



THE DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
**Office of Human Life,
Family and Bioethics**



Called to be Forces for the Salvation of Human Life

Excerpts Taken from Homily, January 15th Msgr Jim Lisante, Pastor Our Lady of Lourdes, Massapequa

Isaiah states, **“The Lord who formed me from the womb as His servant.”** **We are not accidental!** What is our purpose in the world? You are intended, we are all intended by God. Not one person is a mistake, all of us are intended in the mind of God. Even if we get lost in life, God has a plan. We are meant to be here. God knit us together in our mother’s womb with a purpose and a plan.



He has a value on you that you can not erase. This is important to keep in mind. We are here to fulfill God’s plan for us. He intended you to be, we make mistakes, but we are not a mistake. **God decided in His love and glory to create you. He made us to enlighten the world and to enhance it. We should be a light to all nations. If we live that plan, we become a sign of hope and light for those around us.**

In St. Paul’s reading to the Corinthians, we are all called by the Will of God. Even St Paul being the huge persecutor of Christians which he thought was his purpose. He was a real hard sinner, a bad guy. But he had a great conversion. Whatever we have done we should look at Paul who was transformed by the Love of God. No matter where we come from, we can be transformed. In our weakness God makes something wonderful. **Reminder, none of us is beyond Redemption. We are reminded and encouraged to give up on no one. We belong to Christ and with Him everything is possible.**

In the Gospel of St John, we see that St John the Baptist points us to the way of Christ. When people look at us they should see that Christ has made difference in our lives. **We must be defenders of all human life. When people look at us do they see the face of the loving, compassionate, merciful Jesus? We have to live in a way that we are instruments of His mercy.**

We have to live in a way that shows Christ to others. They may never see Him in person but will see Him in our person. If we are Catholic, they have to see the life of Christ in us just as St John the Baptist pointed to Christ. When others examine our lives do they see Him or the absence of Him in our lives?

Let us live the lives we are called to live as God created us.

I want to speak about Dobbs vs Jackson decision. Back in 1973, when Roe Vs. Wade became the abortion standard, owing to a 7-2 majority of Supreme Court Justices, pro-lifers looked for other ways to save the pre-born child.

Liberal Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield and Conservative New York Senator James Buckley brought forth a Human Life Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, seeing it as the only alternative to the overwhelming embrace of unrestricted abortion by the Supreme Court.

Happily, with time and the Herculean efforts of pro-lifers throughout the United States, Roe is finally history. But that victory has created anger in some parts of the pro-choice movement.

And that anger, has, sadly, turned violent. Since May of 2022, just a few short, months ago, there have been 78 attacks of pregnancy care alternative centers. These centers offer help to women who find themselves wanting to have their babies, but who face needs and obstacles requiring practical and social assistance. Crisis Pregnancy Centers provide such services. But because they represent the life affirming choice NOT to abort, they have been the focus of proabortion anger and violence.

Similarly, from 1973 on, no organization has been a voice for Moms and their pre-born children more forcefully than the Catholic Church. Happily, many other religious denominations have joined us in this effort to let babies live, but if you look at news accounts from the 1970s and 1980s, no one did more to stem the tide of spiraling abortion than our Church. It's a history of caring we can be rightly proud of.

BUT, now those who thought Roe Vs. Wade was set in stone have newfound anger and much of it is also being directed at the Catholic Church. In the past seven months there have been 108 attacks on Catholic Churches. In response to this unacceptable violence, the new Congress offered a resolution condemning these attacks.

You'd imagine such a resolution would pass the House unanimously, right? Care centers for women and their babies and Catholic Churches, charities looking to assist people in need. Who wouldn't consider them worthy of protection?

Apparently almost half the Congress!

The resolution in Congress called for the condemnation of the recent firebombing, violence and vandalism against Care Centers and Catholic Churches. Congressional House Resolution 3 passed by a vote of 222-208. That's right: 208 Members of Congress could not bring themselves to back a resolution condemning violence against Centers to assist Mothers and their children, and our own Catholic Church.

Sadly, the 208 negatives included every Democratic Member of Congress, except one, Congressman Vincente Gonzalez of Texas.

To give us a sense of the absurdity of their negative vote, can you imagine ANY Member of Congress voting against a Resolution condemning violence against a Synagogue or Mosque? Of course not!

It would be political suicide to do so.

The lesson here? Dobbs eliminated Roe Vs. Wade, but it did not diminish the need to stand tall in defense of the choice to bear life, and to stand with all of us who will never be silent about the sacredness of all human life.

And to those who admit that termination of the pre-born is wrong and unfortunate but "it's only one life issue among so many others," let me share with you a great Churchman's perspective.

It was my privilege to interview Cardinal Joseph Bernadin some years ago. For those may who not remember this good progressive voice in the Church, he was known as the leading proponent of the '**Seamless Garment**' approach to life, a proclaimer of the need for a **Consistent Ethic of Life**.

My question to the Cardinal? Is it wrong to prioritize the issue of abortion, to make it our focus as we rightly battle for the protection of all life?

His response: "**Each day in America, at least three thousand young lives are ended through abortion. So, in this historical moment, and in light of this violence against the most vulnerable in our society, there is clear justification for a focus on saving the unborn and assisting their mothers in whatever way we can.**"

Please don't imagine that the victory in Dobbs vs. Jackson ends the fight for our pre-born sisters and brothers. It continues.

As Congress demonstrated last week, those who align themselves with Moms in need who choose life, or Churches that will not be quiet about what Jesuit author John Powell called 'The Silent Holocaust' will face rejection and both physical and verbal abuse. But how can we do otherwise? We are the voice for the voiceless ones.

We are called to be forces for the Salvation of Human Life!

Msgr. Jim Lisante