

## **Every Life Counts: The Legacy of the Unborn**

She was faced with three choices: 1) an abortion, which would save her life and allow her to have more children in the future, 2) a complete hysterectomy, which would save her life but take the unborn child's life and prevent her from having more children, or 3) removal of only the fibroma, with potential further complications, which would save the life of her baby. The decision was an easy one for St. Gianna Beretta Molla: she would protect her unborn daughter!

Though St. Gianna knew she would love to be with her daughter and her other children for as long as she could, she realized that by saving herself, she would take the precious life of an innocent human being. Like so many parents, she didn't hesitate to put the needs of her child before her own. She understood that the baby she was carrying was a human with a heartbeat—the same human before and after birth. St. Gianna also recognized that her baby deserved to live, just like everyone else. Just as a baby needs its parents to provide life necessities such as food and shelter, so too does the mother's womb provide for the growing little human being.

This does not mean the value of the child's life is greater than the mother's. Every human has a unique story of growth, adventure, and potential. The beauty of life lies in its interconnectedness: parents sacrificing for children, children learning from parents, and the cycle of life continuing. Becoming a parent can be both a challenging and beautiful experience, and through raising their children, parents learn many virtues such as patience, empathy, resilience, and selflessness. In addition, they find fulfillment in nurturing life and guiding their children through the world. After the child grows up, he or she carries the lessons learned from their

parents and goes out into the world, ready to face new challenges and make a positive impact on others. In this way, each life not only matters but contributes to a greater legacy of love and growth.

One day, St. Padre Pio, the famous Capuchin priest known for his mystical experiences and the stigmata, was hearing confessions. Among those seeking him out was a woman burdened by guilt over the abortion she had undergone years earlier. Longing for forgiveness and healing, she confessed her sins to Padre Pio. After listening with compassion, he told her that the baby boy she had aborted was created by God for greatness—that God would have chosen him to lead His Church as the next Pope. His response reminds us of the gravity of life and the incredible potential carried by every human soul, even those who never have the chance to fulfill it.

As God says in Jeremiah 1:5, “Before I formed thee in the bowels of thy mother, I knew thee: and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and made thee a prophet unto the nations.” Every human being—young or old, born or unborn, past or present—was created with purpose and loved by God. Even when we might think that someone doesn’t “deserve” life, God still loves them (and us) and has a plan for each of us, just as He did for the unborn child in the woman’s confession. We may not always understand His plans, but it is not our place to take away the gift of life that only God can give.

In honoring and preserving the life of the unborn, we honor the future and potential every child holds. Each child represents a new opportunity for hope and change. Just as our parents before us chose life and passed on the gift of love and life to us, let us choose the path of life as well. By choosing life, we commit to preserving every heartbeat and fulfilling God’s plan for

humanity. Every life counts, whether small or big, born or unborn. By valuing each individual, we create a society that reflects the love and compassion we all hope to receive. Every person, no matter how tiny or vulnerable, is a testament to the beauty and sanctity of life.