ABORTION

THEME: Moral considerations concerning abortion.

OPENERS:

1. The United States Supreme Court decision. Roe vs. Wade in 1973, established a virtually unqualified right of every woman, married or single, adult or minor, to have an abortion.

2. "Since Roe vs. Wade the annual number of abortions performed in the U.S. has risen from 744,600 to 1,500,000. Abortions last year (1980) terminated one-third of all pregnancies in the nation." — TIME

3. One-third of the abortions are performed on teen-agers, and more girls 14 and under are having abortions than deliver.

4. "Mature women, as mature human beings with all the respect and dignity to be accorded mature human beings, should have the right to decide whether or not they carry a specific pregnancy to term." — Harold Rosen

5. "To me, the nations with legalized abortions are the poorest nations. The great destroyer of peace today is the crime against the innocent unborn child." — Mother Teresa of Calcutta

6. "A fetus cannot speak, reason or judge between right and wrong. It cannot have personal relations, without which a person is not functionally a person at all." — Christian Century

7. "A live fetus is in effect, a pre-infant as a child is a pre-adult. Thus, killing a pre-infant is, like killing any human, homicide." — Laurle Tilsin, R.N.

DISCUSSION PROBES:

1. How do you understand the abortion issue?

2. What are the factors, pro and con that should be considered regarding abortion?

3. What are some reasons for abortion? Which, if any, would you deem valid?

4. How are the following affected by abortion: society; the father; the mother? Why should society, the father, or the mother be consulted on abortion? Is abortion only a matter of personal conscience?

5. Biological life begins at fertilization, but does that collection of cells constitute a human being? Discuss.

6. Will liberal abortion laws lead to killing of malformed babies and old people? Why, or why not?


CONCLUSIONS:

1. The Roe vs. Wade ruling of the Supreme Court looks on an unborn child as a non-person who has no rights; at most, a potential life.

2. Pro-lifers believe that abortion not only contributes to a breakdown of traditional family values, but is tantamount to genocide.

3. Thirty percent of all pregnancies in the U.S. are now terminated by legal abortion.

4. "I’m pro-abortion. No legislature should tell a woman what to do with her
body. And I’m no baby killer." - Theodore White

5. "We believe there is no greater tyranny over an individual than the power to control childbearing." - Pro-choice lobbyist, Barbara Schack

6. Pro-lifers believe that a fetus is a person; therefore to allow abortion on demand is murder.

BRINGING IT HOME:

1. Consider the reasons why the Supreme Court decided in 1973 that a woman has the right to decide to have an abortion.

2. In the heat of the abortion discussion, look at all sides of this complex issue.

3. The responsible use of sex would preclude the necessity of most abortions.

4. Think about what life is, and what makes it precious, and when it begins.