

The Lord of Life, and the Election on April 4

It is ironic that I am writing this on the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25), the day we recall the words of the Angel Gabriel to Mary: “Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Immanuel.” Yes, in his Incarnation, Jesus embraced our humanity to the point of spending nine months growing as a dependent, preborn child in the womb of Mary.



The irony is that just days from now, on Tuesday, April 4, a state election will take place whose central focus has been abortion. Abortion has been illegal in Wisconsin (with only a life-of-the-mother exception) since the *Dobbs* decision overturned *Roe v. Wade* last June. In fact, nationwide as a result of *Dobbs*, in the first two months alone, it is estimated that nearly 11,000 babies’ lives were saved from abortion.

We give thanks that so many preborn children have been spared, for they are holy images of the God whose conception we celebrate on this Feast of the Annunciation. We recall the words of Psalm 139: “You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother’s womb.”

This great step forward in respect for the sanctity of human life is now under threat. Advocates of legal abortion are pinning their hopes on the State Supreme Court race that is part of the April 4 election, with the winner serving a 10-year term as a Justice on that Court. If the composition of the Court can be swung in their direction, abortion advocates believe that the 1849 state statute outlawing abortion will be struck down, opening the door once more to the killing of preborn children in our state.

Millions of dollars have been poured into this race, much of it from outside of Wisconsin, making it the most expensive State Supreme Court race in our nation’s history. The pro-abortion propaganda about “choice” and “reproductive health” has come fast and furious in political ads on TV and in other media.

It is the responsibility of voters to inform themselves on where the two candidates stand on the issues, especially this life-and-death issue of abortion. The Church’s responsibility is to highlight the moral principles at stake, and to note that without the God-given right to life, all other rights are meaningless.

The Church also calls us to show love and support to women facing pregnancy in difficult circumstances. Indeed, there are more than eighty pregnancy resource centers throughout Wisconsin, ready to welcome expectant mothers with open arms and compassion, and to assist them with any needs they may have. There are fifteen such centers in the Diocese of La Crosse alone, with information at diolc.org/respect-life. Catholic Charities offers support to expectant parents, who may call 1-844-644-7223 or text 715-600-6391. No one needs to face the challenges of a difficult pregnancy alone.

Will Wisconsin remain a state that cherishes and defends the right to life of the child in the womb? It is sobering to note that election day, April 4, falls on Tuesday of Holy Week, the week when Jesus gave his very life to show his love for us and save us from our sins. Please vote with a well-formed Christian conscience, and urge your family, friends, and acquaintances to do the same.

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The Diocese of La Crosse does not endorse candidates or parties, but wishes to lend its voice in forming consciences for faithful citizenship.