



## Columnist distorts Catholic views

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Daniel Maguire misrepresents the views of several religions on abortion in his commentary "Religions say...," which ran with Tom Ehrich's column ["Where does God stand on abortion?"](#) ([The Forum, Monday](#)).

In particular, his summary of Roman Catholic teaching was filled with historical distortions and theological sleight of hand. Maguire continues to spew the ridiculous mantra that there is "no one Catholic view" on abortion. He maintains this untenable position so that his well-known abortion advocacy can somehow be seen as Catholic.

The church has one teaching on abortion. Human life from the time of fertilization must be respected as a person. Direct attacks on innocent human life, at any stage of development, aren't permitted. Some medical procedures are allowed for the sake of the mother's health or life that might result in the *indirect* death of the fetus. The death of the unborn child may not be directly caused or willed.

Maguire's claim that St. Antoninus was "pro-choice" is amazingly dishonest. Antoninus speculated that early abortion of an un-ensouled fetus was permitted for the mother's life. This means the fetus wasn't yet human. This hardly makes him pro-choice. Debate on ensoulment was the result of scientific ignorance regarding fetal development. Nevertheless, the church always taught that killing a fetus, even if un-ensouled, was a serious sin.

Theological opinions should not be confused with doctrine, especially bad ones. Readers should not have to be subjected to a dissident theologian's personal propaganda. If anyone wishes to know what the Catholic Church teaches, please consult the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. There they will find the official word.

*(Illustration by Alejandro Gonzalez, USA TODAY)*