

# ad. veritatem

ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY

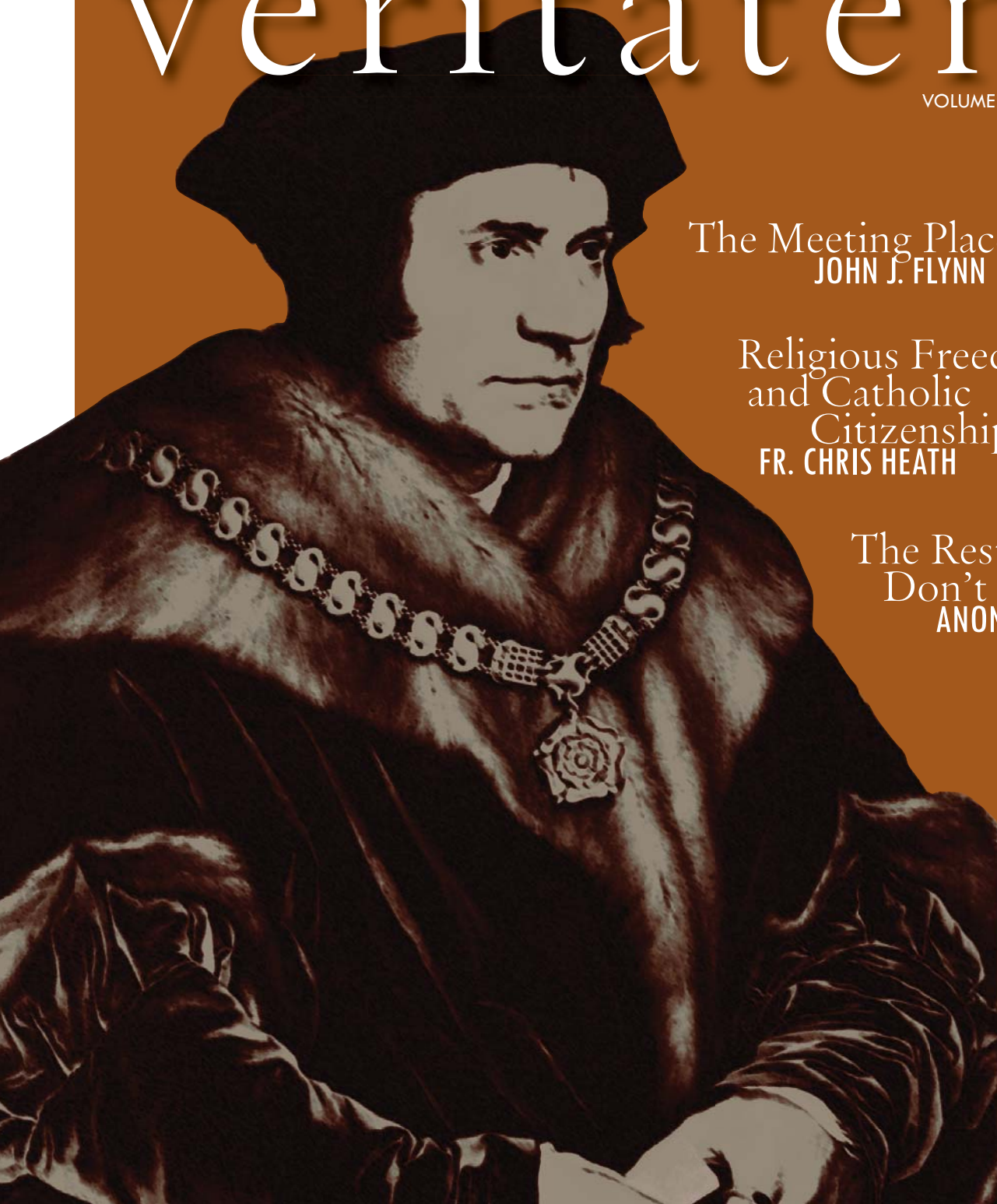
**JUNE 2012**

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The Meeting Place  
JOHN J. FLYNN III

