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Unhappy Fault

On the Integration of Anger into the Virtuous Life

By Leon Podles

Any institution tends to preserve itself by avoiding conflict, whether external or internal. In addition to this universal tendency, many Christians have a false understanding of the nature and role of anger. It is seen as something negative, something that a Christian should not feel.

In the sexual abuse cases in the Catholic Church, those who dealt with the bishops have consistently remarked that the bishops never expressed outrage or righteous anger, even at the most horrendous cases of abuse and sacrilege. Bishops seem to think that anger at sin is un-Christian. Gilbert Kilman, a child psychiatrist, commented, "What amazes me is the lack of outrage the church feels when its good work is being harmed. So, if there is anything the church needs to know, it needs to know how to be outraged."

Mark Serrano confronted Bishop Frank Rodimer, asking why he had let his priest-friend Peter Osinski sleep with boys at Rodimer's beach house while Rodimer was in the next bedroom: "Where is your moral indignation?"

Rodimer's answer was, "Then I don't get it. What do you want?" What Serrano wanted Rodimer to do was to behave like a man with a heart, a heart that is outraged by evil. But Rodimer couldn't; his inability to feel outrage was a quality that had helped make him a bishop. He would never get into fights, never rock the boat, never "divide" but only "unify." Rodimer could not understand why he should feel deep anger at evil, at the violation of the innocent, at the oppression of the weak.

Emotional Deformation

The emotions that are now suppressed are hatred and anger. Christians think that they ought not to feel these emotions, that it is un-Christian to feel them. They secretly suspect that Jesus was being un-Christian in his attitude to the scribes and Pharisees when he was angry at them, that he was un-Christian when he drove the moneychangers out of the temple or declared that millstones (not vacations in treatment centers) were the way to treat child abusers.

Conrad Baars noticed this emotional deformation in the clergy in the mid-twentieth century. He recognized that there had been distortions in "traditional" Catholic spirituality. It had become too focused upon individual acts rather than on growth in virtue; it had emphasized sheer naked strength of will. In forgetting that growth in virtue was the goal of the Christian's moral life, it forgot that the emotions, all emotions, including anger and hate, are part of human nature and must be integrated into a virtuous life.

Baars had been imprisoned by the Nazis. He knew iniquity firsthand and that there was something wrong with those who did not hate it:

A little reflection will make it clear that there is a big difference between the person who knows solely that something is evil and ought to be opposed, and the one who in addition also feels hate for that evil, is angry that it is corrupting or harming his fellow-men, and feels aroused to combat it courageously and vigorously.

Just Wrath

Wrath is a necessary and positive part of human nature: "Wrath is the strength to attack the repugnant; the power of anger is actually the power of resistance in the soul," wrote Josef Pieper. The lack of wrath against injustice, he continued, is a deficiency: "One who does good with passion is more praiseworthy than one who is 'not entirely' afire for the good, even to the forces of the sensual realm."

Aquinas, too, says that "lack of the passion of anger is also a vice" because a man who truly and forcefully rejects evil will be angry at it. The lack of anger makes the movement of the will against evil "lacking or weak." He quotes John Chrysostom: "He who is not angry, whereas he has cause to be, sins. For unreasonable patience is the hotbed of many vices, it fosters negligence, and incites not only the wicked but the good to do wrong."

Pieper observed the disappearance of the concept of just wrath in Catholic moral theology and spiritual life: The fact, however, that Thomas assigns to [just] wrath a positive relation to the virtue of fortitude has become

largely unintelligible and unacceptable to present-day Christianity and its non-Christian critics. This lack of comprehension may be explained partly by the exclusion, from Christian ethics, of the component of passion (with its inevitably physical aspect) as something alien and incongruous - an exclusion due to a kind of intellectual stoicism-and partly by the fact that the explosive activity which reveals itself in wrath is naturally repugnant to good behavior regulated by "bourgeois" standards.

Pieper's quote from Aquinas's commentary on John is relevant to both anger and forgiveness. Aquinas is commenting on the passage in which Jesus tells us to offer the other cheek:

Holy Scripture must be understood in the light of what Christ and the saints have actually practiced. Christ did not offer the other cheek, nor Paul either. Thus to interpret the injunction of the Sermon on the Mount literally is to misunderstand it. This injunction signifies rather the readiness of the soul to bear, if it be necessary, such things and worse, without bitterness against the attacker. This readiness our Lord showed, when He gave up His body to be crucified. That response of the Lord was useful, therefore, for our instruction.

The philosophical error that is at the root of this rejection of the passions is not stoicism so much as nominalism and a false concept of freedom which has become ingrained in Western Christianity.

Anger as Energy

The Reverend Kevin Culligan, a priest in his sixties, was angry when he was a teenager, but says, "Since then I have been uncomfortable with anger." He has been afraid of losing control of himself and doing something "I would later regret or have held against me." He feared becoming "irrational."

