



October 30, 2008 - Cardinal Statement on the Right to Life

“In defending the cause of life, we are not only fulfilling our vocation as Catholics, but we are also defending the vision of democracy that is embodied in the Declaration of Independence that states “We hold these truths to be self evident,” namely, that we are all created equal and are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights, the first of which is the right to life.

Today, this most fundamental human right is threatened. As the Bishops of the United States have said in our document *Living the Gospel of Life*: “As we tinker with the beginning, the end, and even the intimate cell structure of life, we tinker with our own identity as a free nation dedicated to the dignity of the human person.”

If we ask ourselves what is the leading cause of death in the United States, we usually think of heart disease, cancer and other serious illnesses. Actually the leading cause of death in the United States is abortion. The architects of the pro-abortion movement in the United States thought that within a year or so the opposition would go away or die off. More than thirty years later the issue is still alive because people care about life, and an ever increasing number of young people are making it known that they too are committed to upholding respect for life.

The American people are not in favor of abortion on demand, partial birth abortion, or allowing babies who have survived an abortion to die. If we had the opportunity to vote as a nation there would certainly be limitations imposed on the abortion industry that destroys not just the lives of the babies but also the lives of all involved. A dictatorial court has imposed an unethical decision on our country and divided the American people.

We pray for the opportunity to allow the American people to have a voice in such a crucial issue. As people of compassion we must defend the rights of the most vulnerable. The Church’s social teaching is very coherent and extends to all aspects of economic justice, racial equality, war and peace, immigration, education and health care issues. But the centerpiece of our teaching will always be the right to life.”

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