Religious Freedom  
and Catholic  
Citizenship  
FR. CHRIS HEATH

The Rest  
Don't Matter  
ANONYMOUS



# THE REST DON'T MATTER

## A POIGNANT E MAIL EXCHANGE (TYPOS AND ALL) BETWEEN A STMS MEMBER AND HIS SON SERVING AT AN ADVANCE BASE IN AFGHANISTAN

... one thing that is nice. i am getting to know my dad, your grandfather Lord rest his soul, a little bit better every day.

for example, i rememebr when i was your age. i know i loved him—a lot. i also liked him. he was a real good guy. i also respected him—he was a very decorated war hero from ww2.

but i always thought that his life was over—he was about 45.

i thought he had a boring life, achieved very litle other than provide for his family.

i knew i was going to be better than him, achieve more and accomplish a lot more.

simply put, i thought he was an old man, put out to pasture ... leading an irrelevant life. when i would talk to him i would keep it short, after all i had a lot of things—important things—to do. when he would get “wise” and give me advice it would go in one ear and out the other. what did he know about my world.

what i realize now is what i think you are saying—the world had brainwashed me into being one of its slaves. the world wants to own each of us—to use us for its advantage. they convince us that we are doing “great things” when all we are really doing is serving the “master” of this world—the welathy types, the politicians ... my dad knew that. he tried to tell me. i was too brainwashed to listen.

he would forgive me my stupidity but then he would ram home something he told me a lot: “get right with God, because the rest dont matter. get right with your brothers, because the rest dont matter. get right with your family, because ...” he would always stop before finishing the last one. i think he wanted me to finish it to show i agreed. i never did—i just looked at him and smiled.

i think if he were here and he gave me a chance, i would finish it.

“dad ... the rest dont matter.”

the guys you bunk with, the guys you fight with, that is all that matters now. take care of them. you need to come home safe and sound but you you gotta bring them home too. semper fi is not something i am privileged to say. but i am privileged to know good men like you who have the right and duty to say it every day. serve your brothers. the rest dont matter. ♦

# ad. veritatem

The St. Thomas More Society of Orange County is an independent organization sponsored by lawyers and judges who are practicing members of the Roman Catholic Church.

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### IDEALS OF ST. THOMAS MORE

The legal profession is a high calling with corresponding responsibilities to society. The principal objective of every lawyer is to promote and seek justice. Catholic Lawyers pursue the truth in both their spiritual and professional lives. The duty of a Catholic lawyer is to remain faithful to Jesus Christ, His Church and its teachings at all times despite the personal consequences.

### THE OBJECTIVES OF STMS

- encouraging its members to live a Christian life and apply the principles and ideals exemplified by St. Thomas More in their lives and encourage same in the legal profession.
- promoting and foster high ethical principals in the legal profession generally and, in particular, in the community of Catholic lawyers.
- assisting in the spiritual growth of its members.
- encouraging interfaith understanding and brotherhood.
- sponsoring the annual Red Mass for

elected and appointed officials and members of the legal profession.

### MEMBERSHIP IN STMS

Each member of the Society is committed to:

- strive to live an exemplary Christian life and apply the principles and ideals exemplified by St. Thomas More in their daily lives and encourage same in the legal profession.
- attend monthly meeting of the Society and provide personal support to the St. Thomas More Society.
- attend and support the Red Mass.

### LAWYER'S PRAYER

Give me the grace, Good Lord, to set the world at naught; to set my mind fast upon thee and not to hang upon the blast of men's mouths; to be content to be solitary; not to long for worldly company but utterly to cast off the world and rid my mind of the business thereof.  
- ST. THOMAS MORE

EDITOR@STTHOMASMORE.NET

# THE MEETING PLACE

JOHN J. FLYNN III



Yogi Berra (even his name suggestive of Eastern wisdom) is reputed to have said: “When you reach a fork in the road, take it.” We laugh first because it cannot be done, and, second, because we sense in the statement an inarticulate truth, perhaps reflective of a deeper reality. The fork, after all, is metaphorical, and metaphors are meant to highlight commonalities. Is there a fork in the road of spiritual progress, where one must choose between the path of spiritual maturity and that of childhood? Or, to see things at the depth intimated by Yogi, are they the same path?

