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Pastoral Statement
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Human Life is Sacred from Conception

1. The Bible clearly teaches that human life is sacred and precious from conception, and that murder is wrong (Genesis 9:6). This sacredness flows from the sacrament of marriage in which a married couple cooperates with God in bringing new human life into our world. Uniquely among all creatures created by God, only man, the human person; the human being, which includes each and every species of homo sapiens at all stages of life, has the capacity for a loving relationship with God. Only man has a soul and is the only one made in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). It follows then the human soul must be present

from conception. Body and soul cannot be separate until death as determined by God.

2. The Christian Institute, from which I have taken much information, reminds us that the incarnation of Christ also has important implications for medical ethics. Jesus Christ reveals not only the nature of deity but also the nature of what is human. Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem, but he was conceived much before this by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Since Jesus shared our humanity and was like us in every way (Hebrews 2:14, 17), our own human life must also have begun at conception. ProLife American reminds us that abortion drugs account for the majority of abortions in the United States amounting to 65% of the total in 2025. These drugs carry with them potentially serious risks not only to the unborn but the health of their mothers. The Christian Institute also affirms that human personhood begins at conception and

that the human embryo is precisely that a human embryo. There are enormous practical moral implications which flow from this belief. Not only is abortion seriously wrong, but also any practice which deliberately destroys human embryos.

3. For good Pastoral, moral clarity, it is necessary to point out why artificial contraception is also morally wrong. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) based on Catholic moral doctrine, specifically *Humanae Vitae* in 1968, the USCCB maintains that direct sterilization and artificial contraception are “intrinsically evil” and forbidden, as they represent a deliberate, unnatural obstruction of the generative process. The USCCB supports Natural Family Planning (NFP) as the morally acceptable method for spacing children. NFP allows the couple to use the natural infertile periods of the woman’s cycle to avoid pregnancy without interfering with the natural, life-giving design of the act.

4. Medical science in recent years has confirmed our long faith belief that human life begins at some point in fertilization in conception. This is why more recently there is an ever-growing support for Congress to use its power under section 5 of the 14th article of the amendment to the Constitution of the United States, declaring that the right to life granted by the Constitution is vested in every human being born and unborn person. This ever-growing effort is called the Life at Conception Act and incorporates the Churches proper understanding of NFP. However, nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize the persecution of any woman for the death of her unborn child.
5. Life is indeed in God's mind sacred from conception, and as it is a unique act of creation of a new person, God alone is the final author of how conception is to take place for those who read, believe and care deeply for the word of God. The Bible teaches us about the God, the Master of Creation, who brings into our

world a whole new human being with the cooperation of His children, a married woman and man. This loving act of cooperation with God in the formation and birth of a new person is an essential part of the sacrament of matrimony. Here we remember the beautiful and inspiring passage from Psalm 139:13-16 “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.”

6. And then we hear in the Bible that when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. Elizabeth was pregnant with John the Baptist. And was filled with the Holy

Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry about Mary, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.”

(Luke 1:42-44). The fruit in Mary’s womb was the very son of

God Jesus Christ, true God and true man. These words of the

Holy Spirit bring out how sacred was the fruit in the womb of

those two marvelous women. And then we read in Jeremiah 1:5

how only God knows and plans how each of His little children is

formed in a woman’s womb with the help of a husband, “Before

I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were

born set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

Only the Bible gives testimony that in the beautiful creation of a

new human being, God is the Father and Master of this beautiful

process and know exactly when fertilization begins and the life

of a new beautiful human person. The Bible passage supports the reason for the Life at Conception Act.

7. From the usccb.org/prolife/life-matters, here I bring to your attention when married parents encounter the heartache and worry that arise when they find themselves with serious difficulties in conceiving a child of their own. Often, they jump immediately to IVF – in vitro fertilization – where they attempt to control all factors of timing, embryo creation and selection – leaving little to nature and God’s design. IVF is now a \$3 billion industry, which is largely unregulated and seemingly unconcerned about the long-term health risks for women or children. The first and most obvious is the serious moral problem raised by in vitro fertilization that it invariably requires fertilizing of several eggs in the laboratory at the same time. Typically, some embryos are implanted in the uterus in the hope that one will survive. The embryos not implanted are either

discarded or frozen for later use. Many do not survive the freezing or defrosting process. It is the sad reality that the great majority of embryonic children created by IVF will end up dead sooner or later. What is lost here, is that in these many failed technological attempts in each procedure, involves living human individuals created by God who deserve to be treated with dignity of a human person. They share – as all human beings do – in the likeness of God the Father of all. The deeper meaning of sexual intercourse in marriage – uniting a couple in love so generous and powerful that allows God to bring forth a new child destined to live forever – is lost in the process. Every child conceived in IVF is truly deserving of respect and love: each is a human person, regardless of the manner of conception. As Christians we must come to understand that IVF puts the lives of women and children at risk. As Christians we must all stand

for the dignity of every human as a gift from God and not as a product to be manipulated even with the best of intentions.

8. In closing, I bring to your attention the words of Pope St. John Paul II in his powerful Pastoral Statement, the Gospel of Life – *Evangelium Vitae* – “What is urgently called for is a general mobilization of consciences and a untied ethical effort to activate a great campaign in support of life, including the unborn. All together, we must build a new culture of life.” As fellow Disciples of Jesus, especially for we that are pastors and teachers, we proclaim that human life is a precious gift from God and that each person who receives this gift is responsible to God and each other; that society, through it’s laws and social institution, must protect and nurture human life at every stage of its existence. To follow these principles and live these values will contribute much for the need for our lawmakers to approve a Life at Conception Act. Hopefully many of our Congress

people and all of us will support the efforts of Congressman Eric Burlison, and the many who have cooperated with him, who introduced the Life at Conception Act to affirm and protect all life efforts for every human being – born and unborn. Burlison states “Every life is a sacred gift from God, deserving of dignity and protection from the moment of conception. The Life at Conception Act urges Congress’ constitutional authority to define personhood, fulfilling our moral and legal obligation to safeguard the lives of the unborn”. Hopefully all of us as children of God, sisters and brothers of Jesus, will pray for and actively support all efforts for this Act to become a reality in our country. These tiny unborn children of God depend on you and me.