

## **Important Announcement to all Parishioners from Bishop Stephen J. Berg**

The October 1 Feast of our diocesan patroness, St Therese of Lisieux, has initiated the month of Respect Life. In prayer through this month, I write today about one issue of deep concern on the upcoming Colorado November ballot. This measure is titled Amendment 79 Right To Abortion, where I must clearly urge you to Vote No.

In hope, faith and compassion, we are called to protect life in all its stages and forms, preborn and living, all God's children. Much of society today is complacent with the notion of the 'right' to abortion without understanding its dire consequences. Amendment 79 enshrines this tragedy and proposes to concretize and increase the attack on the unborn, their mothers, families, and the integrity of the communities of Colorado in three ways.

First, it expands Colorado's already most liberal abortion law in the country, to be enshrined in the Colorado constitution, to an unrestricted right to abortion for all 40 weeks of pregnancy. There will be no further/future discussion to be had, or legislation to be considered, even as to common-sense limitations protecting the unborn child through the last trimester of pregnancy, when the child can feel pain and is able to survive outside the womb.

Second, it eliminates parental notification of any minor child's receiving an abortion. This will permanently abrogate parents' rights of responsibility for their child's psychological, emotional and medical welfare. Those parental decisions will now be legally assumed and guided by people, pressures and influences outside the family.

Third, Amendment 79 will allow and direct taxpayer funding for all abortions, currently prohibited. Countless children known only to God, brought forward both in-state and out-of-state, will die in Colorado, funded by taxpayer dollars. We will be obligated to participate, regardless of faith or conviction, through our own state funding.

Amendment 79 proposes to make these three changes permanent. Period.

As a Catholic nonprofit we are not permitted to support or oppose political candidates or parties in an election. But we are most definitely encouraged to engage and speak on ballot issues that impact our mission. We have the right, and as Christians we have the duty, to speak from the heart and condemn this unjust and irreversible Amendment 79.

As Catholics we have a moral obligation to exercise our right to vote (CCC 2240). We must stand together to ensure that our state constitution reflects respect for life, parental rights, and communal responsibility for all God's children. We must pray, get the word out, work with pro-life brothers and sisters, and Vote No on Amendment 79.

I encourage you to be informed. Go to our diocesan website at [diopueblo.org](http://diopueblo.org) and read the Voter's Guide. Check out the Right To Know website at [righttoknowco.org](http://righttoknowco.org), a coalition of pro-life groups of Colorado. It will also be helpful to review the USCCB website, "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship."