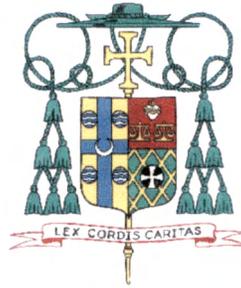


THOMAS IOANNES

Divina Miseratione et



Apostolicae Sedis Gratia

EPISCOPUS CAMPIFONTIS IN ILLINOIS

DECREE DECLARING THAT ILLINOIS LEGISLATIVE LEADERS WHO PROMOTED AND VOTED FOR THE ACT CONCERNING ABORTION OF 2017 (HOUSE BILL 40) AND THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ACT OF 2019 (SENATE BILL 25) ARE NOT TO BE ADMITTED TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION, AND CATHOLIC LEGISLATORS WHO VOTED FOR PRO-ABORTION LEGISLATION ARE NOT TO PRESENT THEMSELVES FOR HOLY COMMUNION PER CANONS 915 AND 916 OF THE CODE OF CANON LAW

In the Name of the Most Holy Trinity. Amen.

Whereas, the Church since the first century has affirmed the moral evil of abortion, which teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable, declaring, “You shall not kill the embryo by abortion and shall not cause the newborn to perish” (*Didaché*, 2:2).

Whereas, the college of bishops together with the Roman Pontiff at the Second Vatican Council affirmed that direct abortion, willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law, saying, “Life must be protected with the utmost care from the moment of conception: abortion and infanticide are abominable crimes” (Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 51);

Whereas, Pope Francis has called abortion a “very grave sin” and a “horrendous crime” (interview with Italian media outlets TV2000 and Blu Radio, November 20, 2016);

Whereas, canon 915 of the *Code of Canon Law* requires that those “who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin are not to be admitted to Holy Communion”;

Whereas, canon 916 of the *Code of Canon Law* states, “A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to celebrate Mass or to receive the Body of the Lord without prior sacramental confession unless a grave reason is present and there is no opportunity of confessing; in this case the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible”;

Whereas, Sacred Scripture warns, “Whoever eats unworthily of the bread and drinks from the Lord’s cup makes himself guilty of profaning the body and of the blood of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 11:27);

Whereas, the *Statement on Catholics in Political Life* issued by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2004 said, “Failing to protect the lives of innocent and defenseless members of the human race is to sin against justice. Those who formulate law therefore have an obligation in conscience to work toward correcting morally defective laws, lest they be guilty of cooperating in evil and in sinning against the common good”;

Whereas, several Catholic legislators in the Illinois General Assembly have obstinately persisted in promoting the abominable crime and very grave sin of abortion by facilitating the passage of and/or voting for the Act Concerning Abortion of 2017 (House Bill 40), which among other things, provides for taxpayer funding of abortion, as well as for the Reproductive Health Act of 2019 (Senate Bill 25), which, among other things, purports to declare abortion to be a fundamental right, while also declaring that an unborn baby does not have independent rights under the laws of this state;

Whereas, “the bishop is bound to promote the common discipline of the whole Church and therefore to urge the observance of all ecclesiastical laws” (*Code of Canon Law*, canon 386, §2); and

Whereas, decisions about “whether the denial of Holy Communion to some Catholics in political life is necessary because of their public support for abortion on demand . . . rest with the individual bishop in accord with the established canonical and pastoral principles” (*Statement on Catholics in Political Life* USCCB, 2004);

Now therefore, I, the Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki, by the grace of God and the favor of the Apostolic See Bishop of Springfield in Illinois, do hereby issue this decree declaring in accord with canon 915 of the *Code of Canon Law* that Illinois Senate President John Cullerton and Speaker of the House Michael J. Madigan, who facilitated the passage of the Act Concerning Abortion of 2017 (House Bill 40) as well as the Reproductive Health Act of 2019 (Senate Bill 25), are not to be admitted to Holy Communion in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois because they have obstinately persisted in promoting the abominable crime and very grave sin of abortion as evidenced by the influence they exerted in their leadership roles and their repeated votes and obdurate public support for abortion rights over an extended period of time.

These persons may be readmitted to Holy Communion only after they have truly repented these grave sins and furthermore have made suitable reparation for damages and scandal, or at least have seriously promised to do so, as determined in my judgment or in the judgment of their diocesan bishop in consultation with me or my successor.

Moreover, I declare that Catholic legislators of the Illinois General Assembly who have cooperated in evil and committed grave sin by voting for any legislation that promotes abortion are not to present themselves to receive Holy Communion without first being reconciled to Christ and the Church in accord with canon 916 of the *Code of Canon Law*.

Given at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Springfield, Illinois, on this 2nd day of the month of June, in the Year of Our Lord 2019.



+ Thomas John Paprocki

Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois

Christopher A. House

Very Reverend Christopher A. House, V.J.
Chancellor