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Letter from Archbishop Quinn  
(06/24/91)  
re: Abortion



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

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Abortion Protest

June 24, 1991

My dear brother priests,

I am writing to inform you that Planned Parenthood of San Mateo County has sued the Archdiocese of San Francisco together with several other organizations and some individuals. Planned Parenthood alleges in the suit that the defendants have engaged in various illegal acts during pro-life activities at the site of an abortion clinic in Daly City.

We have made it clear to Planned Parenthood and to the Court as a matter of public record and continue to affirm that the Archdiocese of San Francisco cherishes and defends the rights of the unborn to life and unequivocally condemns the practice of abortion as the destruction of innocent human life. In addition, we have reaffirmed our position that the Supreme Court decision of Roe v. Wade lacks foundation in the Constitution, is misguided and should be overturned.

At the same time, we have denied and we do deny that we or anyone acting on our behalf has engaged in any illegal activity, or that it is the position of the Archdiocese to encourage or condone any illegal action in connection with pro-life demonstrations.

At an early stage in the litigation with Planned Parenthood, the Federal Court issued a preliminary injunction restraining the activities of some of the defendants at the abortion clinic. I enclose a copy of that injunction for your information. While the injunction does not specifically apply to the Archdiocese, it does appear to include relatively reasonable, though perhaps imperfect, guidelines for pro-life protests, which allow expression of pro-life viewpoints in a peaceful manner.

While the Archdiocese praises and encourages those who serve as representatives of the Archdiocese, indeed all Catholics, to lend their voices to the defense of life, especially innocent unborn human life, I ask those who engage in pro-life activities and protests to do so in a peaceful and legal manner. I further ask that you not use or allow to be used any property or facility of the Archdiocese to encourage or promote violation of the provisions of the injunction which accompanies this letter.

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As I have written elsewhere, abortion is the axe at the root of human rights. When the right to life is no longer sovereign, all other rights are in jeopardy.

With gratitude to you and to all who act in defense of human life, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *John R. Quinn*

Archbishop of San Francisco