

# Truth be Told

*Bringing Christ to the World*

Issue 1

Newsletter of the Dominican Laity

Nov-Dec 2008

Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus

## Change!

There is a climate of change in the air; the Province has given the laity a new promoter, the LPC has new officers, and we are deep into an election cycle where The Big Word is Change; but change sometimes comes where not expected.

And Change is coming to these pages as well. As Dominican laity, we are bound to the quest for Truth, to learn it and to live according to it. Since our apostolic mission is in sharing that light of Truth in a world plunging headlong into darkness, the EC has elected to alter the name of this publication to "TRUTH BE TOLD, *bringing Christ to the world.*"

In this first issue we bring to your attention the Holy Father speaking on the ecclesial disruption caused by the flight from the Truth, Bp Robert Vasa (Baker) exploring the internal aversion to change, Bishop Martino (Scranton) providing an example of Catholic speaking clearly in the public square, and Fr. Phillip Neri Powell O.P.'s clear explanation of conscience and the errors associated with the typical appeal to conscience in dissent.

These are all timely items for the moment, but beyond that, we suspect they are "signs of the times," signs of a Church finding her voice in the public square, to proclaim the Truth to everyone ... not just the faithful. A voice that proclaims the Good News to all the world. And we are called share in that proclamation.

*But my people did not listen to my words; Israel did not obey me.*

*So I gave them over to hardness of heart; they followed their own designs. (Ps 81:12-13)*

That this is a hard hearted, self-seeking generation, few would argue; the obedience of faith is weak to altogether lacking, and the Word is not heard. But the Word has not been silent!

What better way to sum up Jesus' words in Matthew,

*What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops (Mt 10:27)*

than the marvelous Dominican catch-phrase

*"contemplare et contemplata aliis tradere"?*

Here I'd like to borrow an observation from Fr. James Mary Sullivan, OP:

*Nemo dat non quod habet* or as we say in Boston, "You can't give what you don't have."

Let us acknowledge our weakness, like St. Paul, and allow Jesus to perfect His power in us (2 Cor 12:9).

### Particular Directory – every vote counts!

Speaking of change, I prepared a side-by-side of the existing and proposed updated PD:

[http://dominicanidaho.org/rule/PD\\_side\\_by\\_side.htm](http://dominicanidaho.org/rule/PD_side_by_side.htm)

The updated version is not in order because it doesn't match the original, and since it's nice to compare side-by-side, I thought it might be helpful to put it as close as possible.. *Mark*

### Christ's Healing

*Pope Benedict XVI*

Christ is not a healer in the manner of the world. In order to heal us, he does not remain outside the suffering that is experienced; he eases it by coming to dwell within the one stricken by illness, to bear it and live it with him. Christ's presence comes to break the isolation which pain induces. Man no longer bears his burden alone: as a suffering member of Christ, he is conformed to Christ in his self-offering to the Father, and he participates, in him, in the coming to birth of the new creation. Without the Lord's help, the yoke of sickness and suffering weighs down on us cruelly.

## Greetings for St Dominic's Day

from Fr Carlos Aspiroz OP, Master of the Order

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am writing from Montevideo, capital city of Uruguay, in South America ... (it is winter). From deep in my heart I greet you on the feast of St. Dominic.

I want to express my personal gratitude to all of you for your ministry to the Order, the Dominican Family and the Church, while collaborating more closely with me in the service my brothers entrusted to me seven years ago.

My visit to Brazil was very intense (one has to travel enormous distances in order to reach all the communities) and joyful ... rich in experiences and so full of hope.

We then went to Paraguay where we could see first hand the life and mission of the friars and of the sisters from different congregations, and many lay fraternities... There is so much life! How beautiful a mission! Our brothers and sisters are not unaware of the situations of marginalization and of extreme poverty... Indeed, they share the life of the people, their joys and their hopes, their sorrows and their worries... Together with Bro Javier, who is accompanying me on this visitation, we are now in Uruguay. Although Paraguay and Uruguay share borders with Argentina, I had never been to these countries. The beauty of this Oriental country is something marvelous. Again, the work our brothers and sisters carry out encourages us to keep moving forward...

