



MICHIGAN  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

## Statewide Catholic Action Plan to Defeat Proposal 3

September 14, 2022

Dear Pastor/Pastoral Administrator/Deacon:

On Tuesday, November 8, Catholics across the state will have the opportunity of a lifetime to defeat a proposal that would impose unregulated abortion-on-demand on the people of Michigan. Voters will be asked if the state constitution should be amended to create a right to abortion throughout pregnancy with no regulations, no opportunity for the legislature to change the law, and no limitations on who can obtain an abortion from any person, at any time, without consequences. The question appears on the ballot as Proposal 3. Catholic engagement is necessary to defeat this proposal and its grave consequences.

To witness to and uphold the right to life in this state, and to prevent the abortion industry from turning Michigan into the pro-abortion capital of the country, Michigan Catholic Conference, in collaboration with the seven dioceses in the state, has launched a statewide Catholic Action Plan to defeat Proposal 3.

### **Every parish in Michigan is asked to engage in this effort, to distribute educational materials, and to encourage a No vote on Proposal 3.**

The statewide Catholic Action Plan is designed to assist you and your parish staff with running an educational effort over a seven-week period leading up to the election, starting the weekend of September 24/25, to encourage Catholics to vote against Proposal 3. Enclosed you will find from MCC:

- *FOCUS*: Protect Life: Vote No on Proposal 3
- Questions and Answers about Proposal 3
- They Say/We Respond Document
- Prayer Card
- Suggested Pulpit Announcements
- Suggested Prayers of the Faithful
- 7-week Preaching Guide
- One Page Overview of Proposal 3
- Suggested Parish Action Plan

These resources can be copied and used as needed. Your diocesan communications and pro-life offices will provide additional resources to support the Church's opposition to Proposal 3. MCC is also leading the official ballot question committee with Right to Life of Michigan to defeat the proposal. The group is called Citizens to Support MI Women and Children. MCC encourages your support of this coalition of pro-life professionals and organizations; their website is [supportmiwomenandchildren.org](http://supportmiwomenandchildren.org).

As highlighted in our *2022 Election Year Guidelines for Catholic Parishes and Organizations* pamphlet sent in July, **Catholic organizations and clergy can speak against a ballot proposal and encourage a No vote without limitations.** It is your right to do so. Lastly, I encourage you to use the enclosed form to order additional copies of MCC's *FOCUS* publication and prayer cards at no-cost to distribute within the parish.

With gratitude for your service to the people of God and participation in this immense effort, I am

Sincerely,

Paul A. Long  
President and CEO



# focus

VOL. 50, FALL 2022



MICHIGAN  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

# Protect Life

## VOTE NO ON PROPOSAL 3

ABORTION IS ON THE  
BALLOT IN MICHIGAN  
THIS FALL, AND  
THE STAKES COULD  
NOT BE HIGHER.

In the span of this election, Michigan could go from a state with laws protecting the unborn and vulnerable women from abortion to a state that permanently guarantees unlimited, unregulated abortion.

Proposal 3 goes *far* beyond just keeping abortion legal or reinstating the now overturned *Roe v. Wade* decision.

It would allow abortions to be performed by anyone, at any point in pregnancy, and for any reason. It would throw away state laws regulating quality, safety, and inspections for abortion clinics. It would remove parental consent requirement for teens seeking abortions, and also teens seeking gender reassignment surgeries.

Proposal 3 would move Michigan far from a society where human life is welcomed and where mothers do not have to turn to abortion. Voters must reject this extreme proposal and allow our state to build a culture that values all human life by supporting existing efforts led by pregnancy centers and Catholic Charities agencies to assist mothers in need.

As Catholics, we believe every person has a right to life, which is the fundamental right that makes all other rights possible.<sup>1</sup> Abortion is a “preeminent” threat to the dignity of human life because it is a direct attack on life itself, “the most fundamental good and the condition for all others.”<sup>2</sup>

Already, millions of dollars are pouring into Michigan to get Proposal 3 passed, as this measure is seen by many across the country as a trial run for similar efforts to expand abortion in other states.

As Catholics who stand for the dignity of all human life from conception to natural death, it is time to come together and defeat this dangerous proposal. The Catholic bishops of Michigan emphatically urge a NO vote on Proposal 3 and

strongly urge you to tell every person you know that this amendment goes too far on abortion, and to vote NO.

This issue of **focus** will explain what Proposal 3 would do and why it is dangerous for Michigan. It will empower you to talk with your friends and family about why this amendment must be defeated.

In addition to upholding the dignity of human life, there are several other principles based in Catholic social teaching to consider when voting. This edition of **focus** will also equip Catholics with the principles rooted in the Church’s rich teachings on social justice that are helpful to making a well-informed vote on the entire general election ballot. ■

## *What You Need to Know About Proposal 3*

**How would this change Michigan’s abortion law?** Michigan’s existing pre-*Roe* law prohibits abortion except to save the mother’s life, in addition to numerous other laws that regulate abortion. Under this amendment, all those laws would be revoked, and it would be nearly impossible for the Legislature to pass any laws to regulate abortion and protect women and children.

**Why is this amendment being proposed?** This proposal was launched in anticipation that the U.S. Supreme Court would strike down *Roe*. The Supreme Court ruling allowed abortion regulation to return to individual state legislatures to decide, yet this amendment would take that power away from the Legislature by locking unlimited abortion access into the state constitution.

**How would passing this amendment compare to when *Roe v. Wade* was in effect?** This amendment would take Michigan far beyond what was allowed for abortion under *Roe*. In the half century since *Roe*, dozens of laws have been passed to regulate abortion. Under this amendment, those protections would be gone, and abortion would be unrestricted and unregulated.

**How late into pregnancy would an abortion be allowed under this amendment?** The amendment would allow for abortions all throughout pregnancy. The amendment appears to allow a ban on late-term abortions, but provides an exception based on the mother’s physical and mental health. That means a late-term abortion could be justified for almost any reason.

**How would Michigan compare to other states if this amendment passed?** According to the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute, Michigan is one of 36 states that require parental involvement in their child’s decision to have an abortion, one of 32 states requiring abortions be performed by a licensed physician, and one of 43 states that prohibit abortion after a specified point in pregnancy.

Under Proposal 3, Michigan would no longer require parental consent, that physicians perform abortions, or a limit to when an abortion can happen in a pregnancy, putting Michigan in the minority of states in all three categories. ■

# LAWS AFFECTED BY THE ANYTHING GOES ABORTION AMENDMENT

Because Proposal 3 seeks to create a constitutional “right” to “reproductive freedom,” this amendment could have negative implications for dozens of state laws protecting life and regulating abortion.

Below are examples of laws that could be revoked or limited if Proposal 3 were to pass:

- Increased penalties for later term abortions when babies are fully formed.
- Law requiring babies born alive during an abortion be protected and cared for.
- Conscience rights of hospitals and doctors who decline to take unborn human life.
- Ban on taxpayer-funded Medicaid dollars to pay for abortions.
- Ban on school employees from helping a child obtain an abortion.
- Informed consent provisions for an abortion, such as a 24-hour waiting period, information on fetal development and abortion procedures, and ultrasound viewing.
- Respectful disposal of fetal remains.



Let's not pretend that this constitutional amendment is simply about creating a so-called right to an abortion. It goes much, much farther than that.

**John Bursch**

Former Michigan Solicitor General

## *Responding to Arguments Made for Proposal 3*

The following are examples of what supporters may say about the abortion amendment. Study these responses so that you can help your family and friends better understand the consequences of this proposal.

**THEY SAY** “This amendment ensures women will not be prosecuted for having a miscarriage/abortion.”

**WE RESPOND** There is no history of women being prosecuted in Michigan for either of those circumstances. In addition, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled in 1963 that a woman receiving an abortion is not guilty and cannot be charged. State law also explicitly defines abortion as not including miscarriage.

**THEY SAY** “This amendment stops the government from prosecuting women who experience miscarriages or ectopic pregnancies.”

**WE RESPOND** Abortion is an intentional act to destroy a life, while a miscarriage is a spontaneous action within a woman's body. An ectopic pregnancy is when a fertilized egg implants outside the uterus, where it cannot survive. A woman receiving treatment for an ectopic pregnancy or suffering a miscarriage is not the same as choosing to undergo an abortion. Both state law and the Michigan Supreme Court are clear that women rightfully cannot be prosecuted for an abortion.

**THEY SAY** “Michigan residents should have the constitutional right to abortion care and reproductive freedom.”

**WE RESPOND** Women already have the right to reproductive care in the state of Michigan. Women have access to prenatal, postpartum, and infertility care. Pregnancy help centers provide support and referrals for women unable to see a doctor.

Abortion is not reproductive care as it harms women mentally and physically and guarantees that out of the two patients involved, one will die. Abortion is never medically necessary to help save the life of a mother.

**THEY SAY** “Decisions on abortion should remain between a woman and her doctor”

**WE RESPOND** With this amendment, nonphysicians would be able to conduct abortions, undermining the notion that women would be making these decisions with the help of an appropriately licensed physician.

The amendment would block the state from prohibiting abortions in cases where “in the professional judgment of an attending health care professional,” the abortion “is medically indicated to protect the life or physical or mental health of the pregnant individual.”

Under Michigan law, “health care professional” means more than just a physician, as that definition also includes dentists, chiropractors, massage therapists, acupuncturists, counselors, and psychologists, to name a few examples.

The language also says the state could not “penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against someone for aiding or assisting a pregnant individual in exercising their right to reproductive freedom with their voluntary consent.”

Because of that, a school counselor, for example, could take a 13-year-old girl to get an abortion, contraception, or undergo sterilization without telling her parents, and there is nothing her parents could legally do, if they ever found out.

**THEY SAY** “This amendment allows for women to have autonomy over their own bodies”

**WE RESPOND** A pregnant woman carries inside her a human life that deserves the same dignity that she should be afforded. If a woman becomes pregnant unexpectedly or unwillingly and she feels she is unable or unwilling to parent her child, there are options to ensure the baby is safe and cared for through the state’s adoption process or the Safe Delivery Law, which allows mothers to surrender their newborns for adoption, no questions asked.

**THEY SAY** “This amendment still allows for restricting late-term abortions.”

**WE RESPOND** The amendment creates broad exceptions to any ban enacted on late-term abortions, including for reasons related to mental health. Any pregnant woman could claim not getting a late-term abortion would cause her anxiety or stress, so essentially no abortion would be restricted.

**THEY SAY** “This amendment still allows the state to restrict/regulate abortion after viability.”

**WE RESPOND** This amendment changes the definition of fetal viability to no longer mean when the baby can survive outside the womb, instead defining it as when a baby can survive outside of the womb without “extraordinary medical measures.”

This means that a prematurely born infant who needs intensive medical treatment could be considered not viable in the eyes of the mother and the “healthcare professional,” who does not have to be a licensed physician under the language provided in the amendment.

**THEY SAY** “Over 700,000 Michiganders signed this proposal to put it on the ballot, which shows how widely supported it is.”

