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**Texas “Heartbeat Law”**  
**Will Keep the Hearts of Thousands of Tiny Unborn Beating with Life**

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We Bishops of Texas and all pro-life leaders are grateful that Texas Governor, Greg Abbott, signed the “Heartbeat Law”, SB 8 that had been approved by the Texas legislature. This prolife bill will keep the hearts of thousands of tiny unborn beating with life and ending most abortions in The Lone Star State. This law has the potential to save tens of thousands of babies from the brutal process of abortion letting them enjoy our first human right, the right to life. In 2020, about 54 thousand unborn babies were aborted in Texas. This wonderful news means that 100 unborn babies with beating hearts may be spared from an abortion every single day in Texas.

Unanimously the Texas Catholic Bishops celebrated the passage of this life beating bill and state, “we celebrate every life saved by this legislation”. Opponents of the law argue the term “heartbeat” is misleading. Strangely they call it “embryonic cardiac activity” or worse. These attempts to dehumanize the unborn are disturbing. The bishops stress that abortion is a human life issue: the most fundamental human life is the right to life. Abortion is in no way healthcare. Abortion is not freedom. Abortion is not helping women as it is always a violent taking of innocent human life. This legislation is all about the personhood of the baby in the womb. This is the heart, better said, the “heartbeat” of the matter, and no one can express this better than an expectant mother.

The US Supreme Court upheld the Texas Heartbeat Legislation declining to block it. So, Texas has become the first state in nearly 50 years to be allowed to protect unborn babies by banning almost all abortions. The state and all pro-lifers achieved a major victory at the Supreme Court. The Court for the first time in decades has allowed the Heartbeat Bill to go into effect immediately. However, there is much work left to be done to preserve this bill. We bishops and all pro-lifers need to show that this law is good for Texas, that abortion hurts women, it brutally destroys human life and there are several better alternatives like the Safe Haven Law. If sadly a woman does not want her child, there is a Safe Haven that will receive this precious child. In all the 50 states, a woman can drop their baby off at a hospital at no cost and no legal consequences. Texas will pay for all medical expenses if she is considered low income. And there are also other adoption programs available.

Sadly, and regrettably the two top government officials in our country, President Biden, and House Speaker Pelosi, both claiming to be good Catholics, have condemned the abortion ban and rather celebrate the killing of babies in abortions. Biden, in less than a year in office, has already been recognized as the most pro-abortion president in US History. He has pledged the full effort of his administration to stop this Texas legislation, claiming there is a constitutional right to abortion. In fact, the constitution has not mentioned abortion as a right and Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, strongly holds that abortion, “Is without a shred of support from the Constitution’s text.” Justice Thomas adds, “Our abortion precedents are gravely wrong and should be overridden.” House Speaker, Nancy Pelosi, also claiming to be a faithful Catholic, was outraged by the Texas Heartbeat bill, and to counteract this bill approved by the Supreme Court, said she will use her position to codify Roe vs Wade and enshrine it into law forever. She is encouraging congress to fight this ban.

This is a unique and vitally important pro-life moment, a moment of special grace from God for all who believe the precious unborn is a true human being, a true child of God made in his image, for all pro-lifers to strongly express their belief, their faith, in positive acts of charity. As Catholics, Both Biden and Pelosi, do not accept the dogmatic teaching of our Catholic church enunciated by Pope John Paul II that the unborn is a human person, a unique image of God himself. This belief is based on many scriptural passages and has been confirmed over and over by scientific research. In criticizing the Texas legislation approved by the Supreme Court, Biden a “faithful” Catholic has also astoundingly stated to the media that he does not agree with the scientific fact that human life begins at conception. This puts him completely out of step with biblical principles and pro-life teaching of the Catholic life that life begins at conception as medical science has proved many times. Biden has stated, “I respect those that believe that life begins at conception, but I don’t agree with that.”

While not responding directly to the new Texas Heartbeat bill, Pope Francis in an interview in early September, slammed clearly and strongly the killing of babies in abortion because it is a life, it is a human life. Pope Francis once again compared abortion to the hiring of a hitman to kill a totally innocent child. Pope Francis frequently uses the “hitman” analogy in his condemnation of abortion and pleads for society to recognize babies as valuable human beings. The Pope said this comes down to two questions, “first, is it licit and fair to eliminate human life to solve a problem? Second question is, it right to hire a paid assassin to solve this problem?” The Pope continued, “the pro-life position is based on science and morality.”

In this new pro-life moment of this Texas Legislation, Pope Francis’ clear statement on the sacredness of human life and the obligation to promote and respect the precious life of the unborn and show care for their mothers, is a clarion call for all Bishops, Priests and Pro-lifers to increase our public and personal pro-life position and to denounce the great evil of abortion. We bishops united with the president of our conference need to speak more clearly and forcefully in a united manner against the evil abortion which is the greatest moral evil in our country. It is the most pressing human rights challenge of our time. Alveda King, the niece of the great civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, has stated that abortion which destroys almost a million unborn babies a year in the USA, is the greatest civil rights issue in our country at this time. Following the example of the State of Texas hopefully more states will enact similar pro-life legislations to restrict and do away with abortion. For this to happen, we bishops and our priests, deacons, and women and men religious with all our faithful lay Catholics especially like the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Daughters and many other Catholic organizations need to be more actively engaged in religious and social pro-life programs of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and of our parishes, and in the government process to restrict and overcome abortion. We bishops have the serious duty to clarify and correct first personally and then publicly, with our Catholic President and House Speaker, and other Catholic elected officials who publicly profess to be Catholics, but publicly support abortions, letting them know that they are not in good standing with the Catholic church and cause great scandal for millions of fellow Catholics. They have broken Eucharistic consistency.

All Catholics need to participate in these new pro-life efforts especially in the State of Texas, clarifying that Texas has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in programs for pregnant mothers and families through the Abortion Alternatives Programs. We need to remind those in need that there are hundreds of pregnancies and parenting support programs and adoption services in our state that provide practical resources to women and families facing overwhelming circumstances. As Pope Francis reminds us, we are to offer support for pregnant and parenting moms letting them know that our parishes are, “islands of mercy in the midst of a sea of indifference”. Everyone in the parish should know where to refer for help pregnant women in need. The US Catholic Bishops nationwide program, Walking with Moms in Need, helps nurture and protect lives. And women and men suffering due to an abortion need to be reminded that there is hope and healing through ministries such as Project Rachel and Raphael’s Refuge. God’s mercy and forgiveness is limitless, and we all need to be agents of God’s mercy for others.

Our most powerful means of overcoming the extremist statements of our president and speaker and the evil of abortion is the Holy Spirit who is always present to aid us in every life situation. To be guided by this wonderful Spirit, all our parishes need to provide, and encourage participation, in prayer programs which provides us with God's grace and means to overcome the tragic killing of the precious children of God in abortion. Our prayer moves us to advocate for and to surround both mother and child with love and practical support as a humane and Christ like response for all their needs. Our constant pro-life motto is, "we choose life for both mother and child".