Finally, I send you my greetings for this feast, and ask the Lord, through the intercession of St. Dominic, the grace of preaching for all of you. We have to keep open eyes in order to contemplate God, the men and women of our times, the beauty of creation, and the more wonderful beauty of the grace God generously bestows on us. Open hearts so that everybody could find a place in them, like Saint Dominic, who because he loved everybody, he was loved by all. Open lips in order to announce the Word of God in all its expressions, in the most diverse ways ... to all nations.

Fraternally in Christ, Mary of the Rosary and Saint Dominic.

I embrace you all and ask you to remember me in your prayers.

Bro Carlos A. Aspiroz Costa OP

## Anniversary (of sorts)

13 years ago I received the email below from someone helping me study the Catholic faith. It came at a time of extreme trial, and after reading it, I sought out a Catholic priest for the very first time. In my life. On this day I share it again to give thanks to God who gave us his son, who gave us so many through the ages who have worked so tirelessly that those in darkness would see a great light.

May God's blessings be upon you. - Mark

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### From the Office of the Reading for Thursday in the 29th week in Ordinary Time:

From a letter to Proba by Saint Augustine, bishop  
*(We do not know what is right to pray for)*

You may still want to ask why the Apostle said: "We do not know what is right to pray for", because, surely, we can not believe that he or those to whom he wrote did not know the Lords Prayer.

He showed that he himself shared this uncertainty. Did he know what it was right to pray for when he was given a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to bruise him, so that he might not be puffed up by the greatness of what was revealed to him? Three times he asked the Lord to take it away from him, which showed that he did not know what he should ask for in prayer. At last, he heard the Lord's answer, explaining why the prayer of so great a man was not granted, and why it was not expedient for it to be granted: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power shines forth more perfectly in weakness."

In the kind of affliction, then, which can bring either good or ill, we do not know what it is right to pray for; yet, because it is difficult, troublesome and against the grain for us, weak as we are, we do what every human would do, we pray that it might be taken away from us. We owe, however, at least this much in our duty to God: if he does not take it away, we must not imagine that we are being forgotten by him but, because of our loving endurance of evil, must await greater blessings in its place. In this way, "power shines forth more perfectly in weakness." These words are written to prevent us from having too great an opinion of ourselves if our prayer is granted, when we are impatient in asking for something that it would be better not to receive; and to prevent us from being dejected, and distrustful of God's mercy towards us, if our prayer is not granted, when we ask for something that would bring us greater affliction, or completely ruin us through the corrupting influence of prosperity. In these cases we do not know what it is right to ask for in prayer.

Therefore, if something happens that we did not pray for, we must have no doubt that all that what God wants is more expedient than what we wanted ourselves. Our great Mediator gave us an example of this. After he said: "Father, if it is possible, let this cup be taken away from me", he immediately added, "Yet not what I will, but what you will, Father", so transforming the human will that was his through his taking of human nature. As a consequence, and rightly so, "through the obedience of one man the many are made righteous."

# On the fragmentation of the Christian communities

by Benedict XVI

*New York, ecumenical meeting in the church of Saint Joseph, Friday, April 18, 2008*

[...] Too often those who are not Christians, as they observe the splintering of Christian communities, are understandably confused about the Gospel message itself. Fundamental Christian beliefs and practices are sometimes changed within communities by so-called "prophetic actions" that are based on a hermeneutic not always consonant with the datum of Scripture and Tradition. Communities consequently give up the attempt to act as a unified body, choosing instead to function according to the idea of "local options". Somewhere in this process the need for diachronic *koinonia* – communion with the Church in every age – is lost, just at the time when the world is losing its bearings and needs a persuasive common witness to the saving power of the Gospel (cf. Rom 1:18-23).

Faced with these difficulties, we must first recall that the unity of the Church flows from the perfect oneness of the Trinitarian God. In John's Gospel, we are told that Jesus prayed to his Father that his disciples might be one, "just as you are in me and I am in you" (Jn 17:21). This passage reflects the unwavering conviction of the early Christian community that its unity was both caused by, and is reflective of, the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This, in turn, suggests that the internal cohesion of believers was based on the sound integrity of their doctrinal confession (cf. 1 Tim 1:3-11). Throughout the New Testament, we find that the Apostles were repeatedly called to give an account for their faith to both Gentiles (cf. Acts 17:16-34) and Jews (cf. Acts 4:5-22; 5:27-42). The core of their argument was always the historical fact of Jesus's bodily resurrection from the tomb (Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30). The ultimate effectiveness of their preaching did not depend on "lofty words" or "human wisdom" (1 Cor 2:13), but rather on the work of the Spirit (Eph 3:5) who confirmed the authoritative witness of the Apostles (cf. 1 Cor 15:1-11). The nucleus of Paul's preaching and that of the early Church was none other than Jesus Christ, and "him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2). But this proclamation had to be guaranteed by the purity of normative doctrine expressed in creedal formulae – symbola – which articulated the essence of the Christian faith and constituted the foundation for the unity of the baptized (cf. 1 Cor 15:3-5; Gal 1:6-9; *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 2).