**WE RESPOND** Paid petition gatherers are not legally required to tell people everything that a proposal would do. Thus, it is likely that most people who signed the petition did not read the proposal or understand the reality of what they were signing. People from various backgrounds, including those who say they are pro-choice, overwhelmingly oppose partial-birth abortion and support health and safety regulations on abortion clinics. This proposal would give constitutional protections to third-trimester abortions up to birth and likely revoke state law that requires abortion facilities to be licensed and inspected. ■



## BALLOT SUMMARY LANGUAGE

The following language is what voters will read about Proposal 3 on their November 8 General Election or absentee ballot.

*A proposal to amend the state constitution to establish new individual right to reproductive freedom, including right to make all decisions about pregnancy and abortion; allow state to regulate abortion in some cases; and forbid prosecution of individuals exercising this established right.*

*This proposed constitutional amendment would:*

- Establish new individual right to reproductive freedom, including right to make and carry out all decisions about pregnancy, such as prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, contraception, sterilization, abortion, miscarriage management, and infertility;
- Allow state to regulate abortion after fetal viability, but not prohibit if medically needed to protect a patient's life or physical or mental health;
- Forbid state discrimination in enforcement of this right; prohibit prosecution of an individual, or a person helping a pregnant individual, for exercising rights established by this amendment;
- Invalidate state laws conflicting with this amendment.



The words are so vague that they essentially allow abortion up to the moment of birth—precisely what nearly every Michigander rejects.

**John Bursch**

Former Michigan Solicitor General

## PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

The following language is what supporters of Proposal 3 are seeking to place in the Michigan Constitution.

- (1) *Every individual has a fundamental right to reproductive freedom, which entails the right to make and effectuate decisions about all matters relating to pregnancy, including but not limited to prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, contraception, sterilization, abortion care, miscarriage management, and infertility care. An individual's right to reproductive freedom shall not be denied, burdened, nor infringed upon unless justified by a compelling state interest achieved by the least restrictive means. Notwithstanding the above, the state may regulate the provision of abortion care after fetal viability, provided that in no circumstance shall the state prohibit an abortion that, in the professional judgement of an attending health care professional, is medically indicated to protect the life or physical or mental health of the pregnant individual.*
- (2) *The state shall not discriminate in the protection or enforcement of this fundamental right.*
- (3) *The state shall not penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against an individual based on their actual, potential, perceived, or alleged pregnancy outcomes, including but not limited to miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion. Nor shall the state penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against someone for aiding or assisting a pregnant individual in exercising their right to reproductive freedom with their voluntary consent.*
- (4) *For the purposes of this section:*
  - *A state interest is "compelling" only if it is for the limited purpose of protecting the health of an individual seeking care, consistent with accepted clinical standards of practice and evidence based medicine, and does not infringe on that individual's autonomous decision-making.*
  - *"Fetal viability" means: the point in pregnancy when, in the professional judgement of an attending health care professional and based on the particular facts of the case, there is a significant likelihood of the fetus's sustained survival outside the uterus without the application of extraordinary medical measures.*
- (5) *This section shall be self-executing. Any provision of this section held invalid shall be severable from the remaining portions of this section.*

# *The Rest of the Ballot: The Faithful Citizen's Approach to Voting as a Catholic in the November Election*

Along with the portion of the ballot where you vote **NO** on Proposal 3, there will be many other voting decisions in this upcoming general election.

As Catholics, we are obligated to live out faithful citizenship. The bishops tell us that “responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation.”<sup>3</sup>

But what does faithful citizenship mean? The Church has said the lay faithful “are not only bound to penetrate the world with a Christian spirit but are also called to be witnesses to Christ in all things in the midst of human society.”<sup>4</sup> That includes participating in political life, and for most people, that means exercising the right to vote.

With the November election approaching, we encourage all Catholics to be “guided more by our moral convictions than by our attachment to a political party or interest group”<sup>5</sup> when discerning their choices to vote. The Church is non-partisan and “our cause is the defense of human life and dignity and the protection of the weak and vulnerable.”<sup>6</sup>

Further, living out faithful citizenship requires us to go beyond cable news networks and social media feeds. To truly cast an informed vote, we must make the intentional effort to become informed on Catholic social teaching with regard to policy issues and where candidates and ballot proposals stand on those policy issues.

The U.S. bishops have said it is “essential” that Catholics are “guided by a well-formed conscience that recognizes that all issues do not carry the same moral weight,” and in particular, “the moral obligation to oppose policies promoting intrinsically evil acts has a special claim on our consciences and our actions.”<sup>7</sup>

The decision on whom to vote for “should take into account a candidate’s commitments, character, integrity, and ability to influence a given issue.”<sup>8</sup> Ultimately, the decision is “to be made by each Catholic guided by a conscience formed by Catholic moral teaching.”<sup>9</sup>

Consider the following broad themes of Catholic moral teaching that serve as a framework for Catholics to form their consciences prior to voting. There are also questions that accompany these themes to help Catholics make decisions on candidates and ballot issues.

## **DIGNITY OF HUMAN LIFE**

“Every human being has a right to life, the fundamental right that makes all other rights possible”<sup>10</sup>

- Does the candidate or the ballot issue promote policies that affirm the dignity of all human life?
- Does the candidate or the ballot issue stand opposed to policies that allow the deliberate taking of innocent human life?
- Is the candidate consistent in his or her support for all human life from conception to natural death?
- Is the candidate committed to policies to reduce violence of every kind, and in particular, gun violence in our schools and in our communities?
- Is the candidate committed to condemning racism and working to root it out of societal structures?

## **MARRIAGE & FAMILY**

“The family—based on marriage between a man and a woman—is the first and fundamental unit of society and is a sanctuary for the creation and nurturing of children. It should be defended and strengthened, not redefined, undermined, or further distorted.”<sup>11</sup>

- Does the candidate support policies that affirm the truth of marriage and policies that strengthen and encourage it?
- Does the candidate support policies that serve the needs of families, and in particular, children?
- Does the candidate support policies to encourage employers to compensate workers enough to adequately support their families?
- Does the candidate support policies to assist poor families to allow them to live in dignity and to create opportunities for economic security?





## SERVING THE POOR & VULNERABLE

“When we meet a person truly in need, do we see the face of God?” —Pope Francis

- Does the candidate display a priority for keeping the poor and vulnerable in mind?
- Does the candidate support policies to reduce poverty and dependency?
- Does the candidate support expanding access to affordable housing?
- Does the candidate’s policy stances indicate that he or she considers affordable and accessible healthcare a fundamental human right?
- Does the candidate support working for comprehensive immigration reform that offers a path to citizenship, treats immigrant workers fairly, prevents the separation of families, maintains the integrity of our borders, respects the rule of law, and addresses the factors that compel people to leave their own countries?



## RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

“In all contexts, its basic contours are the same: it is the ‘immun[ity] from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such ways that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits.’”<sup>12</sup>

- Does the candidate oppose efforts to force people working for religious institutions to violate their consciences?
- Does the candidate support religious institutions’ right to serve according to their sincerely held beliefs?
- Does the candidate oppose efforts to require religious institutions to compromise their moral or religious convictions to participate in government programs?



## EDUCATION

“Parents—the first and most important educators—have a fundamental right to choose the education best suited to the needs of their children.”<sup>13</sup>

- Does the candidate support policies allowing parents to choose education for their children, including policies that encourage and support a variety of education options?

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

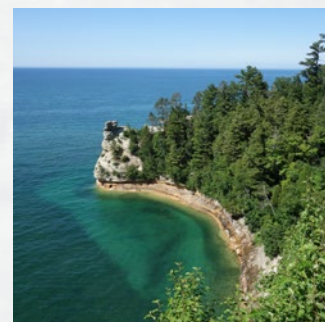
“An ethic of responsibility, rehabilitation, and restoration should be a foundation for the reform of our broken criminal justice system.”<sup>14</sup>

- Does the candidate support policies aimed at justly reducing the prison population, helping people leaving prison to reintegrate into their communities, combating recidivism, promoting just sentencing reform, and strengthening relationships between the police and the communities they serve?

## CARE FOR CREATION

“Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.”<sup>15</sup>

- Does the candidate recognize protecting the land, water, and air we share as a duty of stewardship?
- Does the candidate support policies to protect Michigan’s natural resources?



The information in this guide relies primarily on *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, a document produced and occasionally updated by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The full document can be found at the USCCB website at [ctlh.cc/fcfc](http://ctlh.cc/fcfc). ■



# Proposal 3 at a Glance

# Help Defeat Proposal 3

Proposal 3 would allow:

- Abortion at any time in pregnancy for any reason.
- Children to undergo abortion or sterilizing transgender procedures without their parents' consent.
- Elimination of the state's partial-birth abortion ban and late-term abortion ban.
- Anyone to perform an abortion—even those without a medical license
- Abortion providers to be shielded from consequences for injuring or killing women.
- Elimination of all current health and safety regulations on abortion clinics.

- Vote **NO**, either in person on Tuesday, November 8, or by absentee ballot beforehand.
- Check your voter registration status and learn how to vote properly by visiting the Michigan Voter Information Center at [mvic.sos.state.mi.us](http://mvic.sos.state.mi.us).
- Encourage your relatives, friends, coworkers, and parishioners to register to vote for the election and vote **NO** on this proposal.
- Pray that the outcome of election may be one that will protect and uphold the dignity of human life.



## GET INVOLVED WITH THE NO ON 3 CAMPAIGN

To volunteer for the Vote No on Proposal 3 campaign, receive updates, and donate money to defeat this dangerous amendment, visit [supportmiwomenandchildren.org](http://supportmiwomenandchildren.org).



## ANYTHING GOES ABORTION AMENDMENT!

1. Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship (FCFC), USCCB, No. 49.
2. FCFC, No. 64.
3. FCFC, No. 13.
4. Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, No. 43, as cited in Faithful Citizenship.
5. FCFC, No. 14.
6. FCFC, No. 58.
7. FCFC, No. 37.
8. FCFC, No. 37.
9. FCFC, No. 37.
10. FCFC, No. 49.
11. FCFC, No. 46.
12. *Dignitatis Humanae*, No. 2.
13. FCFC, No. 82.
14. FCFC, No. 84.
15. *Laudato Si*, No. 217.

CATHOLICS. MAKE YOUR VOICE  
**HEARD**  
JOIN THE CATHOLIC ADVOCACY NETWORK

To stay up to date on the campaign to defeat Proposal 3, as well as other issues important to your Catholic faith, join the **Catholic Advocacy Network**. It is a free online service provided by Michigan Catholic Conference and an easy way to put your faith into action. Learn more by scanning the QR code.



Find **Michigan Catholic Conference** on Facebook, Twitter, and at [micatholic.org](http://micatholic.org)



October 10, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Peace be with you! As bishops and teachers of the Catholic faith, we continually proclaim that all human life is sacred and a gift from God. The teachings of our faith regard the dignity of human life as the foundation of a moral society and the right to life as the fundamental right upon which all other human rights depend.

As citizens and pastors in Michigan, we call your attention to an immense threat to the dignity of human life on this November's ballot: Michigan voters are being asked to consider Proposal 3, the most extreme proposal concerning abortion this state or country has ever seen. We urge you to vote No.

