

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Nicandor and Joannicius -- November 4th

November 4, 2012

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

OUR VENERABLE FATHER JOANNICIUS THE GREAT; THE HOLY MARTYRS NICANDER, BISHOP OF MYRA, AND HERMAS, PRIEST

TONE 6

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 5 – NOVEMBER 11

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8 – SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY ARCHANGEL MICHAEL, COMMANDER OF THE HEAVENLY HOSTS; ARCHANGELS GABRIEL, RAPHAEL, URIEL, SALAPHIEL, JEGUDIEL, BARACHIEL, JEREMIEL AND THE OTHER INCORPOREAL POWERS

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

Special Intention

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10

6:00 PM – Great Vespers of Sunday

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11 – *TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; OUR VENERABLE FATHER JOANNICIUS THE GREAT; THE HOLY MARTYRS NICANDER, BISHOP OF MYRA, AND HERMAS, PRIEST*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

For All Parishioners

"Lord Jesus Christ, You told us to give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God. Enlighten the minds of our people in America. May we choose a President of the United States, and other government officials, according to Your Divine Will. Give our citizens the courage to choose leaders of our nation who respect the sanctity of unborn human life, the sanctity of marriage, the sanctity of marital relations, the sanctity of the family, and the sanctity of the aging. Grant us the wisdom to give You, what belongs to You, our God. If we do this, as a nation, we are confident You will give us an abundance of Your blessings through our elected leaders. Amen."

– Election Prayer by
Fr. John A. Hardon, S.J.

Sunday offering for October 28

Amount	Number
\$1.00	1 (loose)
\$5.00	1
\$10.00	2
\$20.00	4
\$25.00	2
\$30.00	4
\$40.00	1
\$50.00	1
\$60.00	1
\$80.00	1
\$100.00	1
\$200.00	1
\$806.00	13 Parishioners

Parishioner Total: \$801.00

Visitor Total: \$5.00

Average / parish household (40): \$20.03

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2125.00

Shortfall: (\$1,324.00)

Pancake Breakfast

Next Sunday, November 11th will be our pre-Nativity Fast Pancake Breakfast. This will take place after each Liturgy. Cost is: Adult 18 and over: \$10, Ages 13-17: \$5, under 12 FREE.

Continued from *Issues for Catholic Voters: 2012 Edition*

XVIII Health Care

Life and physical health are precious gifts entrusted to us by God. We must take reasonable care of them, taking into account the needs of others and the common good. Concern for the health of its citizens requires that society help in the attainment of living conditions that allow them to grow and reach maturity: food and clothing, housing, health care, basic education, employment, and social assistance. (CCC 2288)

THE ISSUE OF HEALTH CARE DOMINATED THE DEBATE during the 2010 election. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), passed by Congress and signed by President Obama, attempts to provide universal care for American citizens long supported by the bishops.

Some people falsely assume that, for health care to be universal, it must be managed by the federal government. In fact, the bishops have never stipulated how universal health care—reasonable access for everyone to adequate health care—should be achieved. It could have been achieved by a combination of personal and corporate insurance coverage, supplemented by philanthropic and government programs.

The bishops did not support this particular legislation because it does not explicitly prohibit the use of federal funds for abortion. In spite of this historic expansion of access to abortion, the majority of Catholic members of Congress voted for this legislation, many of them denying the very presence of the abortion loophole their bishops publicly condemned.

Other Catholic leaders, including the Catholic Medical Association, questioned the wisdom of putting the nation's health care under the supervision of the federal government. Their argument was based on the principle of subsidiarity, in connection with the loss of individual choice and the impact on the doctor-patient relationship.

The Protect Life Act has been introduced to close the abortion loopholes in the legislation; it passed the House on October 13, 2011, with bipartisan support and awaits action in the Senate. This

legislation has been strongly endorsed by the Catholic bishops and Catholic Advocate.

Insurance

As Catholics, we are called to respect the dignity of people by helping “in the attainment of living conditions that allow them to grow and reach maturity” (CCC 2288). Throughout this country's history, hundreds of Catholic hospitals have steadfastly fulfilled this moral obligation to care for the sick. But faith-based medical services, along with publicly funded hospitals and clinics, are strained to take care of the uninsured.

Insured patients have been financially strained to meet the rising costs of health care. Most rely on their employee benefit plans, which are less expensive than private insurance policies. However, the costs are still high, and some companies are scaling back their benefit programs. Other companies and professions do not offer any benefits at all.

Conscience Protection

Another health-care issue that has surfaced in PPACA is that of conscience protections. Following the passage of *Roe v. Wade*, Congress protected the rights of health organizations and providers to refuse to perform abortions under the conscientious objection principle. Today, this question is returning with a vengeance. Under PPACA, all conscience protections for health-care personnel have been removed. And on January 20, 2012, the Department of Health and Human Services issued a final rule forcing employers that offer health insurance to include access to contraception, sterilization, and abortifacients with no out-of-pocket cost to the employee—even if it conflicts with that organization's beliefs.

Some in Congress anticipated that the law would be implemented this way. To address that concern, the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act of 2011 was introduced by Congressman Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE) on March 17, 2011. It amends PPACA “to permit a health plan to

decline coverage of specific items and services that are contrary to the religious beliefs of the sponsor, issuer, or other entity offering the plan or the purchaser or beneficiary (in the case of individual coverage) without penalty.” It also applies similar guidance to state health insurance exchange programs and would be retroactively applied to the date when PPACA was signed into law.

In recent years, “reproductive rights” advocates have pushed for expanded health-care coverage that would force all employee health plans to include contraception and “emergency contraception.” The Catholic health-care ministry is based on the protection of life and preservation of the dignity of people. Procedures that are contrary to this mission (abortion, euthanasia, and contraception) cannot be provided by Catholic hospitals or supported by Catholic health-care plans.

As a result, many Catholic hospitals have lost their Catholic identity, gradually caving to pressure to offer abortions, and some have been sold to secular medical conglomerates.

Summary

- ✓ Catholics should not be required to pay taxes that might subsidize abortion coverage in a universal health-care program.
- ✓ The good of achieving universal coverage does not outweigh the evil of allowing abortion funding under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA).
- ✓ Health-care needs should be met by a combination of personal and corporate insurance, philanthropy, and government programs.
- ✓ Catholic health-care organizations must be free to perform their work with clear consciences.

XIX Religious Liberty

This Vatican Council declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that...no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits.
(Dignitatis Humanae, 2)

AS CREATED BY GOD, HUMAN BEINGS have an intrinsic dignity. The natural desire to hold religious beliefs and to practice forms of religious worship is an expression of that dignity and must be considered a fundamental human right.

Since religious beliefs around the world are not uniform, the right to religious belief and practice posits a corresponding duty of respect for religious liberty. This duty of respect requires tolerance for different religious viewpoints and an appreciation for religious pluralism.

The state must guard the religious liberty of all faith traditions, both in law and public policy. This protection is spelled out in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof....

It is essential to note that this amendment in no way prohibits the freedom of religious expression, but it forbids the United States from designating one faith tradition as an official religion.

Protection of the common good, however, can take precedence over an individual’s right to religious expression. Therefore, religious liberty does not protect those who promote violent demonstrations of faith or call people to commit violent acts.

The impact of the First Amendment, properly understood, protects freedom of religious expression and protects people of faith against those who would impose their secular beliefs on others. But, sadly, this has not been the case in practice: During the past 35 years, government authorities have implicitly established secularism as an official State religion.

Secularism has taken many forms: the removal of voluntary religious instruction in public schools; the banning of voluntary private prayer in public schools; employment discrimination against those who openly practice their faith; the promotion of an atheist ethos; and mandatory

contraceptive coverage in health plans. “It is therefore difficult...to accept a position that gives only atheism the right of citizenship in public and social life, while believers are, as though by principle, barely tolerated or are treated as second-class citizens” (Redemptor Hominis, 17).

The greatest threat to religious liberty at present is the adoption of same-sex marriage laws in six states, the latest being New York. Although same-sex marriage legislation contains exemptions for church institutions from civil suits for refusing to perform same-sex marriages, there is no guarantee that these exemptions will survive judicial review. Church institutions can also be punished by loss of government contracts for social services. San Francisco revoked \$3.5 million in social services contracts from the Salvation Army when it refused, for religious reasons, to provide benefits to its employees’ same-sex partners.

The issue that most people have long identified with religious liberty—the display of religious symbols—is the easiest to resolve. Allowing the display of religious symbols does not constitute the “establishment” of a State religion but merely points to the history of our nation. The founding of America was rooted in Judeo-Christian teachings incorporated into our legal system and the document of our democratic charter.

The importance of religion to the development of our nation can be seen in the development of our education and health-care systems. For the

first 125 years of the American experience, our citizens and government relied upon the money and work invested by faith-based organizations in education and health care. But in recent years, government funds for both education and health care have made secular demands on the religious institutions. This is discriminatory and a clear violation of religious liberty.

Secular and faith-based organizations should play on a level playing field in competing for government funds. Faith-based organizations that accept government funding must not be forced to sacrifice their religious liberties. For example, a Catholic hospital that receives a government grant should not be required to provide contraception and abortion services.

Summary

- ✓ The desire for religious belief and practice is natural to the human person, who is created in the image and likeness of God.
- ✓ Religious liberty, therefore, is a fundamental human right rooted in the dignity of the human person and must be protected by law and public policy.
- ✓ The First Amendment protects religious expression and also protects people of faith from the enforced secularism of public institutions.
- ✓ Public displays of religious symbols from the Judeo-Christian tradition do not establish a religion but rather express the historical development of our nation and its culture.

XX Immigration

Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of his own country; and, where there are just reasons for it, the right to emigrate to other countries and take up residence there. (Pacem in Terris, 25)

PERSONS EMIGRATE FROM ONE COUNTRY TO ANOTHER for a variety of reasons: to escape persecution, to overcome poverty, or to seek greater opportunity. The Church views emigration as a right that should be recognized by every nation. That right is rooted in the belief that each person

should have access to the basic goods required by our shared human dignity.

The willingness of one country to accept persons across borders and offer them a home is emblematic of the unity of the human family and an act of human solidarity. Some political leaders have spared no effort to restrict—and, in some cases, end—legal immigration to the United States. They argue that new immigrants do not assimilate to the American way of life and pose a threat to the jobs of U.S. citizens. But given the core of Catholic social teaching, any

political candidate who impedes this process or betrays a hostile attitude toward immigrants should be found wanting.

The prosperity of the United States, according to the Catechism, places a special obligation on its citizens and elected representatives: “The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin” (CCC 2241).

The Church also recognizes that a country has the right to control its borders while monitoring and setting reasonable limits on immigration. The United States may also protect its cultural patrimony, which some immigrants to America may initially not share. But Catholics should avoid the kind of nationalist and nativist rhetoric that was once used to discourage Catholics from immigrating to our nation. Finally, the threat of possible terrorist infiltration is legitimate

but should not overshadow the basic Catholic obligation of “welcoming the stranger among us.”

Summary

- ✓ The Church affirms the basic human right of persons to emigrate from one nation to another for “just reasons,” such as economic well-being.
- ✓ At the same time, every state has the duty to protect its borders, regulate the flow of immigrants, and document their presence.
- ✓ The prudential challenge for our nation is simultaneously recognizing the right to emigrate for “just reasons” while protecting the common good by the reasonable control of our borders.
- ✓ Catholics should remember when the economic conditions of European countries like Ireland and Italy sent thousands of immigrants to the United States to seek a better life.

XXI The Environment

Man, who discovers his capacity to transform and in a certain sense create the world through his own work, forgets that this is always based on God's prior and original gift of the things that are. Man thinks that he can make arbitrary use of the earth, subjecting it without restraint to his will, as though it did not have its own requisites and a prior God-given purpose, which man can indeed develop but must not betray. (Centesimus Annus, 37)

MAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ENVIRONMENT is subject to various principles of Catholic social teaching, such as solidarity, prudence, and the preferential option for the poor. The Church does not think environmental issues can be resolved through economic or scientific means alone; the underlying moral and cultural causes must be addressed if changes are to become permanent.

