



## Office of the Bishop

*Diocese of Brooklyn*

310 Prospect Park West  
Brooklyn, New York 11215

June 24, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today's decision by the Supreme Court in *Dobbs v. Jackson* is certainly encouraging. I offer sincere appreciation to all of you who have worked tirelessly as witnesses and advocates for the unborn, as helpers of mothers and babies before and after birth, and as healers of all who have been wounded by the horrors of abortion. Those of us in the pro-life movement could have easily been discouraged throughout these past fifty years. However, the Lord has always renewed our strength and our hope in the most difficult moments as we continued to fight for the rights of the most defenseless members of society.

Today's decision corrects the crucial errors of *Roe v. Wade* and accompanying cases that have prevented our elected representatives from enacting even modest legal protections for the unborn. However, we surely still have a long way to go to convert hearts. We are challenged now to do more to foster a Culture of Life that respects the dignity of every human person, created in the image and likeness of God, from the first moment of conception to natural death and at every moment in between.

This decision is an important step along the way and will allow individual states to enact limits on abortion that have widespread support, especially with respect to abortions later in pregnancy. So, where do we go from here?

- **Prayer** – We must beg the Lord's mercy for the sins against the unborn and against women in crisis pregnancies who were made to think that they had no alternative to abortion. We ask God to transform hardened hearts and renew within the Catholic community the firm resolve to win greater protection for the little ones in the womb.
- **Charity and respect** – We must meet the vitriol of the negative reactions to this decision as true followers of Christ. We must exercise tremendous charity in our words and actions. This will contribute to the conversion of hearts and minds to the cause of life.
- **Dialogue** – As Catholic citizens, we will seek to build consensus around the fundamental value and dignity of all human life. Participation in public debate in advancing pro-life legislation is not only our right as Americans, but also our responsibility. We know that there is widespread agreement on some limitations to abortion and on greater support for women and families during pregnancy. Though it may prove difficult to pass pro-life

legislation here in New York State, we can attain some positive change by holding our elected officials accountable. We must seek allies from around the state, from other churches, religious communities, and the broader public.

- **Solidarity** – We must accompany those most afraid and in need, especially women and families facing unexpected or difficult pregnancies. The bishops of New York State recently released a statement entitled “[\*Toward a Pro-Life Future in the Empire State\*](#).” We are proposing new initiatives and policy changes that would assist women in carrying their babies to term and renewing our commitment to do our part. Faithful Catholics in Brooklyn and Queens have long been generous and even heroic in volunteering at pregnancy and early-childhood centers such as the Life Center and Bridge to Life. The credibility of our witness will demand that we redouble our efforts to support women and children in need, not only until birth but beyond. Unfortunately, here in New York State those pregnancy centers are under attack not only from fringe groups, but even from the state government itself, which recently enacted legislation harassing the centers under the guise of “studying them.”

The Church’s pro-life witness is marked by joy and respect for every human person, even those who oppose our message or even wish to silence us. Authentic pro-life witness demands consistent advocacy for the respect for human dignity in truth and love at every stage of life for every human person created in the image and likeness of God. I am grateful for that witness and proud to stand alongside you.

May God continue to bless us at this important and historical moment remembering the unborn need us to continue to champion the cause of their life. May we be bold, joyful, and credible instruments of His peace as we strive to build a society in which all children are welcomed into the world and cherished for the beautiful gift they are.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

  
Most Reverend Robert J. Brennan  
Bishop of Brooklyn