Based on an analysis of the proposal and ballot summary language, it is clear this proposed amendment to the state constitution intends to:

- Repeal existing laws requiring informed consent for abortion and parental consent requirements for teens seeking abortion.
- Repeal existing laws requiring abortion clinics to be licensed and inspected for health and safety reasons.
- Allow *anyone* to perform an abortion and prohibit any legal consequences if a woman is harmed.
- Allow for late-term abortions due to an undefined mental health exemption in the proposal.
- Define viability to apply only to children who can survive without extraordinary medical care.

Last, because the amendment also extends the “right to sterilization” to any individual regardless of age, a minor would be allowed to seek sterilizing drugs or gender-changing procedures, in addition to abortion, without parental knowledge or consent.

Let us be clear: If Proposal 3 passes, there would be no real limits on abortion or sterilization procedures in Michigan, outside of an individual's voluntary consent. And no matter how one feels about abortion, this proposed amendment goes well beyond what was allowed under *Roe vs. Wade*. The proposal would also change our state constitution, which is much more consequential than any law. We urge you to read the proposed amendment and focus on the language. Words matter, particularly as they relate to constitutional amendments. Visit [www.micatholic.org/Proposal3](http://www.micatholic.org/Proposal3) for more information and to read the proposal. For the reasons mentioned here,

### **We strongly urge you to Vote NO on Proposal 3.**

We cannot create a world where abortion is unthinkable without also creating a world in which all families receive the support they need. In addition to opposing Proposal 3, we call for your renewed dedication to supporting women in need who may find themselves involved in difficult pregnancies or crisis situations. With prayer, compassion and material support, the Catholic Church — through its agencies and lay faithful — *must* be willing to walk with women in need to support them, their children, and their families – before, during and after pregnancy.

Let us come together to protect human life and promote the dignity of women and children by **voting NO on Proposal 3**. Please encourage others to do so as well. Thank you for your witness to the sanctity of all life. God bless you and your loved ones.

With you in Christ,

Most Rev. Allen H. Vigneron  
Archbishop of Detroit

Most Rev. Earl A. Boyea  
Bishop of Lansing

Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley  
Bishop of Kalamazoo

Most Rev. John F. Doerfler  
Bishop of Marquette

Most Rev. Robert D. Gruss  
Bishop of Saginaw

Most Rev. Jeffrey J. Walsh  
Bishop of Gaylord

Most Rev. David J. Walkowiak  
Bishop of Grand Rapids



# FIGHT LIKE HEAVEN

PRAY / FAST / ALMS

Vote **NO** on Proposal 3  
Extreme Abortion  
Ballot Initiative



MICHIGAN  
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CONFERENCE

# *Prayer for Life and Right Laws*

Almighty ever-living God,  
you bestow the gift of life  
as you form each of us in our mother's womb.

Look on our nation, state, and community  
and awaken in every heart  
reverence for life.

Protect our state from unjust laws.

In your Name, bring to defeat  
every attack against the sacredness of life.

Safeguard the rights of parents,  
whom you have entrusted  
with the care and formation of their children.

Help all who believe in Jesus  
to proclaim the Gospel of Life to their neighbors.

Dispel every anxiety and fear.

Strengthen the bond between parents and their unborn child.

May mothers and fathers accept and nurture the gift of life  
made in your image and likeness.

Our Lady, Queen of the Family, pray for us!

St. Michael the Archangel, pray for us!

St. Joseph, Protector of the Unborn, pray for us!



**MICHIGAN  
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## **FOCUS & PRAYER CARD ORDER FORM**

### ***Help to Educate Catholics and Defeat Proposal 3 by Distributing Prayer Card & MCC's FOCUS Publication***

To receive additional copies of *FOCUS* and prayer cards at no cost please send the information below to [kmay@micatholic.org](mailto:kmay@micatholic.org). You may scan and email this document or paste the information in the body of your email.

Parish Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of *FOCUS* Copies Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Prayer Cards Requested: \_\_\_\_\_



# Vote **NO** on Proposal 3

## DEFEAT THE ANYTHING GOES ABORTION AMENDMENT

This November election, the Catholic bishops in Michigan are urging all Michiganders to vote **NO** on Proposal 3. The measure would add an amendment to the state constitution to:

- Legalize abortion at any time in pregnancy for any reason.
- Allow abortions to be performed by anyone, even those without a medical license.
- Allow any person to help teens obtain abortions without their parents knowing.
- Protect abortion providers from penalties for killing or injuring a woman during an abortion.
- Revoke state law that requires abortion facilities to be licensed and inspected.
- Require taxpayers to pay for abortions.

This amendment allows abortion for:

- **ANY ONE:** any age...including minors
- **ANY TIME:** up to the moment of birth...and beyond birth
- **ANY WHERE:** in a medical facility...or any other location

## Vote **NO**

- On legal abortion through all nine months of pregnancy for any reason.
- On anyone performing abortions.
- On ending parental consent for teenage abortions.
- On allowing legal immunity for medical and non-medical abortionists.

## Help Defeat Proposal 3

- Vote **NO**, either in person on Nov. 8, or by absentee ballot beforehand.
- Check your voter registration status and learn more about how to make sure you vote properly by visiting the Michigan Voter Information Center at [mvic.sos.state.mi.us](http://mvic.sos.state.mi.us)
- Encourage your relatives, friends, coworkers, and parishioners to register to vote and vote **NO** on this proposal.
- Pray that the outcome of election may be one that will protect and uphold the dignity of human life.



## GET INVOLVED WITH THE VOTE NO CAMPAIGN

To volunteer, receive updates, and make a donation to ensure there are enough resources to defeat this dangerous amendment, visit the website for Citizens to Support MI Women & Children—the official campaign to defeat the anything goes abortion amendment—at [supportmiwomenandchildren.org](http://supportmiwomenandchildren.org)









# Vote **NO** on Proposal 3

## DEFEAT THE ANYTHING GOES ABORTION AMENDMENT

This November election, the Catholic bishops in Michigan are urging all Michiganders to vote **NO** on Proposal 3. The measure would add an amendment to the state constitution to:

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- Require taxpayers to pay for abortions.

- Allow abortions to be performed by anyone, even those without a medical license.
- Allow any person to help teens obtain abortions without their parents knowing.
- Protect abortion providers from penalties for killing or injuring a woman during an abortion.
- Revoke state law that requires abortion facilities to be licensed and inspected.



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## Vote NO

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- On anyone performing abortions.
- On ending parental consent for teenage abortions.
- On allowing legal immunity for medical and non-medical abortionists.

# Help Defeat Proposal 3

- Vote **NO**, either in person on Nov. 8, or by absentee ballot beforehand.
- Check your voter registration status and learn more about how to make sure you vote properly by visiting the Michigan Voter Information Center at [mvic.sos.state.mi.us](http://mvic.sos.state.mi.us)
- Encourage your relatives, friends, coworkers, and parishioners to register to vote and vote **NO** on this proposal.
- Pray that the outcome of election may be one that will protect and uphold the dignity of human life.



## GET INVOLVED WITH THE VOTE NO CAMPAIGN

To volunteer, receive updates, and make a donation to ensure there are enough resources to defeat this dangerous amendment, visit the website for Citizens to Support MI Women & Children—the official campaign to defeat the anything goes abortion amendment—at [supportmiwomenandchildren.org](http://supportmiwomenandchildren.org)





# *Suggested Prayers of the Faithful Through Election Day*

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For the Church, that we may bear joyful witness that each human life comes from God, belongs to God, and is meant to return to God, we pray to the Lord.

For all public officials, that the Holy Spirit would inspire them to enact laws that defend and promote the right to life of all human beings, especially those not yet born; we pray to the Lord.

For those working to build a culture of life where every person is welcomed as a gift from God, may they be strengthened through the grace of Christ; we pray to the Lord.

For all couples facing an unexpected pregnancy, may the Lord give them hope and love for their child; we pray to the Lord.

For all pregnant mothers who are alone and afraid: may they know that Jesus is with them through the accompaniment of friends and family, we pray to the Lord.

For all who have suffered from the traumatic effects of abortion: that they may find peace in the love of Jesus Christ and be guided by hope to seek refuge in His mercy; we pray to the Lord.

For our parish community: that we will offer our hearts, minds, and hands to God to be His instruments in welcoming and supporting all expectant parents who find themselves alone or afraid, we pray to the Lord.



## ADDITIONAL SOURCE FOR PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL







# *Suggested Pulpit Announcements Regarding Abortion Proposal*

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**Note:** Each of these announcements direct parishioners to the parish website or bulletin for more information. Please be sure to include information on the campaign at the parish website or bulletin for the week that the announcement is made. The campaign website can be found at the following QR code:



[supportmiwomenandchildren.org](http://supportmiwomenandchildren.org)

The Catholic bishops in Michigan are calling on all Catholics to vote no on Proposal 3 on the November election ballot. The proposal would create a constitutional amendment to allow for unlimited, unregulated abortion throughout all of pregnancy. For more information about the proposal and how to help defeat it, please see our parish bulletin/website for how to connect with the official vote no campaign.

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The Catholic dioceses and bishops in Michigan are calling on all Catholics to vote no on Proposal 3 on the November election ballot. The proposal would take away parental consent requirements and allow children to get abortions or undergo sterilization without their parents' consent or knowledge. For more information about the proposal and how to help defeat it, please see our parish bulletin/website for how to connect with the official vote no campaign.

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The Catholic bishops and dioceses in Michigan are calling on all Catholics to vote no on Proposal 3 on the November election ballot. The proposal would allow any person to perform an abortion—not just doctors or physicians—and would remove any legal consequences for anyone who conducts a botched abortion. For more information about the proposal and how to help defeat it, please see our parish bulletin/website for how to connect with the official vote no campaign.

The Catholic bishops in Michigan together with all the dioceses in this state are calling on all Catholics to vote no on Proposal 3 on the November election ballot. The proposal would force taxpayers to fund abortions and would revoke the rights of medical personnel who refuse to provide abortions. For more information about the proposal and how to help defeat it, please see our parish bulletin/website for how to connect with the official vote no campaign.

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The Catholic bishops in Michigan together with the dioceses in this state are calling on all Catholics to vote no on Proposal 3 on the November election ballot. The proposal would prevent the state legislature from enacting any health or safety regulations on abortion providers and allow abortion providers to conduct an abortion on a child without the parent's knowledge or permission. For more information about the proposal and how to help defeat it, please see our parish bulletin/website for how to connect with the official vote no campaign.

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The Catholic bishops in Michigan together with the dioceses in this state are calling on all Catholics to vote no on Proposal 3 on the November election ballot. This would allow abortion up to the moment of birth for practically any reason. For more information about the proposal and how to help defeat it, please see our parish bulletin/website for how to connect with the official vote no campaign.

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The Catholic bishops in Michigan together with the dioceses in this state are calling on all Catholics to vote no on Proposal 3 on the November election ballot. The proposal would give legal immunity to a school worker or anyone who helps a teen get an abortion without the parents' consent. For more information about the proposal and how to help defeat it, please see our parish bulletin/website for how to connect with the official vote no campaign.