But then he saw a television program about a boy who had been abused by a priest when he was eight years old, and he saw the arrogance of the church officials who dismissed the boy's cries for help. Culligan shouted at the TV set: "Those bastards! Look what they've done to the Church!" He felt the hot wrath of God in him against those who had made the Church a den of sexual predators.

Culligan reflected that "many current spiritualities regard strong emotion-fear, joy, anger, sadness, hope, pity-as 'obstacles to spiritual growth.'" But Jesus felt the full range of human emotions, including anger, and Culligan decided that "our emotions too-our rage as well as our compassion-are sacred" because they give us the energy needed to rebuild the Church and do God's work.

One Irish bishop said the calm way everyone approached sexual abuse helped mislead him about the seriousness of the matter:

I think if it had come to me differently... if the parent had come roaring and shouting at me, it would have affected the response. It would have made me sit up more and be aware. The experience of having direct contact with a parent who was very angry and very upset would have alerted me more too. If someone had come thumping at the door outraged and making demands, which they are quite entitled to do, I would have learned a lot faster.

As Gregory the Great said, "Reason opposes evil the more effectively when anger ministers at her side."

Diplomatic Weakness

This lack of aggressiveness among clerics has been noticed by psychologists. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops published a study that said, "Priests are often, by temperament and personality, anxious to establish harmony and to please. By theology and vocation they are concerned to be healers, reconcilers, and builders of the community." Almost all psychological studies support this assessment: Priests and seminarians are "unassertive, dislike violence... and have a high need for abasement (i.e., want to give in and avoid conflict)." This dislike of conflict is present in other churches and their clergy as well.

Diplomats rule in the Vatican, and diplomats dislike confrontation, anger, and hatred, because such emotions make diplomacy difficult. The Vatican has appointed the bishops; the bishops have trained the clergy. Therefore, hatred of iniquity has been felt to be something that did not fit into the Christian life. The Catholic bishops had and have this lack of anger, and thereby betray a defect or weakness of the will in their rejection of child abuse. To express sorrow but not anger at the mystery of evil that is child abuse demonstrates only part of the virtue of

fortitude, as Thomas Aquinas explained:

Whereas fortitude... has two parts, namely endurance and aggression, it employs anger, not in the act of endurance... but for the act of aggression... Sorrow by its very nature gives way to the thing that hurts; though accidentally it helps in aggression... as being the cause of anger.

Sorrow at evil without anger at evil is a fault, a fault that the Catholic bishops have repeatedly fallen into in their handling of sexual abuse and that the late pope fell into when he tolerated the bishops' faults. Until just anger is directed at the bishops, until bishops (including the pope) feel just anger at their fellow bishops who have disgraced and failed their office, the state of sin in the Church continues.

Virtue Without a Name

Meekness, which is the virtue that moderates anger, is misunderstood as passivity. Moses angrily confronting Pharaoh was the meekest of men, because he moderated the plagues to allow Pharaoh time to repent. Meekness moderates anger so that it is in accord with reason. Since most people suffer from an excess of anger, the virtue that increases anger in those who are deficient in it so that it is in accord with reason does not have a name, but it needs one. ☞

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ACORN, CCHD, and the Principles of Subsidiarity

By Phil Sevilla

Last November after the ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) voter fraud and embezzlement scandals surfaced in the media before and during the 2008 election, the U.S. Bishops cut off funding for the radical group which had received community grants to the tune of \$7,300,000 over the last 10 years from CCHD (Catholic Campaign for Human Development). The Campaign for Human Development was created in 1969 by the American Catholic Bishops to combat poverty. But where have the hundreds of millions of Catholic dollars gone? Did you know that Barack Obama was once Chicago ACORN's attorney and worked to train ACORN leaders? With egg on their faces, the Bishops voted to stop further funding of ACORN late last year due to growing public outrage. Did you also know that the Bishops were alerted long ago about ACORN's corruption but refused to heed the long-standing criticisms of Catholic whistleblowers like Paul Likoudis of the Wanderer Press who wrote his expose, *The Legacy of CHD*, in 1994, the Wanderer Forum Foundation Report prepared for the Bishops some years ago, and the numerous writings of Stephanie Block, Catholic investigative journalist in New Mexico? Only when the egregious ACORN scandals made the national media headlines, conservative talks shows, and internet blogs did they act.

Well, ACORN has not been the only problem. According to a recent article in the *California Catholic Daily* regarding the CCHD, despite assurances that funding problems have been fixed, they have NOT. In California, investigations show CCHD funds for 2009-2010 have gone to organizations promoting same-sex marriage and opposing parental notification concerning abortions on minors. *Bellarmino Veritatis Ministry* conducted an eye-popping well-documented review of recent grants approved by CCHD for advocacy organizations that promote abortion, same sex marriage, and contraception.