My dear friends, the power of the kerygma has lost none of its internal dynamism. Yet we must ask ourselves whether its full force has not been attenuated by a relativistic approach to Christian doctrine similar to that found in secular ideologies, which, in alleging that science alone is "objective", relegate religion entirely to the subjective sphere of individual feeling. Scientific discoveries, and their application through human ingenuity, undoubtedly offer new possibilities for the betterment of humankind. This does not mean, however, that the "knowable" is limited to the empirically verifiable, nor religion restricted to the shifting realm of "personal experience". For Christians to accept this faulty line of reasoning would lead to the notion that there is little need to emphasize objective truth in the presentation of the Christian faith, for one need but follow his or her own conscience and choose a community that best suits his or her individual tastes. The result is seen in the continual proliferation of communities which often eschew institutional structures and minimize the importance of doctrinal content for Christian living.

Even within the ecumenical movement, Christians may be reluctant to assert the role of doctrine for fear that it would only exacerbate rather than heal the wounds of division. Yet a clear, convincing testimony to the salvation wrought for us in Christ Jesus has to be based upon the notion of normative apostolic teaching: a teaching which indeed underlies the inspired word of God and sustains the sacramental life of Christians today.

Only by "holding fast" to sound teaching (2 Thess 2:15; cf. Rev 2:12-29) will we be able to respond to the challenges that confront us in an evolving world. Only in this way will we give unambiguous testimony to the truth of the Gospel and its moral teaching. This is the message which the world is waiting to hear from us. Like the early Christians, we have a responsibility to give transparent witness to the "reasons for our hope", so that the eyes of all men and women of goodwill may be opened to see that God has shown us his face (cf. 2 Cor 3:12-18) and granted us access to his divine life through Jesus Christ. He alone is our hope! God has revealed his love for all peoples through the mystery of his Son's passion and death, and has called us to proclaim that he is indeed risen, has taken his place at the right hand of the Father, and "will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead" (Nicene Creed). [...]

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## **Bishop Vasa writes about “Change”**

### **Liturgical changes: short-term angst, long-term benefit**

*9/19/2008*

[...]There are changes in the Church and in the next couple of years there will be more changes. Those changes will not be about defined and settled matters such as the Divinity of Christ, the perpetual virginity of Mary, the primacy of the Pope, priestly celibacy, ordination of men, heterosexual marriage, the evil of contraception and abortion, or a host of other firm Church teachings. The changes on the horizon have a lot to do with the central liturgy of the Church, Holy Mass.[...]

There have been rumors that the current permitted practice of receiving Holy Communion in the hand is being revisited. There is certainly an ongoing concern that the reception of Holy Communion be accomplished in as fervent and respectful a manner as possible but, as far as I know, a change in the current practice is not being considered.

Interestingly, as relatively minor as such a change would be in the objective order, I could almost guarantee that nothing would produce in the hearts of many greater anger, angst or distress than this simple proposal. A continued reflection on why such a change would generate such trauma is perhaps very much in order. For now it is probably sufficient for each of us to ask, “What impact would such a proposal have on me and why?”

### **Overcoming self will is critical to understanding obedience**

*9/25/2008*

Last week I indicated that perhaps it would be good to pursue further the question of why even the suggestion of a change in the practice of receiving Holy Communion in the hand would be the cause or source of outrage and rebellion in the Church. It is certainly possible that such a proposal would be accepted with calm and grace but in my estimation such a response would not be highly probable. Such a proposal would much more likely be met with fierce opposition and anger. It needs to be made clear that I am neither offering nor encouraging such a proposal but an examination of our response to such a speculative proposal may be fruitful.

