

# *Los Pequeños Pepper*

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# A Model for Reforming CCHD

By Diocese of Kansas City - St. Joseph -The Catholic Key Blog

*The U.S. Catholic bishops are set to receive a review board's report on the Catholic Campaign for Human Development at their November meeting. The report may include recommendations for reform of the controversial program. The Diocese of Kansas City - St. Joseph has already implemented a reform of CCHD locally. A discussion of our reform is offered here as a possible model for the bishops' deliberation. The author, Jude Huntz, is Director of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph Human Rights Office.*

By Jude Huntz

In recent years the Catholic Campaign for Human Development has come under a great deal of scrutiny and criticism. CCHD had a relationship with the national organizing group ACORN that was problematic, and when a variety of problems were discovered with ACORN the national CCHD office took steps to defund the organization. Yet, the relationships with community organizing groups across the country have been the fundamental problem with many CCHD grants in all parts of the country. Many have called on bishops to cease their support of the collection entirely, and some bishops have chosen that path for a variety of reasons. Others have called for a reform of CCHD, and in response to those requests the U.S. Bishops established a review board last fall to examine all aspects of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. This November the bishops will receive a report from this committee and recommendations will be made on the future of the campaign.

While we pray for the work of this review board and await the outcomes, it may be fruitful to look at one possible model of reform that we have established in the diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. This model was established last year after a thorough review of the history of CCHD in our diocese and careful reflection on current funding decisions by the Human Rights Office of the diocese, the office charged with oversight of CCHD by Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop Robert W. Finn. In addition, Bishop Finn met with his fellow bishops in November to hear their experiences and to obtain their advice. What follows is the result of these two processes.

## I. The Negative Decision

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development offers two possible national grant opportunities: community organizing grants and economic development grants. In studying the various problems with CCHD grants nationally, we noticed that the problematic grants all fell under the community organizing area. These organizations have traditionally attempted to create a voice for populations that have historically had no voice in the political and economic decisions of society. *This goal is laudable in itself, but as time progressed the nature of organizing evolved. Many organizing groups began to develop a partisan edge to their work. What is more, many organizing groups began to advocate for causes that are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church, most notably in the areas of abortion, same sex marriage, and health care reform.*

*Our first decision, then, was to cease funding all community organizing projects in our diocese and not to grant such requests in the future.* While the diocese still supports the concept of providing a voice to those who lack a voice in our society, we believe that there are a variety of mechanisms to achieve such a goal that can take place without funding community organizing groups that offer positions contrary to Church teaching. In the Church's political advocacy work, we believe in the following principle: no permanent enemies, no permanent allies. Funding community organizing groups gives the impression that we are permanent allies when in fact we are not. We welcome alliances with such groups on particular issues, and we recognize that we will have to be on opposing sides on other issues. The decision not to fund community organizing groups enables the Church to maintain her autonomy while respecting the autonomy of these groups as well.

*The Church will continue to advocate for the voiceless in our society, and we will do so using our diocesan offices, state Catholic Conferences, and the work of the laity. It is not necessary to outsource our advocacy work to organizations that may not agree with our principles in all areas of Catholic Social Teaching.*

## II. The Positive Decision

Our focus for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, then, is in the area of economic development. In our experience, we have found that economic development is an effective tool in combating poverty and in developing authentic community throughout the diocese. This focus enables the diocese to promote a fundamental principle of Catholic Social Teaching - the importance of and the right to work. The surest way to overcoming poverty is providing jobs for people, and the economic development grants of CCHD have provided us the opportunity in our diocese to help organizations develop jobs for people so that people can help themselves.

In our review of CCHD grants nationally and locally we discovered that in all the controversy around CCHD grants, no grants to economic development organizations were problematic in any way. We also discovered that these projects were highly successful in the work they do in providing jobs for people living on the margins of society. Furthermore, our diocese has had a great deal of success in the area of economic development grants to various organizations. *We have seen first hand businesses and jobs created through this work, and it led to the discovery that people need and want to have a job more than they need and want to be organized into the work of agitation.*

### III. The Outcomes

This year of grant funding represents the first year of our new model for CCHD in our diocese. Our diocese chose to recommend national grant awards to two organizations - the Kansas City Urban Youth Center, and Northwest Missouri Enterprise Facilitation.