Remember this next time your diocese starts promoting their annual campaign soliciting funds to go to CCHD. It is time to just say no to CCHD. Shut it down. Enough! Basta!

Principles of Subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity, according to a well-written exegesis on the subject by Catholic Exchange, "has been an integral part of Catholic Social teaching for over a century, [which] states that only things that need to be done at the national or 'federal' level should be done by a 'federal' government; and allows for things that can be done at the local or smaller level to be done at the more local and smaller units of society. Where individuals, intermediary groups, or small private groups of persons can address the particular exigencies and realities of a given situation, it is best to defer to such smaller groups because human beings need some flexibility and autonomy in order to effectively address their particular circumstances."

Besides the scandal of the national organization of American Catholic bishops' long-standing financial support for politically-motivated, corrupt and morally bankrupt organizations, paid for by donations of average Catholics in the pews, I have a bone to pick with the bishops about their continual violation of the principles of subsidiarity within the area of Catholic social action.

Why are we DELEGATING our duties and responsibilities as Christians to a national bureaucracy like CCHD which has funded notorious politically partisan organizations that promote the culture of death? What about Catholic Charities organizations that have accepted federal, state, and city funding and have paid the price for it? There are Catholic Charities chapters around the country that have been taken over by radical social agents. Think about it. Christ taught in Matthew 25:45, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me." He did not say give to big national bureaucracies to carry out our charitable works. He called us to personally help feed, clothe, shelter and comfort our neighbor.

The application of Catholic social teaching has been corrupted by so called social service organizations who have done great harm to the mission of the Church by giving up their financial independence and freedom with the goal of promoting works of charity. Publicly funded Catholic Charities in Boston had to shut down their adoption services when the state dictated that Charities could not discriminate against homosexual couples seeking to adopt. Publicly funded Catholic Charities in San Francisco was forced by the city supervisors to provide benefits to same sex partners of their employees or else lose their funding. (Why was Catholic Charities in San Francisco hiring active homosexuals in the first place? Because sexual orientation non-discrimination ordinances which violate the rights of non-profit religious-based organizations have not been challenged by the Church!)

Read these declarations on Catholic Charities USA's website and ask yourself if this social welfare organization's goals are consistent with your understanding of its mission: "President Barack Obama in his famous campaign speech dealing with racism challenges everyone to have faith in God and faith in the American people. Together, we can overcome centuries of racial division to form a more perfect union— in the words of the Declaration of Independence." I would ask the author of this statement what about the rights of the unborn and their exclusion from our "more perfect union"? What do you think of this organization's goal? "Deepening our understanding of the reality of white privilege and how it affects our agencies, policies, and relationships with employees and clients of color." How does this statement square with the growing number of reverse discrimination cases in litigation in courts around the country?

The Gift of Self vs. Corporate Giving

There is another aspect of the principle of subsidiarity which has been violated by social change agents within the Church. In an address in May 2008, Pope Benedict XVI summarized the Catholic principle of subsidiarity as the "coordination of society's activities in a way that supports the internal life of the local communities". Aren't these bureaucratic organizations like CCHD and Catholic Charities USA in violation of our Catholic principles of subsidiarity? Was the parable of the good Samaritan about delegating our good works to someone else or about a personal commitment to help our neighbor? How can we individual Catholics grow in the virtue of sacrificial charity and self-giving if all we're asked to do is write checks?

David Rusch published a good article, *A Catholic Solution to America's Health Care Problem*. In part he writes:

A number of years ago I calculated the number of poor families in the U.S. and pondered how the Church might respond to their needs. I concluded that if each parish adopted two poor families, poverty in this nation would vanish. I suggested that the size of the parish or church determine how many families they would support, with an average of two per parish. The support would include all that was necessary for them to be a part of the community: food, job opportunities, education, and health care. Each parish voluntarily provides all these essentials, and poverty vanishes.

Wow! What a concept! Individual members of Catholic parishes adopting and supporting needy members of their parish or members of the community at large who have fallen on hard times. This in a nutshell is the essence of the Church's teaching on subsidiarity.

What better way to promote Catholic social teaching is there than at the local parish level and ultimately at the family level? Where families or groups of families in the parish adopt those members of their local community who need food, shelter, work, education, undergoing crisis pregnancies and in desperate need of community support. In other words, rather than writing a check or dropping a few dollars in the second collection basket, you and I and our families become individual St. Vincent de Paul societies, Legions of Mary, and Gabriel Projects. A Gabriel Project ministry is a parish-based ministry which endeavors to provide parish-level first responder support and assistance to mothers within their local community experiencing crisis pregnancies.