**FULL TEXT OF PROPOSAL 3  
AMENDMENT TO THE MICHIGAN CONSTITUTION**

**Article 1, Section 28 Right to Reproductive Freedom**

- (1) Every individual has a fundamental right to reproductive freedom, which entails the right to make and effectuate decisions about all matters relating to pregnancy, including but not limited to prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, contraception, sterilization, abortion care, miscarriage management, and infertility care.

An individual's right to reproductive freedom shall not be denied, burdened, nor infringed upon unless justified by a compelling state interest achieved by the least restrictive means.

Notwithstanding the above, the state may regulate the provision of abortion care after fetal viability, provided that in no circumstance shall the state prohibit an abortion that, in the professional judgment of an attending health care professional, is medically indicated to protect the life or physical or mental health of the pregnant individual.

- (2) The state shall not discriminate in the protection or enforcement of this fundamental right.
- (3) The state shall not penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against an individual based on their actual, potential, perceived, or alleged pregnancy outcomes, including but not limited to miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion. Nor shall the state penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against someone for aiding or assisting a pregnant individual in exercising their right to reproductive freedom with their voluntary consent.
- (4) For the purposes of this section:

A state interest is "compelling" only if it is for the limited purpose of protecting the health of an individual seeking care, consistent with accepted clinical standards of practice and evidence-based medicine, and does not infringe on that individual's autonomous decision-making.

"Fetal viability" means: the point in pregnancy when, in the professional judgment of an attending health care professional and based on the particular facts of the case, there is a significant likelihood of the fetus's sustained survival outside the uterus without the application of extraordinary medical measures.

- (5) This section shall be self-executing. Any provision of this section held invalid shall be severable from the remaining portions of this section.



# Where Does It Say That?

## AN EXPLAINER ON THE DANGERS OF PROPOSAL 3

### Article 1, Section 28 Right to Reproductive Freedom

- (1) Every individual **1** has a fundamental right **2** to reproductive freedom, which entails the right to make and effectuate decisions about all matters relating to pregnancy, including but not limited to prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, contraception, sterilization, **3** abortion care, miscarriage management, and infertility care.  
An individual's right to reproductive freedom shall not be denied, burdened, nor infringed **4** upon unless justified by a compelling state interest achieved by the least restrictive means.  
Notwithstanding the above, the state may regulate the provision of abortion care after fetal viability, provided that in no circumstance shall the state prohibit an abortion that, in the professional judgment of an attending health care professional, **5** is medically indicated to protect the life or physical or mental health **6** of the pregnant individual.  
The state shall not discriminate in the protection or enforcement of this fundamental right. **7**
- (2) The state shall not penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against an individual based on their actual, potential, perceived, or alleged pregnancy outcomes, including but not limited to miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion. Nor shall the state penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against someone for aiding or assisting a pregnant individual in exercising their right to reproductive freedom with their voluntary consent. **8**
- (3) For the purposes of this section:  
A state interest is "compelling" only if it is for the limited purpose of protecting the health of an individual seeking care, consistent with accepted clinical standards of practice and evidence-based medicine, and does not infringe on that individual's autonomous decision-making. **9**  
"Fetal viability" means: the point in pregnancy when, in the professional judgment of an attending health care professional and based on the particular facts of the case, there is a significant likelihood of the fetus's sustained survival outside the uterus without the application of extraordinary medical measures. **10**
- (4) This section shall be self-executing. Any provision of this section held invalid shall be severable from the remaining portions of this section.

- 1 By using the word "individual" and not limiting it to adults, this fundamental right to abortion, sterilization, contraception and more would apply to children.
- 2 This proposal is a constitutional amendment, making it more difficult to change or overturn in the future.
- 3 Children would also have a right to seek sterilization and contraceptives.
- 4 The right to reproductive freedom would be nearly impossible to restrict or regulate.
- 5 Under Michigan law, a "health care professional" includes dentists, acupuncturists, massage therapists, counselors and more. In the amendment, health care professionals are given the ability to approve a late-term abortion.
- 6 This section appears to restrict late-term abortion, but it includes a mental health exception, so that a mother could cite anxiety on her due date as a reason for getting an abortion and a "health care professional" could agree. This would allow for abortions to happen at any point and for any reason.





# *An Analysis of Proposal 3's Extreme Constitutional Amendment*

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## PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL TEXT

*"Every individual has a fundamental right to reproductive freedom, which entails the right to make and effectuate decisions about all matters relating to pregnancy, including but not limited to prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, contraception, sterilization, abortion care, miscarriage management, and infertility care."*

*"An individual's right to reproductive freedom shall not be denied, burdened, nor infringed upon unless justified by a compelling state interest achieved by the least restrictive means."*

*"Notwithstanding the above, the state may regulate the provision of abortion care after fetal viability, provided that in no circumstance shall the state prohibit an abortion that, in the professional judgment of an attending health care professional is medically indicated to protect the life or physical or mental health of the pregnant individual."*

*"The state shall not discriminate in the protection or enforcement of this fundamental right."*

## ANALYSIS

The amendment specifically says it will impact **ALL** matters relating to pregnancy and lists several examples. These words have extremely far-reaching consequences. The word individual is not defined as to age, meaning the provisions in this amendment will apply to children as well as adults.

This amendment specifically defines a compelling state interest, which would severely restrict any possible abortion law or regulation.

This confusing language appears to allow late-term abortion bans, but by introducing a "mental health" exception, it would allow late-term abortions for practically any reason.

Notice that it does not mention doctors, but "health care professional" which under Michigan law, covers more than just physicians. For example, a dentist could approve a late-term abortion on mental health grounds—and even perform one with no consequence.

If this were to be added to the constitution, the state would likely be seen as singling out abortion with its ban on taxpayer funded abortions through the Medicaid program. With this provision, the state would be required to fund abortion, sterilization, and unethical infertility measures as any other medical procedure. **CONTINUED →**

## PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL TEXT

*“The state shall not penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against an individual based on their actual, potential, perceived, or alleged pregnancy outcomes, including but not limited to miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion.”*

*“Nor shall the state penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against someone for aiding or assisting a pregnant individual in exercising their right to reproductive freedom with their voluntary consent.”*

*“For the purposes of this section:*

*A state interest is “compelling” only if it is for the limited purpose of protecting the health of an individual seeking care, consistent with accepted clinical standards of practice and evidence-based medicine, and does not infringe on that individual’s autonomous decision-making.”*

*“Fetal viability” means: the point in pregnancy when, in the professional judgment of an attending health care professional and based on the particular facts of the case, there is a significant likelihood of the fetus’s sustained survival outside the uterus without the application of extraordinary medical measures. This section shall be self-executing. Any provision of this section held invalid shall be severable from the remaining portions of this section.*

## ANALYSIS

This section could stop investigations of infanticides. For example, if someone gives birth and then abandons the baby in the trash, the state cannot investigate the situation because investigation is an “adverse action” against a “perceived pregnancy outcome.”

People do not have a right to kill a newborn baby, but this amendment could give them one, and make the state enforce it.

This could stop the state from investigating someone who assists with any abortion as long as consent is given. A school counselor could take a 13-year-old girl to get an abortion without telling her parents, and there is nothing her parents could legally do when or if they find out. An untrained employee at an abortion facility could perform an abortion, and health and safety regulators could be powerless to address it.

This section is likely intended to invalidate the state’s pro-life laws. Any existing law related to pregnancy, sex, abortion, sterilization, etc. must overcome three separate obstacles:

- First, the law can only be for the purpose of protecting “health,” which is not defined.
- Second, the law must agree with “accepted clinical standards of practice,” which are written by the abortion industry itself.
- Third, no law on anything related to pregnancy can infringe on a person’s “autonomous decision making.”

This means that the amendment makes a female’s consent the only legal limit on abortion.

Fetal viability is usually defined as the point a child can survive outside the womb. The amendment changes this definition so that any newborn with a significant illness could be defined as a non-viable child. ■

# Questions and Answers Regarding Proposal 3

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**Q: What would this proposal do?**

**A:** This proposal seeks to add an amendment to the Michigan Constitution that would guarantee that abortion is legal through all nine months of pregnancy, with no limitations or regulations. Specifically, the proposal would:

- Legalize abortion at any time and for any reason.
- Allow teens to obtain abortions, contraceptives and sterilization without their parents knowing.
- Allow abortion to be performed by anyone—even those without a medical license.

**Q: How would this change abortion laws in Michigan?**

**A:** Michigan has several laws on the books that require parental consent and informed consent to protect women and children, prohibit partial-birth abortion and taxpayer-funded abortion, and require abortion facilities to be licensed and inspected, among others. Under this amendment, all of Michigan's pro-life laws would be revoked, and it would be nearly impossible for the Legislature to pass any laws to regulate abortion and protect women and children.

**Q: Why is this amendment being proposed?**

**A:** This proposal was launched in anticipation that the U.S. Supreme Court would strike down *Roe v. Wade*. The Supreme Court ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* allowed abortion regulation to return to individual state legislatures to decide, yet this amendment would take that power away from the Legislature by locking unlimited abortion access into the state constitution and blocking laws from regulating abortion.

**Q: How would passing this amendment compare to when *Roe v. Wade* was in effect?**

**A:** This amendment would take Michigan far beyond what was allowed for abortion under *Roe*. In the half century since *Roe*, dozens of laws have been passed to regulate abortion. Under this proposed amendment, those protections would be gone, and abortion would essentially be unrestricted and unregulated.

**Q: How late into pregnancy would an abortion be allowed under this amendment?**

**A:** The amendment would allow for abortions all throughout pregnancy. The amendment appears to allow a ban on late-term abortions, but it also provides an exception based on the mother's physical and mental health, in addition to protecting the mother's life. That means a late-term abortion could be justified for almost any reason.

**Q: How would Michigan compare to other states if this amendment passed?**

**A:** According to the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute, Michigan is one of 36 states that require parental involvement in their child's decision to have an abortion, one of 32 states requiring abortions be performed by a licensed physician, and one of 43 states that prohibit abortion after a specified point in pregnancy.

Under Proposal 3, Michigan would no longer require parental consent, that physicians perform abortions, or a limit to when an abortion can happen in a pregnancy, putting Michigan in the minority of states in all three categories.

**Q: Who is pushing this amendment?**

**A:** Planned Parenthood and the American Civil Liberties Union are the primary backers, with support from their national affiliates and out-of-state donors. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Attorney General Dana Nessel also support the proposal.

**Q: Who is working to defeat the amendment?**

**A:** The official group dedicated to defeating the abortion proposal is called Citizens to Support MI Women & Children. That group is led by Michigan Catholic Conference and Right to Life of Michigan. MCC is working with each diocese in the state, who are in turn working with their respective parishes, to get the word out to every Catholic and encourage them to vote **NO** and to support the opposition to the proposed constitutional amendment. ■





# *How to Respond to Myths and False Claims About Proposal 3*

The following are examples of what supporters may say about Proposal 3. Study these responses so that you can help your family and friends better understand the consequences of this dangerous constitutional amendment.