At creation, the Church teaches, men and women were made the stewards of this world. Despite this authority, we do not have an unfettered rule over the environment. Our control is subject to the same moral restrictions that are imposed

on governing our bodies: Just as governments serve to protect the common good, so too must we recognize our responsibility to care for the natural world and its resources.

Prudence requires that nations and their leaders apply intelligence when making decisions that affect the environment. Unfortunately, some are more concerned with meeting their economic and consumer goals than in responsibly carrying out their stewardship roles in protecting natural resources. As a result, the common good has been threatened from an array of environmental issues, including pollution and nuclear waste.

Arguably, the more significant factor in environmental crises has been the rise of consumerism and over-consumption. As John Paul II explained: “In many parts of the world society is given to instant gratification and consumerism while remaining indifferent to the damage which these cause. Simplicity, moderation and discipline, as well as a spirit of sacrifice, must become a part of everyday life, lest all suffer the negative consequences of the careless habits of a few” (“The Ecological Crisis”).

Rather than addressing issues of protecting natural resources or curbing consumerism, the affluent nations tend to focus more on reducing third-world birth rates. Protecting the environment has become another excuse for funding abortion around the world.

Foreign-aid packages that are sent to Africa from USAID and other federally funded relief organizations often contain materials directed toward population control, such as contraception, abortion, and voluntary sterilization. But the sheer number of people is not the problem: Some of the most densely populated areas of the world are both affluent and ecologically secure. Even if these initiatives were successful, the impact on the environment would not be nearly as significant as reduced consumption.

To be fair, the leaders of the developed world have taken steps to curb their excessive consumerism. But men and women, the natural stewards of all creation, must continue

to focus their creativity on more responsible development: “Even as humanity’s mistakes are at the root of earth’s travail today, human talents and invention can and must assist in its rebirth and contribute to human development” (USCCB, “Renewing the Earth”).

Summary

- ✓ The Church teaches that human persons are the stewards of the natural world and its resources.
- ✓ We should look upon the natural world as a gift and treat it as such, just as we do our own lives and existence.
- ✓ The destruction of the environment and the overuse of natural resources is the product of unfettered production and consumption.
- ✓ Responsible stewardship of the environment is no justification for contraception, abortion, or sterilization.

Recommended Reading

1. *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility* (Paulist National Catholic Press)
2. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Doubleday Religion)
3. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (USCCB Communications)
4. *Human Dignity and the Common Good: The Great Papal Social Encyclicals from Leo XIII to John Paul II*, by Rev. Richard W. Russeau, S.J. (Praeger)
5. *Render Unto Caesar: Serving the Nation by Living Our Catholic Beliefs in Political Life*, by the Most Rev. Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. (Image)
6. *Onward, Christian Soldiers: The Growing Political Power of Catholics and Evangelicals in the United States*, by Deal W. Hudson (Threshold)

“It is also the duty of the laity to participate actively in political life, in a manner coherent with the teaching of the Church, bringing their well-founded reasoning and great ideals into the democratic de-bate, and into the search for a broad consensus among everyone who cares about the defense of life and freedom, the protection of truth and the good of the family, solidarity with the needy, and the vital search for the common good.”

—Pope Benedict XVI
Message to the Pontifical Council of the Laity
May 21, 2010



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Prayer is Answering the Word of God

Isidore said:

'Anyone who wants to be always united to God must pray often and read the Bible often. For in prayer it is we who are speaking to God, but in the readings it is God speaking to us.'

'All spiritual progress is based on reading and meditation. What we do not know, we learn in the reading; what we have learned, we preserve by meditation. Reading the Bible provides us with a two-fold advantage. It instructs our minds, and introduces us to the love of God by taking our attention off vanities.'

'None can understand the meaning of the Bible if they do not acquire familiarity with it through the habit of Bible reading.'

Augustine said:

'Nourish your soul with Bible reading. It will prepare a spiritual feast for you.'

Jerome said:

'Anyone who is assiduous in reading the Word of God becomes weary while reading, but afterwards is happy because the bitter seeds of the reading produce sweet fruits in the soul.'

'Let us study while we are on earth that Reality which will stay in our minds also when we are in heaven.'

Defensor Grammaticus (ca. 7th century)