We give of ourselves, our time, talents, and *caritas*, not just our treasure. Treasure is always easier to give up especially when there's an abundance. Our time and talents are more difficult to offer and share in service to others. Think about what our children learn when they spend time playing with or taking other children less fortunate to museums or other cultural activities, go fishing or throw frisbees and kick soccer balls together to help enrich the lives of others. We parents can pray and read the bible together while preparing a meal for a family whose breadwinner has lost his or her job or may have a serious illness. We can help mothers in crisis pregnancies with their housing, medical, pre-natal needs, counseling, job training and job hunting, emotional and spiritual support, and most importantly, our unconditional love and attention.

Something to think about. ☞

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Healthcare Hell?

Big Nanny Nurse Strikes Home!

By Marie P. Loehr

November is a time for turkeys, plucked, stuffed and roasted. In the recent order of things, this would have meant serving up the Apostle Nathaniel as the turkey, roasted in Scriptural humor, stuffed with figs, and served with a fine sacramental wine. All in thanksgiving to God, eating and drinking and doing all to his glory and our salvation, as Paul enjoins us. But in the new world order, there are so many other turkeys to roast—not in gentle humor, but in black, even splenetic, humor.

Those who watched TV's "Saturday Night Live" in the 1980s will remember Steve Martin, whose humor developed into a broader appeal and audience. But one of his classic skits was "Theodoric of York, Medieval Barber," sometimes known in shorthand as, the Barber of York. It was a general spoof of medicine in all times and places, the doctor as shaman, pantoufle, full of himself, sure that his nostrums are the hottest and the best. It also sends up American fascination with patent medicine, the snake oil salesman, and the travelling medicine show. If we read the old Godey's and Peterson's Ladies Books of the 1800s, we see the back pages filled with ads for such self-medications for women in particular, but not entirely.

For the liberals and leftists who were so taken with SNL's comedy and transgressive stars, this skit was a biting parody of medieval superstition and its suffocation of scientific progress due to the religious tyranny of the Dark Ages. The joke is on them after all. Looking at it now, the shoe is on the other foot—or perhaps the other foot, not its shoe, has dropped—off—due to the quality of healthcare these days. In short, it seems more a sly presage of modern mythology and its suffocation of medical progress due to the liberal/leftist ideology of this darkening age.

There is a lot of fervid ferment among those on the Right, so to speak, about what horrors we face under obamacare. They are not entirely off the mark. But what is the situation right now? What hard reality do we face right now, with or without *cor pelosimeds*?

Judie Brown of the *American Life League* sums up the seven primary demands we must stand against at all costs, in any attempt to reform healthcare.

- 1] No chemical, medical, or surgical abortion
- 2] No contraceptive services
- 3] No embryonic stem-cell research or therapy
- 4] No sterilization procedures
- 5] No allowance for euthanasia
- 6] No provision for assisted suicide
- 7] No healthcare rationing

It should be added that there must be an irrevocable "freedom of conscience" clause for all healthcare, medical, and pharmacy personnel of all religious persuasions, as is demanded by our constitutional freedoms. That should go without saying. It is no longer a given in an age of utilitarian, even nihilist, ideology-driven agendas.

This is bottom-line. Those bishops who refuse to stand on this rock-bottom foundation for true healthcare are in danger of supporting a "culture of death" healthcare program. Such a reform, however mild at its inception, will inevitably lead them down the garden path, a not unfamiliar trek for so many bishops. It will also set the general public on the slippery slope to everything that contradicts those non-negotiable, core "culture of life" principles.

Is the Right, are conservatives and orthodox religious believers, creating bogeymen by citing communist-style health care, "death panels," and similar horrors as inevitable developments? Most reaction to currently stated obamacare and various congressional bills now under discussion is based on Obama's own speeches over the period of his political life, and presidential campaign, as well as a reading of various versions of reform bills.

Has general public unrest and criticism been the result of right-wing propaganda playing on ignorance and fear?

It is disingenuous disinformation for the leftist liberals and Democrats to make that claim!

The general public could care less what the Right, or even bishops and religious leaders say, for that matter. The general public reaction has almost certainly been based on its own personal experience of our current system of healthcare. Each change over the decades has generally been a change for the worse, despite our high technology and its advances in moderating intractable systemic conditions, illnesses, and such. Cardiac bypass technology and its practitioners are one example of a great beneficial, but high cost, advance. Every medical specialty can pre-

sent evidence to support the benefits of our modern technology and training, as well as pharmaceutical advances that enhance life for people of all ages. But all such cutting edge advances do carry a cost penalty, insupportable for the average patient, without some form of insurance coverage, private or government.

On the other hand, unglamorous family practice is losing practitioners. A fair number of pediatricians can't recognize simple childhood diseases any general practitioner could have identified easily 50 years ago. Modern pediatricians often buy into medical fads and specious solutions to non-problems, confusing new parents and jeopardizing infants and toddlers.