**THEY SAY** “Michigan residents should have the constitutional right to abortion care and reproductive freedom.”

**WE RESPOND** Women already have the right to reproductive care in the state of Michigan. Women have access to prenatal, postpartum and infertility care. Pregnancy help centers provide support and referrals for women unable to see a doctor. Abortion is not reproductive care as it harms women mentally and physically and guarantees that of the two patients involved, one will die.



**THEY SAY** “This amendment would ensure access to abortion and reinstate what was legal under *Roe v. Wade*”

**WE RESPOND** This amendment would allow abortion for any reason, at any point in the pregnancy, for a woman or teen at any age, and allow anyone to conduct an abortion without legal consequences. Together, that would take abortion regulations far beyond anything that was ever allowed under *Roe*. It also doesn’t solely apply to abortion as, for example, a parent would lose consent should a child seek to modify his or her biological gender.

**THEY SAY** “Decisions on abortion should remain between a woman and her doctor”

**WE RESPOND** With this amendment, nonphysicians would be able to conduct abortions, undermining the notion that women would be making these decisions with the help of an appropriately licensed physician.

The amendment would block the state from prohibiting abortions in cases where “in the professional judgment of an attending health care professional,” the abortion “is medically indicated to protect the life or physical or mental health of the pregnant individual.”

Under Michigan law, “health care professional” means more than just a physician, as that definition also includes dentists, chiropractors, massage therapists, acupuncturists, counselors, and psychologists, to name a few examples.

The language also says the state could not “penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against someone for aiding or assisting a pregnant individual in exercising their right to reproductive freedom with their voluntary consent.”

Because of that, a school counselor, for example, could take a 13-year-old girl to get an abortion, contraception or undergo sterilization without telling her parents, and there is nothing her parents could legally do when they find out what has taken place.

CONTINUED →

**THEY SAY** “This amendment ensures women will not be prosecuted for having a miscarriage/abortion.”

**WE RESPOND** There is no history of women being prosecuted in Michigan for either of those circumstances. In addition, the Michigan Supreme Court has ruled that a woman receiving an abortion cannot be charged. State law also explicitly defines abortion as not including miscarriage.

**THEY SAY** “This amendment stops the government from prosecuting women who experience miscarriages or ectopic pregnancies.”

**WE RESPOND** Abortion is an intentional act to destroy a life, whereas a miscarriage is a spontaneous action within a woman’s body. An ectopic pregnancy is when a fertilized egg implants outside the uterus, where it cannot survive. Receiving treatment for an ectopic pregnancy or suffering from a miscarriage is not the same as abortion. Both state law and the Michigan Supreme Court are clear that women rightfully cannot be prosecuted for an abortion.

**THEY SAY** “This amendment allows for women to have autonomy over their own bodies.”

**WE RESPOND** A pregnant woman carries inside her a human life that deserves the same dignity that she should be afforded. If a woman becomes pregnant unexpectedly or unwillingly and she feels she is unable or unwilling to parent her child, there are options to ensure the baby is safe. These options include the state’s adoption process or the Safe Delivery Law, which allows a mother to surrender her newborn for adoption, no questions asked.

**THEY SAY** “This amendment still allows for late-term abortions to be restricted.”

**WE RESPOND** The amendment creates broad exceptions to any ban enacted on late-term abortions, including for reasons related to mental health. Therefore, a pregnant woman could claim that any anxiety or stress she may be feeling gives the right to a second or even third-trimester abortion.

**THEY SAY** “This amendment still allows the state to restrict/regulate abortion after viability.”

**WE RESPOND** This amendment changes the definition of fetal viability to no longer mean when the baby can survive outside the womb, instead defining viability as when a baby can survive outside of the womb without “extraordinary medical measures.”

This means that a prematurely born infant who needs intensive medical treatment could be considered not viable in the eyes of the mother and the “healthcare professional,” who does not have to be a licensed physician under the amendment language.

**THEY SAY** “Over 700,000 Michiganders signed this proposal to put it on the ballot, which shows how widely supported it is.”

**WE RESPOND** Paid petition gatherers are not legally required to tell people everything that a proposal would do. Thus, it is likely that most people who signed the petition did not read the proposal or understand the reality of what they were signing. People from various backgrounds, including those who say they are pro-choice, overwhelmingly oppose partial-birth abortion and support health and safety regulations on abortion clinics. This proposal would give constitutional protections to third-trimester abortions up to birth and likely revoke state law that requires abortion facilities to be licensed and inspected.

**THEY SAY** “This proposal would not wipe away parental consent and other health and safety laws that are on the books.”

**WE RESPOND** Proposal 3, as described by its own summary, specifically says that state laws conflicting with this amendment will be invalidated. And even if there are open questions on the legal interpretation of the abortion proposal, those open questions would need to be settled by the courts, meaning years of expensive litigation that will have to be funded by taxpayers. If this proposal were to pass, Michigan would immediately become one of the most permissive, anything goes abortion jurisdictions in the country. ■



## **Suggested Action Plan for Parishes to Defeat Proposal 3**

Below are some suggested strategies for informing the faithful of your parish about Proposal 3 using the materials made available by the Diocese and MCC. Please feel free to adopt these strategies or come up with your own with the goal of reaching every parishioner with the message to vote no on Proposal 3 by the election. For questions, please contact your diocesan communications office.

### **Parish Leadership/Pastor**

- Assemble 2-3 parish volunteers who can help coordinate the information distribution efforts.
- Make a plan to use the parish retreat program for the seven Sundays that run from Sept. 25 to Nov. 6.
- Incorporate the provided prayers of the faithful for each of the seven Sundays (perhaps one per week)
- Use the suggested pulpit announcements to notify congregation where to find printed/digital informational materials
- Order prayer cards from MCC and distribute/recite prayer following Masses.

### **Information Materials**

- Provide copies of FOCUS, Questions & Answers document, They Say/We Respond document and One Page Review of Proposal 3 to parishioners in church gathering spaces, parish office, in church bulletins or hand out directly to parishioners as they leave Mass.
- Provide digital versions of the documents on the parish website and in parish's email communications with parishioners.
- Place campaign logo banner/button on parish website that links to campaign.
- Acquire yard signs from the campaign and make them available to parishioners, outside the parish and school, and around any parish festivals/gatherings this fall.

### **Events**

- Using the FOCUS issue and/or other printed materials, host an information night or discussion.
- For Respect Life Sunday (Oct. 2), make a big visible push against the proposal
  - Play bishop's video/audio message (if applicable) during homily.
  - Have prayer cards at the end of each pew to recite at the end of each Mass.
  - Pulpit announcement after Mass – urge the faithful to visit campaign website and pray for life and mothers in need.
  - Promote MCC and diocesan materials in bulletins, other print mediums as well as digital/social/electronic communications.
  - Acquire and distribute yard signs – have parishioners handing them out to people as they leave Mass.





STATE OF MICHIGAN  
BUREAU OF ELECTIONS  
LANSING

**Proposal 22-3**

**A proposal to amend the state constitution to establish new individual right to reproductive freedom, including right to make all decisions about pregnancy and abortion; allow state to regulate abortion in some cases; and forbid prosecution of individuals exercising established right**

This proposed constitutional amendment would:

- Establish new individual right to reproductive freedom, including right to make and carry out all decisions about pregnancy, such as prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, contraception, sterilization, abortion, miscarriage management, and infertility;
- Allow state to regulate abortion after fetal viability, but not prohibit if medically needed to protect a patient's life or physical or mental health;
- Forbid state discrimination in enforcement of this right; prohibit prosecution of an individual, or a person helping a pregnant individual, for exercising rights established by this amendment;
- Invalidate state laws conflicting with this amendment.

Should this proposal be adopted?

YES  
 NO

WORD COUNT: 95





**MICHIGAN**  
**CATHOLIC**  
C O N F E R E N C E

**We were Created for Such a Time as This**  
(Esther 4:14)

**A Preaching Plan to Election Day**  
**on Proposal 3**



On November 8, 2022, the citizens of Michigan are going to vote on Proposal 3, the so-called Reproductive Freedom for All ballot proposal. In the past, when issues like this have come before the state, Michigan Catholic Conference and the (arch) dioceses in this state have offered a series of reflections on the various readings for Sunday Masses during the weeks leading up to the vote.

This Anything Goes Abortion Constitutional Amendment, however, is so devious and presents such a grave concern for the unborn, pregnant women in need, children, and parents, that a different approach is required. This packet of material is designed to assist priests and deacons with homily preparation in the seven weeks leading up to the general election, starting the weekend of September 24/25. This project was undertaken at the direction of the seven (arch) diocesan bishops by a team led by Father John Riccardo with ACTS XXIX. The goal is that no matter where one attends Mass during this time a consistent message will be heard. The themes within this homiletics helper are not tied to the weekly readings. While this is most unusual, it will be highly effective in raising awareness of this unjust proposal.

Each Sunday has a theme and a goal for what those in the pews will take away and be able to discern through the week. In addition to this series, included within are suggested prayers of the faithful that tie into the messages from the homilies. Along with bulletin inserts, and messaging for parish websites and social media, the parish can be immersed in the themes of the week. By these means, we hope not only to defeat the unjust proposal, but to help us think ever more clearly on critical issues facing us as citizens of Michigan and disciples of Jesus.

In an earlier time, the effort to defeat Assisted Suicide, Proposal B of 1998, was overwhelming. Of Catholics who attended Mass once or more a week, 92% voted No on that proposal. The outcome of Proposal 3 will have a critical impact on the lives of the people of this state for generations. It is imperative it be defeated. It is hoped the information provided here will assist in another overwhelming effort in support of human dignity and life, for, “We were created for such a time as this.” (Esther 4:14)

## *Week 1*

### **Theme: Statewide Focus to Educate, Understand, and Pray**

#### **Talking points:**

- What is starting today across the state in every Catholic Church: a seven week “retreat”
- Why we’re doing this extraordinary thing: the November election and the Reproductive Freedom for All amendment on the ballot
- What we’re going to be doing: at every Catholic Church across Michigan, we’re going to reflect on a single theme that is related to what is in front of us
- What’s at stake: not simply abortion on demand up until birth, but serious attacks on parental rights and other things that we need to be aware of
- Ask the people to make sure we all find the language of this proposal and read it through, together with a thorough analysis, so that we can understand just how unreasonable it is
- Call the diocese/parish to fast in some way until the election for the defeat of this proposal
- Invite the diocese/parish to pray the rosary on a given day for the same purpose
- Make clear this is appropriate for us to discuss in Church and reflect on together, since these are human issues and we are called to be both disciples of Jesus and citizens of this State.
- Make clear that these things aren’t matters of belief so much as they are matters of careful thought; in other words, it’s not as though we believe abortion is wrong because we’re Catholic; rather, we think abortion is unjust because it is the killing of an innocent human being. This doesn’t come from the Catechism; it comes from science and medicine.

#### **Goal:**

- The people of the diocese/parish will understand that starting today the Church throughout Michigan is doing something most

extraordinary due to a most important amendment proposal on the ballot in November. Calling each of us by virtue of our baptism to speak in a united voice in charity, truth, and justice.