Perhaps imagining that we have chosen the path of maturity, it might seem to us that we have outgrown the two Catholic devotions that we celebrate in June: the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. For many of us, it is as if those two devotions lie in storage, a couple of holy cards in the hidden precincts of a dresser drawer. Better to think of these devotions as gems stored in a chest, to be removed and held up again to the sunlight, as the paths of childhood and maturity merge. Illuminated, they reveal a profound and powerful truth, shedding light even on the very nature of the Church herself.

The heart of Jesus is the incarnate heart of God, “the totality of eternal love,” and the heart of Mary is the human heart:

“In the Holy Spirit’s union with Mary we observe more than the love of two beings: in one there is all the love of the Blessed Trinity; in the other all of creation’s love. *So it is that in this union heaven and earth are joined; all of heaven with all the earth, the totality of eternal love with the totality of created love.*”<sup>1</sup>

And in this summit of love is the heart of the Church, the one heart formed by the union of the two, divine and human:

“These dimensions together constitute ‘one complex reality which comes together from a human and a divine element’: The Church is essentially both human and divine, visible but endowed with invisible realities, zealous in action and dedicated to contemplation, present in the world, but as a pilgrim, so constituted that in her the human is directed toward and subordinated to the divine, the visible to the invisible, action to contemplation, and this present world to that city yet to come, the object of our quest.”<sup>2</sup>

So in June we have occasion to meditate on the hearts of Jesus and Mary, who lead us into the mystery of the Church, the meeting place, as pre-figured at Calvary and prophesied by Simeon, where the two hearts become one. ♦

<sup>1</sup> Fr. H. M. Manteau-Bonamy, O.P., *Immaculate Conception and the Holy Spirit: The Marian Teachings of St. Maximilian Kolbe* (Libertyville: Franciscan Marytown Press, 1977), 5, quoting St. Maximilian Kolbe, emphasis added.

<sup>2</sup> Catechism, § 771.

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# RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND CATHOLIC CITIZENSHIP

FR. CHRIS HEATH

We are Catholics. We are Americans. We are proud to be both, grateful for the gift of faith which is ours as Christian disciples, and grateful for the gift of liberty which is ours as American citizens. To be Catholic and American should mean not having to choose one over the other. Our allegiances are distinct, but they need not be contradictory, and should instead be complimentary. That is the teaching of our Catholic faith, which obliges us to work together with fellow citizens for the common good of all who live in this land. That is the vision of our founding and our Constitution, which guarantees citizens of all religious faiths the right to contribute to our common life together.”<sup>1</sup> These words from our Bishops introduce us to the current controversy facing the Church and state regarding religious liberty.

It is once again “election season”: we Catholics must evangelize our nation and culture by acting on our beliefs, and insisting that what we “teach, believe, and profess to be revealed by God”<sup>2</sup> is in fact the best way for our nation to repair itself and thrive. “Catholics have the same rights and duties as others to participate fully in public life. The Church throughout its institutions must be free to carry out its mission and contribute to the common good without being pressured to sacrifice fundamental teachings and moral principles.”<sup>3</sup> It’s not “imposing our morality,” but rather insisting that our moral teachings are from “nature and nature’s God,”<sup>4</sup> as even our Constitution acknowledges the role of morality and conscience in civic life. We have “inalienable rights,”<sup>5</sup> meaning rights that no one can take away from us; rights not given by the state but endowed on us by our Creator. Whatever rights are ours by the authority of the government are rights that can be changed or taken away, but our human rights given us by God are not in the hands of the government to do with as they please.

