

The facts about abortion:

- In 1973, the Supreme Court legalized abortion for virtually any reason.
- Since 1973, we have lost approximately 50 million lives to abortion in this country alone.¹
- Worldwide, about one in five pregnancies end in abortion.²
- Abortion kills roughly 36,000 children and wounds as many families in Maryland each year. The abortion rate in Maryland is 1 ½ times that of the national abortion rate.³

**The facts about its victims:⁴**

- From the moment of conception, all 46 chromosomes are present, gender is determined, and a new unrepeatable human being comes into the world.
- By the third week, the heart begins to beat.
- Brain waves can be recorded in the second month.
- By eight weeks, all body systems are present.
- 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.⁵



¹ *Facts on Induced Abortion in the United States*, Alan Guttmacher Institute (May 2010).

² *Facts on Induced Abortion Worldwide*, Alan Guttmacher Institute (Oct. 2009).

³ *State Facts About Abortion: Maryland*, Alan Guttmacher Institute (2008).

⁴ *Watch Me Grow*, Little One Sweet Publishing (2004).

⁵ *The Jericho Plan: Breaking Down the Walls Which Prevent Post-Abortion Healing*, by David C. Reardon. Springfield, IL: Acorn Books, 1996.

Roe v. Wade, Compassion & the Risen Christ
by Deirdre A. McQuade, *April 21, 2006*

"Peace be with you."

So speaks the risen Lord to his terrified disciples when he suddenly appears among them in the upper room. Our Christian faith calls us to reject the spirit of fear and anxiety and rely upon the providence of God, who is merciful and all-loving. He is our refuge in times of trouble.

By contrast, pro-abortion rhetoric incites fear that without access to abortion women will be abandoned in their hour of need. Abortion advocates treat *Roe v. Wade* as sacrosanct legal precedent. They talk of the need to protect "reproductive rights" as if on par with protecting women's very lives.

But the experience of many women attests to the opposite: abortion makes them particularly vulnerable to abandonment. Legalized abortion has made it easy for others to pressure women. Rather than rallying to care for a woman's needs, those around her may pressure her to resort to the apparent "quick fix" of abortion.

Some abortion supporters, such as Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, say abortion should be readily available to women but rare. But *Roe v. Wade*, read with its companion case *Doe v. Bolton*, has no limits. In fact, over the past 33 years, Supreme Court decisions on abortion have curtailed the States' ability to pass protective legislation for women and their unborn children.

Since most Americans continue to believe that *Roe* allows for meaningful restrictions on abortion, it bears repeating: Abortion — for virtually any reason, throughout all nine months of pregnancy, with no significant legal barriers — is the law of our land.

What is true compassion? And what will it take to make abortion rare, if not unthinkable, in our country? Advocating for women means refusing to accept the violence of abortion as a solution. Abortion doesn't solve problems, it only introduces new ones.

In my counseling work at a pregnancy care center, I met many women considering abortion. They were scared and overwhelmed at the thought of facing an unplanned pregnancy. Some were shocked that the birth control they put their trust in had failed. Some wanted to give birth, but were being pressured by their boyfriends or parents who said that abortion would be the "best option" under the circumstances. Others were being coerced by threats of being abandoned emotionally and financially.

But fear did not have the final word. While they couldn't change the past or other circumstances outside their control, many courageous women decided to continue their pregnancies, encouraged by others who were committed to helping them make good decisions for themselves and their children in the future.

Because Christ rose from the dead, we have the courage to pray: "Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our day. In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety..." Let the whole Church work toward the day when every life is welcomed, every woman is honored, and abortion is unthinkable.