## ***Week 2:***

### **Theme: Either/or: The critical issue**

#### **Story:**

On December 1, 1955, a woman was coming home from work. She took the bus. She took the bus every day both to and from work. She was sitting in the 11th row, as the first 10 rows were reserved for white people, and she wasn't white. The first ten rows quickly filled up and she was told to move by the bus driver. She refused. She was ordered by the bus driver and still refused. Finally, the police were called and she was arrested and charged, officially, with resisting the orders of a bus driver. Her name was Rosa Parks. And so began the Montgomery bus strike and the civil rights movement. Today there are streets all across Michigan cities, and throughout the country, named for her. What is often not known is how much Rosa's faith motivated what she did. "In the eyes of God," she said, "all people were free and I was going to live like a free person. It was time for someone to stand up, or, in my case, to sit down." Rosa knew it was unreasonable to think that skin color made some people of more worth and dignity than others. To be sure, as we've seen the past few years, we still have a very long way to go in this country before we all act accordingly, but at least in the stated law injustice has been written out.

#### **Talking points:**

- It's really a very simply either/or in front of us on abortion. Either all human beings are persons or else only some are.
- Science and medicine, not the Bible and the Catechism, tell us that from the moment of conception there is a new human being, with its own unique DNA, needing only nutrients and an environment (the same things we all do) to continue to grow
- If the scientific and medical data are so clear that this is a human being, how is abortion justified? It's denied the status of personhood
- But if personhood isn't something that all human beings have simply because they're human, that means we are giving raw power to

someone or other people to arbitrarily determine which human beings are and are not human persons.

- It is reasonable to think that this amendment is an unjust law and a dangerous pattern of thinking: what are the criteria after all? Who decides those?
- Why, after all, should we care about the poor? Or the immigrant? Or the sick? Or the elderly? Or another race? Because they're human, and all human beings should be considered as persons and have rights, most especially the right to life, without which no other right has any value.
- Thus, we have laws and this amendment would imply only some human beings are persons under the law
- Consider alerting parents that next week they may want to take shifts if they have younger children coming to Mass, or perhaps step out during the homily and listen together afterwards

## **Goal:**

- Bring to people's attention that it is a freer, more just and more enjoyable place to live where all human beings have the status of persons and therefore have rights, most especially the right to life, without which no other right makes sense.

## **Week 3:**

### **Theme: Getting beyond the rhetoric**

#### **Story:**

Possibly Dr. Bernard Nathanson, co-founder of NARAL and the former head of the largest abortion provider in the world. Though he was responsible for tens of thousands of abortions, including one of his own children, his response to seeing via ultrasound what was actually taking place.

Dr. Anthony Levatino, an obstetrician/gynecologist who performed 1,200 abortions before becoming pro-life. He served as an expert witness in front of the U.S. Congress on the issue of late term abortion. It took a terrible tragedy with his own child before he woke up to realize he was killing other's children. He is now a member of Heartbeat International's Medical Advisory Council, highlighting the work of our pregnancy resource centers. His testimony also talks about what abortion really is.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Talking points:**

- This is a hard week, to be sure. Lead with Mercy.
- It must be delivered without stirring up hatred, fear
- But we must put flesh behind the word “abortion”
- Define what is an abortion: the direct and intentional killing of a human being prior to birth
- Though we see graphic depictions of death on all our devices and more or less all channels, we never, with perhaps one exception, have seen an abortion on film
- Imagine what would happen if we did
- Help people understand how abortions are done, as sensitively as possible, in various trimesters<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Dr. Levatino Destroys Abortion in 2 Minutes - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZXQBhTszpU&t=3s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZXQBhTszpU&t=3s)

<sup>2</sup> See Human Life International's video resources at [Tools Used for Abortion: Descriptions, Pics, and Videos - https://www.hli.org/resources/tools-used-for-abortion/](https://www.hli.org/resources/tools-used-for-abortion/) and [What's Partial-Birth Abortion? - https://www.hli.org/abortion-videos/whats-partial-birth-abortion/](https://www.hli.org/abortion-videos/whats-partial-birth-abortion/) or Live Action's resource videos at [Abortion Procedures - https://www.abortionprocedures.com/abortion-pill/](https://www.abortionprocedures.com/abortion-pill/)

- It may also be helpful here to possibly offer excerpts from various U.S. Supreme Court decisions that describe abortion techniques

**Goal:**

- To leave with a sobered understanding of what actually happens in an abortion

## **Week 4:**

### **Theme: Who's Right?**

#### **Story:**

Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children, including the privilege of teaching the faith and raising their children with Christian values. Moms and Dads also work to guide their children, preserve their innocence and childhoods, and protect them from harm.

#### **Talking points:**

- The key this week is to address the fact that Proposal 3, the Reproductive Freedom for All amendment, isn't only about abortion; it's a serious attack on parental rights as well.
- Proposal 3 presupposes that the state - and even children themselves - know what is best for children/themselves—*not* their parents.
- The words of the amendment confer a fundamental right to “reproductive freedom” for everyone, without any age limits. That means children will likely be able to invoke these rights without your parental consent or even your knowledge. They may even apply against your wishes, and there might be nothing that you as a parent can do about it.
- Lawmakers, the governor, and any other elected officials will be unlikely to mitigate the damage or restore parental rights because these are state Constitutional rights being conferred to children and teens—rights which will override other state laws.
- If this amendment is voted into the Constitution, another vote of the people will be the only way to change it, aside from a court decision, which is unlikely. Parental rights should not be left to chance – requiring a lawsuit and hoping for a favorable court ruling.
- Other people—including teachers, counselors, or even other adults—will be able to help your child exercise these rights to reproductive freedom: to pregnancy, contraception, sterilization, and abortion, all without parental consent or even knowledge.



- Read the start of the amendment again, keeping in mind that, as written, this will apply to teens and younger children:
  - “*Every individual has a fundamental right to reproductive freedom, which entails the right to make and effectuate decisions about all matters relating to pregnancy, including but not limited to prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, contraception, sterilization, abortion care, miscarriage management, and infertility care.*”
- Foreseeable situations for minors and teens under this Constitutional Amendment:
  - If your teen has a consensual relationship with an adult that results in pregnancy, the adult would be able to help your teen obtain an abortion without you ever knowing about it.
  - School health clinics will be able to provide contraception to your minor children without informing you.
  - Hospitals and doctors, without your knowledge or consent, will be able to sterilize your child – either due to gender confusion and transition or to avoid future pregnancies.
  - Teachers, counselors, coaches, and others will be able to help your teens and children obtain abortions against your wishes, and they will not be held accountable if the child consented. These same teachers and coaches could even perform your child’s abortion themselves and still be unaccountable, because this constitutional language prohibits the state from penalizing, prosecuting or taking any other “adverse action” against someone for assisting in an abortion.
  - Depending on how aggressively government officials decide to enforce the proposal’s language, parents could also be in jeopardy of losing custody if they do not support their child obtaining contraception, an abortion, or gender transition services, since those would all be deemed “fundamental rights.”
- This proposal will render parents powerless to protect their children and teens regarding sexuality and reproduction.

**Goal:**

- That people walk away with clarity that Proposal 3, the Reproductive Freedom for All amendment, isn't only about abortion but is a direct attack on parental rights too.

## ***Week 5:***

### **Theme: As far as the East is from the West**

#### **Story:**

One of the more convicting people of the 20th century was Dorothy Day. As a child she had nominal faith but soon abandoned that and became an atheist, an anarchist and a communist. She had several affairs and twice tried to take her own life. She also had an abortion. But in December of 1927, Day was baptized and became one of the most consistent Catholic figures of the 20th century. A daily communicant, a woman of intense prayer before the Eucharist and a devotee of the rosary, Day was a champion for persons on the margins, much like a woman she met later in life was – Mother Teresa. Her cause for canonization is open currently and while it's not yet definitively concluded the fact that the Church is considering the canonization of a woman who had an abortion is a reason for extraordinary hope for all of us in general, and for many of us in particular

#### **Talking points:**

- Given the statistics on abortion it is reasonable to presume that at every Mass today here and across the State there is someone present, and perhaps many present, who have, for whatever reason, either had or been involved in some way in an abortion. The God who is rich in mercy wants to speak today in a special way to you
- There is nothing – simply nothing – that God won't forgive
- The devil has a relentless strategy with those who have experienced this trauma: God's mercy is not for you. This is a lie
- Psalm 103:10-12
- Jesus, St. Paul tells us in Romans, died for the ungodly. And that's all of us. The cross and resurrection of Jesus are not a reward for good behavior; Jesus did all He did because we are all desperately in need (cf. Rom 5:6)
- The only thing that's different from person to person is what our sin is, but we're all in need

- Unlike us, though, God loves to forgive, He loves to welcome home, He loves to give us second chances
- If you have not yet experienced His mercy in the sacrament of reconciliation, please come this week.
- God allows us to begin again
- Some of us may know someone, perhaps even someone close to us, who has suffered from a prior abortion. The Church's abortion healing ministry, Project Rachel, is here to actively assist and extend a healing hand of mercy to those in need. Go to [HopeAfterAbortion.com](http://HopeAfterAbortion.com) or call 888-456-HOPE.

**Goal:**

- To speak to those present who have had, or been involved in, an abortion and to let them know God's forgiveness is real and His mercy is abundant and to invite those who have not yet experienced His mercy in the sacrament of reconciliation to come in the days ahead.

## **Week 6:**

### **Theme: Our role in the world as disciples**

#### **Story:**

Sophia Scholl was a German student, active in the White Rose – a non-violent resistance group to Hitler and the Nazi party.<sup>3</sup> In 1943, she was caught delivering anti-war propaganda and, with her brother Hans Scholl, was executed for high treason. Sophie Scholl has become an important symbol of anti-Nazi resistance in Germany.

At the age of twelve, she joined a pseudo-Nazi organization, the League of German Girls. Initially, Sophie enjoyed the activities of the group, and she was promoted to Squad Leader. Over time Sophie became uneasy about the conflict between her conscience and the creeping Nazi ideology of the organization.<sup>4</sup>

Witnessing evil changed her thinking: In 1937, her brothers and some of her friends were arrested for participating in the German Youth Movement. This incident left a strong impression on Sophie and helped to crystallize her opposition to the Nazi regime. In 1942, her father was later sent to prison for making a critical remark about Hitler.<sup>5</sup>

Sophie developed a strong Christian faith that emphasized the underlying dignity of every human being. This religious faith proved an important cornerstone of her opposition to the increasingly all-pervading Nazi ideology of German society.

Sophie and her brother Hans decide to take action: Sophie and Hans were part of a group that became known as the White Rose. The group began to write leaflets that quoted theology and encouraged Germans to listen to different teachings such as the Bible and Aristotle instead of Hitler. The

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<sup>3</sup> Except where noted, the summary below is taken from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6bLWH9bijQ>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.biographyonline.net/women/sophie-scholl.html>

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

final leaflet called for Germans to take a stand against the Nazi government.