There are some, perhaps even a majority of active communicants, who would find no difficulty in making a transition back to Holy Communion on the tongue. It would be suitable and necessary to offer to the faithful a rationale for the change and, whether that rationale is convincing or not, many active communicants would accept it. Others, however, if this rationale was not completely convincing to them would simply reject both the proposal and the rationale for it. I could envision protest, anger, rejection and even boycott. If my suspicion is correct then I think we need to ask a very simple question: Why?

In our increasingly autonomous world it is practically deemed to be heresy to suggest that the will of God is expressed in the laws that give order to the life of groups of people. While the context for this statement is a document for religious communities there is a applicability for parish and diocesan churches as well. The same spirit of obedience which seeks actively and humbly the will of God must reign both within and outside of religious communities. This flies completely in the face of our secular culture with its overemphasis on personal autonomy.

[...] misunderstanding of the meaning of a consensus of the faithful gives rise to a sense of autonomy, independence and “authority” of one’s personal opinions which the Second Vatican Council never intended. Someone steeped in the belief that their opinion is somehow guaranteed by the Holy Spirit to be clear, truthful and accurate and must therefore be not only listened to and heard but acted upon by the Diocesan or Universal Church, is a bit misguided. Such individuals are sincere but misguided nonetheless. This does not mean that ecclesial authority may run roughshod over those who come forward with opinions and thoughts. Such presentations must be listened to and heard and taken into account, as Paul VI did, but after this a decision needs to be made. At this point a new challenge is presented and it has to do with obedience. [...]

For many in the Church the very word obedience itself generates a visceral response. There does not seem to be any difficulty with demanding that Pope Paul VI “obey” the consensus of the birth control commission but the suggestion that Catholics need to read and heed the teachings of *Humanae Vitae* is practically anathema. Suggesting that the will of God is not, in any way, mediated through the legitimate teaching of religious authorities is, in fact, the rejected position. Overcoming self will and bending more and more to the will of God is very difficult for all of us in our autonomy leaning society.

## On Conscience

During a presidential election year there is perhaps no concept invoked more or less understood among Catholics than “conscience.”

Rather than bore you with long quotes from the Catechism, theologians, Thomas Aquinas, etc., I will show you a rather simple distinction that captures what I would argue is the most important difference between conscience as it is generally understood among post-Vatican Two Catholics and the way in which the Church’s magisterial tradition has authentically defined it.

Since I am a Dominican, we will use pecan pie as our example.

What is the fundamental difference between these two statements?

1). While visiting my mom and dad in Mississippi, I **made** a pecan pie in the kitchen.

and

2). While visiting my mom and dad in Mississippi, I **discovered** a pecan pie in the kitchen.  
(HINT: the difference is [**bolded**])

What is the commonly understood difference between making something and discovering something? Let’s tease it out:

a. Something I make does not exist until I make it. Something I discover does exist before I discover it.

b. My primary relationship with something I make is Maker/Made. My primary relationship with something I discover is Discoverer/Discovered.

c. A Maker is necessary for the Made to exist, i.e. no Maker, no Made thing. A Discoverer is necessary for the Discovered to be discovered but not for the Discovered thing to exist, i.e. that which is discovered exists whether the Discoverer discovers it or not.

d. Given C above, the Maker can make the Made thing anyway he/she chooses. The discoverer simply finds that which already exists undiscovered.

There are a few more differences, but these will do.

Now, replace the Made Pecan Pie with conscience as it is generally understood. And replace the Discovered Pecan Pie with conscience as the Church teaches it.

Some would have us believe that conscience is that human faculty that makes a true moral judgment from the available ingredients.

However, the Church teaches that conscience never makes truth from the available ingredients but rather discovers an already existing truth and assents to it.

Do we really need to tease out the differences between an invented truth and a discovered truth?

Conscience, then, in the sense authentically taught by the Church for all Catholics to believe, is our God-given ability to seek out, discover, and assent to an already existing truth. The magisterial right and duty of the Church is to seek out, discover, assent to, and map already existing truths. In other words, as a body we have already found a great number of moral truths that are in no way subject to the “inventing mind and hands” of the believer. These truths exist whether we seek them out or not; whether we discover them or not; and whether we assent to them or not.

So, when a Catholic reports that he or she must dissent from an idea or practice that the Church has already sought out, discovered, etc. and does so using the familiar formula, “In good conscience, I must dissent from X,” you can be assured that he or she has misunderstood the Church’s teaching on conscience and, by speaking so, has given public testimony to a poorly formed conscience.

It is safe to report that the Church has sought out, discovered, etc. at least five Pecan Pies opposition to which must form the good conscience of every Catholic.

1. Abortion (direct killing of innocent life is always evil)
2. Euthanasia (ditto)
3. Embryonic Stem Cell Research (ditto)
4. Human Cloning (denies God's providence, ultimate hubris)
5. Same-sex “Marriage” (denies God's providence)

Please keep in mind here that I am simply offering one important distinction between two notions of conscience, one false and one true. There are many other distinctions to be made and many other shady areas to brighten.

Fr. Philip Neri Powell O.P.  
*DOMINE, DA MIHI HANC AQUAM...*

## A PASTORAL LETTER FROM BISHOP MARTINO

Respect Life Sunday

My brothers and sisters in Christ,

The American Catholic bishops initiated Respect Life Sunday in 1972, the year before the Supreme Court legalized abortion in the United States. Since that time, Catholics across the country observe the month of October with devotions and pro-life activities in order to advance the culture of life. This October, our efforts have more significance than ever. Never have we seen such abusive criticism directed toward those who believe that life begins at conception and ends at natural death.

As Catholics, we should not be surprised by these developments. Forty years ago, Pope Paul VI predicted that widespread use of artificial contraceptives would lead to increased marital infidelity, lessened regard for women, and a general lowering of moral standards especially among the young. Forty years later, social scientists, not necessarily Catholics, attest to the accuracy of his predictions. As if following some bizarre script, the sexual revolution has produced widespread marital breakdown, weakened family ties, legalized abortion, sexually transmitted diseases, pornography, same-sex unions, euthanasia, destruction of human embryos for research purposes and a host of other ills.

It is impossible for me to answer all of the objections to the Church's teaching on life that we hear every day in the media. Nevertheless, let me address a few. To begin, laws that protect abortion constitute injustice of the worst kind. They rest on several false claims including that there is no certainty regarding when life begins, that there is no certainty about when a fetus becomes a person, and that some human beings may be killed to advance the interests or convenience of others. With regard to the first, reason and science have answered the question. The life of a human being begins at conception. The Church has long taught this simple truth, and science confirms it. Biologists can now show you the delicate and beautiful development of the human embryo in its first days of existence. This is simply a fact that reasonable people accept. Regarding the second, the embryo and the fetus have the potential to do all that an adult person does. Finally, the claim that the human fetus may be sacrificed to the interests or convenience of his mother or someone else is grievously wrong. All three claims have the same result: the weakest and most vulnerable are denied, because of their age, the most basic protection that we demand for ourselves. This is discrimination at its worst, and no person of conscience should support it.

Another argument goes like this: "As wrong as abortion is, I don't think it is the only relevant 'life' issue that should be considered when deciding for whom to vote." This reasoning is sound only if other issues carry the same moral weight as abortion does, such as in the case of euthanasia and destruction of embryos for research purposes. Health care, education, economic security, immigration, and taxes are very important concerns. Neglect of any one of them has dire consequences as the recent financial crisis demonstrates. However, the solutions to problems in these areas do not usually involve a rejection of the sanctity of human life in the way that abortion does. Being "right" on taxes, education, health care, immigration, and the economy fails to make up for the error of disregarding the value of a human life. Consider this: the finest health and education systems, the fairest immigration laws, and the soundest economy do nothing for the child who never sees the light of day. It is a tragic irony that "pro-choice" candidates have come to support homicide – the gravest injustice a society can tolerate – in the name of "social justice."

Even the Church's just war theory has moral force because it is grounded in the principle that innocent human life must be protected and defended. Now, a person may, in good faith, misapply just war criteria leading him to mistakenly believe that an unjust war is just, but he or she still knows that innocent human life may not be harmed on purpose. A person who supports permissive abortion laws, however, rejects the truth that innocent human life may never be destroyed. This profound moral failure runs deeper and is more corrupting of the individual, and of the society, than any error in applying just war criteria to particular cases.

Furthermore, National Right to Life reports that 48.5 million abortions have been performed since 1973. One would be too many. No war, no natural disaster, no illness or disability has claimed so great a price.

