

FATHER MARK SCHULTE HOMILY
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 24, 2021
“Evil of Abortion”

Brothers and Sisters:

The story of Nineveh is that classic story of condemnation, repentance, and forgiveness.

The Prophet Jonah was the reluctant messenger of God. He was certain that his message of repentance would not be well received and so he took the “long route” to his destination hoping to avoid his mission (3 days in the fish).

His message to the Ninevites was a simple one: “God will destroy you if you do not repent and change your ways.” Fortunately for them, they received the message well and God spared their city (they repented in sack cloth and ashes).

There are other examples in scripture where a severe chastisement was the ultimate outcome.

- Cain was banished to a life of wandering for killing his brother.
- In Noah’s day, God punished the entire world with a flood for their sins.
- The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were completely destroyed for their wicked immorality.
- Egypt was chastised severely for killing the Hebrew babies and other terrible acts.
- The Israelites Dathan and his cohorts were literally swallowed up by the earth for their sinful acts.
- Israel was made to wander in the desert for forty years for their unfaithfulness.
- King Saul was removed from his kingship and eventually killed by the sword for disobeying God (as a King).
- Later, the Israelites were banished into Babylonian captivity for disobeying God and breaking the covenant.

We don’t like to think of these stories, but they are very real, and their message is very clear.

We cannot let this week go by without reflecting upon a very serious and wicked event in our own country. It was almost 50 years ago that our court system legalized the practice of abortion, another terrible reality that many would simply prefer not to talk about. The slaughtering in the womb of over 60 million children.

It was not mentioned much this year because the Covid-flu dominated the news cycle, but the abortion slaughter went on anyway.

Some will attempt to minimize the seriousness of abortion, by lumping it in with other human injustices.

Abortion is different from other social injustices. Abortion is an intrinsic evil in and of itself. That means that its practice is always sinful and cannot be justified in any way, even a little. It is always gravely wrong to do, no matter what the circumstances.

For example, poverty is an evil and an injustice and those who experience poverty should be given assistance whenever possible. But the person in his poverty still possesses the gift of life. The aborted child has had its life snuffed out, murdered. Therefore, the two evils are not the same, not equal in their gravity.

Also: they are not the same from the perspective of the church penalty imposed:

- For example, it is a sin to willfully fail to assist those in need, but no specific penalty is incurred.
- The penalty for abortion is excommunication (Latae Sententiae) from the Church; the withholding of all sacraments until it is confessed.

Abortion is murder – the breaking of the commandment “Thou shall not kill”.

- Therefore, it is a mortal sin and the person who has had an abortion may not be admitted to Holy Communion until it is confessed.

Also: the person who supports, encourages, or promotes abortion in any way may not receive Holy Communion, no matter what the social status of the person might be.

- Life is a gift from God.
- A child is a supreme gift from God no matter the circumstances (i.e., poverty, inconvenience).
- To kill the child is to spit on the gift and the gift giver.

Abortion is a most serious sin and may not be treated lightly. A member of the clergy such as a priest, who knowingly gives Holy Communion to a person who supports or promotes abortion in any way is creating a grave scandal on the people and risks the salvation of his own soul.

God is very merciful. The person who has had an abortion or the person who supports abortion; and for that matter all sinners – which we all are – should consider the story of Nineveh – the people of Nineveh heard God’s message – expressed their willingness to repent, and God spared them from destruction.

Regarding our country –

If America wishes to prosper and avoid its own destruction, it too must repent of the grave sin of abortion like Nineveh and give evidence of that repentance.