Sometimes our politicians forget this. Henry VIII thought that he could assume to himself authority over the Catholic Church in England so that he could divorce and remarry as he wished. His 1534 Act of Supremacy made himself the final decider of what religion would teach, and almost all of the



Catholic bishops of the time signed the Act, and by doing so officially abandoned the Catholic Church and started with King Henry the Church of England. St. Thomas More, the former Chancellor of Henry’s government and his close friend, together with Bishop John Fischer, refused to sign the Act and were martyred for it. Just before St. Thomas More was beheaded for treason he stated, “I am the king’s good servant, but God’s first.” He found himself having to choose between his citizenship in England and his citizenship in Heaven, and paid the price for his choice.

Today Catholics are concerned about the erosion of religious freedom, and we oppose any assumed rights that the government tries to impose over the Church. The current mandate “of the department of Health and Human Services has received wide attention and has been met with...vigorous and united opposition. In an unprecedented way, the federal government will both force religious institutions to facilitate and fund a product contrary to their own moral teaching, and purport to define which religious institutions are ‘religious enough’ to merit protection of their religious liberty. These features of the ‘preventative services’ mandate amount to an unjust law. As Archbishop William Lori testified to Congress: ‘This is not a matter of whether contraception may be prohibited by the government. This is not even a matter of whether contraception may be supported by the government. Instead, it is a matter of whether religious people and institutions may be forced by the government to

<sup>1</sup> USCCB, “Our First, Most Cherished Liberty,” Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, March 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Profession of Faith for candidates being received into the Church, Rite of Christian Initiation n. 491

<sup>3</sup> USCCB, Faithful Citizenship, 2012 “Introductory Note”

<sup>4</sup> US Declaration of Independence, first sentence

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., Preamble .

provide coverage for contraception or sterilization, even if that violates their religious beliefs.”<sup>6</sup>

Let’s clarify what the current religious freedom “debate is—and is not—about. This is not about access to contraception which is ubiquitous and inexpensive, even when it is not provided by the Church’s hand and with the Church’s funds. This is not about the religious freedom of Catholics only, but also of those who recognize that their cherished beliefs may be next on the block. This is not about the Bishops’ somehow ‘banning contraception,’ when the US Supreme Court took that issue off the table two generations ago. Indeed, this is not about the Church wanting to force anybody to do anything; it is instead about the federal government forcing the Church—consisting of its faithful and all but a few of its institutions—to act against Church teachings. This is not a matter of opposition to universal health care, which has been a concern of the Bishops’ Conference since 1919... This is not a fight we want or asked for, but one forced on us by the government on its own timing. Finally, this is not a Republican or Democrat, a conservative or liberal issue; it is an American issue.”<sup>7</sup>

“When the Bill of Rights was ratified, religious freedom had the distinction of being the First Amendment. Religious liberty is indeed the first liberty. The First Amendment guarantees that ‘Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.’ That is our most cherished freedom. It is the first freedom because if we are not free in our conscience and our practice of religion, all other freedoms are fragile. If citizens are not free in their

own consciences, how can they be free in relation to others, or to the state? If our obligations and duties to God are impeded, or even worse, contradicted by the government, then we can no longer claim to be a land of the free, and a beacon of hope for the world.”<sup>8</sup>

We have experienced, however, a slow erosion, a subtle shift in civic discourse that speaks no longer of “freedom of religion,” but rather “freedom of worship”: this narrows the Church’s influence only to what we do within these church walls, and seeks to silence our voice in the public square where our religion may no longer be free to exercise its rights through institutions of education, health care, and charity. “Many Catholics are confused and angry. They should be. Many feel betrayed” by an administration that 54% of Catholics in this country voted into office three years ago, and now wonder why it “would seek to coerce Catholic employers, private [Catholic citizens as well as the Catholic Church], to violate their religious convictions.”<sup>9</sup>

After the Louisiana Purchase of 1804, Sister Marie Therese Farjon of the Ursuline Order of nuns wrote to President Thomas Jefferson “to ask whether the sisters’ property and ministries would be secure under the new government,” since Louisiana had been under French jurisdiction and was now part of the United States. In response, President Jefferson replied: “The principles of the Constitution and the government of the United States are a sure guarantee to you that it will be preserved to you sacred and inviolate and that your institution will be permitted to govern itself according to its own voluntary rules without

interference from civil authorities.”<sup>10</sup> Would Jefferson recognize the current controversy as anything similar to his promise?