In saying these things in an election year, I am in very good company. My predecessor, Bishop Timlin, writing his pastoral letter on Respect Life Sunday 2000, stated the case eloquently:

*Continued on next page*

Abortion is the issue this year and every year in every campaign. Catholics may not turn away from the moral challenge that abortion poses for those who seek to obey God's commands. They are wrong when they assert that abortion does not concern them, or that it is only one of a multitude of issues of equal importance. No, the taking of innocent human life is so heinous, so horribly evil, and so absolutely opposite to the law of Almighty God that abortion must take precedence over every other issue. I repeat. It is the single most important issue confronting not only Catholics, but the entire electorate.

My fellow bishops, writing ten years ago, explained why some evils – abortion and euthanasia in particular – take precedence over other forms of violence and abuse.

The failure to protect life in its most vulnerable stages renders suspect any claims to the 'rightness' of positions in other matters affecting the poorest and least powerful of the human community. If we understand the human person as 'the temple of the Holy Spirit' – the living house of God – then these latter issues fall logically into place as the crossbeams and walls of that house. *All direct attacks on innocent human life, such as abortion and euthanasia, strike at the house's foundation* [emphasis in the original]. These directly and immediately violate the human person's most fundamental right – the right to life. Neglect of these issues is the equivalent of building our house on sand. *Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to American Catholics*, 23.

While the Church assists the State in the promotion of a just society, its primary concern is to assist men and women in achieving salvation. For this reason, it is incumbent upon bishops to correct Catholics who are in error regarding these matters. Furthermore, public officials who are Catholic and who persist in public support for abortion and other intrinsic evils should not partake in or be admitted to the sacrament of Holy Communion. As I have said before, I will be vigilant on this subject

It is the Church's role now to be a prophet in our own country, reminding all citizens of what our founders meant when they said that ". . . all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." The Church's teaching that all life from conception to natural death should be protected by law is founded on religious belief to be sure, but it is also a profoundly American principle founded on reason. Whenever a society asks its citizens to violate its own foundational principles – as well as their moral consciences – citizens have a right, indeed an obligation, to refuse.

In 1941, Bishop Gustave von Galen gave a homily condemning Nazi officials for murdering mentally ill people in his diocese of Muenster, Germany. The bishop said:

"Thou shalt not kill!" God wrote this commandment in the conscience of man long before any penal code laid down the penalty for murder, long before there was any prosecutor or any court to investigate and avenge a murder. Cain, who killed his brother Abel, was a murderer long before there were any states or any courts or law. And he confessed his deed, driven by his accusing conscience: "My punishment is greater than I can bear. . . and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me the murderer shall slay me" (Genesis 4:13-14)"

Should he have opposed the war and remained silent about the murder of the mentally ill? No person of conscience can fail to understand why Bishop von Galen spoke as he did.

My dear friends, I beg you not to be misled by confusion and lies. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, does not ask us to follow him to Calvary only for us to be afraid of contradicting a few bystanders along the way. He does not ask us to take up his Cross only to have us leave it at the voting booth door. Recently, Pope Benedict XVI said that "God is so humble that he uses us to spread his Word." The gospel of life, which we have the privilege of proclaiming, resonates in the heart of every person – believer and non-believer – because it fulfills the heart's most profound desire. Let us with one voice continue to speak the language of love and affirm the right of every human being to have the value of his or her life, from conception to natural death, respected to the highest degree.

*Continued on next page*

October is traditionally the month of the Rosary. Let us pray the Rosary for the strength and fortitude to uphold the truths of our faith and the requirements of our law to all who deny them. And, let us ask Our Lady to bless our nation and the weakest among us.

May Mary, the mother of Jesus, the Lord of Life, pray for us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Joseph F. Martino, D.D., Hist. E.D.  
Bishop of Scranton

### ***From the Formation Director***

To begin with let me thank the new editor of this publication. It is a tremendous undertaking to be sure, and congratulations are more than due. Being new to the position of promoter of formation, I have been spending my time looking over the first and second year formation programs of those chapters who don't use the provincial formation. So far I have received five very impressive works plus one that the Australians use, which is for three years.

So I would like to take this time to ask for any other chapters using a different program to please send them to me, either by e-mail or at the address just below. Certainly I would like to also invite any who have questions about initial or ongoing formation to contact me. Thank you for your attention and May God bless you all.

