

## Catholic Life Offices Call for Public Debate on All Aspects of Abortion

The current debate over abortion, including late term abortion and abortion funding, is an opportunity for reexamining our options.

"Australians should work toward eliminating all abortion, rather than complacently accepting the loss of precious unborn life and the harm to women," the directors of the Respect Life Offices of three Catholic Archdioceses said today. "To all caught up in abortion we say: there is hope; there are alternatives."

"Our community is increasingly aware that abortion at any stage and for any reason can be a devastating and life-changing event for women."

"Recent claims that speaking out about the trauma caused to women is a 'strategy' are yet another attempt to silence hurting women. The Church seeks an option that affirms and respects both mothers and the unborn. It recognizes that we cannot adequately care for either without caring for both.

In a joint statement, the Directors of the Respect Life Offices for the Catholic Archdioceses of Melbourne, Perth and Sydney say "we must work to avoid the tragedy of abortion and the trauma abortion causes. We need to use our love and creative energies to address the many factors that influence a woman's decision to have an abortion and we need to provide her with real alternatives."

"We need to respond to increasing social awareness that abortion at any stage and for any reason is devastating for women and destroys a human individual."

"Many women feel compelled to choose abortion due to lack of emotional, financial, social or practical support. Abortion should never be the only option. We need to find new ways of assisting women. Women deserve better than abortion."

"Catholic Church leaders, agencies and individuals welcome this opportunity to revisit an issue about which our community has been complacent and silent for too long."

Dr Brigid Vout, Archdiocese of Sydney Life Office  
Marcia Riordan, Archdiocese of Melbourne Respect Life Office  
Clare Pike, Archdiocese of Perth Life Office

For more information contact Marita Franklin, Catholic Communications Sydney on (02) 9390 5300 or 0419 243 957.