



FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

201 W. Park Avenue
Tallahassee, FL 32301
www.flaccb.org

Michele M. Taylor, Associate Director for Communications, (850) 205-6817, mtaylor@flacathconf.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Ingrid Delgado
Associate for Social Concerns/Respect Life
(850) 205-6825
idelgado@flacathconf.org

Florida's Catholic Bishops Release Statement Marking 42nd Anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* Decision

**Bishops encouraged by pro-life progress while lamenting continued devastation of abortion
Both women and men are affected by abortion and the Church is here to assist them
The fight for the recognition of the sanctity of all human life will continue**

TALLAHASSEE, FL (January 12, 2015) - The Catholic bishops of Florida, even as they mourn the deaths of millions of unborn children, remain heartened by progress made towards the recognition and protection of human life. "Often in the face of great opposition, new pro-life laws are passed and pregnancy centers across our state continue to provide counseling and support for mothers in need," said the bishops in their statement on the 42nd anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision on *Roe v. Wade*. "We also remain hopeful as we witness, through the efforts of parish and diocesan ministries, those who experience a conversion of heart and come to treasure the unborn child."

Referencing what Pope Francis has deemed a "throwaway culture," one which considers life disposable, the bishops state, "As a result, those populations who are most vulnerable outside the womb are also most vulnerable inside the womb." Determining the value of the human person based solely on gender, race, health, age or financial status puts one at risk of being marginalized by society and deemed worthless. Likewise, children within the womb whose worth is similarly measured are often at greater jeopardy of having their lives terminated through abortion.

The bishops also note, "Each abortion affects not only a woman who may be suffering, but involves a man who may be experiencing grief and guilt." They remind us that, "Jesus Christ longs to extend his abundant mercy and love to these women and men, and the Church is here to assist them both in the process of healing and finding this peace."

Encouraged by the positive strides to protect the unborn child, Florida's bishops vow to "continue to fight for life always to triumph over death."

The full text of the Statement of the Catholic Bishops of Florida on the 42nd Anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* is available online in English: (<http://www.flaccb.org/statements/2015/150122RoevWade.pdf>)
Spanish: (<http://www.flaccb.org/statements/2015/150122RoevWadeSpanish.pdf>)

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The archbishop and bishops of the seven (arch)dioceses in Florida constitute its board of directors.*