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Richie Fenton, 28, is an architect from Co. Waterford >



Richie’s Story “The conversations surrounding the Eighth Amendment are largely devoted to dealing with the rights of the mother and the unborn child. The rights and concerns of the father are rarely talked about.

“As a man it can be difficult to discuss the idea of abortion when it is so commonly referred to as a ‘woman’s right’. Men can often feel like they should remain silent on the issue. I feel it is important for everyone in this country to get involved with the discussion which is ultimately a discussion about human rights and the value of human life itself.

“The Eighth Amendment is a life-saving amendment. It gives equal protection to both the baby, and their mother, in law. It is the reason there are tens of thousands of people alive and in our country today – because we don’t have local access to abortion in Ireland. It gives women and couples time to really think the decision through.

“Nowadays we can’t deny the scientific facts about the development of the baby in the womb. We know a baby’s heart starts beating at 21 days and characteristics such as eye and hair colour are defined at the moment of our creation. For me, there is no denying that this is a human life and deserves to be protected.

“The unborn child is completely dependent on us and our laws to protect them. Abortion introduces a culture where we no longer value the life of every human being equally. It discriminates against the most vulnerable in society – a group of real people who rely on us and our constitution to protect them. That is what the Eighth Amendment does. It protects each and every one of us.”

What can I do?

Why not express your views on this important topic on social media in a compassionate way? Don’t forget to use #ChooseLife2018 as the hashtag!

Your Questions

Is a view on abortion solely a question of religious belief?

The right to life is not just a question of religious belief. As the first and fundamental human right, it affects people of all faiths, and none. You do not have to be from any particular faith tradition to agree that human life should be protected and that intentionally ending the life of another human is never justified. Supporting and sustaining a culture of life is in the interest of every citizen, Catholics and all people of goodwill because it defines us as a society.

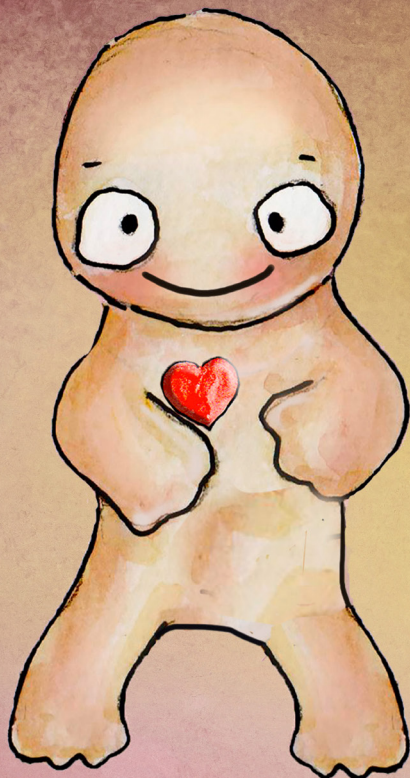
What is the view of the Church?

The Church teaches that life is sacred from conception to natural death and there is no such thing as a life without value. This belief is based on reason as well as faith. Our Church rejects the suggestion that any person can decide when it is time for another person to die.

Bump!

Hi Mammy!

Today my heart started to beat for the first time and I'm only three weeks old. I'm really tiny and the sound of my little heart is too soft to detect yet but it's there! You and Daddy will be able to hear it in just a few short weeks. I love you both!



Over the coming weeks we will be following the development of Baby Bump based on pregnancy milestones up to 12 weeks.

Church teaching

During pregnancy is one life more important than the other?

By virtue of their common humanity, a mother and her unborn baby have an equal right to life. The Catholic Church has never taught that the life of a child in the womb should be preferred to that of a mother. This aspect of Catholic Church's teaching on the right to life is often presented inaccurately.

If a pregnant woman becomes seriously ill and needs treatment which may, as a secondary effect, put the life of her baby at risk, such treatment is always ethically permissible provided every effort has been made to save the life of both mother and baby. Abortion, by contrast, is the direct and intentional ending of an unborn baby's life.

Human Rights Law

Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

"Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person".

The right to life is a fundamental human right. Without it all other human rights, such as the right to education, food and shelter, free speech, are meaningless.

The unborn child will grow and change in rapid ways during the nine months of pregnancy. Our basic needs as human beings are the same inside and outside the womb. Fundamental human rights belong to everyone by virtue of our inherent dignity and value as human beings.

"THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE is a message of life. It is about how every human life is a reflection of the very life of God. Each of us is created in the image of God. Catholic teaching clearly affirms that every human life has unique and irreplaceable dignity. Every human life has the right, from its very beginnings, to flourish and develop as God wants it to. Compassion and support for women in difficult situations also belongs to the essence of Catholic teaching. Any society which attempts to define certain lives as being of lesser worth and of lesser protection betrays the common good. All should be equal in the face of the law. That is a fundamental principle of our Constitution – and indeed of democracy – to be maintained and protected."



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin

Family Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are the
source and lover of life
Reawaken in us respect
for every human life
Help us to see in each child
the marvellous work of our Creator
Open our hearts to welcome
every child as a unique and
wonderful gift from God.
Amen.

*Choose Life: Prayer for the Child in the Womb,
Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2012*



"I wasn't with my girlfriend long when she got pregnant. I was so stressed out. A friend recommended Cura. It really helped to talk to someone who didn't know me personally. I'm working through things now with my girlfriend" Michael, 35.

Cura is an agency of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference which supports women experiencing unplanned pregnancies. If you need Cura's help call **1850 622 626** or visit **Cura.ie**

To access videos, testimonies and frequently asked questions visit **www.chooselife2018.ie**