That we Catholics believe that abortion and contraception are sinful is, as Jefferson put it, “voluntary rules.” Even though the current controversy regarding federal health care is primarily about freedom of religion and conscience, about respecting our “voluntary rules” that constitute the moral and doctrinal teachings of the Catholic Church, I feel a need to ask whether many Catholics respect our beliefs! Perhaps it’s enough to fight against the Health and Human Services mandate on First Amendment grounds, but the only reason it’s a conscience issue is because the Church has always held artificial contraception to be a sin. In fact every Christian church used to believe this until 1930 when the Church of England thought it would be okay under certain circumstances to allow couples to use contraception, then Christian morality unraveled from there. Since then the world over has experienced 1) the general lowering of moral standards, 2) the rise in infidelity and children born out of wedlock, 3) the reduction of women to objects used to satisfy men, and 4) government coercion in reproductive matters. Pope Paul VI said this is exactly what would happen if contraception became the norm in his Encyclical Letter *Humane Vitae* in 1968.<sup>11</sup>

Fifty years later his prophecy is undeniable, yet it hasn’t stopped most people—and most Catholics—from acting like contraception is no big deal. Time to wake up, Catholics. Those

**(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)**

<sup>6</sup> USCCB, “Most Cherished Liberty.”

<sup>7</sup> USCCB, statement of the Administrative Committee, March 14, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> USCCB, “Most Cherished Freedom.”

<sup>9</sup> Archbishop Charles Chaput, Archdiocese of Philadelphia PA, philly.com, 02/12/2012 opinion

<sup>10</sup> Archbishop George Niederauer, Archdiocese of San Francisco, calcatholic.com, 03/01/2012

<sup>11</sup> n. 17

# RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND CATHOLIC CITIZENSHIP

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

who dislike the Catholic Church point to the majority Catholics who don't follow the Church's teaching in this matter as a primary reason why the Church is wrong and why a federal mandate is perfectly okay to impose on the Church. The world thinks we're a bunch of idiots who need to be forced to do what they think is best. Contraception and abortion are bad for the soul, bad for marriage, and bad medicine. Contraception is not preventative medicine: pregnancy is not a disease people have to be protected from. Sex is not a recreation and marriage is not the government's to redefine.

The Church cannot tell people for whom to vote. We can't name names or endorse specific candidates or parties. But the Church does hold the right to teach its members how to vote, what principles to consider as you exercise your precious American democratic privilege. We are morally obligated to bring our faith to the voting booth. I recommend you read the US Bishops' document Faithful Citizenship, which teaches the primary theme of the right to life and the dignity of every human person. There is a hierarchy of values, certain moral issues that are more urgent than others, that give us a priority when we consider our voting strategy. "We cannot consider

abortion... as merely [one issue] among many to be weighed or dismissed with a shrug. Nor can we exclude other issues that also are pro-life": poverty, immigration, war, capital punishment, etc.<sup>12</sup> There is no moral equivalence between pro-life issues and other social issues.<sup>13</sup> Faithful Citizenship outlines "clear obligations to oppose intrinsic evils which can never be justified... and other [issues] raising serious moral questions."<sup>14</sup> The challenge here is to think like a Catholic, not like a Democrat or a Republican who holds opposing views labeled "pro-life" or "social justice": Catholics must not act or vote as though these are in opposition. We must fight to end abortion, to protect the rights of the Church, and protect traditional marriage first, and work for solutions to all the other social ills of our time. "All issues do not carry the same moral weight and the moral obligation to oppose intrinsically evil acts has a special claim on our actions."<sup>15</sup> "Some issues involve principles that can never be violated... Others reflect our judgment about the best way to apply Catholic principles to policy issues."

