

"I hope that together we can work towards protecting Ireland's Eighth Amendment. It is a law that has protected hundreds of thousands of Irish lives."

Sarah Moynihan, 21, is a student from Co. Meath >



Sarah's Story "I have always been pro-life but I remember the day I wholeheartedly promised to always stand up for the unborn.

"I heard a woman speak called Melissa Odhen, who survived an abortion in America. I remember asking myself 'If abortion was really about womens' rights, then where were Melissa's rights when doctors tried to end her life when she was in the womb?'"

"I see and acknowledge the gift of life as the fundamental cornerstone upon which society survives. The right to life is the most important human right, without it all other rights are meaningless.

"As women we have the capacity to bear life inside of us. This is something which should empower us. I understand that women can sometimes find themselves in difficult situations when pregnant, but if the only help we as a society can offer her is to end the life of her baby, then we have failed that woman.

"Being pro-life in today's society is often labelled as something repressive and anti-woman, but for me it is the exact opposite. From personal experience, and from meeting many other like-minded people, I know that there is always a better answer than abortion. When women find themselves in such crisis, society should strive to eliminate that crisis, not the child. Abortion is life-ending, not life-saving.

"I hope that together we can work towards protecting Ireland's Eighth Amendment, a law that has protected hundreds of thousands of Irish lives. We must remember to be compassionate and loving towards all those most personally affected by this issue but also be firm and unafraid of what we are standing for. Future lives depend on it."

What can I do?

Why not pray the family prayer included in this week's newsletter with your family before having a meal together or at bedtime?

Your Questions

What happens if a pregnant woman's life is at risk?

If a seriously ill pregnant woman needs life-saving medical treatment which may, as a secondary effect, put the life of her baby at risk, such treatments are always ethically permissible provided every effort has been made to save the life of both mother and baby. Abortion is the *direct* and *intentional* ending of the life of an unborn baby. The Catholic Church upholds that necessary medical intervention to save the life of a pregnant woman, which results in the untended death of her unborn baby, is never considered an abortion.

What if the baby dies?

If a baby dies as a result of life-saving medical treatment to save the life of a pregnant woman it is extremely sad and a tragic outcome. If the intention of the doctor is not to directly and intentionally end the baby's life, then this is not an abortion.

Week 5

Hi Mammy!

We're now connected by our umbilical cord. There is a lot going on inside and outside my tiny body. My brain has divided into distinct segments and my nervous system, spine, lungs and liver have started to form. I have tiny buds that will one day be my arms and legs. If you could see me you'd see the beginnings of my nose, eyes and ears. I hope I get your good looks!



Over the coming weeks we will be following the development of Baby Bump based on pregnancy milestones up to 12 weeks.

Church teaching

The unborn child is a person

There is no moment as significant as the moment of conception in terms of defining the beginning of personal existence. Everything else is simply the process of growth and development of a person who has already embarked on the wonderful journey of life.

It is illogical to consider a newborn child to be a person deserving human rights and, on the other hand, an unborn child to be a non-person undeserving of human rights.

For Christians, there is no conflict between faith and reason. Reason leads us to recognise the continuity of human life, from conception to natural death, and faith allows us to see each person as having their origin in God and their fulfilment in eternal life.

Modern science

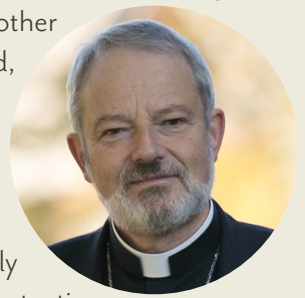
A window into the womb

Amazing advances in ultrasound technology reveal the humanity of the unborn child. By day 21, a baby's heart is beating. At just six weeks, the baby's eyes and eyelids, nose, mouth and tongue have formed.

By week 8, everything found in a fully grown person is developing. By week 12, fingerprints and fingernails appear. The baby's lips can open and close. Babies can yawn, swallow and suck. They have 20 tiny teeth buds in their gums and can be seen kicking and leaping about in the womb.

All of this is happening even before the mother's bump starts to show.

"WHEN IT COMES TO THE RIGHT TO choose, there is a tendency to forget that there is another person involved, a vulnerable person who has no choice and who depends entirely on others for protection.



If society accepts that one human being has the right to end the life of another, then it is no longer possible to claim the right to life as a fundamental human right for anybody. This is the final frontier. If we cross it, there will be no easy way back."

Excerpt from the Pastoral Message on Unborn Human Life from Bishop Kevin Doran of Elphin

Family Prayer

Blessed are you, Lord God, giver of life and love.

We thank you for the gift of our children.

May they grow before you in wisdom and grace.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Veritas Book of Blessing Prayers



"After I had my baby, my friends were all in college or working. It was like we had nothing in common anymore. I emailed Cura and they put me in contact with my local centre. I went to see a counsellor a few times. She was brilliant." Jenny, 22.

Cura is an agency of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference which supports women experiencing unplanned pregnancies. If you need Cura's help call **1850 622 626** or visit **Cura.ie**

To access videos, testimonies and frequently asked questions visit **www.chooselife2018.ie**