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PRESS RELEASE

**RESPONSE OF THE MOST REVEREND JEROME E. LISTECKI TO
REMARKS OF U.S. SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE NANCY PELOSI**

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Sunday, August 24, U. S. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, in an appearance on *Meet the Press*, misrepresented both the writings of St. Augustine and the settled doctrine of the Catholic Church in an attempt to justify uncertainty about when human life begins and thus to defend a right to abortion.

That today is the Feast of St. Augustine makes it all the more fitting for me, as Bishop of the Diocese of La Crosse, to exercise my obligation to correct this grave error. And so I join a number of my brother bishops in speaking out.

Let me be clear. To say that there is ambiguity about when human life begins is utterly and completely false, and any Catholic (which Speaker Pelosi professes to be) who tries to interpret Church teaching in such a manner gives scandal and misleads the faithful.

The Church's constant teaching on this matter is expressed in the Catechism: "Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable" (No. 2271).

New human life with distinct DNA begins at conception, and it is science, not theology, which tells us that. Advances in ultrasound and other imaging technology, along with the wonders of prenatal surgery, have only made more visible and poignant that distinct life within the womb.

While it does not belong to the mother, that human life does depend on her care and protection, along with the support and protection of any society that would call itself civil and humane.

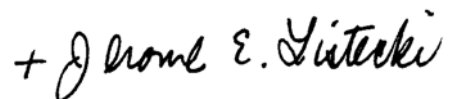
It is ironic that, in an age that prides itself on scientific knowledge, there are those whose agenda drives them to invoke misinformed theology to cast doubt on some of the most basic biological truths.

In such a politicized environment of self-serving skepticism and slogans about “choice,” the Church must tirelessly proclaim the truth about the dignity of the human person from conception to natural death. This is all the more urgent when innocent human life is threatened, as it is by abortion, as well as embryonic stem cell research and euthanasia.

To clearly proclaim and defend this truth is my duty as your Bishop, part of my task to form consciences for faithful citizenship. It is also the duty of all the faithful, as we work together to foster a culture of life.

With gratitude for the fidelity of your witness, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Jerome E. Listecki". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Most Reverend Jerome E. Listecki
Bishop of the Diocese of La Crosse