KCUYC provides after school programs for urban youth who live in the poorest apartment complexes in our city. These programs include tutoring, athletics, community gardening, and organizational skills. This work enables young people to be successful in school and life, providing the surest way for a group of people to break the cycle of poverty in which they find themselves.

NWMEF began as a project of the diocesan Human Rights Office and became its own non-profit several years ago. This organization provides low income people with business mentoring so those who want to start their own business can do so, and others who want to expand their business can receive the help they need to do so successfully. This work takes place in rural counties of Northwest Missouri where the program has created a great number of jobs. The success of this work is being recognized by the State of Missouri, which would like to expand the model to other rural communities across the state.

The diocese also selected four organizations to fund with local CCHD money that comes from our share of the national collection as well as a private endowed trust we have for such local diocesan grants. The organizations are as follows:

1. Missourians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty: This organization works for the abolition of the death penalty in Missouri and advocates for restorative justice programs in our prisons. Restorative justice programs seek to rehabilitate offenders and help them to become productive members of society again.

2. Amethyst Place: This facility is a residential and treatment center for single mothers overcoming drug and alcohol dependence. The families can live at Amethyst Place for up to two years. Mothers receive treatment for their addiction, job training, and counseling. The children attend school and receive free medical care.

3. Troostwood Youth Gardens: This organization operates a community garden in one of poorest neighborhoods of Kansas City. Volunteers recruit and train young people to plant and develop the garden, market the sale of the fruits and vegetables grown there, and be responsible for the reinvestment of proceeds into the garden project. The program has taught young people valuable skills of self-reliance, providing them a path out of the cycle of poverty.

4. Seton Center: The Seton Center is a Catholic social service agency that provides a food pantry, clothing pantry, free dental clinic, an alternative high school for troubled youth, senior citizen programs, and a community action network for the neighborhood association. The work of the high school provides an educational path for troubled young people which helps enable them to escape the cycle of poverty.

There are many other worthy organizations in our diocese deserving of such funds, and we hope to help them in future years with our CCHD funding model.

***The reform of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development is a goal to which our diocese is committed. We believe that we have demonstrated that not only is reform possible, but that it is happening here in the diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Our hope is that our model will provide the national office and other dioceses a framework for the work of CCHD across the country. ∞***

# El Paso Priest on Homosexuality: Genuine Love Seeks Eternal Salvation, not ‘Tolerance’

By Kathleen Gilbert—LifeSiteNews.com

Although his small stature and gentle voice don't betray it, Rev. Michael Rodriguez's strong words and fidelity to Catholic Church teaching against homosexuality have caused quite a stir.

The local media began paying attention when Rodriguez, a parish priest at El Paso's San Juan Bautista Catholic Church, issued several columns against the homosexualist agenda earlier this year in response to the city council's decision to grant benefits to domestic partners of city employees.

In a column issued earlier this month entitled "Every Catholic Must Oppose Certain Things," Rodriguez laid out the simple proposition that "Every single Catholic, out of fidelity to charity and truth, has the absolute duty to oppose (1) the murder of unborn babies, and (2) any and all government attempts to legalize homosexual unions."

"I urge all of the Catholic faithful to treat homosexuals with love, understanding, and respect," wrote the priest, who called homosexuality an "unequivocally intrinsic moral evil" alongside abortion. "At the same time, never forget that genuine love demands that we seek, above all, the salvation of souls. Homosexual acts lead to the damnation of souls."

In response to the controversy caused by Rodriguez's columns, Darren Hunt of ABC KVIA 7 interviewed the priest alongside Pifas Silva, an open homosexual and former Catholic who is a member of several local homosexualist groups.

Silva argued, with respect to city policy on homosexuality, that "you really want to keep religion separated." "I really don't believe it's a religious issue, I believe it's a moral issue and a civil rights issue," he said. Silva also took issue with what he perceived as Rodriguez's lack of "forgiveness" and other Church-promoted values.

The priest, in turn, emphasized that the Church's teaching on homosexuality is based on Jesus Christ's love for each individual: thus while the Church promotes the human dignity of homosexual persons, he said, the issue of "tolerance" can sidetrack from the real issue.

"The question always has to come back to what is the truth," he said. "Jesus Christ came to this world to bring us to Heaven. He teaches the truth with love. He loves all of us, all of us are sinners.

"Unfortunately, homosexual activists continue to avoid the real issues under the cover of these words ... equal rights, dignity ... The Church acknowledges all that, but there's still the real issue that, what is right and what is wrong? What are God's commandments? We like to talk a lot about rights: what is our duty to our fellow men, what is our duty to God, what do we have to do to be saved?"

The priest pointed to the Gospel story of the rich young man who approached Jesus as guidance for what questions should be asked. "It's a beautiful question ... he doesn't ask Jesus about what are my rights ... he asks the key question that all Catholics must ask themselves: he says, 'Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?'" said Rodriguez.

When one audience member questioned whether Rodriguez spoke officially for the diocese, the priest said it was not a matter of "just one person's opinion or another." "I'm definitely not just presenting my own opinion, I'm doing my best to transmit faithfully what the Church teaches," he said.

The priest encouraged the audience member to look up the Vatican's own statements on homosexuality. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, as well as documents from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, are unanimous in calling homosexual acts intrinsically disordered and incompatible with the union of man and woman that constitutes the fruitful union of marriage.

"She [the Church] has to really love her children who are struggling with a homosexual orientation, she has to help those children to salvation, to be faithful to the truth with the love and tenderness as a mother," explained the priest. "Ultimately it's a question for a need for a profound healing. That's the question of any sin." ❧

# Excommunication

*When It Must Be Done*

*Following is an excerpt from a column by Eastern Oregon's Bishop Robert Vasa in the January 7, 2010 Catholic Sentinel of Oregon.*

During the course of this past year there have been a number of occasions when bishops have hinted to laity that being Catholic involves a bit more than claiming the title. This has been done, in particular, with regard to politicians who may, in their own way, love Jesus, who may attend Sunday Mass and who do identify themselves as “faithful” Catholics.

The press usually hints at the big “E” word, excommunication. The question of when a Catholic should be excommunicated has even been asked quite frequently and very seriously. While bishops are extremely reluctant to take the seemingly dramatic step of excommunication, I think there is very good reason for us to explore more thoroughly what excommunication really means and why it might be considered in certain circumstances.

The press would undoubtedly accuse bishops who talk or even think about excommunication as being tyrannical power mongers, but this is unfair.

Excommunication is a declaration, based on solid evidence, that the actions or public teachings of a particular Catholic are categorically incompatible with the teachings of the Church. It is intended primarily as a means of getting the person who is in grave error to recognize the depth of his error and repent.

A second reason, while somewhat secondary but no less important, is to assure the faithful who truly are faithful that what they believe to be the teaching of the Church is true and correct. Allowing their faith to be shaken or allowing them to be confused when Catholics publicly affirm something contrary to faith or morals, seemingly without consequences, scandalizes and confuses the faithful. This is no small matter. The Church, and particularly bishops, have an obligation to defend the faith but they also have an obligation to protect the faithful. We do not generally see the dissidence of public figures as something that harms the faithful but it has a deleterious effect upon them.

I find, very frequently, when I speak a bit more boldly on matters of morality or discipline, there are a significant number of the faithful who send messages of gratitude and support. It is their gratitude which stirs my heart for it makes me realize how much there is a need to support and affirm the clear and consistent teachings of our Catholic faith for the sake of the faithful.

While the press may caricature such bishops in rather uncharitable fashion, I trust that they are men devoted to true compassion and to the truth itself. Their compassion extends to those who are misled and to those who, while not misled, are discouraged when their faith is attacked without rebuttal. This discouragement of the faithful is not insignificant. When we look at the word itself we see that its root is “courage” and allowing someone’s courage to be dissipated, or “dissed” as the young might say, is harmful to the person. Encouragement, by contrast, builds up the courage of the faithful and increases their strength for doing good. It is life giving and revitalizing. Allowing error, publicly expressed, to stand without comment or contradiction is discouraging.