Basic medicine is not as exciting, and does not pay as well as cutting edge technologies and medical empire-building based on media-trendy fads and fancies. Anecdotal evidence presents horror stories across the medical and age spectrum.

Those who grew up in the military are all too familiar with "socialized" medicine and its consequences. Those who have Canadian or British friends have heard similar horror stories abounding in their single-payer, government healthcare systems. The media clamor over Americans flocking to Canada for cheaper medications, a sleazy story in its own right! But they never seem to note the number of Canadians who are driven to cross our border to find timely and urgently needed medical care that requires interminable and life-threatening waiting or rationing in Canada. We don't even need to advert to the Soviet medical systems to illustrate the problems and disadvantages of socialized or single-payer or "public option" care.

We have womb-to-tomb euthanasia already. We don't have to wait for Obamacare, or even pass a secularist, aka leftist, healthcare reform bill.

Let's face it. Abortion itself is a radical, cutting edge practice of euthanasia—at the very source of life, before new helpless humans even leave the womb. It legitimizes all other forms of euthanasia, however we name them, by the very fact of its presence, its legitimization in "law," and its widespread acceptance, whether by intellectual elites or the brainwashed hoi polloi. The gospel of utilitarian convenience has already captured the high ground, politically and practically speaking. Indeed, Hitler took his eugenics programs and their culmination in his Final Solution from U.S. eugenics proponents, including Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., and Margaret Sanger, among others—way back in the 1930s.

The covert eugenicists are always with us—the "put granny on the ice floe, and throw her to the orcas" faction, the "oops, the tiger got Ayesha, but she was crippled and slow, alas!" party.

Contraception isn't even on the radar. Abortion is no longer just for frightened teens and harried poverty moms. Doctors routinely recommend abortion for cases involving physical and genetic defects detected in the womb, or as a known latency in the given couple's genetic lineage. The only thing new about this is its outspoken presence in the media, in medicine, in medical consultation between doctor and patient. Back in the 1950s doctors already practiced a certain selective culling among defective newborns immediately after birth, prior to conscious, immediate parental involvement. Some of the horror stories, including anencephaly, were the proverbial hard cases that make for bad law. Doctors simply dealt with it on the spot, and faced the parents with news that the child had died during the birth process. That was common enough as a natural occurrence for it to be plausible, in an earlier era.

Catholic mothers expected that in a gynecological emergency, a Catholic ob/gyn would rush to save the endangered fetus or the newborn child at the expense of the mother's life. We might think that in a well-run hospital, even way back when, such a choice would be minimized, if not eliminated, by up-to-date procedures for the time, a supply of all blood types—once such blood storage was possible and common, and enough available personnel. T'ain't necessarily so. Such was the teaching of Catholic ethics, all pragmatic practices aside. The attitude of Catholic doctors and medical staff reflected that, without addressing steps that would make such a choice unnecessary.

There are always hard cases. No one is perfect, not even our modern physicians and increasingly futuristic technology. Nor can they function as well when they're subject to the second guessing of economic, and often medically illiterate gatekeepers.

Besides personal history and its anecdotal evidence, the general public can look to other government programs and their eventual metastasizing, following the law of "unintended" consequences, and draw their own conclusions. The hydra of LBJ's poverty programs, intended to help the poor, created new generations of poor and dependent children and adults. Anyone who has had to deal with Workmen's Compensation knows the excruciating process, and often callous attitude to the handicapped and terminally ill who may be dependent on it.

Again, government's promises of readily available, continuing healthcare—even after disability, and illness even in retirement—to the military who served our country and suffered for it have sputtered, faltered, and in many cases failed over generations. The latest charming effort of the Veterans Administration to offer "end-of-life"

counseling and options/choices is encapsulated in a booklet authored by the Hemlock Society [under its current appellation of Care and Compassion] which—no surprise—has a certain flavor of “death panel” about it. Right now, here on this stage, folks! Sarah Palin was not fantasizing when she spoke of “death panels,” giving this trend a catchy title to keep our attention. She spoke current reality, not future fantasy.

To find out more about the tone of this “death book” being supplied to all those dependent on Veterans Admin healthcare, googling “Jim Towey” will take the reader to his *Wall Street Journal* article for 18 August 2009 on this particular non-obamacare reality. Wikipedia will provide his bio and credentials as a Catholic and a Knight of Columbus, who followed John DiIulio as head of Bush’s faith-based ministries initiative.

The general public doesn’t need right-wing extremists to stir them up over healthcare and government intrusion into it. They have lived, they are living, they will be stuck living in the trenches of whatever system they are forced to accept. But make no mistake—this is simply back to the futurism. However, this particular looming government boondoggle really does threaten our lives and our livelihoods.

