

Intercession:

For an end to legal abortion in our nation and for the conversion of all hearts, so that the inherent rights of every human being—especially those most at risk of abuse and rejection—will be upheld.

Prayer:

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection:

Today, on this 41st anniversary of Roe v. Wade, we consider the past four decades in which our society has legally permitted abortion and wandered far from God. Instead of accepting children in joy and hope, many hearts seem hardened against making commitments to others, fearing the demands others may make on our time or our freedom. We are becoming a culture marked by rejection, by loneliness and sorrow. In today's Gospel, we hear how Jesus grieved over the Pharisees' hardness of heart, as he heals the man with the withered hand. They remained silent when Jesus pointedly asked them: "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it?" Our laws now make it legal to destroy life by abortion, by abortifacient drugs, in destructive embryo research, in the course of in vitro fertilization procedures, and in some states by assisted suicide and the death penalty. How Jesus must grieve over this culture of death! Let us open our hearts in faith, entrusting our culture to the healing power of Christ, the One who has overcome sin

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

- Today is a day of prayer and penance for restoration of the right to life. Step out of your comfort zone and witness publicly to life in a march or rally, or call your elected representatives to ask them to promote policies and laws that respect life.
- Gratitude helps us love God and neighbor. Today try to not complain or be negative. Say a prayer of thanksgiving instead.
- Don't push the snooze button. Get right out of bed and offer your day in prayer to God. "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." (Ephesians 5:14).



Image: A mosaic of Our Lady of Guadalupe decorates a side altar in the Church of Santa Maria della Famiglia at the headquarters of the office governing Vatican City State Dec. 15. (CNS photo/Paul Haring).