When that moral error is espoused publicly by a Catholic who, by the likewise public and external act of receiving Holy Communion, appears to be in “good standing” then the faithful are doubly confused and doubly discouraged. In that case, the error is certainly not refuted. Furthermore, the impression is given that the error is positively condoned by the bishop and the Church. This is very discouraging to the faithful. In such a case, private “dialogue” is certainly appropriate but a public statement is also needed. In extreme cases, excommunication may be deemed necessary.

It seems to me that even if a decree of excommunication would be issued, the bishop would really not excommunicate anyone. He only declares that the person is excommunicated by virtue of the person’s own actions. The actions and words, contrary to faith and morals, are what excommunicate (*i.e.*, break communion with the Church). When matters are serious and public, the bishop may deem it necessary to declare that lack of communion explicitly.

This declaration no more causes the excommunication than a doctor who diagnoses diabetes causes the diabetes he finds in his patient. The doctor recognizes the symptoms and writes the necessary prescription. Accusing the doctor of being a tyrannical power monger would never cross anyone’s mind. Even when the doctor tells the patient that they are “excommunicated” from sugar it is clear that his desire is solely the health of his

patient. In fact, a doctor who told his diabetic patient that he could keep ingesting all the sugar he wanted without fear would be found grossly negligent and guilty of malpractice.

In the same way, bishops who recognize a serious spiritual malady and seek a prescription to remedy the error, after discussion and warning, may be required to simply state, "What you do and say is gravely wrong and puts you out of communion with the faith you claim to hold." In serious cases, and the cases of misled Catholic public officials are often very serious, a declaration of the fact that the person is de facto out of communion may be the only responsible and charitable thing to do.

Failing to name error because of some kind of fear of offending the person in error is neither compassion nor charity. Confronting or challenging the error or evil of another is never easy yet it must be done. The adage usually attributed to Edmund Burke was correct: All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.

The Lord has called bishops to be shepherds. That shepherding entails both leading and protecting. In an era when error runs rampant and false teachings abound, the voice of the Holy Father rings clear and true. The teachings of the Church are well documented and consistent. Bishops and the pastors who serve in their dioceses have an obligation both to lead their people to the truth and protect them from error. ✠

# Ghosties, Goblins—and Schrödinger’s Cat?!

By Marie P. Loehr

*A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while,  
and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. – John 16:16*

It is the season when we celebrate those souls who have left our temporal presence and rest in the presence of God. The eve of their feast, however, finds spooks flitting from house to house, extorting treats from us, lest they “play tricks,” or inflict damage to our property. They come and go. Now we see them, now we don’t. This tradition comes from the Celtic myths that dead unleashed from Celtic hell this time of year always go forth in the dark to haunt the living. My grandson Thomas used to say, Let’s go out into the spooky dark! He spoke more truly than he knew.

This is the time of year Pixel the Quantum Kitten loves to go prowling. It’s a time of uncertainty, spooks from other dimensions unleashed, and saints unseen in heaven-home. It’s a good time to discuss Erwin Schrödinger and his famous thought problem – the cat – not in the hat – but in the box.

His father was Catholic, his mother Lutheran. His father apparently had the typical male, European faith—in the church only to be baptized, married, and buried! His mother was somewhat more attentive to her Lutheran faith, but barely. His aunt did teach him English by reading stories to him from an English Bible. So although Schrödinger is listed as Catholic in some references, he was in fact registered for weekly classes in Lutheranism in his Gymnasium. A gymnasium is a high school and, even in the 1960s, the students had to choose to sign up for classes in Lutheran or Catholic religious teaching twice a week.

Nevertheless, Schrödinger grew up in Vienna’s rich atmosphere of sentimental Catholicism. No doubt he had some experience of the Mass, the ornate baroque church architecture and art, the soaring musical tradition native to Vienna. He was eager to learn, and he enjoyed scientific discussion, as well as German poetry. He was nonetheless impatient with any rote learning, and any dependence on memorization alone. He appears to have been fascinated by truth—all religion aside — not merely superficially, but at its roots.

