

Daily Meditation 09/04/2021

## **Texas Zealots Banning Abortion, continued**

Good morning.

We're discussing again the theological background to the subject of abortion. And it's more nuanced than those who fetishize abortion in the name of religion let onto.

What I tried to do in writing this article a year or so ago was to point out that we could find a lot of common ground between the so-called pro-life and the Roe versus Wade people.

And we can! And I begin to lay this out in today's essay. For example, to be in favor of Roe versus Wade does not mean you're in favor of abortion. There's nothing in Roe versus Wade that demands that a person get an abortion. Nothing, zero, nada.

If you're against abortion, fine: you don't get one and you try to convince others not to for the reasons that you're against abortion.

What is being said is that, if a woman is going to have an abortion -- and women will have abortions; there are many reasons for having an abortion.

This is why many women get abortions: it's not a small thing to commit 20-plus years of your life to care for another human being, especially if you are on faulty ground yourself because of poverty, or because of health issues, or because you already have children, with the many demands children make on one.

So the point is: let us make abortion as safe as possible. There're going to be abortions in our society; let's make them as safe as possible. We're not telling anyone "you must get an abortion," but let us make abortions as safe as possible.

That is what Roe versus Wade is about. In this way a woman's life is not in danger. Because when states like Texas, and the Supreme Court suddenly going silent on the topic, decide that no women should have abortions -- there're 30 million people in the state of Texas, and seven million women of child-bearing age.

When such a state makes that decision, it really is a decision to force women into dangerous abortions.

So Roe versus Wade makes a woman's life more safe. There'll be far less danger for her and her body, and for her to continue her work as a mother, as a spouse, or as a citizen working in society, if she's healthy after getting an abortion.

Of course wealthy women could fly off and get their abortions, but middle-class women and young women and poor women are the objects of this assault by so-called pro-life people. An assault on those who are already living, mothers and their children, and others who depend on them, including their husbands and partners.

Another point to be made -- and this I cannot make strongly enough. I can't believe how many bishops I think missed Ethics 101, because this you learn in Ethics class 101 - at least I did. There's a difference between good law and good morality. Let me say it again: there's a difference between good law and good morality.

Law cannot always dictate good morality. And the shadow side is parallel: there's bad law and good morality, there's bad law and bad morality. So good law and good morality are not always the same thing. This is why you can be against abortion but in favor of Roe versus Wade.

And it's also why diversity of conscience is to be encouraged. And we live in a pluralistic culture in a pluralistic time, in a democracy not a theocracy. Churches and those who claim to represent God and pro-life who are really only interested in the question of abortion, not of what happens to a child when he or she is born or for the next 25 years of their life. Issues like education and a just economic system that doesn't put so much of the power of money in the hands of a few who pay no taxes, most of them.

Another rule that is explicit in the Catholic tradition is called the lesser of two evils. You can believe abortion is evil, but so too is men telling women what to do with their bodies -- that is evil; it's more evil than abortion. Especially when the men we're talking about are power-hungry, reptilian-brain-driven, sexist, misogynist, "I will control you," really sadistic people.

This is a path of fascism. Fascism is about control, and it does not care about the suffering of others, the suffering of women who have come to the difficult conclusion decision that they need an abortion.

Let us not hold up men and give them the power to think they have -- this kind of man, and you give them the power -- so they can carry on thinking that they can dictate to women, and to their husbands, and to their children who are alive, what their most intimate decisions are about bringing a child into this world.

Let us leave that to the women and to their doctors and to their spouses.

Thank you, see you tomorrow.