

ABORTION IN THE POST-ROE ERA

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No institution in American history has been more resolute in its opposition to abortion than the Catholic Church. Protestants and Jews were almost in lockstep praising *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, largely because our side was against it. Then things changed.

In the 1970s, evangelical Protestants moved away from their reflexive anti-Catholicism and took a more sober look at what abortion entailed. They joined our side. Regrettably, most of the mainline Protestants—the United Church of Christ, Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, American Baptists, and Episcopalians—stayed in the abortion rights camp.

Among Jews, those who are observant—the practicing Jews—may not share the Catholic understanding of abortion altogether, but they are much closer to us than they are to their secular cousins; they clearly reject abortion-on-demand. Unfortunately, most Jews are secularists and are therefore on the pro-abortion side.

The political parties flipped in the 1970s. The Republicans, led by the WASP elite, were always on the side of the abortion activists. They founded Planned Parenthood with Rockefeller money, quietly saying that abortion was the answer to the “urban problem,” meaning blacks. By the end of the decade, most Republicans became pro-life.

Until the 1970s, the Democrats, led by Catholics, wanted nothing to do with abortion. But the radical feminists booted Catholics from power and took over the party. In the early 1970s, Sen. Edward Kennedy wrote passionately against abortion (I have a copy of one of his letters) and Rev. Jesse Jackson said it was “genocide” against black people. Both became abortion proponents by the end of the decade.

All along, the Catholic Church stood fast. We were the only ones who were both consistent and on the right side of the issue. We should never forget that, and indeed more Catholic students should be made aware of this verity.

After almost a half century of legal abortion, the issue was returned to the states last year. We are now in the post-*Roe* era, and this means we must adjust our strategies to meet current needs.

Ever since the *Dobbs* decision overturned *Roe*, many in the pro-life camp decided to change state laws in a dramatic fashion, hoping to make abortion illegal in every case, or at least in most cases. Voters, who certainly did not approve of the very liberal abortion laws in the states prior to *Dobbs*, did not want to go full circle either. They hit the pause button on initiatives that would ban virtually all abortions.

The all-or-nothing strategy doesn't work. We need to start with the most indefensible of all abortions—late term abortions—and work our way back. If we have a choice of trying to ban all abortions, and failing, and banning many of them, and succeeding, the latter is preferable. After all, each abortion not performed means another life saved.

We also need to challenge the myth that everyone who is an abortion rights advocate is not truly pro-abortion. While this may be true of most Americans on the abortion rights side, it is not true of all of them, and it most certainly is not true of abortion activists who exploit women by telling them they should feel good about their abortions.

The *Nation* magazine is the oldest radical left-wing publication in the country. In the last century, it proudly defended Stalin, even after his mass murders were exposed. Virulently pro-abortion, it recently offered a Thanksgiving gift to its readers. It published the comments of nine women who bragged about their abortions. Six of them admitted to

having more than one.

The common denominator was their happiness over having children when they felt like it. One woman said, "I *am* thankful for both of my abortions. I am thankful that I didn't want to be a parent *then*, so I didn't have to be a parent *then* (her italics)." Another woman said, "I am thankful for the freedom of self. Some people may call this selfish, but I don't think it is." The others voiced similar sentiments.

Their self-absorption is stunning. It's all about me. What I want and when I want it. They make it sound like they are ordering from a fast-food joint, tailoring their order to fit their wants.

The men in their lives come out as winners. After they get what they want, they hand over their credit card and tell their pregnant girlfriend (if she is even that) to get rid of the baby on her lunch hour.

Young women need to be educated. Not about sex—unwanted pregnancies and STDs have spiked since sex ed became mandatory decades ago—but about being exploited. They need to know that there are legions of men who will use them as a means to their ends. They need a radical wake-up call.

The young men also need to be educated, morally speaking. They need to learn why engaging in reckless sex hurts themselves and others, and they need adult men to tell them this to their face.

We won on Roe, and now we have to set our sights on more victories. We need to adjust our sails, without ever losing our resolve.