of the ministries that the Church offers is outreach to women and men who are suffering after they've been involved with an abortion. The women who call Project Rachel mean more than any statistics. One woman said she struggled through the entire month of January every year since her abortion. She had lost her child in January 20 years ago. Another said she cannot drive down Rte. 40 in Catonsville, but takes back roads because the sight of the clinic haunts her. Another told me she still has nightmares of her baby crying in the night. My heart breaks for these women.

show VIDEO → Testimony, Kelly Stauffer (3 min, 40 seconds)

If you have an experience with abortion or know someone who has, please consider Project Rachel Baltimore – the Church's healing ministry to those suffering after abortion. Women and men are both welcome. www.project-rachel.net | 410-625-8491

Pass out the HANDOUT → How to talk to a friend who's had an abortion

SAINT TERESA OF CALCUTTA

Read February 3 remarks to the National Prayer Breakfast (or play video if time allows)



"the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion"



"... [I] feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child, a direct killing of the innocent child, murder by the mother herself. And if we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another? How do we persuade a woman not to have an abortion? As always, we must persuade her with love and we remind ourselves that love means to be willing to give until it hurts. Jesus gave even His life to love us. So, the mother who is thinking of abortion, should be helped to love, that is, to give until it hurts her plans, or her free time, to respect the life of her child. The father of that child, wherever he is, must also give until it hurts."

By abortion, the mother does not learn to love, but kills even her own child to solve her problems. And, by abortion, the father is told that he does not have to take any responsibility at all for the child he has brought into the world. That father is likely to put other women into the same trouble. So abortion just leads to more abortion. Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want. This is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion."

approximately 70 minutes

QUESTIONS