## **Talking points:**

- We can be good in the Church often at turning amazing realities into boring textbook definitions that leave us unaffected
- Baptism is one of those realities
- When we were baptized we were made priests, prophets and kings. So what?
- We're all priests by baptism (some of us are also priests by the sacrament of orders, but that's a different kind of priesthood)
- Priests have access to God. This is amazing! Try calling the governor right now, or the president, or your doctor: good luck. But we can talk to God anytime!
- What do priests do? "It is the priest's task to bring another before God in prayer." (Abbot Jeremy Driscoll)
- We are all able to go before the Creator of the Universe, the Father of Mercies, and bring those most in need before Him. Women in crisis. Children who are threatened. Families in need. Politicians who, for whatever reason, are promoting and championing abortion. Women and men who are hurting over past decisions to end the life of their child. Anyone!
- What do prophets do? They speak on God's behalf. In the Scriptures we see God raise up prophets to speak on His behalf when injustices are taking place.
- So too today He is calling us, in love, to speak up on behalf of those who are being unjustly treated.
- This is what Sophie Scholl did.
- We can all do this simply by voting this year, for to vote No on Proposal 3, the Reproductive Freedom for All amendment, is to speak up on behalf of the unborn, but not just them to be sure
- We are all kings too by baptism (or better, sharers in Christ's Kingship)

- This can be challenging for us to understand first because we're Americans and we don't have kings, and second because our image of kings (and queens) is often not a biblical one.
- Kings in Scripture have 3 principle tasks: to lead the army in battle, to defend widows and orphans, and to look after the poor
- The amazing work of crisis pregnancy centers throughout our community is an acting out of this kingship
- It's often said we as Christians or Catholics only care about the unborn child. That's simply not true.
- Highlight perhaps a local center that is doing great work to care for women and families in crisis
- Highlight the accompaniment that is occurring in your parish through Walking with Moms in Need where everyone's gifts are valued.

## **Goal:**

- That each person would leave with a profound awareness of the gift and task of their baptism in general and their role in the world as priest, prophet and king.

## ***Week 7:***

### **Theme: For such a time as this**

#### **Talking points:**

- Homily to close out the series
- The theme comes from the book of Esther
- Just as God created Esther for that moment in history, so God has created us for this time and these days. We don't just happen to be alive right now. We have been created to live now, with all that's going on in this world and in our State and we are not to stand by
- We are celebrating today and every Sunday the resurrection of Jesus. It's a little Easter, if you will
- Easter Sunday was the day Jesus began the recreation of this world which God loves
- One day He will gloriously return and all things will be made new
- But in the meantime we have a part to play, work to do
- Even though some of us have sung a song by this title, we can't actually build the city of God; but we can build for it. And we are called to do just this!
- In our work, in our family life, in our voting, in our social media posts, in everything we do, we can do all we can to make this world genuinely more human and more just
- It will be costly, just as it was for Rosa Parks and those in the civil rights movement, just as it was for Sophie Scholl and those in the White Rose movement. But it is worth it!
- Bring the series to a prophetic crescendo that comes from the homilist's heart

#### **Goal:**

- To rouse the faithful to play their part in this day and age in which God has chosen for us to live.



# Prayers of the Faithful Template For Seven Week Focus on Proposal 3

## Week 1

### Theme: Statewide Focus to Educate, Understand, and Pray

For the Church and its leaders. May we strive in a unified voice to uphold and defend the dignity of the human person in all stages of life, born and unborn.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For Pope Francis. May he speak clearly and unambiguously on behalf of life, most particularly the life of the unborn.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our [arch]bishop, \_\_\_\_\_, may he shepherd and pastor this [arch]diocese with the heart of the Father as we embark upon this seven week retreat prayerfully focusing on the defense of the unborn, the rights of parents and the defeat of Proposal 3, the Reproductive Freedom for All amendment.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our nation and its leaders. May they speak and act consistently on behalf of the most basic of all rights, the right to life.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the state of Michigan and those who govern us. May they think clearly on matters of utmost importance, especially, but not only, the dignity of all life, born and unborn.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

## Week 2

### Theme: Either/or: The critical issue

For the Universal Church. May we be a voice of truth and justice, inspiring all nations to speak and defend our unborn brothers and sisters.  
*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For Our Holy Father. May he lead and speak as Jesus on behalf of those who have no voice. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our [arch]bishop. May his leadership and advocacy on behalf of life inspire all bishops to lead accordingly.  
*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our nation and our leaders. May they fight for the most defenseless among us, namely the unborn.  
*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our state's leaders who don't yet think with the mind of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may they come to see that all life, both born and unborn, are made in the image and likeness of God and thus worthy of all the protections afforded to every human person.  
*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For those of us here today in the pews. May we be inspired by the example of Rosa Parks who fought for justice. May we be advocates of truth and justice and speak courageously that nothing justifies taking the life of our unborn children.  
*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the sick ...

For those who have gone before us ...

## Week 3

### Theme: Getting beyond the rhetoric

For the Church and its leaders. May we be unafraid to speak boldly and confidently the Gospel of Life.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our [arch]bishop, \_\_\_\_\_, may he shepherd and pastor this [arch]diocese with the heart of the Father as we continue on in this seven week retreat prayerfully focusing on the defense of the unborn, the rights of parents and the defeat of Proposal 3, the Reproductive Freedom for All amendment.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the state of Michigan and its leaders. May they govern so as to bring about a culture of life and may our citizens be courageous in speaking and voting on behalf of the unborn.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the conversion of abortion providers. May they, like Bernard Nathanson, come to see what abortion truly is and be moved to fight for the life of our unborn brothers and sisters.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the sick ...

For those who have died ...

## **Week 4**

### **Theme: Who's Right?**

For the Church, Our Holy Father Pope Francis, bishops and priests. May we strive to speak on behalf of the family and the unique privilege parents have to raise, defend and protect their children.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our nation. May we be a beacon of light and hope to a darkened world that does not value the life of the unborn. May we promote just laws for all human persons, including our preborn children.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the state of Michigan and its leaders. May they come to recognize that parents, not the state, know what is best for their children.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For those of us in the pews. May we have ever greater clarity about Proposal 3, the Reproductive Freedom for All amendment, understanding that what's at stake is not only abortion, but also a direct attack on parental rights as well.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the sick ...

For our deceased brother and sisters ...

## Week 5

### Theme: As far as the East is from the West

For the Church and all those who minister to God's people. May we speak faithfully and compassionately on behalf of God who is rich beyond all measure in mercy and forgiveness. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our country and its leaders. May we be known as a nation that advocates for families, the unborn and those who have suffered the trauma of abortion.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For those men and women who have experienced the pain of abortion. May they experience the healing, freedom and restoration that God so desperately wants to give them and be inspired by the model of Servant of God Dorothy Day's example of conversion and new life in Jesus Christ.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our [arch]diocese. May we be a community that bears the message that we are not defined by our sin, but rather as sons and daughters of a Father that loves to forgive, no matter what's in our past.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the sick ...

For our beloved dead ...

## Week 6

### Theme: Our role in the world as disciples

For the Church and its leaders. May we have absolute clarity on the mission of Jesus and our mission as disciples and strive to be agents of re-creation and transformation in this world that God so loves, tirelessly advocating for a culture of life and love.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the United States and those who govern. May they govern with a heart for those most vulnerable and defenseless among us, stewarding well the right to life for everyone, most particularly the unborn.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our [arch]diocese, May we be known as a community that welcomes the pregnant mother in crisis, strives to provide the material and spiritual support needed for both mother and child and a place of refuge for those most in need.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For those of us in the pews. May we have a renewed understanding and appreciation for the gift of our baptism and our role as priests, prophets and kings as we speak and act up on behalf of the unborn and encourage others to do the same.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the state of Michigan in this critical election. May our vote on Proposal 3, the Reproductive Freedom for All amendment, be a vote for the unborn and families.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For those who labor tirelessly to protect life through the great work of crisis pregnancy centers. May they be richly rewarded for their efforts to protect women and their children.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the sick ...

For those who have died ...

## Week 7

### Theme: For such a time as this

For the Church, our Holy Father, and all bishops, priests and clergy. May we be a shining example to all the world as to what it means to be human and to be a more just society.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For our nation and our leaders. May they be inspired to lead with the heart of Esther, fighting for what is right, good and just for all human persons, especially the unborn.

For the state of Michigan. May we be known as a state that defends life, the family and the rights of parents.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For those of us here today. May we come to recognize that like Esther, we were born for such a time as this and make a decision to be great, playing our part in this age God has chosen us to live, recognizing the gravity of the upcoming election and choosing to vote for life.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

For the sick ...

For our beloved dead ...



## ***The Word from Lansing: What Abortion Proposal Supporters Won't Tell You***

At this point in the election cycle, Michigan voters may know an abortion proposal will be on the November ballot. Voters have been led to believe this proposal would simply reinstate *Roe v. Wade*. **But that claim is false.**

The proposal has been framed as just ensuring abortion is legal like it was before *Roe* was struck down. It was portrayed in a [recent poll question](#) as merely establishing abortion as a right in the constitution.

But for voters to make an informed decision on the proposal, they need to know that it is NOT simply making sure abortion is legal in a post-*Roe* Michigan. The proposal goes much further than that: It allows abortion for any woman or girl at any point in the pregnancy for any reason -- and then some.

It starts in the first sentence of the language, where it says, "every individual has a fundamental right to reproductive freedom." Because it says individual, and not adult, the reproductive rights afforded in this amendment would be applied to children.

What kind of reproductive rights would also apply to children? Children would have a constitutional right to seek sterilization and contraception. Those terms are listed right in the language.

If the amendment was only about restoring the abortion rights of *Roe*, why did the proposal authors include sterilization and contraceptives? And why are children included in these rights?

Further, the proposal summary text explaining what it does says it will "invalidate state laws conflicting with this amendment." Neither the amendment nor the summary text, however, details what state laws will be invalidated.

Legal experts believe dozens of laws could be invalidated, including the parental consent requirement for children seeking an abortion, because children would have a right to an abortion under the amendment.

Other laws that would fall include those that ban late-term and third trimester abortions. Under the provisions of the amendment, an abortion could be permitted at any stage of pregnancy for almost any reason.

Laws that regulate the quality and safety of abortion facilities would be gone under the amendment, as would the requirement that only physicians perform abortions.

Taxpayers would be forced to pay for abortions, as the amendment language says the state cannot discriminate in enforcing reproductive rights. If tax dollars can pay for other medical procedures, why would tax dollars for abortions be banned under this amendment?

That is not how things were even when *Roe* was in effect. Based on those examples alone, the proposal is not *simply* about ensuring legal access to abortion.

Unfortunately, advocates for this amendment will say it is only about making sure abortion is legal and accessible, yet the language they crafted for the constitution goes far beyond that notion. If more people know that, they might be more reluctant to support such a dangerous and extreme proposal.

Read the 300-plus words of the amendment or the 100-word summary and decide yourself whether this proposal is just about making sure abortion is available, or if it is dangerous for women and children, extreme in taking away parental rights, and wrong for Michigan. And remember to vote no on Proposal 3 in November.