Did this experience of Catholicism, however casual, influence his scientific pursuits? He himself says, concerning the great questions of philosophy and science: “Don’t teachers always do their best to avoid these topics for fear they might conflict with religious doctrines and cause uncomfortable questions?”

He adds, “This is the main reason for my turning against religion . . .”

This is a real and present danger in eras when scientific knowledge increases, and religious knowledge remains at an elementary level. Yet the Fathers of the Church, the Doctors of the Church, and Galileo all state that one truth does not cancel out another truth, or endanger either partial truth or absolute Truth.

Charles Cardinal Journet, in his book *The Meaning of Evil*, reiterates that in our everyday dimension we have to learn to live with paradox. We are not able to live at the height and depth of God’s omniscience where paradox is reconciled in the fullness of His truth and love. If we cannot see how two seemingly opposed truths could ever complement one another, it means that we do not have enough knowledge or experience to resolve the paradox. We must seek in humility and patience to discover their relation to one another. If we simplify or dismiss paradox to fit our narrow understandings, we may throw the baby out with the bath water. We lose sight of the whole, if we do that.

Aquinas adds that in such cases of apparent contradiction we need to consider where we are simply wrong, and re-formulate our premises. As finite minds, we will always have a partial view of reality and truth. Detectives and lawyers know that every witness to the same crime or situation has a slightly different perspective and description of it than each of the other witnesses. They also know evidence may be incomplete, and circumstantial evidence may be misinterpreted. This was the premise of the Japanese movie, *Rashomon*, decades ago.

As it turns out, this hard reality accords with the discoveries and discussions of particle physics and quantum theory for the past century. Schrödinger was in the thick of that wrestling with scientific discovery.

Hindu philosophy was attractive to him, as it has been for many modern physicists, Fritjof Capra’s *The Tao of Physics* being a case in point. Yet we must not suppose that particle physics reduces reality to mere *maya*, illusion. Matter is real. It can be observed and measured. Our senses are normally trustworthy. Aquinas speaks of the senses as providing information to the intellect.

Nevertheless, the quantum level, *i.e.*, the infinitesimal, requires complicated instrumentation and experiment to augment our sense experience. Something IS going on. Einstein speaks of “spooky action at a distance,” referring

to particle entanglement. Physicists speak of “ghost particles.” There really is a spooky dark in both the astrophysics of the macro-universe and the micro-dimensions of the particle and quark. . . actually called “atoms.” They conceived them as being hard solid little granules, always in motion, agglomerating to form the four basic elements of earth, air, water, and fire, which then further coalesced into all the forms of organic and inorganic matter that we know. In attempting to describe this flux of atoms, Heraclitus was on the right track when he declared that “you cannot set foot into the same river twice.”

Generally, medievals followed the theory of four elements, but the Scholastics did have a basic concept that they called “prime matter.” It was the most basic, irreducible amorphous matter, “stuff,” into which all other forms of matter dissolve, in the ever-changing world of physical being. It is the fundamental dust, the ground of material being.

Dante would take considerable delight in modern physics and its revelations. They would square quite well with his medieval kernel of truth. But Schrödinger—for all his love of physics—was disturbed by all that “damned quantum jumping!” His thought experiment with the cat, the box, and the cyanide amoule was intended to show the absurdity of applying quantum physics to ordinary reality, to define Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle a bit more graphically, to test the limits of these theories.

Material reality is the kaleidoscopic swirl of temporal being, living, dying, resurrecting in ever new patterns, all within the Law of the Conservation of Matter – a whirlpool and flow of particles and sub-particles, ghost particles, virtual particles, actual particles, leaping in and out of sight like the glowing chips and shards at the end of a kaleidoscope, held to the light, revolving slowly. This is not ordinarily visible to us. It is only at the atomic and sub-atomic level that this becomes apparent, and reveals paradox.

The gist of the experiment is this: “A cat, along with a flask containing poison and a radioactive source, is placed in a sealed box shielded against environmentally induced quantum decoherence. If an internal Geiger counter detects radiation, the flask is shattered, releasing the poison that kills the cat. The Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics implies that after a while, the cat is *simultaneously* alive and dead. Yet, when we look in the box, we see the cat *either* alive *or* dead, not both alive *and* dead.” [Wikipedia, online: “Schrödinger’s cat”]

Schrödinger himself called this a “ridiculous case.” It is a *reductio ad absurdum*, to make his points. All that matters in this discussion is simply the parallel of Catholicism’s subliminal influence here, the childhood memory of the Eucharist in the tabernacle appearing as the shadow behind the cat in the box, the real Catholicity of particle physics, quantum mechanics, and this experiment.

Here is where quantum physics and Schrödinger’s repressed experience of Catholicism join. His sealed box reminds us of the tabernacle.

We know that bread and wine are contained therein, as the cat in the box. We believe by faith that the bread and wine have become consecrated to be the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ, Son of God and Second Person of the Trinity.

The tabernacle is opened; the hosts are removed for Eucharistic communion in Mass, for repose in the monstrance for Benediction and adoration, for distribution by the Eucharistic ministers to the sick who cannot be at Mass. In communion the Real Presence who is Christ enters our bodies, our bloodstreams, and thus every cell in each one of our bodies, finally incorporating all of those who receive him into one Body, one Blood, spiritually of course, but materially as well. Real food, real efficacious activity, real transfiguration . . .

By relating particle physics and Schrödinger’s work to Eucharistic reality, do we suggest that Mass, Eucharist and Mystical Body are in fact merely virtual, merely *maya*?! Not at all—that would be a grave misinterpretation! Catholic doctrine speaks the reality and practice that is rather the fullness, both spiritually and materially of what particle physics merely glimpses in passing and confusion. When Christ says he comes not to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it, he was speaking not only of the Torah and Judaic law. He was speaking of fulfilling the essential desires of all religions, all truth, and even the natural laws of material Creation. ⚡

[To Be – or not to be?! – Continued]



# “Palliative Care”

*Current Health Care “Reform:” How it makes rationing and death-hastening the law of the land*

By Ione Whitlock

In Progressive politics, Death frequently comes in packages labeled “Life.”

And so it is with legislation such as that which is now before the Senate. Think you are supporting pain relief and hospice legislation in order to prevent assisted suicides? Wrong. Thanks to Big Death — a collection of heavily funded non-profit hospice and palliative care groups<sup>[i]</sup> — the line between palliative care (pain relief; symptom management) and imposed death has become blurred.

One Big Death “thought leader” who has helped create the confusion between life-affirming palliative care and imposed death is Ira Byock, Dartmouth physician and hospice guru. In a [blog at the New America Foundation](#)<sup>[ii]</sup> this summer, he illustrated our point. He suggests, using the example of one senior citizen, that we might improve seniors’ lives simply by giving them “reliable transportation ... to the local Senior Center [where they would] share nutritious group lunches and noon-time discussions on advance directives for health care”. In other words, he wants to sell seniors a free trip to the Center for a fulfilling and healthy life ... to persuade them to focus on death, of course.

Byock drew early attention and support from Andrea Kydd – former organizer for the Welfare Rights Organization, and board member of the Tides Foundation. Kydd, who was health program director for the Nathan Cummings Foundation, directed the foundation’s support to two end-of-life projects in 1995: one collaborated with the Commonwealth Fund to conduct a caregiver study directed by Ezekiel Emanuel and his wife Linda; the other was Byock’s Missoula Demonstration Project. The grant from Cummings was followed by a grant from Soros – one of the earliest grants awarded in Soros’s Project on Death in America .

From there Byock moved to projects sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. He directed a massive \$15 million end-of-life project “Promoting Excellence” that could have been called “Promoting Rationing.” It tested methods of “moving hospice upstream” in various “difficult” clinical settings and on specific populations: veterans hospitals, native American reservations, African-Americans in urban centers, and prisons, for example. The project, headquartered in Montana, focused on financial savings and various ways to convince people to accept “palliative care” earlier in the game.

