

# THE BACK OF THE BULLETIN

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## One Will Be Taken, The Other Left

These words come from the Lord as he tries to communicate the theme of judgment and the end of the world to his mystified hearers (Matt 24:40f). Of two men peaceful at their farm work, of two women at the mill, one is taken, one is left: *so stay awake! You do not know when your Master is coming.*

### One of the least of these little ones

These words came to my mind as I heard of the decision to end the life of an unborn twin, because the single mother already had one child, and could not face the strain and the demands of twins as well. Offers of motherly help was at hand at once; but too late. The operation effected, the oncoming “problems” are treated as having been halved; the system, we are assured, is working well. Urbane words of politicians and of those charged with the supervision of medical ethics have assured us that no new principle has been established, so that’s OK.: all legal and above board. But somehow everyone is not happy. Why not? If what happened is already provided-for in our laws, why would anyone not be pleased that everything is as the country wants? Could it be that the country has not quite *stayed awake* about this particular law?

### Judgment of Solomon

In a barbaric tale, Solomon found out which of two mothers claiming a baby was telling the truth: he threatened, with a sharp sword, to present them with half each. The real mother resigned her claim, so that her child should at least survive. Solomon gave her the child. In our country, that love is changing. The abortion law was sold as a means of regulating *and eventually reducing* the rate of abortions. It hasn’t. Each year more than 160,000 abortions are now being performed in our country. Monday to Friday, at ten hours a day, that’s just over one a minute. When you remember the statistics for road and home accidents and natural infant mortality taken all together, it means that the most mortally dangerous place to be in this country is *in the womb of your own mother.*

### The *Daily Mirror*’s Consolation

The *Daily Mirror* told us that “Every abortion is sad. But even that is better than an unwanted child.” This sentimental claptrap is what got me to write the Bulletin this week. One has to work hard, in the climate we’ve allowed to develop, to remember that this “sad” thing is in *fact a dead child*. Better a *dead* child than an *unwanted* child? Hasn’t the *Daily Mirror* heard of the queues of hopeful adoptive parents, longing to become the family of a child in need? There are *no* unwanted children in this country - because the children judged to be so are *dead*. But that judgment is not the inscrutable judgment of God. It isn’t even the wisdom of Solomon. How *did* they judge which of the twins was to survive? Was it a comparison of their qualities, an estimate of their relative health, or beauty: *or just size*? Perhaps the decision was taken by the Chinese method - girls rather than boys - or perhaps one was just then nearer the needle than the other. Perhaps it was done on the flip of a coin.

### Who’s Responsible?

In a democracy, we all are: responsible for the unmarried mother, for the moral climate in which she made her decisions, for her loneliness, and the conviction that she can’t proceed with her motherhood, for the laws of the land, which offer the abortion as a proper response to her problems; above all, for the press and the politicians, who can claim to be representing *us* in all that they have said and done. They can write, and say, and do these ghastly things because you and I let them. And I find that as hard to write as you do to read it.

*Fr Philip*