We already have a national contraceptive mentality. We already have abortion and its euthanasia mentality of “convenience,” utility, pragmatism, and quality of life. We already have a clamor for Embryonic Stem Cell research and therapy, ignoring the already practicable and practical advances of Adult Stem Cell research and its success stories. Sterilization is a creeping presence and probability for many already. Euthanasia is here—even some hospice practices advocate it rather than simply making the final days to natural death peaceful and comfortable for patients and families. Oregon already allows assisted-suicide, and other states are examining the option. Kevorkian lost the battle, but is winning the war.

Finally, healthcare rationing has always been with us, is very definitely with us right now, and will certainly accelerate due to economic and logistic exigencies—real or imagined. To rub salt in our wounds, even the best-intentioned, well-meaning medical personnel told us, tell us, and will insist this is all “for your own good,” coating the medicine with sugar to make it go down, one way or another. For their own survival, under the government gun . . .

The good doctors have already been slipping out of the system, disgusted with protocols that serve economics rather than patients, paperwork that uses up time better spent with patients, nickel-and-diming over proper tools, medications and formularies, procedures and time constraints.

A detailed study of such healthcare systems over decades and around the world will almost certainly show that any public, socialized system will drive out the good medical personnel, leaving a vacuum to be filled with time-servers, calculators and mediocre personnel instead.

Is this a paean of despair? Does it suggest we should roll over and die like good little citizens in a Vonnegut or Ellison or Aldiss sci-fi novel, predicting this age?!

No. It means standing firm against the latest reforms until they allow the options and “culture of life” principles our Constitution promises and grants us. It means the usual ongoing battle to “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s” - no more, no less, and “to God the things that are God’s” in whatever way each of us is able: by prayer, by fasting, by political vote and petition and letter/phone/e-mail campaigns, by peaceful protest, and by the sort of quiet subversion Karol Wotyła used against the commissars when he was bishop of Krakow. Against Communist rule with all its constraints and restraints, he applied subtlety, confusion, commiseration over the difficulties for the constrained personnel. He chose Catholic humanism, *i.e.*, truth and love, *veritas* and *caritas*, “heaping coals of fire” as Paul describes it in Romans on those who were either empty or embittered. He emphasized their humanity and his own, his flock’s own humanity, with spoken wit and humor, or applied wit and humor in behavior and practice. We need to study his tactics, as well as Christ’s confrontations with the Pharisees, to understand how to deal with “the spirit of the world” in order to be leaven in its midst, despite whatever confronts us.

The situation we face now, and in the future, calls us to work pragmatically against all programs that support the culture of death. It calls for us to believe beyond belief, hope against hope, and love over-and-above love.

Oh yes, and it may require a return to the frontier medicine, the Mother-Doctor, those “thrilling days of medical yesterday” . . . a new sort of “medicine show.”

Are we prepared? We’d better be. In Christ, always in Christ . . . who shows us the way, the truth, and the life in all things. ☞

USCCB Reassurance Rings Hollow

Evidence Surfaces Showing CCHD Grants Given to Groups Promoting Abortion, Homosexuality and Prostitution

By Rob Gasper

“Supporters of CCHD can be reassured for the way CCHD has responded to these challenges and take pride in the impressive and creative ways CCHD carries out the values of the Gospel and the principles of our Catholic faith in rural communities and urban neighborhoods across our nation.” - Bishop Roger Morin, Chairman of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) Subcommittee, in his response to concerns about CCHD funding of ACORN

To Catholics living in the United States, November means more than cool, crisp days and the celebration of Thanksgiving. November also brings the annual national Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) collection, generally held on the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

Following last year's much publicized disclosure that ACORN was a primary grantee of the CCHD, many Catholics were hesitant to contribute to the national collection. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the CCHD responded rapidly, removing all funding from ACORN and reassuring the faithful that the problem had been resolved.

However, further revelations cast doubt on this reassurance. As has been well documented in *The Pepper*, the CCHD continues to fund organizations either founded or inspired by Saul Alinsky such as the IAF, PICO, DART and Gamaliel. Furthermore, it has now come to light that the CCHD has been granting Catholic donations to groups that promote abortion, homosexual marriage, contraception, and legalized prostitution.

For example, consider the San Francisco based Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) which was granted over \$100,000 since 2004. The CPA in 2006 filed an *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief in support of six homosexual marriage cases coming before the California courts. Also, in 2008, the CPA published a voter's guide urging voters to vote against Proposition 4 which required parental notification for minors seeking an abortion and also against Proposition 8 which would make homosexual marriage unconstitutional in California.

