

**THE SALVATION ARMY AUSTRALIAN TERRITORIES  
POSITIONAL STATEMENT**

**ABORTION**

The Salvation Army believes in the sanctity of all human life from the moment of fertilisation. It considers each person to be of infinite value, and each life a gift from God to be cherished, nurtured and preserved.

The Salvation Army supports efforts to protect and promote the welfare of the weak and defenceless person, including the unborn. It takes seriously the rights and needs of both the foetus and the mother. It accepts that termination of a pregnancy may be justified on certain limited grounds; that is, where, in the judgement of competent medical and allied staff, the pregnancy poses a serious threat to the life of the mother, or could result in irreversible physical injury to the mother. In cases of proven rape or legally defined incest an abortion may be justified because of the extent to which rape and incest violate the whole person. Termination of a pregnancy may also be justified where reliable diagnostic procedures determine that a foetal abnormality is present which is incompatible with life other than brief post-natal survival or where there is total absence of cognitive function.

It is The Salvation Army's experience that where unwanted pregnancies occur, in most instances it is best to counsel acceptance of the situation by all involved, and for the foetus to be carried to term, and for all possible supportive help to be given.

When our counsel has not been accepted and an abortion has taken place, The Salvation Army will offer loving and compassionate pastoral care.

A serious commitment to the protection and care of the unborn calls us equally to promote and work for a society in which all those born into it find loving acceptance and the resources necessary to enable them to reach their fullest potential.

For further reading:

Watson, Bernard: *The Salvationist in a Secular Society*; SP&S Ltd, 1974.

Clifton, Shaw: *Strong Doctrine, Strong Mercy*; The Salvation Army London, 1985.

**Approved by IHQ March 1990**