

“The doctors told us our baby had a ‘fatal foetal abnormality’ and that they were 100% certain that our baby wouldn’t live. We were told there was no hope at all.”

Sinéad McBreen with her daughter Grace from Bailieborough, Co. Cavan >



The McBreen’s Story “The beginning of our pregnancy with Grace was the same as our other children. Everything was normal. We had an early scan at seven weeks which showed a heartbeat. We had another at 12 weeks and at 16 weeks we went for a third scan where the doctor could see something was wrong.

“The doctors told us our baby had a ‘fatal foetal abnormality’ and that they were 100% certain that our baby wouldn’t live. We were told there was no hope at all. We were devastated obviously. Before the doctors sent us home they brought us into a room and told us we didn’t have to continue with this pregnancy. We were told we were taking the difficult route. They said there was obviously something wrong and the easiest thing for us to do would be to terminate the baby. There was pressure. There was an expectation that we should terminate.

“We wanted God to decide what day, what hour, and what minute our baby was to leave. We thought if she’s going to die anyway let it be natural. We wanted to give her every chance.

“Grace was born in November 2014 with Down Syndrome. She is a little miracle. She’s a joy from morning until night. She has made a difference in everybody’s life. Her siblings adore her. Everybody adores her. She teaches us something new every day.

“She wakes up first thing in the morning with a smile on her face and we fight over whose turn it is to hold Grace, to play with her, to feed her. She is making a big impact, on us as her family, and on everyone who meets her.

“We are proud to live in a country that protects the right to life of unborn babies. Where there is life there is always hope.”

What can I do?

Why not follow Choose Life 2018 on Facebook and @ChooseLife2018 on Twitter and share our posts to help us spread the message of life online?

Your Questions

Is a view on abortion solely a question of religious belief?

The right to life is not just a question of religious belief. As the first and fundamental human right, it affects people of all faiths, and none. You do not have to be from any particular faith tradition to agree that human life should be protected and that intentionally ending the life of another human is never justified. Supporting and sustaining a culture of life is in the interest of every citizen, Catholics and all people of goodwill because it defines us as a society.

What is the view of the Church?

The Church teaches that life is sacred from conception to natural death and there is no such thing as a life without value. This belief is based on reason as well as faith. Our Church rejects the suggestion that any person can decide when it is time for another person to die.

Week 12

Hi Mammy!

Congratulations! The first trimester is officially over. Your morning sickness should stop now though you might experience some unusual cravings. I am now able to suck my thumb and curl my fingers and toes. I am three inches long. Big news! From now on people will start to notice your baby bump. You'll have to tell everyone soon. I can't wait to meet you all when I'm born.



Over the coming weeks we will be following the development of Baby Bump based on pregnancy milestones from conception up to 12 weeks.

Church teaching

During pregnancy is one life more important?

By virtue of their common humanity, a mother and her unborn baby have an equal right to life. The Catholic Church has never taught that the life of a child in the womb should be preferred to that of a mother. This aspect of Church teaching on the right to life is often misunderstood.

If a pregnant woman becomes seriously ill and needs treatment which may, as a secondary effect, put the life of her baby at risk, such treatment is always ethically permissible provided every effort has been made to save the life of both mother and baby. Abortion, by contrast, is the direct and intentional ending of an unborn baby's life.

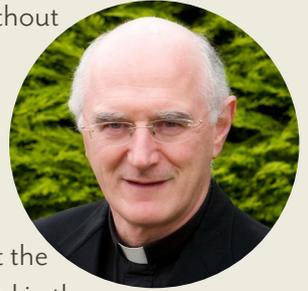
The Eighth Amendment

A declaration of equality

The Eighth Amendment of the *Constitution* is a declaration of equality and respect for human life. It represents, at the very foundations of our laws, a conviction that all human life is worth cherishing equally. It says: *"The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right"*.

To repeal this amendment would leave unborn children at the mercy of whatever permissive abortion laws might be introduced in Ireland in the future.

"LIFE ITSELF IS THE MOST PRECIOUS gift of all. I give thanks to God for this ultimate gift without which nothing else is possible. In these days we are all very aware of the need to protect the life of every child in the womb. However it is paradoxical, and in some ways the ultimate delusion, to extinguish this most fundamental right of all, the right to life of the innocent child, in the name of personal and civil rights. May the Lord open our eyes to see the image of God in every child at every stage of their lives"



Bishop Dermot Farrell of Ossory speaking at the celebration of Mass for his Episcopal Ordination in Kilkenny on March 11, 2018.

Family Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are the source and lover of life. Reawaken in us respect for every human life. Help us to see in each child the marvellous work of our Creator. Open our hearts to welcome every child as a unique and wonderful gift from God. Amen.

Choose Life: Prayer for the Child in the Womb by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference



"When I thought I might be pregnant I did the test in my local Cura centre. My counsellor sat and talked with me about the results. I went back a few times and I brought my mam. It was a really tough time but going to Cura definitely helped" Emma, 21.

Cura is an agency of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference which supports women experiencing unplanned pregnancies. If you need Cura's help call **1850 622 626** or visit **Cura.ie**

Our website has just been redesigned. To access videos, testimonies and frequently asked questions visit www.chooselife2018.ie