Blurring the distinction between life-affirming care and hastened death eases the path for bedside rationing, which of course lowers costs. How to convince “difficult” cases to forgo life-sustaining treatment? Offer them palliative care.

When Promoting Excellence moved to South Carolina, the effort was focused on reminding a group of chronically ill patients who “generally do not see themselves as dying” that, in fact, they were dying. Diane Meier and Sean Morrison of Mt. Sinai in New York worked with NJ-based Franklin Health and Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina for intervention by case management teams using advance care counseling and a variety of other tools. Meier’s group reported that the South Carolina population was “an ‘upstream’ population of very sick people, averaging 46 years of age, generally suffering from serious, progressive, and life threatening illnesses, who will likely consume high dollar amounts of resources” and were thus chosen for intervention.

When Byock delivered a provocative keynote address to a conference of over 275 end-of-life health professionals, researchers, policymakers, and community activists, he described the “levers” that could be used to change the US death-denying culture. Bureaucracy would be their ally. Byock noted that “German sociologist Max Weber said that social movements that become successful become routinized by the agency of bureaucracy. Therefore, ironically, bureaucracy is the means and the mark of our success to this point.”

While Byock rallied the “levers” and “agents of change,” he also quietly created a new right-to-die consumer’s group that would organize caregiver and hospice groups, and pressure legislators to pass living will legislation. Byock brought AAHPM together with Choice in Dying (aka Euthanasia Society of America and Society for the Right to Die) to form “Partnership for Caring” (PfC) in 1999. PfC’s mission was to articulate “a national policy agenda”, and their first priority was “mandated universal access to high-quality care.”

Just when we think we are supporting a partnership for caring, we end up with the choice to die.

Now, twelve years later, the Senate is poised to firmly establish Big Death’s “agency of bureaucracy” by implementing the Obama/Pelosi/Reid plan.

According to the principle of subsidiarity, medical decisions should be made at the lowest level – closest to the

patient, with the least bureaucracy. That is the first step in protecting American health care. All current health “reform” legislation is the polar opposite. ☞

Notes:

[i] A core group from Big Death showed up to support [Rep. Blumenauer’s death counseling bill](#): AARP, American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM), American College of Physicians (ACP), American Hospice Foundation, Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC), Consumers Union, Gundersen Lutheran Health System, Hospice and Palliative Nursing Association (HPNA), Medicare Rights Center, National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO), National Palliative Care Research Center (NPCRC), Providence Health and Services, and Supportive Care Coalition.

[iii] [“HEALTH REFORM: We Can’t Fix Health Care By \(Merely\) Fixing Health Care”, August 7, 2009.](#)

*Ione Whitlock writes for LifeTree. LifeTree’s timeline was posted on its web site. It shows how a handful of foundations and quasi-government agencies have funded and implemented the strategies highlighted in this article. LifeTree continues to reach out to all who will listen, with its well-researched information on the lower-profile wing of the euthanasia movements.*

*For more information on LifeTree (and to view its euthanasia timeline), visit [www.LifeTree.org](http://www.LifeTree.org); call 919-785-0855; send an e-mail to [lifetree inc@yahoo.com](mailto:lifetree inc@yahoo.com) or write to LifeTree, Inc., P. O. Box 17301, Raleigh, NC 27619.*

# Around the Archdiocese

*Interfaith spirituality and Call to Action dissent move into high gear...*

By Stephanie Block

Nestled between Tai Chi Chih and Centering Prayer classes, autumn 2010 at the **Spiritual Renewal Center** includes a “creative writing for spiritual growth” workshop led by **Sr. Paula Gallagher, IHM**. Participants are “invited to listen, to find their own voice and begin writing out of their own life experience.” [Quotes about the workshop are taken from a flier about the workshop, [www.src-nm.org/Flyers/SpiritualWriting11-13-10.pdf](http://www.src-nm.org/Flyers/SpiritualWriting11-13-10.pdf)]

Sr. Gallagher is a staff member of the *Shekina Spirituality Center* whose principle web image is a retablo-style image by Beverly Lanzetta, founder of the interfaith *Schola Divina*, “an independent contemplative tradition . . . that traces its roots to the spirit of the desert experience and the wisdom of feminine divine consciousness.” Based in New Mexico, Lanzetta writes and speaks about “the advent of new paradigms in religion, spiritual direction, and the mystical life.”

