

ad. veritatem

ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY

OCTOBER 2012

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 10

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FINDING JESUS AT ISAIAH HOUSE

DAVID WERNER

Years ago, my good friend Greg Weiler asked me to help out at Isaiah House. It appears that I now attend pretty regularly, every fourth Sunday of the month. He recently asked me to write an article for *Ad Veritatem* answering the question “Why?” Why do I go? Why should any of us go?

As I have grown older, as I have come to know more and experience more, I have come to the conclusion that what I think is best kept to myself. I figure that no matter what I think, no matter what I figure out about the world or my life, it really doesn’t matter. Until I can conclusively say that I have something to say to my Lord Jesus Christ that would cause him to respond “Oh, I did not know that,” it just doesn’t matter.

For myself, I can only tell you what I figured out for me. It doesn’t make it right, or even correct. It is just what makes me get out of bed every fourth Sunday and flip 150 burgers.

When I first went, it was because I had total fantasy about the poor. If you read the New Testament, you see a lot of words that seem to indicate that the poor are morally superior. The folks I meet at Isaiah House are poor. But morally superior? The reality for me is that it is not the status of “poorness” that makes Jesus happy. It is the status of not caring about material things and focusing on God that makes Him smile. The poor at Isaiah House are as focused or more focused on material things that I am—by a long shot. They are hungry. They want food. They want clothes. They want to be safe and off the street. They don’t figure on prayer very much—not when they cannot find a bathroom. I don’t go there to find morally superior beings. That is gone.

Someone told me that I should go to places like Isaiah House because it affects me; it makes me a better man. By serving Christ, I am morally superior, and I guess that is the message. I lived through that concept, but felt it to be an empty desert. I was no different going there than before. Morally superior to whom.

Then here was the “I feel good about myself” syndrome. A high-powered trial attorney serving the poor—aren’t I great? Of course I am. Only a great and good man would do that, right?

Sorry. I would rather feel good about myself by watching an Angels game. Pretending that I was Kirk Gibson winning

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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

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

JOHN J. FLYNN III



One occasionally encounters apologetical writing that seems unnecessarily derisive and scornful. What is the point, after all, of apologetics? To defend, which is its proper purpose, or to ridicule and humiliate? Unfortunately, we often use the same rhetorical “techniques” in the apologetics of everyday life, with little or no regard for the demands of the Gospel, which asks that we deny ourselves the low pleasures of momentary conquest for the sake of charity; charity, after all, is the guarantor of our credibility as Christians (1 John 4:20). Putting aside the moral obligation, therefore, to offend against charity is actually to undermine one’s apologetical effectiveness.

There is profound meaning in the Catholic concept of dialogue, correctly understood, providing guideposts for conscience. More fundamentally, perhaps, the Church’s call to dialogue is a call to suffer, an idea discussed below, with particular emphasis on the writings of John Paul II.

Conversion and Dialogue

First, it must be acknowledged that dialogue does not permit us to seek “unity” at the cost of what is true and essential.¹ There is nothing to be gained by denying truth for the sake of mere silence. Silence is not the same as peace; authentic peace is grounded in truth. The longer we suppress truth for the sake of maintaining a counterfeit peace, the more unstable the condition of the Church.²

At the same time, we cannot offend love in defending the truth, because love and truth comprise a unity, a reality implicitly affirmed by John Paul II at the canonization of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein):

“Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross says to us all: Don’t accept anything as truth if it is without love. And don’t accept anything as love if it is without truth! One without the other is a harmful lie.”³

The unity of love and truth, grounded ultimately in the oneness of God, imposes specific demands upon the

character of dialogue.⁴ The Church struggles to find the right modes of expression, guided by certain fundamental realities that make way for dialogue: the harmonious demands of truth and dialogue, the capacity of intellect and language to express the same truth in different forms, and the variable relationship of the tenets of Catholicism to the foundation of Christian faith.⁵ A new “style” of thinking and perceiving emerged from Vatican II:

“[T]he Second Vatican Council differed from earlier councils *because of its particular style*. It was not a defensive style. Not once in the Council documents did the words *anathema sit* appear. It was an *ecumenical style* characterized by great openness to dialogue, a dialogue described by Pope Paul VI as a ‘dialogue of salvation.’”⁶

This “style” refers to the Church’s inner life, just as words reveal the inner life of the one who speaks them: “A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks.” “Dialogue,” therefore, refers not only to the externalities of dialogue, but to a fundamental change in the orientation of one’s faith,⁷ involving “the human subject in his or her entirety”⁸: “*There must be charity towards one’s partner in dialogue* and humility with regard to the truth which comes to light *and which might require a review of assertions and*

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¹ Karol Cardinal Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II), *Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1980), 31, quoting Vatican II, *Decree on Ecumenism*, § 11.

² John Paul II, Encyclical, *Ut Unum Sint* (“UUS”) (1995), § 36.

³ Vatican Information Service [web site], October 11, 1998.

⁴ Wojtyla, *Sources of Renewal*, 31-32.

⁵ *UUS*, §§ 36, 19, 37; Wojtyla, *Sources of Renewal*, 31-32.

⁶ John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 162, emphasis in original.

⁷ Wojtyla, *Sources of Renewal*, 29-32; *UUS*, §§ 28-29.

⁸ *UUS*, § 28.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

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attitudes”.⁹ In other words, there is a specific relationship between conversion, on the one hand, and the style and attitudes we bring to dialogue, on the other. Indeed, the relationship of conversion to ecumenical dialogue is so close that Vatican II equated them:

“This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and can rightly be called ‘spiritual ecumenism.’

We proceed along the road leading to the conversion of hearts guided by love which is directed to God and, at the same time, to all our brothers and sisters, including those not in full communion with us.”¹⁰

In every encounter, we must be mindful of our debt to the Cross. We are, as John Paul II said, “all equally indebted to our Redeemer,”¹¹ an equality that overshadows all other differences, providing new ways of perceiving our partners in dialogue. Conversely, the lack of charity in dialogue in a certain sense implies a repudiation of one’s debt, a presumption, not always fully appreciated, that one has risen above the need for the Cross. It is precisely this radical awareness of indebtedness, an awareness always in need of renewal, which promotes the cultivation of the styles, attitudes and mentalities essential to dialogue:

“Dialogue cannot take place merely on a horizontal level, being restricted to meetings, exchanges of points of view or even the sharing of gifts proper to each Community. It has also a primarily vertical thrust, directed towards the One who, as the Redeemer of the world and the Lord of history, is himself our Reconciliation. *This vertical aspect of dialogue lies in our acknowledgment, jointly and to each other, that we are men and women who have sinned. It is precisely this acknowledgment which creates in brothers and sisters living in Communities not in full communion with one another that interior space where Christ, the source of the Church’s unity, can effectively act, with all the power of his Spirit, the Paraclete.*”¹²

Dialogue and Suffering

The relationship of dialogue to suffering might not be immediately apparent, but John Paul II seems to have concluded that dialogue produces interior effects not unlike those of suffering. As if to echo his own words on the fruits of dialogue, i.e., creation of the “interior space where Christ, the source of the Church’s unity can effectively act with all the power of his Spirit,” John Paul also observed, on the effects of suffering:

“It is suffering, more than anything else, which clears the way for the grace which transforms human souls.”¹³

In the same vein, in *Salvifici Doloris*, his apostolic letter on the meaning of suffering, John Paul II wrote:

“And at the same time, during the holy year of the redemption we

recall the truth expressed in the encyclical *Redemptor Hominis* (Redeemer of Man): In Christ ‘every man becomes the way for the Church’. *It can be said that man in a special fashion becomes the way for the Church when suffering enters his life.*”¹⁴

Suffering, in other words, produces a kind of “hollowing out” that makes way for the inflow of grace; it is the price of sin,¹⁵ but in the divine plan it also exists to promote conversion and re-build charity:

