

United Episcopal Church *of North America*

• Missionary Diocese of the South and Ozarks •

June 24, 2022

A Pastoral Letter to the Diocese On thanksgiving for the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,


Today, the United States Supreme Court released its ruling in the case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. This ruling overturns the Court's previous decisions in the infamous *Roe v. Wade* case and others. The result of today's ruling is that the authority to regulate abortion is returned to state governments.

Though this ruling will not, by itself, eliminate abortion, its effect is that abortion is now outlawed in several states. As of today, nine of the ten states included in our diocese, prohibit abortion. In the remaining state, Florida, some restrictions come into effect July 1st, with the potential for complete prohibition to be enacted soon. Within a short time, murder of babies in the womb will be illegal in about 25 states.

It is important to understand that abortion has not ended in the United States. More is needed to protect the lives of innocent preborn babies. We should not stop praying; we should not stop calling on our government leaders to respect and protect life; we should not stop supporting pro-life organizations, adoption agencies, and mothers in crisis. This is work that must continue. However, on this occasion, let us give thanks to God that he has seen fit to bring the end to abortion in many states. Let us rejoice that the lives of many innocents will be spared.

I call upon each congregation in this diocese to mark Sunday, June 26, 2022 as a day of thanksgiving to the Lord for the blessing of children, for the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, and for the protection of preborn babies. The prayer "For the Children" from page 596 of the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer* and Psalm 139 are especially suited for such thanksgiving. I also request that each congregation take a special monetary collection for the benefit of a local pro-life organization that supports mothers in need.

In Christ our hope,



The Rt. Rev. Daniel J. Sparks
Bishop