

The Sanctity of Human Life

We feel that the main concern here should be the sanctity of ALL human life, which does not begin and end with the abortion issue. Fair and decent treatment of others whose lives are at risk is also part of the equation and should be considered when determining whether a candidate is "pro-life" in the sense that he or she respects human life taken as a whole. Not only that, but as a nation of wealth, shouldn't we take action in respecting the sanctity of human life in areas around the world where people are dying when it could be prevented? Shouldn't we help? Here are some of Obama's beliefs regarding the all-encompassing issues of the sanctity of human life. . .

OBAMA: ". . .take an example like Bosnia, when we went in and undoubtedly saved lives. We did not have U.N. approval, but there was a strong international case that had been made that ethnic cleansing was taking place, and under those circumstances, **when we have it within our power**, we should, you know, **we should take action.**" (Saddleback Forum - transcripts.cnn.com)

OBAMA: "I think that the death penalty is appropriate in certain circumstances. There are especially heinous crimes: terrorism, the harm of children. Obviously, we've had some problems in this state in the application of the death penalty. That's why a moratorium was put in place and that's why I was so proud to be one of the leaders in **overhauling a death penalty system that was broken**. We became the first in the nation requiring the video taping of capital interrogations and confessions. We have to have this ultimate sanction in certain circumstances where the whole community says "this is beyond the pale."(Barak Obama vs Alan Keyes - ontheissues.org)

OBAMA:"If we are doing this right, if we have a phased redeployment where we're as careful getting out as we were careless getting in, then there's no reason why we shouldn't be able to prevent the wholesale slaughter some people have suggested might occur. . .**We have to have humanitarian aid now**. We also have two-and-a-half million displaced people inside of Iraq and several million more outside of Iraq. **We should be ramping up assistance to them right now**. But I always reserve the right, in conjunction with a broader international effort, to **prevent genocide or any wholesale slaughter** than might happen inside of Iraq or anyplace else."
(Feb 2008 Politico Interview - ontheissues.org)

OBAMA: "I think we can provide **common-sense approaches to the issue of illegal guns that are ending up on the streets**. We can make sure that criminals don't have guns in their hands. We can make certain that those who are mentally deranged are not getting a hold of handguns. We can trace guns that have been used in crimes to unscrupulous gun dealers that may be selling to straw purchasers and dumping them on the streets." (2008 Philadelphia Primary - ontheissues.org)

OBAMA: "We are all sick because of AIDS and we are all tested by the crisis. Neither philanthropist nor scientist; neither government nor church can solve this problem on their own. **AIDS must be an all hands on deck effort.** I don't think we can deny that there is a moral and spiritual component to prevention--I heard stories of men and women contracting HIV because sex was no longer part of a sacred covenant but a mechanical physical act. Having said that, I also believe that we cannot ignore that abstinence--may not be the reality. If condoms and potentially microbicides can prevent millions of deaths, they should be made more widely available." (ontheissues.org)

OBAMA: "You know, my mother died of ovarian cancer when she was 53 years old. And I remember in the **last month of her life**, she wasn't thinking about how to get well, she wasn't thinking about coming to terms with her own mortality, **she was thinking about whether or not insurance was going to cover the medical bills** and whether our family would be bankrupt as a consequence. **That is morally wrong.** It's objectionable. That's why I put forward a comprehensive legislation for universal health care so that all people could get coverage." (2007 Democratic Primary – ontheissues.org)

OBAMA: "**Poorly secured nuclear material** in the former Soviet Union, or secrets from a scientist in Pakistan could help build a **bomb that detonates** in Paris. The poppies in Afghanistan become the **heroin** in Berlin. The **poverty and violence** in Somalia breeds the terror of tomorrow. The **genocide** in Darfur **shames the conscience of us all.**

In this new world, such dangerous currents have swept along faster than our efforts to contain them. **That is why we cannot afford to be divided.**" (Berlin Germany – 2008electionprocon.org)

Did you know. . .

The number of abortions in the U.S. has been falling steadily since the 1980s regardless of whether the person in the White House favored a legal right to abortion or opposed it.

Guttmacher's figures show the number peaked several years after the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that created a national legal right to abortion, held fairly steady throughout Republican Ronald Reagan's presidency, and has declined through the presidencies of Republican George H.W. Bush, Democrat Bill Clinton and Republican George W. Bush.

