
Clergy Advocacy Board Statement

Pastoral Letter to Patients

Dear Friend:

The decision to have an abortion is personal. Though your reasons may be complicated and private, you're not alone. As religious leaders from a number of religious traditions, we're here to support you in your decision.

Many people wrongly assume that all religious leaders disapprove of abortion. The truth is that abortion is not even mentioned in the Scriptures — Jewish or Christian — and there are clergy and people of faith from all denominations who support women making this complex decision. The beliefs of each person are deserving of respect, and each person deserves care and compassion. No one should be allowed to force their faith teachings on anyone else.

We believe this decision is yours, made with your doctor and anyone else you choose to bring into the conversation, such as a spouse, partner, parent, or clergyperson.

Our religious traditions have somewhat different opinions about abortion, but we share some basic understandings:

- No one knows the circumstances of your life as well as you know them; no one knows what's in your heart better than you. Allow yourself to be at peace with your decision.
- God loves you and is with you no matter what you decide. You can find strength, understanding, and comfort in that love.

| If you'd like to speak with a clergyperson, your [local Planned Parenthood health center](#) can refer you to someone who will be supportive of you and your decision. Your privacy will be protected and all conversations will be completely confidential.

Our hope for you is for peace in your heart.

The Clergy Advocacy Board
Planned Parenthood Federation of America

The Planned Parenthood Federation of America Clergy Advocacy Board (CAB), dating from 1994, leads a national effort to increase public awareness of the theological and moral basis for advocating reproductive health and justice. CAB members are dedicated pro-choice clergy from different denominations and communities throughout the U.S. who work with Planned Parenthood at the national and state levels to further the goal of full reproductive freedom for all women and men.

Oct 2013