*The Word from Lansing is a regular column for Catholic news outlets provided by Michigan Catholic Conference, the official public policy voice of the Catholic Church in this state.*







# Opposing Proposal 3

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## WEEK 1

This November, Michigan voters will be asked to consider Proposal 3 (the “Reproductive Freedom for All” proposal), which would amend Michigan’s Constitution to make abortion a fundamental right. As Catholics, we recognize that “Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception.” (CCC 2270). That is because every person is wonderfully made in the image and likeness of God and is therefore of immense worth. But we must also help our family members, friends, and neighbors understand that Proposal 3 goes much farther than merely restoring *Roe v. Wade*’s abortion regime. In fact, Proposal 3 invalidates more than two dozen Michigan pro-life laws and has many startling consequences.

For example, the proposal grants a fundamental right to reproductive freedom to “every individual”—with no age limits. So on its face, the proposal authorizes a minor to obtain an abortion without parental consent *or even notice*, even though a parent’s consent is *always* required to

dispense medicine or perform the most routine medical procedure for a minor. Proposal 3 supporters say that courts can put limits on this broad language. But that’s not true. A judge interpreting the Michigan Constitution must apply the words that the Constitution contains, and that means courts will be required to give effect to the broad phrase “*every individual*.”

No matter how a voter feels about abortion, Michigan’s Constitution should *not* be amended to strip parents of their right to be consulted before a minor child makes the serious decision to take her baby’s life. Please tell everyone you know: vote “**NO**” on Proposal 3 on November 8th.

**John Bursch is a constitutional lawyer and former Michigan Solicitor General.** Through Alliance Defending Freedom, he represents the Michigan Catholic Conference and Right to Life of Michigan in court to uphold Michigan’s pro-life laws.





# Opposing Proposal 3

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## WEEK 2

Last week, we discussed how Proposal 3 (the “Reproductive Freedom for All” proposal) would amend Michigan’s Constitution to make abortion a fundamental right, contrary to the Catholic Church’s teaching that life must be protected from the moment of conception. We also learned that Proposal 3 goes much farther than merely codifying *Roe v. Wade*, invalidating more than two dozen Michigan pro-life laws and authorizing minors to obtain abortions without a parent’s consent or even notice.

But there’s more. Proposal 3 defines “reproductive freedom” in a breathtakingly broad manner, to include “sterilization.” And again, because Proposal 3 grants this right to “every individual,” without age limits, that means the proposal, on its face, authorizes a minor to obtain a sterilization without parental consent or even notice, such as when a minor desires to change his or her gender. In addition, Proposal 3 authorizes every possible kind of abortion

procedure, defining “reproductive freedom” to include “abortion care.” Such language authorizes gruesome procedures like partial-birth abortion, where a child is partially delivered before an abortionist takes the baby’s life.

No matter how a voter feels about abortion, Michigan’s Constitution should *not* be amended to strip parents of their right to be consulted before a minor child makes the serious decision to undergo a sterilization procedure, nor should the Constitution authorize partial-birth abortions. Please tell everyone you know: vote **“NO”** on Proposal 3 on November 8th.

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# Opposing Proposal 3

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## WEEK 3

For the past two weeks, we've been discussing Proposal 3 (the "Reproductive Freedom for All" proposal), and how it will amend Michigan's Constitution to create a startling broad right to abortion. In Week 1, we learned that the proposal's broad language (giving the right to "every individual") authorizes a minor to obtain an abortion without parental consent or notice. In Week 2, we learned that the same would be true if a minor sought a sterilization procedure, and that the proposal would also authorize partial-birth abortion.

Proposal 3's supporters say that the State will still be able to regulate abortion "after fetal viability." But that is grossly misleading. The proposal specifically allows abortion through all nine months of pregnancy—notwithstanding any contrary Michigan law—if an abortionist decides, in his professional judgment, that an abortion is necessary to protect the "physical *or mental health*" of the mother. As a legal matter, such a "mental health" exception is widely

acknowledged to be so broad as to justify abortion on demand until birth. An abortionist need merely document that the prospect of having a child is causing extreme anxiety and stress for the mother. And while Proposal 3 supporters say a judge won't have to allow such a broad exception, the proposal's language specifically requires courts to defer to the abortionist's "professional judgment."

No matter how a voter feels about abortion, Michigan's Constitution should *not* be amended to allow abortion on demand through all nine months of pregnancy. Please tell everyone you know: vote "**NO**" on Proposal 3 on November 8th.

**John Bursch is a constitutional lawyer and former Michigan Solicitor General.** Through Alliance Defending Freedom, he represents the Michigan Catholic Conference and Right to Life of Michigan in court to uphold Michigan's pro-life laws.





# Opposing Proposal 3

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## WEEK 4

Over the last three weeks, we've been covering some of the more startling provisions contained in Proposal 3 (the "Reproductive Freedom for All" proposal). In addition to creating a State constitutional right to take the life of an innocent, unborn baby, the proposal's text authorizes minors to obtain abortions without parental consent or notification ("every individual" has the right), allows minors to obtain sterilization procedures without parental consent or notification (defines "reproductive freedom" to include "sterilization"), and permits mothers to take their child's life through nine months of pregnancy, provided that an abortionist says the abortion was necessary to protect the mother's "mental health," a truck-sized loophole.

In addition, Proposal 3 limits the State's power to pass pro-life laws unless the law supports a "compelling state interest achieved by the least restrictive means." In the legal world, this standard is known as "strict scrutiny," and the government can almost never satisfy it. In fact, the U.S. Supreme Court *rejected* strict scrutiny as the appropriate standard for analyzing pro-life laws in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. But Proposal 3 goes farther, defining a "compelling" state interest only as one "for the limited purpose of protecting the

health of an individual seeking care." Incredibly, that means the State would be prohibited from passing a law to stop abortions based on the baby's sex, race, or disability, or even for the purpose of protecting the unborn baby's life! And any such laws cannot interfere with the mother's "autonomous decision-making," replacing the familiar "informed consent" standard that applies to every medical procedure with a watered-down "voluntary consent" standard.

No matter how a voter feels about abortion, Michigan's Constitution should *not* be amended to prohibit the State from passing laws that protect innocent, unborn life or to pass safety regulations for abortion procedures that ensure mothers are fully informed before they choose to take their baby's life. Please tell everyone you know: vote **"NO"** on Proposal 3 on November 8th.

**John Bursch is a constitutional lawyer and former Michigan Solicitor General.** Through Alliance Defending Freedom, he represents the Michigan Catholic Conference and Right to Life of Michigan in court to uphold Michigan's pro-life laws.







# Opposing Proposal 3

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## WEEK 5

We've used the last month to shine a spotlight on the extraordinarily broad language used in Proposal 3 (the "Reproductive Freedom for All" proposal) that will appear on the ballot this November. The proposal does far more than simply codify *Roe v. Wade* in our State Constitution. As we've discussed, Proposal 3 invalidates more than two dozen Michigan pro-life laws, authorizes minors to obtain abortion and sterilization without parental consent or even notice, effectively allows abortion through all 9 months of pregnancy, and prohibits the Stat from enacting laws that would protect an unborn baby's life or even to stop abortions based on sex, race, or disability.

At least women would be protected from unsafe abortion practices, right? Not at all. Proposal 3 authorizes the State to pass limited laws protecting the health of the mother, but only "consistent with accepted clinical standards of practice and evidence-based medicine." Who establishes "accepted clinical standards of practice" for abortions? Abortionists! Unlike any other area of medical practice, where doctors

and nurses are subjected to all manner of laws to ensure patient safety, abortionists alone would get to decide whether they want to follow a Michigan health and safety law. If abortionists disagree that hospital admitting privileges are important, they can decline to follow a law that requires them. If abortionists think that laws regulating the safety standards for surgical centers are unnecessary for abortion clinics, they can ignore them with impunity.

No matter how a voter feels about abortion, Michigan's Constitution should *not* be amended to give abortionists complete control over deciding what Michigan health and safety laws they must follow. Please tell everyone you know: vote **"NO"** on Proposal 3 on November 8th.

**John Bursch is a constitutional lawyer and former Michigan Solicitor General.** Through Alliance Defending Freedom, he represents the Michigan Catholic Conference and Right to Life of Michigan in court to uphold Michigan's pro-life laws.





# Opposing Proposal 3

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## WEEK 6

This is now our 6th week discussing the startlingly broad language of Proposal 3 (the “Reproductive Freedom for All” proposal). In addition to violating the Church’s teaching that every human life is sacred and must be protected from conception, the proposal allows minors to obtain sterilizations as well as abortions without parental consent or even notice, effectively allows abortion on demand through 9 months of pregnancy, prevents the State from protecting unborn life or stopping discrimination based on a baby’s sex, race, or disability, and effectively exempts abortionists from health and safety regulations.

It gets worse. In subsection (3), Proposal 3 says that the state shall not “penalize, prosecute, or otherwise take adverse action against someone for aiding or assisting” a mother in obtaining an abortion. That means if a teacher or counselor takes a student to obtain an abortion without notifying the child’s parents, there are no legal consequences. If someone assists with an abortion—even if they have

no medical license or training whatsoever—there can also be no legal consequences. Most bizarrely, if an abortionist engages in gross negligence and severely harms or kills the mother as well as her child during an abortion, he will have a constitutional defense to any malpractice claim: Michigan’s Constitution would prevent the State from imposing an “adverse action,” i.e., a state-court judgment, against him.

No matter how a voter feels about abortion, Michigan’s Constitution should *not* be amended to allow non-medical providers to assist in abortions and to absolve abortionists of medical-malpractice liability. Please tell everyone you know: vote “**NO**” on Proposal 3 on November 8th.

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# Opposing Proposal 3

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## WEEK 7

This is our 7th and final week to review the actual language of Proposal 3 (the “Reproductive Freedom for All” proposal). Unsurprisingly, the proposal violates Church teaching about the sacredness of all human life beginning at conception. Shockingly, the proposal also authorizes minors to obtain abortions and sterilizations without parental consent or even notice, effectively allows abortion on demand through 9 months of pregnancy, prevents the State from protecting unborn life or stopping discrimination based on a baby’s sex, race, or disability, effectively exempts abortionists from health and safety regulations, and permits non-medical professionals to assist with abortions while potentially absolving abortionists from medical-malpractice lawsuits. Is it any surprise that Proposal 3’s supporters did not publish the proposal’s full text on their website until *after* petition signature gathering was over?

There are plenty of additional provisions of Proposal 3 that we could address, but we only have time for one more. Subsection (2) says that the “state shall not discriminate in the protection or enforcement of this fundamental right.” The Michigan Supreme Court has previously held that Michigan can limit taxpayer funding for abortions. But supreme

courts of Alaska, California, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and New Jersey have all held that an independent state constitutional right to abortion means the state cannot restrict public funding of abortions. And Proposal 3’s anti-discrimination law makes it a near certainty the same will happen here. So not only will abortion on demand be the law in Michigan, but all of us will likely have to pay for it—even if it violates our deepest religious beliefs about the value and dignity of unborn, human life.

No matter how a voter feels about abortion, Proposal 3 is terrifying. This extreme proposal would make Michigan an outlier, not only in the United States but around the world. And the Michigan Legislature and courts would have very few tools to do anything to combat the proposal’s language, which appears intentionally overbroad. Please tell everyone you know: vote **“NO”** on Proposal 3 on November 8th.

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