“This is an extremely important aspect of suffering. It is profoundly rooted in the entire Revelation of the Old and above all the New Covenant. Suffering must serve *for conversion* that is, *for the rebuilding of goodness* in the subject, who can recognize the divine mercy in this call to repentance. The purpose of penance is to overcome evil, which under different forms lies dormant in man. Its purpose is also to strengthen goodness both in man himself and in his relationships with others and especially with God.”¹⁶

Suffering also reveals and “unleashes” love:

“Following the parable of the Gospel, we could say that suffering, which is present under so many different forms in our human world, is also present in order *to unleash love in the human person*, that unselfish gift of one’s ‘I’ on behalf of other people, *especially those who suffer*. The world of human suffering unceasingly calls for, so to speak,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

⁹ Ibid., § 36, emphasis added.

¹⁰ Ibid., § 21, quoting Vatican II, *Decree on Ecumenism*, § 8, first emphasis in original, second emphasis added.

¹¹ John Paul II, Letter, *Dominicae Cenae* (1980), § 13.

¹² *UUS*, § 35.

¹³ John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Salvifici Doloris*

(1984), (“SD”), § 27.

¹⁴ *SD*, § 3, emphasis added.

¹⁵ *SD*, § 15.

¹⁶ Ibid., § 12, emphasis in original.

another world: the world of human love; *and in a certain sense man owes to suffering that unselfish love which stirs in his heart and actions.*¹⁷

“Especially those who suffer...” But whose suffering is it that we seek to relieve by denying ourselves the dubious joys of the moment? It is the Church that suffers from rhetorical tactics that offend charity, since they have the unavoidable effect of disfiguring the face of Christ, thereby impeding the Church’s evangelical mission. We complain, and rightly so, about the spiritually corrosive effects of secularism on the Church,

but think nothing whatever of employing thoroughly secular styles of argumentation, with consequences equally destructive. It is not just any other institution we represent in those moments of encounter; the Church is the crucified Christ, living in the world, seeking souls for the Father. If that is the institution for which we labor, we are bound in every context by the rules of the Gospel.

Suffering is therefore deeply embedded in the reality of dialogue; dialogue presents, in a sense, a decisive crucible for all Christians, a passage of suffering intended by the Holy Spirit, it seems, for the building up of the

Church. It is precisely at moments of clear opposition that we are faced with a challenge to faith, with a crossroads, where we must choose ourselves, or choose Christ. Are we unwilling to deny ourselves the perverse satisfactions of the lacerating word or phrase for the sake of the Gospel? It is a fateful moment in the life of faith, the importance of which we overlook at our peril.¹⁸ We can, at those moments, choose the way of self-vindication, masquerading as zeal for the Church, or we can choose the way of the Cross. Our response to the challenge of dialogue, no matter the context, reveals the depth of our conversion. ♦

¹⁷ *SD*, § 29, first emphasis in original, second emphasis added.

¹⁸ Mt 5:21-22, 12:34-37.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONTH	DATE	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION
October	Wed., Oct. 17, 12:00 p.m.	Lunch meeting. Fr. Chris Heath will speak on “The Well-Formed Conscience.”	Jilio Ryan 14661 Franklin, #150 Tustin, California jilioryan.com
	Sun., Oct. 28, 8:30-11:30 a.m.	Come to help cook and serve breakfast to the homeless of the community at Isaiah House. www.occatholicworker.org	Isaiah House 316 S. Cypress Avenue Santa Ana, CA 92701 (714) 835-6304
November	Wed., Nov. 21, 12:00 p.m.	Lunch meeting. Nationally-syndicated radio show host Hugh Hewitt will speak. A lawyer, law professor and broadcast journalist, Hewitt served in the Reagan Administration and lives in Orange County.	Jilio Ryan (same as above)