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### ***From the Social Justice/Care of Creation Promoter***

#### **Public Policy, Advocacy, and Life Issues.**

The Scriptures say, that when we obey Christ and transform our minds to conform to His, that "there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all." Colossians 3:11. Over history, by development of ideas, and by transformation of minds and hearts by the grace of Him, mankind and the law have also accepted this elevated thinking.

Before God, as is the goal of modern human law, there is no distinction between groups of people. In principle, it is "justice for all." In essence, this is well established in the founding principles and laws of the United States, where it was written:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. – That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, (Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776).

This elemental legal cornerstone of the United States of America proves we are a Godly nation in our founding, and are based upon two principles: (1) that no man or woman is above the law, and (2) that there are fundamental laws grounded in the natural law, or that law which is derived by nature. For instance, any human legislative body cannot repeal the law against murder, assault, battery, robbery, stealing, and lying, among others. These laws are written into our very beings, and even if the state were to allow such infringements, the state's law is void, and violates the natural law that is written on our minds and upon our hearts. (Hb 10:16) St. Thomas Aquinas says such governmental enactments are not law, but are a type of violence. Without just men and women serving in governmental posts, and without just laws, tyranny will soon follow.

Public policy and public laws must be rooted in and guided by the natural law and the concept that no man or woman is above the law. God has called many people to advocate for good public policy. These are advocates, jurists, and activists who work in the political arena for the common good, seeking to perfect society through the cooperation of public and private officials and entities. There is many a laudable goal, when these activists advocate for the homeless, the disenfranchised, the naked, the voiceless, and the poor, among others.

The foremost principle in our modern social culture is that all such advocates and activists should first advocate justice for unborn persons. The unborn share in the characteristics of all other disenfranchised groups. In other words, the unborn persons are naked, voiceless, innocent, unseen, disenfranchised, blind, choice-less, and marginalized. In accord with present U.S. law, the unborn have no rights or guarantees to pursue happiness, to own property, to make love, to have children, or to simply live and breathe. The unborn children who are

aborted will never see the sunset, or be guided by the Scriptures, or see, or feel, or touch those about them. The unborn child has made no choices, has not failed or succeeded, or responded to God's grace or sinned.

This advocacy is not grounded in a proverbial woven cloth, but a precedent rooted in justice first for the most innocent and voiceless in our society. It is a matter of main concern.

We advocate first for the innocent unborn, which fruitfully legitimizes—without question of purpose or duplicity—advocacy for born persons who are homeless, disenfranchised, disabled, marginalized, poor, sick, or suffering.

Under the current law in the United States, the pure power of choice trumps the rights of persons (unborn) granted under the natural law—in other words God-given rights—and life becomes cheap in all its forms, whether it is life seen when it is unborn, old, sick, homeless, hungry, blind, poor, voiceless, powerless, or disabled. When men and women of good will seek legal justice and public policy based upon fundamental rights and not for political purposes, it will result be clarity and priority of purpose for all other advocacy.

Therefore, as a matter of justice, as a matter of true concern and Godly charity, it is essential that Christian activists, whether political, religious, or social, and Christian public officials, concern themselves by prioritizing their effort for life; firstly the unborn, and secondly other persons. To bring justice to all the disadvantaged, we must first bring it to the most humble and poor first. In modern America. that is the unborn.

### **Celebrating the Vocations and Contributions of Lay/Secular Orders**

The San Jose Diocese will once again invite members of the Lay/Secular Orders to an Annual Mass with Bishop Patrick McGrath to be held at St. Martin of Tours Church, 200 O'Connor Dr., San Jose, CA. The date is Saturday, December 6, 2008 at 11:00 AM. A "potluck reception" of finger-foods will follow Mass. Members of the Orders, their families and friends, clergy and religious, and anyone interested are invited. If you plan to attend please contact Event Coordinator, Bernadette K. Davison, OPL at (408) 356-2201 or e-mail [bkd.opl@verizon.net](mailto:bkd.opl@verizon.net).

### **St. Mary Magdalene Chapter (Tempe)**

On October 18, the chapter held its annual Day of Reflection which culminated in Receptions and Professions. The ceremonies were part of the 5:00 vigil Mass which was celebrated in the Old Church on the Newman Center grounds. Four members of Mary Mother of Truth Chapter (Mesa) helped us celebrate the following:

Received: Joseph Buckley and Laura Guild;  
First Promises: Tracy Joy Randolph;  
Life Profession: Christina Escalante, Mary Catherine Hutchinson, Richard B. Leopold, Penny Levy, Michael Lieske, OPL.