And just for the record, the authors of Guttmacher's study said in March 2008 that they can't tell exactly why the decline is taking place. Reasons probably include "better contraceptive use, lower levels of unintended pregnancy, more women carrying unintended pregnancies to term and greater difficulties accessing abortion services in some geographic areas," the authors said.

Sources:
www.factcheck.org

"Trends in Abortions in the United States, 1973 - 2005." Guttmacher Institute, Jan. 2008.

Regarding the issue of abortion, Obama has been both honest and realistic. . .

Obama: "... I am pro-choice. I believe in Roe v. Wade, and I come to that conclusion not because I'm pro-abortion, but because, ultimately, I don't think women make these decisions casually. . . And so, for me, the goal right now should be . . . And by the way, I've now inserted this into the Democratic Party platform, is how do we reduce the number of abortions?"

(Saddleback Interview, Aug 2008)

Obama: "The issue of abortion, I don't think, has gone away. . . I think that the American people struggle with two principles: There's the principle that a fetus is not just an appendage, it's potential life. I think people recognize that there's a moral element to that. They also believe that women should have some control over their bodies and themselves and there is a privacy element to making those decisions."

(The New York Times, Oct 2007)

Obama: "There is a moral dimension to abortion, which I think that all too often those of us who are pro-choice have not talked about or tried to tamp down. I think that's a mistake because I think all of us understand that it is a wrenching choice for anybody to think about."

People of good will can exist on both sides. . . And if we can acknowledge that much, then we can certainly agree on the fact that we should be doing everything we can to avoid unwanted pregnancies that might even lead somebody to consider having an abortion."

(2008 Democratic Compassion Forum at Messiah College, Apr 13, 2008)

The American people hold a variety of opinions on the issue of abortion, be it because of their personal, scientific or religious beliefs. We will never all agree, and because our country is a free one, we cannot force others to conform with or practices our particular set of beliefs and should focus on changing what we can agree on. We believe our energies and efforts would be better spent on seeking other avenues for reducing abortion rather than trying to overturn a law that has held up for several decades? We all agree on the problem, we just have different solutions.

In our opinion, this is why a candidate being "pro-life" in a broader sense than just relating to abortion is so important. Respecting human life on the whole is a much better gauge of a candidate's values, especially given the freedoms and rights of others, which cannot be disregarded. We feel that, in this sense, Obama respects ALL human life and that is why we support him. Another reason we support Obama is because of his personal faith and how he chooses to act that out. Below are some of his statements on the matter. . .

Obama's Personal Faith

Last month, at the Saddleback Civil Forum with Rick Warren, when asked about his Christian faith, Obama replied as follows. . .

OBAMA: "As a starting point, it means I believe in — that Jesus Christ died for my sins, and that I am redeemed through him. That is a source of strength and sustenance on a daily basis. Yes, I know that I don't walk alone. And I know that if I can get myself out of the way, that I can maybe carry out in some small way what he intends. And it means that those sins that I have on a fairly regular basis, hopefully will be washed away.

But what it also means, I think, is a sense of obligation to embrace not just words, but through deeds, the expectations, I think, that god has for us. And that means thinking about the least of these. It means acting — well, acting justly, and loving mercy, and walking humbly with our god. And that — I think trying to apply those lessons on a daily basis, knowing that you're going to fall a little bit short each day, and then being able to kind of take note and saying, well, that didn't quite work out the way I think it should have, but maybe I can get a little bit better. It gives me the confidence to try things, including things like running for president, where you're going to screw up once in a while."

Also at the Saddleback Forum, Obama discussed what he feels his and our role should be in regards to evil. . .

OBAMA: "Evil does exist. I mean, I think we see evil all the time. We see evil in Darfur. We see evil, sadly, on the streets of our cities. We see evil in parents who viciously abuse their children. I think it has to be confronted. It has to be confronted squarely, and one of the things that I strongly believe is that, now, we are not going to, as individuals, be able to erase evil from the world. That is God's task, but we can be soldiers in that process, and we can confront it when we see it.

Now, the one thing that I think is very important is for to us have some humility in how we approach the issue of confronting evil, because a lot of evil's been perpetrated based on the claim that we were trying to confront evil."

Faith Sources:

Saddleback Civil Forum, Aug 2008 - Transcript obtained at www.transcripts.cnn.com