



THE SALVATION ARMY UNITED KINGDOM TERRITORY
WITH THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

**POSITIONAL STATEMENT
ABORTION**

The Salvation Army believes that all people are created in the image of God and therefore have unique and intrinsic value.¹ Human life is sacred and all people should be treated with dignity and respect.²

In common with many other Christian churches, the Salvation Army accepts the moment of fertilisation as the start of human life.

The Salvation Army believes that society has a responsibility to care for others, and especially to protect, and promote the welfare of the vulnerable, including the unborn.

The Salvation Army believes that life is a gift from God and we are answerable to God for the taking of life, whatever the circumstance. Therefore on only certain limited grounds may a termination of pregnancy be morally acceptable. These may include:

- Where the life of the mother would be in jeopardy as a consequence of the pregnancy.
- Where reliable diagnostic procedures have determined that there is an abnormality of the foetus ³ that is considered to be incompatible with life for more than a very brief post natal period.

In addition we recognise that pregnancy occurring as the result of rape presents a special case as the act that produced the pregnancy violated the whole person of the mother and the violation may be compounded by the continuation of the pregnancy.

Whilst acknowledging the legal provision for a termination of pregnancy, the Salvation Army believes the life of the unborn child should be emphasised. Possible alternatives should always be explored when counselling the parents. We recognise that the decision to terminate a pregnancy can often be traumatic, and whether the decision is made to terminate or continue the pregnancy, the Salvation Army would endeavour to offer appropriate pastoral care.

The Salvation Army affirms and supports professional people engaged in the care of pregnant women who feel on religious, moral or ethical grounds, that they cannot be involved in any way with the procuring or undertaking of an abortion.

¹ Genesis 1:26-27 "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Genesis 4:8-10 "Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?" The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Genesis 4:15 "But the Lord said to him, "Not so; if anyone kills Cain, he will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no-one who found him would kill him. Genesis 5:1-2 "This is the written account of Adam's

line. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them "man". Genesis 9:3-6 "Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. "But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man. "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.²

² Exodus 20:13 "You shall not murder. Exodus 21:22-23 "If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman's husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life". Is.59:7 "Their feet rush into sin; they are swift to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are evil thoughts; ruin and destruction mark their ways. Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

Jeremiah 22:3 "This is what the Lord says: Do what is just and right. Rescue from the hand of his oppressor the one who has been robbed. Do no wrong or violence to the alien, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place." Psalm 139:13-16 "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

³ The words foetus and unborn child are used interchangeably in this statement

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