Because our ongoing formation topic this year is the Beatitudes (revisited), they were the theme of the prayerful day. There was a general introduction, and then focussing on the first Beatitude, shared reflections by those involved in the ceremonies that evening, linking the Beatitude to the pillars and priorities of the Order.

### **Dominican supplies has a new home!**

As of November 1, 2008, all orders for Dominican supplies should go to Clair Rogus, who is our new steward of all things Dominicana which you may order by calling (650) 570-7835 or writing:

**Claire Rogus**  
**27 Seville Way**  
**San Mateo, CA 94402**

### **Outstanding Resources**

**<http://CatholicVote.com>**  
**<http://www.durarealidad.com>**

"The apostolate should always be exercised in a saintly manner, with such purity of intention, such interior union with God, such generous forgetfulness and abnegation of self, and with so great a love for souls that it [the apostolate] flows from the interior spirit which informs it and at the same time nourishes and renews this same spirit."

Pius XII. *Primo Feliciter*

## Cardinal Rodé at Symposium on Consecrated Life

### "Reforming Religious Life With the Right Hermeneutic"

Towards the end of the Second Vatican Council, I was in Paris finishing my doctoral thesis on "miracles of the modernist controversy." At that time in France there was a pervasive atmosphere of enthusiasm for the Council as the press and other media presented it, which was a partial image of the Council as a "victory of the liberals over the conservatives."

When I returned to Slovenia I found that the communist regime was isolating the Catholic faithful, suffocating public expression of the faith and reducing it to a merely private affair. I found a faithful people within a society shaped by the ideology of materialism. I soon realized that what I brought with me from my studies in Paris was of very little use for my pastoral work. I needed to be close to the people and to respect the traditional ways of expressing of their faith. I learned so much from the Christian faithful! They taught me to love the Church, to respect the Pope and the bishops in communion with him.

The great lesson I learned from that experience was this: The religious who secularized consecrated life were not doing so for the sake of the faith of the people of God. It was not the good of God's people that they were seeking. Rather than God's will, what they were seeking was their own.

Religious life, being a gift from the Holy Spirit to the individual religious and the Church, depends especially on fidelity to its origins, fidelity to the founder, fidelity to the particular charism. Fidelity to that charism is essential, for God blesses fidelity while he "opposes the proud." The complete rupture of some with the past, then, goes against the nature of a religious congregation, and essentially it provokes God's rejection.

*www.zenit.org 10-13-2008*



Let us, then, not light the lamp by contemplation and action, only to put it under a bushel - that lamp, I mean, which is the enlightening word of knowledge - lest we be condemned for restricting by the letter the incomprehensible power of wisdom. Rather let us place it upon the lampstand of holy Church, on the heights of true contemplation, where it may kindle for all men the light of divine teaching.

*St. Maximus the Confessor*

"When I desire to pray or work for the good of others, I must first of all turn the eyes of my mind toward You, O eternal Light, and to Your splendor, so that You will give me light, strengthen my spirit, and help me to withdraw, as much as possible, from external things in order to turn wholly toward that which is interior. Grant that I may see only the interior man in my neighbor, paying attention to the exterior only insofar as it helps the interior, so that every thing else will be put aside as vanity and I may not be attracted by vain things.

*St. Bonaventure*

*Mary*, our mother

And mother of the Redeemer,  
Gate of heaven and Star of the sea,  
Come to the aid of your people,  
Who have sinned,  
Yet also yearn to rise again!  
Come to the Church's aid,  
Enlighten your devoted children,  
Strengthen the faithful throughout the world,  
Let those who have drifted  
Hear your call,  
And may they who live as prisoners of evil  
Be converted!

*Pope John Paul II*

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- There is no subscription fee.

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Editor – Mark Gross

### Submissions to the Editor

Readers are encouraged to contribute letters or articles, in particular presentations made at chapter meetings. We cannot guarantee that all will be published, and we reserve the right to edit submissions. The purpose of sharing submissions is to pass on relevant information and suggestions for proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel according to the charism of St. Dominic, and in accord with the Catechism of the Catholic Church.