

Elder Statement for Sanctity of Life Sunday

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today we observe Sanctity of Life Sunday. We do so knowing that some among us grieve the pain of abortion in our own stories. We observe this day not to cause guilt or condemnation. Christ offers mercy and grace to us all. Rather, we observe this day because God *Himself* says that each of us—no matter how big or small, young or old, weak or strong—is lovingly made in His image. God crafted each of us in our mother's womb from the moment of conception. And we are of such eternal value in His eyes that He sent His *own* Son to die for us.

We also mark this day because Proverbs 31 tells us that we have a duty to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. And Psalm 82 says we must "defend the weak and the fatherless, uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed, and rescue the weak and the needy."

For 50 years, our nation's Supreme Court took the most fundamental of all rights—the right to life—away from the weakest among us: unborn children. That was wrong. As a result of that injustice, over 60 million babies lost their lives and millions more of their mothers, fathers, families, and communities were hurt.

Last summer—by God's grace and in answer to the relentless prayer and untiring efforts of people like you—the Supreme Court reversed course. The court admitted that it was wrong and that *we the people* have both the right and the responsibility to decide how to care for our mothers and daughters and sons. Churches nationwide have responded by redoubling their efforts to support pregnant women and unborn babies. Lives have been saved. Many more will be. This is reason for rejoicing. Let us praise God for His grace.

But, brothers and sisters, I have bad news. Just this month, our *state* supreme court invented a right to abortion in our *state* constitution. In the same stroke, the court struck down a state law protecting babies whose hearts had started beating. The court has effectively banned we the people of South Carolina from defending our state's unborn children from abortionists.

Let me be clear. This ruling is wrong. It has *no* support in law or logic. It is an act of raw judicial power. It has already cost innocent lives and it will cost many more for as long as it stands. And so it cannot stand.

This means that our work is not done. We must put our shoulders back to the plow and lower our knees back to the floor. We must continue serving our community so that every pregnant mother and every unborn child is welcomed, supported, and free to worship our forgiving God. And we must speak up for the right to life.

The stakes are very high. Our state supreme court is the first in the nation to do this injustice. The eyes of the nation are on us. Other state courts are wondering if they can get away with this too. If we fail, if we yawn and turn away, then not only will we have failed our own mothers and children, but also those in other states too.

So let us pray and let us speak and let us act. And let us resolve that we will never stop until this wrong is righted.

In light of all this, you may be asking: what can I do? Here are three important steps:

1. **Pray.** Real change always comes from God.
2. **Volunteer.** Support the Lowcountry Pregnancy Center. Support LifePark's Refuge ministry to help unborn children and young moms. Help people in your community.
3. **Contact your state legislators.** South Carolina's judges are picked by legislators. Your legislators should know what you think about this ruling. You can find your legislators at this website: <https://www.scstatehouse.gov/legislatorssearch.php>