

## Abortion

- Under no circumstances does the Church condone the practice of surgical or pharmaceutical abortions (such as RU-486 or the morning-after-pill). Abortion cannot be justified by appealing to convenience, hardships, or “a woman’s right to choose”. Here is what the Church officially teaches in the Catechism:
- Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person—among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life (CCC 2270).
- Scripture also indirectly attests to the personhood and humanity of the fetus in Jeremiah 1:5: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you".
- The ancient Tradition of forbidding abortions is expressed in the Didache, a first century writing of the apostles: "You shall not kill the embryo by abortion and shall not cause the new-born to perish" (Didache 2,2")
- The reasoning and arguments of the pro-choice movement have been addressed numerous times by Church authorities (such as John Paul II in *Evangelium Vitae*) who are much more eloquent and adept than the author, and I will not reiterate them here other than to say that a women’s right to choose abortion is not moral or licit because it interferes with and extinguishes the child’s right to live. A child has a soul from the moment of conception and therefore is a person who has certain unalienable rights, the most fundamental of all which is the right to life. Until the present Pope relaxed it, there used to be an automatic excommunication for anyone guilty of abortion and that even extended to anyone who condoned, supported or performed it, such as doctors or family members. Any catholic guilty of the above must have recourse to the Sacrament of Penance before they receive Holy Communion.

- In order to prevent Catholics from deceiving themselves and arguing that the Church's two thousand year condemnation of abortion is only an opinion and not a doctrinal teaching of the faith, Pope John Paul II formally defined the condemnation of abortion in the encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*:
- Therefore, by the authority which Christ conferred upon Peter and his successors and in communion with the bishops . . . *"I declare that direct abortion, that is, abortion willed as an end or as a means, always constitutes a grave moral disorder, since it is the deliberate killing of an innocent human being. This doctrine is based upon the natural law and upon the written word of God, is transmitted by the Church's tradition and taught by the ordinary and universal magisterium. No circumstance, no purpose, no law whatsoever can ever make licit an act which is intrinsically illicit, since it is contrary to the law of God which is written in every human heart, knowable by reason itself, and proclaimed by the Church"* (*Evangelium Vitae* 62).