Another example of misplaced CCHD funding is the *Young Workers United* (YWU). This organization was scheduled to receive its first grant from the CCHD in 2010. However, YWU has an extensive record of anti-life activities, including counter-protesting the annual Walk for Life in San Francisco as well as publishing voter guides opposing pro-life legislation and supporting the legalization of prostitution.

When presented evidence that these and several other organizations were promoting practices contrary to the Catholic faith, the CCHD again responded rapidly, removing two organizations from the grants list while investigating two others for possible removal. However, no mention was made of reforming the grants process which allowed such organizations to receive funding in the first place. Instead, CCHD executive director Ralph McCloud in a statement to the Catholic News Service defended the current multi-level CCHD grants process and blamed the offending organizations, stating: *“Even then [after the grants had been awarded], sometimes you will find organizations that will either shift philosophies or change missions or go in another direction in between funding times...”* (Catholic News Service, Sept. 24, 2009)

However, as was shown above in the case of the Young Workers United, extensive pro-abortion activity had taken place well before the approval of their first CCHD grant. Also, the Chinese Progressive Association received CCHD grants in 2007, 2008 and 2009 following their open support of homosexual marriage in 2006. This demonstrates that the problem is not only with organizations shifting missions post approval, but also points directly at a failure in the CCHD grants process itself.

The USCCB has a grave responsibility to ensure that not a single penny collected from Catholics is given to organizations which promote evils contrary to Church teaching. Until the CCHD grants process is thoroughly investigated and reformed, the risk remains that grants will continue to be awarded to such organizations. Only after this necessary reform takes place will the USCCB truly be able to reassure the faithful that the CCHD is carrying out the values of the Gospel and the principles of our Catholic faith. ☩

Please take the time to visit the Bellarmine Veritas Ministry's web-site (www.bellarmineveritasministry.org) to read the full investigation into the CCHD funding of these organizations as well as learn what steps Catholics can take to help the USCCB reform the CCHD grants process.

Excerpts from...

Principles of Catholic Social Teaching and Health Care Reform

A Joint Pastoral Statement of Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann and Bishop Robert W. Finn

To his credit, President Barack Obama has made it a major priority for his administration to address the current flaws in our nation's health care policies. In fairness, members of both political parties for some time have recognized significant problems in the current methods of providing health care.

As Catholics, we are proud of the Church's healthcare contribution to the world. Indeed, the hospital was originally an innovation of the Catholic faithful responding to our Lord's call to care for the sick, "For I was...ill and you cared for me." (Matthew 25, v. 35-36). This tradition continues today in America, where currently one in four hospitals is run by a Catholic agency. We have listened to current debate with great attention and write now to contribute our part to ensure that this reform be an authentic reform taking full consideration of the dignity of the human person....

What Must We Do? The justified reaction to the significant defects in our current health care policies is to say, "Something must be done." Many believe: "We have to change health care in America." Despite the many flaws with our current policies, change itself does not guarantee improvement. Many of the proposals which have been promoted would diminish the protection of human life and dignity and shift our health care costs and delivery to a centralized government bureaucracy. Centralization carries the risk of a loss of personal responsibility, reduction in personalized care for the sick and an expanded bureaucracy that in the end leads to higher costs.

A Renewal Built on Principles We claim no expertise in economics or the complexities of modern medical science. However, effective health care policies must be built on a foundation of proper moral principles. The needed change in health care must therefore flow from certain principles that protect the fundamental life and dignity of the human person and the societal principles of justice, which are best safeguarded when such vital needs are provided for in a context of human love and reason, and when the delivery of care is determined at the lowest reasonable level. The rich tradition of Catholic social and moral teaching should guide our evaluation of the many and varied proposals for health care reform. It is our intention in this pastoral reflection to identify and explain the most important principles for evaluating health care reform proposals. No Catholic in good conscience can disregard these fundamental moral principles, although there can and likely will be vigorous debate about their proper application.

The Principle of Subsidiarity: Preamble to the Work of Reform This notion that health care ought to be determined at the lowest level rather than at the higher strata of society, has been promoted by the Church as "subsidiarity." Subsidiarity is that principle by which we respect the inherent dignity and freedom of the individual by never doing for others what they can do for themselves and thus enabling individuals to have the most possible discretion in the affairs of their lives. (See: *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, ## 185ff.; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, # 1883) The writings of recent Popes have warned that the neglect of subsidiarity can lead to an excessive centralization of human services, which in turn leads to excessive costs, and loss of personal responsibility and quality of care....

While subsidiarity is vital to the structure of justice, we can see from what the popes say that it rests on a more fundamental principle, the unchanging dignity of the person. The belief in the innate value of human life and the transcendent dignity of the human person must be the primordial driving force of reform efforts....