<sup>16</sup> Certainly we cannot ignore serious issues like immigration, economic justice, poverty, and education: these are not optional concerns, but reasonable people can and do disagree on the nature of the problems and the best way to solve them.<sup>17</sup>

Choosing a candidate who has good ideas about other social problems but who is in favor of abortion is not an acceptable use of your vote: I quote Pope John Paul II: "The human outcry which is justly made on behalf of human

rights is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition for all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination."<sup>18</sup>

And worse, choosing a candidate precisely because he or she is pro-abortion is a mortal sin.<sup>19</sup>

We're looking for people who will truly represent us Catholics, who make

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up 25% of the population in America. You have to know the candidates' records and positions on moral issues and choose wisely, allowing your Catholic faith to inform your vote. We "need to be guided more by our moral convictions than by our attachment to a political party or interest group."<sup>20</sup> As a Church, "we seek to bring the light of the Gospel to our public life, but the work of politics is properly that of committed and courageous lay Catholics. We exhort them to be both

<sup>12</sup> Bishop David Zubic, Diocese of Pittsburgh, 02/02/2012 letter to Catholics

<sup>13</sup> FC n. 28

<sup>14</sup> FC 2012 Introductory Note

<sup>15</sup> FC n. 37

<sup>16</sup> FC n. 63

<sup>17</sup> cf. FC n. 29

<sup>18</sup> FC n. 26, quoting Bl. Pope John Paul II, *Christifidelis Laici* n. 38)

<sup>19</sup> cf. FC n. 34

<sup>20</sup> FC n. 14

<sup>21</sup> USCCB, "Most Cherished Freedom."

<sup>22</sup> Matthew 5:13

engaged and articulate in insisting that as Catholics and as Americans we do not have to choose between the two.”<sup>21</sup>

We Christians are not that well organized or well funded in the fight for freedom of religion, freedom of conscience, and the rights of the Church to perform its mission of educating, healing, and serving the needy. No political party is concerned about a “Catholic voting bloc” because they know we are not united in a

prioritized set of beliefs that inform our vote! As long as we remain divided and disorganized, those who oppose the Church will continue to chip away at the moral code that is the foundation of a healthy society. We Christians are supposed to be the “salt of the earth,”<sup>22</sup> a preservative agent that upholds the “laws of nature and nature’s God” and reminds our great nation of what God created us to be. We must not abandon the principles of our Republic enshrined

in the Constitution and Bill of Rights. To paraphrase St. Thomas More, I am a proud American, proud to serve my nation in any way I can, but I am God’s servant first. Let’s pray we won’t have to choose between the two. ♦

*Fr. Chris Heath serves St. Edward the Confessor parish in Dana Point, Calif.*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONTH	DATE	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION
July	Wed., July 18, 12:00 p.m.	Lunch meeting featuring Hon. Francisco Fimat of the O.C. Superior Court.	Jilio-Ryan Hunter & Olsen 14661 Franklin, #150 Tustin, California <a href="http://jilioryan.com">jilioryan.com</a>
	Sun., July 22, 8:30-11:30 a.m.	Come to help cook and serve breakfast to the homeless of the community at Isaiah House. <a href="http://www.occatholicworker.org">www.occatholicworker.org</a>	Isaiah House 316 S. Cypress Avenue Santa Ana, CA 92701 (714) 835-6304
August	Wed., Aug. 15, 12:00 p.m.	Lunch meeting. Author Dawn Eden will discuss her new book, “My Peace I Give You: Healing Sexual Wounds with the Help of the Saints.”	Jilio-Ryan Hunter & Olsen (same as above)
October	Mon., Oct 1	St. Thomas More Society Orange County Annual Red Mass.	Holy Family Cathedral