


Memo:

TO: Knights of Columbus of Oklahoma
FR: Abbot Lawrence 
DT: January 15, 2010
RE: Prayer Vigil on Friday, January 22

Friday, January 22, 2010, will be the 37th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in Roe vs. Wade, which *de facto* legalized abortion in the United States. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have designated January 22nd as a day of particular prayer and penance for all violations committed against the dignity of life. As we read in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*:

In all the dioceses of the United States of America, January 22 (or January 23, when January 22 falls on a Sunday) shall be observed as a particular day of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion, and of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life. The Mass "For Peace and Justice" should be celebrated with violet vestments as an appropriate liturgical observance for this day.

In keeping with this instruction, the monks of St. Gregory's Abbey will be adding to our usual measure of prayer, fasting and penance on Friday, January 22.

As Abbot, I fraternally challenge my brother Knights of Columbus and their spouses to join the community of St. Gregory's Abbey and University in marking January 22 with some form of special communal and/or private observance. One might consider a form of fasting on that day. For instance, one might consciously limiting the amount of food consumed at each meal or not eating snacks between meals. If your health or age does not allow for this, you might offer some form of prayer or an act of charity for the intention requested. There are many appropriate charities, but two that would be appropriate at this time would be Birth Choice or one of the funds being established to provide aid to the people of Haiti.

To give an opportunity for a communal witness to prayer, we will have a simple *Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament* in the Abbey Church on Friday, January 22, from 1:00 p.m. until 4:45 p.m. To help in planning for this event, sign-up forms for the prayer vigil will be available in the back of the Abbey Church. You can add your name to this sign-up form by sending me an email at abbotlawrence@stgregorys.edu. One need not sign-up in order to participate in the vigil, nor is any specific amount of time required.

Mass will be celebrated in the Abbey Church on January 22 at the usual time of 5:00 p.m. for the intention of increased respect for the dignity of human life.

The issue of respect for life is always urgent, but is especially so during this time when Congress is finalizing health care reform legislation. Thank you for your participation.