OCTOBER LUNCH MEETING FR. CHRIS HEATH

Fr. Chris Heath was born in 1961 and attended public school until his junior year of high school when he entered the minor seminary in San Fernando. He was ordained a priest in 1988 for the Diocese of Orange. After several assignments as Parochial Vicar in the diocese, Fr. Heath was named the first diocesan priest pastor of La Purisima Church in Orange (El Modena) (2002-2006) where he oversaw the building of a new 1200-seat church, improved the finances of the parish

and school, increased the membership of the parish and the size of the parish’s geographic boundaries, and led the people through some tough spiritual and community problems. Now he is a Parochial Vicar at St. Edward the Confessor Church in Dana Point. He is a law enforcement chaplain, and sits on the boards of two charities: Military Children’s Charity, and Ave Maria Catholic Donations. He has been known to write the occasional article in the *Catholic Business Journal Online*, has appeared on EWTN radio with Barbara McGuigan, and sometimes one or another of his homilies gets passed around the county/internet.

FINDING JESUS AT ISAIAH HOUSE

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the series with a home run event though I was crippled by a hamstring.

All of those thoughts are debris—moral debris clogging my brain. None of it works.

My Papa in heaven knows me. He knows every hair on my head, every thought I have or will have. He knows how I think and because of that, and because of his great love for me, he decided to help me out by giving me church. I used to think that church was a building built to honor God.... until, in my mind, I heard His laughter. “It isn’t for me, young man. Church is for you. It is a place I have given you that you can go, anytime day and night and feel and listen to My Presence.”

I know that God is everywhere. I know He is not confined to a little box. But we humans engage in curious practice: We expend considerable energy during the day to conceal God from ourselves. When I am at my desk, when I am watching a game, when I am playing with my grandkids, my mind conceals God from me. He is there, He is in the room. Yet, my mind convinces me that I am alone and He is not there. Only when I focus, only when I object to the “concealment” do I find my way back to him and to His presence.

He knows all that. And He also knows that in church, it doesn’t happen. In church, I don’t conceal Him from myself. I know He is there. I know that He is Lord.

If secrets be told, I love going to church. It is a mental crutch—a crutch that repairs my disability of not seeing Jesus when he is clearly there.

But I need to see Jesus more than just in church. I need to see him in my home, in my office, everywhere He is, and everywhere I go. I need to overcome my innate disability of not seeing him—of concealing him from myself.

I fail too much.

But God bless the wonders of the human mind, because I don’t fail at Isaiah House. At Isaiah House, I see Him. I don’t hide Him from myself.

I think that it may be because of a simple fact, a real fact about the folks at Isaiah House. Can you conceive of your life and your sense of well-being if you did not have an address that the Post Office delivers mail to? How about a life where you work all day, but then when you start to go to place of shelter with a roof on it and friendly faces—a place you call home—you realize that you don’t have such a place? No walls, no ceiling, no refrigerator, no place of shelter. And can you imagine that when a police officer stops you for jaywalking, you have no ID, no way to prove who you are? When you go to call mom or dad or wife or brother, you realize that they don’t exist. They walked away from you long ago and won’t take your call.

I remember as a young child going to Disneyland with my folks. I got separated from them. At six years old, that is not good. I looked around to find them and they were not there. I ran everywhere looking for them but nothing. I did the only thing left I could do: I sat down in the middle of “Main Street” and cried uncontrollably—a very loud cry of pain, pain that was caused by being lost, detached from the world that nurtured and cared for me.

That is the real condition of the folks at Isaiah. Not morally superior—just lost, abandoned by everyone, even themselves. Society has turned away from them. They have no place to go but

CAN YOU CONCEIVE OF YOUR LIFE AND YOUR SENSE OF WELL-BEING IF YOU DID NOT HAVE AN ADDRESS THAT THE POST OFFICE DELIVERS MAIL TO?

worse, they have no place to be. Dwight and Leia try to be like the Disneyland officer that came to my aid—they try to comfort and they try to give identity and

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sense of belonging. Dwight tries to give them California ID cards. They use his address. They know it is not real. They know they don't belong there. But any port in a storm is ok.

They are lost and never likely to be found because no one is looking for them. They don't much look like the pampered kid crying in the middle of main street, but their forlorn cry of being separated from the world is little different.

