

## **FAQs:** Collegians for Life Pro-life Education

### **1. What about abortion to save the life of the mother?**

According to Alan Guttmacher, former president of Planned Parenthood, “Today it is possible for almost any patient to be brought through pregnancy alive, unless she suffers from a fatal disease such as cancer or leukemia, and if so, abortion would be unlikely to prolong, much less save the life of the mother”.

When a woman is pregnant, medical personnel treat two patients, the woman and her child. Ideally, medical interventions are directed to enhance the health of both. In some rare cases, such as uterine cancer or ectopic pregnancy (the baby implants in the fallopian tube. If this ruptures, the woman is likely to die), the mother may choose a procedure that will result in an indirect abortion. The death of the child is unintended. This is different from the intentional abortion of a child when other medical options are available. Particularly inspiring is the story of Gianna Molla, an Italian doctor who chose to delay medical treatment for a uterine tumor in order to give her unborn daughter life. Although some may argue Gianna’s sacrifice was futile and ended in the “waste” of her life, it should be noted that her daughter and other children are carrying on her legacy. A home for women facing crisis pregnancies was opened in Warsaw, ND this year, named in her honor. Numerous charitable organizations throughout the world have also been started due to Gianna’s influence.

### **2. Is abortion justified if the child was conceived in a case of rape or incest?**

Less than one percent of women who are raped become pregnant. For one hundred percent of women who have been raped, they are in a state of mental, physical, and emotional crisis. There is scientific evidence for Post-Abortion Syndrome, a cluster of symptoms including depression, extreme guilt, nightmares, nervous disorders, and debilitating sadness. For a woman who has been raped and then has an abortion, her chances of decreased psychologic functioning are greatly increased. Abortion only adds to the trauma of rape.

If abortion was legal only in cases of rape or incest, only a fraction of one percent of women would be qualified to have an abortion. Unfortunately the rapists often walk free while the innocent child gets the death penalty for a crime s/he didn’t commit.

Also, many families have adopted children from women who have been raped, or women themselves have kept their children. They all speak of the joy and healing that has occurred in their lives.

### **3. Abortion is a basic woman’s right.**

What about the 700,000 unborn women who are aborted each year? Abortion is commonly defended as a way for women to gain control over their bodies, to have brighter futures, and to give them reproductive freedom. Pro-abortion advocates say women need to have “choice”.

Look at it this way: Does a woman really have control over her body when she is subjected to a potentially unsafe medical procedure that could leave her sterile or unable to carry future pregnancies to term? There are stories of women who have endured an

abortion and then been raped by the abortionist. Carol Everett, a former abortion clinic “counselor” stated that abortions were often done on women who weren’t pregnant, after lying to them about their pregnancy test results.

Do women who have had abortions have a brighter future? Post-abortion Syndrome is a serious after effect, including depression, guilt, intense grief, sexual problems, lowered self esteem, eating disorders, anxiety and panic attacks, and flashbacks. One survey of post-abortion women indicated that 31% experienced suicidal feelings while 28% actually attempted suicide, 60% of the women said having the abortion made their lives worse, and 94% regretted the decision to have an abortion. The rate of alcohol and substance abuse is substantially higher for post-abortion women, and these women are more likely to be in an abusive or dysfunctional relationship.

Abortion is anything but “freedom” and “choice”. Often abortion is the only choice for women. Many girls are pressured by their boyfriends or parents to get an abortion when they would rather have the child or give it up for adoption. In Florida, one woman drove her daughter to an abortion facility at gunpoint. The girl didn’t want to have an abortion. Pro-abortion advocates often openly attack crisis pregnancy centers that provide pregnant women with clothing, shelter, money, parenting classes, and adoption services. Abortion is a multi-million dollar industry and operates on the fear of women facing a crisis pregnancy, giving her only one choice.

Most feminists have departed from the ways of their foremothers who were adamantly pro-life. Susan B. Anthony stated,

“Guilty? Yes. No matter what the motive, love of ease, or a desire to save from suffering the unborn innocent, the woman is awfully guilty to commits the deed.”

Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote to Julia Ward Howe, “When we consider that women are treated as property, it is degrading to women that we should treat our children as property to be disposed of as we see fit”.

Victoria Woodhull, the first woman presidential candidate, claimed, “Every woman knows that if she were free, she would never think of murdering [her child] before its birth”, and “The rights of children as individuals begin while yet they remain the fetus”.

#### **4. Is there a link between abortion and breast cancer?**

The World Conference on Breast Cancer concluded that abortion does increase the risk of breast cancer. In the US, 1 in 9 women will have breast cancer. Eleven out of twelve case-control studies of US women of Africa, Asian, and European ancestries showed increased risk of breast cancer in those who had abortions. Twenty-five out of thirty-one worldwide case control and cohort studies indicated the same.

When conception occurs, the breast undergoes tremendous changes. The breast cells grow rapidly and are in an immature, undifferentiated state. If the pregnancy is terminated, many of these cells remain in this state. They are more susceptible to cancerous changes.

#### **5. How safe is abortion?**

Abortion is a highly unregulated industry. Some OB/GYN doctors call abortion facilities “chop shops” because while legal, they operate below the standard of care. In the past five years, three abortion practitioners and a facility manager have been charged

with felonies in connection with botched abortions - only in Southern California. In Georgia, a facility was closed by the Department of Human Resources due to use of unsterilized equipment, unqualified employees, and maintenance and housekeeping failures including an open window just feet from an operating table, dirty floors, and holes in the operating room walls. Between 1973 (the year abortion was legalized) and 1987, 215 women have died from legal abortions. This is incredible as abortion is billed as a safe, painless procedure with no consequences.

Death is not the only consequence. Women have suffered punctured uteruses, severe hemorrhaging, permanent infertility, damaged cervixes, punctured and ruptured colons requiring permanent colostomies, and so on. One abortionist who killed a woman in 1995 was found to have injured women in the past so severely that their anatomy was “difficult to identify”.

#### **6. Wouldn't available abortions make “every child a wanted child”?**

Since the legalization of abortion, child abuse, neglect, and abandonment has skyrocketed. Just in North Dakota last year, Social Services handled over 5,000 child maltreatment cases, ranging from neglect to combined physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Contrary to the belief abortions would eliminate “unwanted” children, more of them are being born than ever before. Abortion has given us the mindset that children are disposable. A good index of a society is how it treats its very old, very young, and very helpless. America scores poorly on all three.

Abortions have also created a deficit in “wanted” children. While millions of infertile couples are waiting to adopt a US child, many are forced to adopt internationally or not at all. If every woman who had an abortion this year gave her child up for adoption, there would still be people waiting to adopt a child.

#### **7. What should a young woman do if she becomes pregnant and her parents and partner are not supportive, or she is very afraid of telling them?**

There are many support services available, including the Women's Pregnancy Center in Grand Forks, Catholic Family Services (offers services to non-Catholics, too), and Blessed Gianna's Maternity Home in Warsaw, ND. All these provide counseling, interpersonal assistance, and pregnancy and adoption services. Churches often have counselors available, as well as other forms of assistance. Women have many more choices than abortion.

#### **8. When does human life begin?**

If it is more permissible to kill a fetus than to kill an infant because the fetus is less of a person, then it is for exactly the same reason more permissible to kill a seven-year-old who has not yet developed many of his educational and communications skills, than to kill a 27-year old.

Is a person one who is consciously performing human acts? If so, people who are asleep are not people, and we may kill them. What about one with a future capacity for performing personal acts? That would mean that dying persons, who will be incapable of doing these, are not persons. One grows into the ability to perform personal acts only because one already is the kind of thing that grows into the ability to perform personal acts, i.e., a person. The being is actual, the function is potential.

Birth is only a change of place and relationship to the mother and surrounding world: how could these things create personhood? As for viability, it varies with accidental and external factors like available technology (incubators). (Peter Kreeft)

Scientists are able to identify the gender of a 3 day old embryo - 4 to 8 cells large - using DNA studies. This genetic message is in lie, and the expression of this genetic message is life. If the message is a human message, the being is a human being. (Jerome Jejeune)