



June 24, 2022

**Statement of Bishop Ronald A. Hicks of the Diocese of Joliet  
on the U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade***

The U.S. Supreme Court decision issued today in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* overturns the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling that legalized abortion across the country. Today's decision is an answer to decades of prayer and upholds the protection of the most innocent of all human life – the child in the mother's womb – which has long been a tenet of Catholic social teaching. I celebrate this ruling yet mourn the fact that here, in our home state of Illinois, it will have no immediate impact given the state's 2019 enshrinement into law of abortion as a misguided fundamental right. Perhaps the court's ruling and recent public conversations, coupled with our own prayers, will stir within the hearts, minds and souls of our elected political leaders a greater respect for the beauty and dignity of human life from conception to natural death. I ask that you join me in earnest and fervent prayer for not only the conversion of those in civic leadership, but for those in our own homes, families and communities who need the light of Christ to see clearly how all are made in the image and likeness of God.

I also ask that you support *Walking with Moms in Need*, an initiative of the U.S. bishops to aid and encourage women facing unexpected or difficult pregnancies. Throughout his papacy, Pope Francis has urged us to embrace the “culture of encounter” by pausing, meeting with, and accompanying those in need on their journey. What is a more promising example of such an encounter than expectant and new moms and their babies?

Finally, I implore all to receive today's ruling with peace toward their neighbors and animus toward none. We are all called to see the face of God in our neighbor, regardless of any strong disagreements on issues as significant as the sanctity of life. As a missionary people seeking to draw others into an encounter with the risen Lord, how we react to the court's ruling or any other matter of political, moral or social concern can leave a lasting impression upon others as to what it means to follow Christ. We must always speak the truth in charity and be willing to accompany one another in patience, humility and gentleness. Through the peace we extend others, the goodness of our God will surely shine through.

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