

# OCA

## ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

The Holy Synod/Official Statements & Speeches/The Holy Synod of Bishops

### Synodal Affirmations on Marriage, Family, Sexuality, and the Sanctity of Life

*These affirmations on marriage, family, sexuality, and the sanctity of life are issued by the Holy Synod of Bishops on the occasion of the Tenth All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America.*

Miami, Florida, July, 1992

#### Abortion

Abortion is an act of murder for which those involved, voluntarily and involuntarily, will answer to God.

Those finding themselves confronted with tragic circumstances where the lives of mothers and their unborn children are threatened, and where painful decisions of life and death have to be made—such as those involving rape, incest, and sickness—are to be counseled to take responsible action before God, who is both merciful and just, to whom they will give account for their actions.

Women and men, including family members and friends of pregnant women considering abortions, are to be encouraged to resist this evil act, and be assisted in bearing and raising their children in healthy physical and spiritual conditions.

Women who have had recourse to abortion, men who have fathered aborted children, and others involved in cases of abortion, are to be provided with

pastoral care which includes recognition of the gravity of the act and assurance of the mercy of God upon those who repent of their sins.

Orthodox Christians are to contribute to legislative processes according to their knowledge, competence, ability and influence so that laws may be enacted and enforced which protect and defend the lives of unborn children while being sensitive to the complexities and tragedies of life in contemporary society.