I don't theologically know the answers but I do know—like the Disneyland cop that came to my aid, who heard my cry and came and gently took my hand and took me to my mom—Jesus comes running when his children cry the loudest. The cry of the lost is a cry He hears. They may or may not know He is there. Mostly I think they don't. But whether He comes running to them is not dependent, I think, on what they do when He gets there. I think He does everything He can to grab hold of them, to take their hand and try to steer them home.

When I go there, I know in my heart that He is there because of who they are, because of what they are, and because

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they are His children who cry into the darkness of their existence: "I am lost, please help..."

And because I know this, and because

At Isaiah House, I don't do it. You have my permission to try to convince me that my faith requires deeper thought than this. But I have to tell you--it



I know He is there, I see him.

From the moment I start the car, until the moment I leave Original Mike's, He is always before me. I see Him. I feel Him. I love Him. He never disappears from me. My mind does not click off in to the absurdity of believing in the world; it stays right there in His presence the entire time.

Last time, I talked to Him for three hours about my son, Michael—the Marine stationed in Camp Bastion. I asked the Lord: Will he be safe? Will he die? Curiously the Lord said to me: "Yea, yea, he is fine. Now let's talk about what I need you to do to get him into heaven."

I have lots of good friends that I know will pick me apart and expound their theology and criticize my thinking. They matter but their words don't.

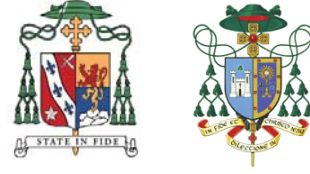
Concealing the Lord from ourselves accomplishes what good? Why do we need to do it? At church, I don't do it.

doesn't matter. You cannot take away from me what I want more than the air I breathe.

I see Him at Mass. I see him in chapel. I see him at Isaiah House. At the end of my day I make a list—things I did, places I went, people I talked to—a list of all the times during the day when I concealed Him from myself. I hope I have enough time left to finish the job. For now at least Isaiah House is there for me. I cannot wait for every fourth Sunday. ♦

AN ELECTION-YEAR MESSAGE

MOST REV. KEVIN J. FARRELL, BISHOP OF DALLAS
MOST REV. KEVIN W. VANN, BISHOP OF FORT WORTH



October 8, 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The month of October is Respect Life Month in our churches. It is a time in which we as Catholics are called to reflect upon the gift of life that has been entrusted to us by our Creator and to focus our attention on the many attacks against human life that exist in our culture today. This year, Respect Life Month takes on a more profound meaning as we face an election in our country where the protection of human life itself, particularly that of the unborn, is very much at stake. Therefore, as your Bishops, we wish to take this opportunity to provide clear guidance on the proper formation of conscience concerning voting as faithful Catholics and to articulate the Church's clear and unambiguous teaching on life issues as they relate to other issues of concern.

The Church teaches that all Catholics should participate as "faithful citizens" in the public square, especially through our voice in the voting booth, and that we have the responsibility to treat the decision for whom we will vote for with profound moral seriousness. We must approach the right and duty to vote with a properly formed and informed conscience in accordance with the teachings of the Church. Last November, the Bishops of the United States issued a document entitled *Forming Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, in which we and our brother Bishops issued clear moral

guidelines to aid the faithful in proper formation of conscience with regard to the many issues we face in our nation today. Through this joint statement to the faithful of Dallas and Fort Worth, we seek to briefly summarize the key points and dispel any confusion or misunderstanding that may be present among you concerning the teaching contained in the document, especially that which may have arisen from recent public misinterpretation concerning this teaching.

1. *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* clearly teaches that not all issues have the same moral equivalence. Some issues involve "intrinsic evils"; that is, they can never under any circumstance or condition be morally justified. Preeminent among these intrinsic evils are legalized abortion, the promotion of same sex unions and "marriages", repression of religious liberty, as well as public policies permitting euthanasia, racial discrimination or destructive human embryonic stem cell research.

