Dear Pro-Life Partners, August 15, 2026

It is natural, even healthy, for us to feel guilt about something we have done wrong. The reality of *doing* something wrong, however, often falsely translates into the shame of *being* something wrong. Because shame can be painful, or we simply do not want to own up to legitimate wrongdoing, this can lead to denial. Saul McLeod, Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Manchester, defines denial as the "psychological process of refusing to accept or acknowledge a painful reality, thought, or feeling. According to developmental psychotherapist Carly Kingswood, if denial doesn't work, we may then minimize our actions or responsibility. If that doesn't fly, we may resort to outright rage at being accused. This may explain why so many post-abortive women become so incensed when confronted with the irrefutable scientific fact that the baby they aborted was a human being.

One example can be found in a column written by Allison Benedikt in the online magazine *Slate.* She addresses the increasingly popular trend of Photoshopping a baby's sonogram onto the mother's stomach. Apparently, this has sparked debate as to whether this practice is disgusting or beautiful. Benedikt opines that this is not just "tacky, but bad for women." Why? Because "treating fetuses like people" makes it "harder to deny that they are people." She also calls it "dangerous," but I would assert that living in willful ignorance is more so.

This denial of life in the womb based on medical science requires a paradigm shift. Our culture is now shifting even farther away from "Is it a person?" to the more nebulous, "Is it wanted?" The narcissism in this mindset is staggering. As if the child's sole hope of survival and inherent value is based on the parents' (and more often than not, solely the mother's) needs and desires. In this scenario, a woman may be carrying a non-human clump of cells in her first pregnancy, but a human embryo in her next. Authors Rebecca Little and Colleen Long (*I'm Sorry for My Loss: An Urgent Examination of Reproductive Care in America*) agree. In their book they state, "How you relate to the pregnancy determines your attachment and experience with it. This way of thinking supports abortion as a morally valid choice and also allows pregnant people to consider the fetus inside them a baby without contradicting one another." There's nothing like pseudo-intellectual denial to skirt around cognitive dissonance! They go on to quote anthropologist Lynda Layne's claim that "personhood is culturally constructed and may be undertaken with some embryos and not others." (Wait, there's more nonsense!) According to Little and Long, feminist bioethicists (oh brother) have coined a term for the process of turning a fetus into a baby—"calling into personhood." In other (ridiculous) words, "the fetus does not have inherent personhood; someone else has to draw it out." I'm thinking God "drew it out" at conception, but that's just me.

Where does this I-get-to-decide-if-you-are-you philosophy lead? Entitlement. Women feel increasingly more justified, per a new Guttmacher Report, to circumvent pro-life laws in order to obtain a "much needed" (dare I say it) "life-saving" abortion. Guttmacher's 2025 report shows that over 140,000 women had an abortion outside their state of residence, including an increase of about 24% in Florida. The overall number of out-of-state abortions actually decreased in 2025 (19% in Texas) because those who didn't travel had abortifacients shipped to their homes. In-home abortions in pro-life states totaled about 91,000, an increase of over 22% from 2024. Talk about dangerous! Early data for 2026 shows an increase in abortion of 1.2% compared to the first three months of 2025. These numbers can be disheartening, but pro-life legislation still acts as a deterrent to some, and every life saved is a victory. What we can see is the need for more emphasis on regulating, and ultimately eliminating, telehealth abortions.

But make no mistake, my friend, this genocide of the unborn is not where it ends. Even for Margaret Sanger, founder of Planned Parenthood and a proponent of eugenics, abortion was a step too far. Bill Clinton wanted abortion to be “safe and rare.” Yet look how far we’ve come. African-American, Female, and Down’s babies are inordinately aborted, infanticide and euthanasia are taking hold around the world, and we are not far behind. If we hang around long enough (God forbid), abortion may go down in history as just the first course in the meal of human destruction and dignity-free demise.

So what do we do?

We remain a light in our communities.

We walk daily in obedience to what we know is right and true.

We keep talking, encouraging, engaging, educating, voting, supporting, listening, standing, and praying.

When we fail, we try again, and when we fall, we get back up.

We go to sleep at night knowing that we have done what we could in our little corner of the world.

Partnering with You for Life,
Linda Verhulst, MRL-WR