Exclusion of Abortion and Protection of Conscience Rights Recent cautionary notes have been sounded by Cardinal Justin Rigali, Chair of the U.S. Bishops Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, and Bishop William Murphy of the U.S. Bishops Committee on Domestic Justice and Social Development, against the inclusion of abortion in a revised health care plan. At the same time, they have warned against the endangerment or loss of conscience rights

protection for individual health care workers or private health care institutions. A huge resource of professionals and institutions dedicated to care of the sick could find themselves excluded, by legislation, after health care reform, if they failed to provide services which are destructive of human life, and which are radically counter to their conscience and institutional mission. The loss of Catholic hospitals and health care providers, which currently do more to provide pro bono services to the poor and the marginalized than their for-profit counterparts, would be a tremendous blow to the already strained health care system in our country....

Exclude Mandated End of Life Counseling for Elderly and Disabled Some proposals for government reform have referenced end of life counseling for the elderly or disabled....

The “Right to Acquisition of Health Care” in the Teaching of the Church The “Right to Health Care” as taught by the Church is a companion to the fundamental right to life, and rights to other necessities, among them food, clothing, and shelter. It may be best understood as a “**Right to Acquire the Means of Procuring for One’s Self and One’s Family** these goods, and concomitantly, **a duty to exercise virtue** (diligence, thrift, charity) **in every aspect of their acquisition and discharge**. This language of rights, coupled with duties toward those who ‘through no fault of their own’ are unable to work, is present throughout papal teaching, and only reinforces the idea that, in its proper perspective, the goal is to live and to work and ‘to be looked after’ only in the event of real necessity.” (Source: *Catholic Medical Association*, 2004 document, *Health Care in America*. – bold and italics our own)

The right of every individual to access health care does not necessarily suppose an obligation on the part of the government to provide it. Yet in our American culture, Catholic teaching about the “right” to healthcare is sometimes confused with the structures of entitlement.” The teaching of the Universal Church has never been to suggest a government socialization of medical services. Rather, the Church has asserted the rights of every individual to have access to those things most necessary for sustaining and caring for human life, while at the same time insisting on the personal responsibility of each individual to care properly for his or her own health.

Indeed part of the crisis in today’s system stems from various misappropriations within health care insurance systems of exorbitant elective treatments, or the tendencies to regard health care services paid for by insurance as “free,” and to take advantage of services that happen to be available under the insurance plan. Such practices may arguably cripple the ability of small companies to provide necessary opportunities to their employees and significantly increase the cost of health care for everyone.

The Right to Make Health Care Decisions for Self and Family Following both the notions of subsidiarity mentioned above and the sense of the life and dignity of every human person, it is vital to preserve, on the part of individuals and their families, the right to make well-informed decisions concerning their care. This is why some system of vouchers – at least on a theoretical level – is worthy of consideration. Allowing persons who through no fault of their own are unable to work, to have some means to acquire health care brings with it a greater sense of responsibility and ownership which, in a more centralized system, may be more vulnerable to abusive tendencies....

Principle of the Obligation to the Common Good: Why We Must Act The Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks of the obligation to promote the common good as “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and easily.” (CCC #1906)

It is very clear that, respectful of this principle, we must find some way to provide a safety net for people in need without diminishing personal responsibility or creating an inordinately bureaucratic structure which will be vulnerable to financial abuse, be crippling to our national economy, and remove the sense of humanity from the work of healing and helping the sick.

The Church clearly advocates authentic reform which addresses this obligation, while respecting the fundamental dignity of persons and not undermining the stability of future generations....

Conclusion: We Can Not Be Passive These last two principles: Solidarity and the Promotion of the Common Good cause us to say that we cannot be passive concerning health care policy in our country. There is important work to be done, but “change” for change’s sake; change which expands the reach of government beyond its competence would do more harm than good. Change which loses sight of man’s transcendent dignity or the irreplaceable value of human life; change which could diminish the role of those in need as agents of their own care is not truly **human** progress at all.

A hasty or unprincipled change could cause us, in fact, to lose some of the significant benefits that

Americans now enjoy, while creating a future tax burden which is both unjust and unsustainable.

We urge the President, Congress, and other elected and appointed leaders to develop prescriptions for reforming health care which are built on objective truths: that all people in every stage of human life count for something; that if we violate our core beliefs we are not aiding people in need, but instead devaluing their human integrity and that of us all.

We call upon our Catholic faithful, and all people of good will, to hold our elected officials accountable in these important deliberations and let them know clearly our support for those who, with prudence and wisdom, will protect the right to life, maintain freedom of conscience, and nurture the sense of solidarity that drives us to work hard, to pray, and to act charitably for the good of all.

We place this effort under the maternal protection of our Blessed Mother, Mary, who was entrusted, with Joseph in the home at Nazareth, with the care of the child Jesus. We ask Our Lord Jesus Christ to extend His light and His Mercy to our nation's efforts, so that every person will come to know His healing consolation as Divine Physician. ✠