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship clearly states:

"There are some things we must never do, as individuals or as a society, because they are always incompatible with love of God and neighbor. Such actions are so deeply flawed that they are always opposed to the authentic good of persons. These are called 'intrinsically evil' actions. They must always be rejected and opposed and must never be supported or condoned. A prime example is the intentional taking of innocent human life, as in

abortion and euthanasia. In our nation, 'abortion and euthanasia have become preeminent threats to human dignity because they directly attack life itself, the most fundamental human good and the condition for all others' (Living the Gospel of Life, no. 5). It is a mistake with grave moral consequences to treat the destruction of innocent human life merely as a matter of individual choice. A legal system that violates the basic right to life on the grounds of choice is fundamentally flawed." (22)

2. The destruction of the most innocent of human life through abortion and embryonic stem cell research not only undercuts the basic human right to life, but it also subverts and distorts the common good. As Pope John Paul II clearly states:

"Disregard for the right to life, precisely because it leads to the killing of the person whom society exists to serve, is what most directly conflicts with the possibility of achieving the common good..."

It is impossible to further the common good without acknowledging and defending the right to life, upon which all the other inalienable rights of individuals are founded and from which they develop..." (The Gospel of Life, 72; 101)

3. Therefore, we cannot make more clear the seriousness of the overriding issue of abortion – while not the "only issue" – it is the defining moral issue, not only today, but of the last 35 years.

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Since the Roe v. Wade decision in 1973, more than 48 million innocent lives have been lost. Each year in our nation more than one million lives are lost through legalized abortion. Countless other lives are also lost through embryonic stem cell research. In the coming months our nation will once again elect our political leaders. This electoral cycle affords us an opportunity to promote the culture of life in our nation. As Catholics we are morally obligated to pray, to act, and to vote to abolish the evil of abortion in America, limiting it as much as we can until it is finally abolished.

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4. As Catholics we are faced with a number of issues that are of concern and should be addressed, such as immigration reform, healthcare, the economy and its solvency, care and concern for the poor, and the war on terror. As Catholics we must be concerned about these issues and work to see that just solutions are brought about. There are many possible solutions to these issues and there can be reasonable debate among Catholics on how to best approach and solve them. These are matters of “prudential

judgment.” But let us be clear: issues of prudential judgment are not morally equivalent to issues involving intrinsic evils. No matter how right a given candidate is on any of these issues, it does not outweigh a candidate’s unacceptable position in favor of an intrinsic evil such as abortion or the protection of “abortion rights.”

As *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* states:

“The direct and intentional destruction of innocent human life from the moment of conception until natural death is always wrong and is not just one issue among many. It must always be opposed.” (28)

5. *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, in paragraphs 34-37, addresses the question of whether it is morally permissible for a Catholic to vote for a candidate who supports an intrinsic evil – even when the voter does not agree with the candidate’s position on that evil. The only moral possibilities for a Catholic to be able to vote in good conscience for a candidate who supports this intrinsic evil are the following:

a. If both candidates running for office support abortion or “abortion rights,” a Catholic would be forced to then look at the other important issues and through their vote try to limit the evil done; or,

b. If another intrinsic evil outweighs the evil of abortion. While this is sound moral reasoning, there are no “truly grave moral” or “proportionate” reasons, singularly or combined, that could outweigh the millions of innocent human lives that are directly killed by legal abortion each year.

To vote for a candidate who supports the intrinsic evil of abortion or “abortion rights” when there is a morally acceptable alternative would be to cooperate in the evil – and, therefore,

morally impermissible.

6. In conclusion, as stated in *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, the decisions we make on these political and moral issues affect not only the general peace and prosperity of society at large, but also may affect each individual’s salvation. As Catholics, we must treat our political choices with appropriate moral gravity and in doing so, realize our continuing and unavoidable obligation to be a voice for the voiceless unborn, whose destruction by legal abortion is the preeminent intrinsic evil of our day. With knowledge of the Church’s teaching on these grave matters, it is incumbent upon each of us as Catholics to educate ourselves on where the candidates running for office stand on these issues, particularly those involving intrinsic evils. May God bless you.

Faithfully in Christ,

Most Reverend Kevin J. Farrell
Bishop of Dallas

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