

LIFE POST-ROE V WADE

Frequently Asked Questions

The 1973 Roe v Wade decision ruled that the United States Constitution protects a woman's right to abortion without excessive restriction. It made abortion a federal matter and in the almost 50 years since, more than 60 million babies have lost their lives in the name of "choice." The debate surrounding the moral and legal implications of abortion is intense in this country and will likely continue to contribute to political polarization, regardless of legislative changes. While we joyfully welcome the overturning of the 1973 Roe ruling, we know much work lies ahead in pursuit of a Culture of Life.

What does the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision and overturning of Roe mean for our country?

There are no immediate changes to abortion access following the decision. The ruling makes each state essentially independent in creating laws and regulations regarding abortion access. Thirteen states have trigger laws that could quickly change abortion access following such a ruling, but Maryland is not one of them.

Is abortion illegal now?

No. This decision simply means that abortion is not protected by the Constitution.

What does this mean for abortion in Maryland?

Unfortunately, abortion is widely accessible in Maryland. It is legal through all nine months, and while most providers in the state provide abortion up to 10 to 12 weeks, there are some who will perform second- and third-trimester abortions as well. Additionally, Maryland recently passed HB937 which mandates insurance companies cover abortions (although there are some exceptions) and allows non-physicians to perform abortions. Maryland is one of only three states that does not require providers to report abortion statistics (which is common healthcare practice) and has sought to enshrine the right to abortion in the state constitution.

How can we advocate for prolife legislation in Maryland?

Changing the laws in Maryland starts with electing pro-life candidates. Supporting candidates with life-affirming views and encouraging them to vote for policies that support women, children and families is an important first step to creating a pro-life state. The Maryland Catholic Conference represents the Maryland Bishops and Maryland Catholics, and has helpful resources for parishes and individuals available online.

There is so much talk about abortion, what about all of the other life issues?

From a 2019 letter from the United States Bishops: “The threat of abortion remains our preeminent priority because it directly attacks life itself because it takes place within the sanctuary of the family and because of the number of lives destroyed...At the same time, we cannot dismiss or ignore other serious threats to human life and dignity such as racism, the environmental crisis, poverty and the death penalty.”

The sheer number of lives lost is justification for concentrated concern over abortion. This does not mean, however, that other threats to life and human dignity are minimized by the Church. In addition to the other life issues stated above, the Church is greatly concerned with rising suicide rates, human trafficking and increasing gun violence. All Catholics are urged to pray for an end to violence of all forms, pray for the protection of all life from conception throughout the entire lifetime to a natural end, and to discern what life issues they are being called to advocate for in a special way.

This is a painful topic for me because I have been involved in abortion; how can the Church help me?

Post-abortive mothers and fathers often find themselves struggling with guilt and grief whether they felt coerced into choosing abortion or not. Family members often regret their involvement in supporting an abortion or find themselves mourning the loss of a little one they never had the chance to meet. The Church wants to extend mercy to those who are experiencing this pain. Project Rachel is a special post-abortive healing ministry for women and men and is available in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. For more information, visit: [Project Rachel - Archdiocese of Baltimore](#)

Life Perspectives [Grief after Miscarriage? Other Reproductive or Pregnancy Loss?](#) is another excellent resource for those seeking healing and education opportunities.

Where do I start?

Helping to cultivate a Culture of Life and serving others through works of mercy is fundamental to our Catholic faith. Many parishes already have thriving Respect Life committees and are looking for additional volunteers to advance their Walking With Moms in Need efforts. Other parishes do not have active Respect Life groups and you may be just the person to get it off the ground. Begin in prayer and ask God where He is calling you to serve. Next, contact your priest and reach out to the Office of Life, Justice and Peace in the Institute for Evangelization for more details and ways to get involved. There will be a Respect Life workshop Saturday, Sept. 10 for parish leaders and volunteers throughout the archdiocese and opportunities to grow the Walking With Moms in Need movement all through October.