Sr. Gallagher is committed to interfaith worship, too, serving as Liturgical Director at Santa Fe’s Santa Maria de la Paz Catholic “Community” and leading the Adult Sanctuary Choir for the United Church of Santa Fe—United Church of Christ, which ordains women and welcomes variant sexual orientations in its clergy.

Another program offered at the *Spiritual Renewal Center* was presented by **Sr. Linda Chavez**, Sister of Charity. Promotional material for her two talks, called “Discovering Grace,” identify Sister as a “teacher, theologian and spiritual leader for the Albuquerque area” and say that “these sessions explore the mystery of grace —What is it? How does it affect us?”

Sr. Chavez was part of the original steering committee for the *Call to Action-New Mexico* (CTA) chapter and helped Father Richard Rohr’s *Center for Action and Contemplation* run its 2006 conference, “Prophets Then, Prophets Now” — featuring the Catholic dissenter Sr. Joan Chittister, OSB.

Why such un-Catholic fare at the *Spiritual Renewal Center*? While the Center has long been known for hosting problematic programs, a change of directorship in 2009 provided opportunity for a new direction, as well. However, the Center’s Spirituality Coordinator is Sharon Pikula, an Adrian Dominican Associate who has been the contact for a number of CTA projects over the years, including an Albuquerque *World Day of Prayer for Woman’s Ordination* and the CTA-NM *Faith in Public Life* listing. She was part of CTA-NM’s founding board in the late 90s and was the CTA national liaison for Rio Rancho in 2000. She is also the current contact in New Mexico for the CTA-related *Women’s Ordination Conference*.

Therefore, it’s hardly surprising that the Center attracts likeminded individuals. During the summer, **Sr. Joan Brown, OSF**—associated with CTA-NM — gave a talk titled, “Earth is Our Mother.” **Catharine Stewart-Roache**, another member of CTA-NM’s founding board gave a “Whole Body Retreat,” to “provide practical ideas to keep the whole being (body, mind & spirit) healthy no matter what age.” And feast day celebrations of the Mary of Magdala, sponsored around the country by CTA and *FutureChurch*, in New Mexico were held at the Center and included “preaching” by **Sr. Annette Lucero OP.**, Parish Life Coordinator of San Ignacio Parish in Albuquerque.

Are these *really* the sorts of programs the Archdiocese of Santa Fe considers appropriate for Catholic formation and spiritual development? Evidently, yes. The *Spiritual Renewal Center* is openly associated with the Archdiocese, referenced in its official directory and linked by websites. The fact that *other* dioceses put a clear distance between CTA dissent and the faithful suggests this is a serious problem. ❧



*Don't forget to give us your change of address information!*



## Yet MORE Around the Archdiocese

As if the *Spiritual Renewal Center's* programs weren't enough diversity for one diocese, it looks as though the **Norbertine Hermitage Retreat's Library Lecture Series** for 2010-2011 is drawing from the same well.

**Beverly Lanzetta** will give an October lecture titled "Global Spirituality: The Unity of the Mystic Heart." Notes about the series available at the Norbertine Community website read: "Many of us seek a deeper mystical path that affirms the spiritual unity of humanity's quest for the Holy. This lecture will explore the distinctive spirituality of mystical universalism and provide exercises for establishing an inner hermitage, a center of silence in oneself open to all. "

At least, Lanzetta doesn't purport to be Catholic. In March, **Dr. Megan McKenna** will deliver "Tasting the Word of the Lord." McKenna is a *Call to Action* (CTA) and CTA-related *Pax Christi* speaker, challenging the supernatural interpretation of scripture and the importance of Church teaching on sexuality, marriage, and issues related to gender and abortion by arguing "in the light of the plight of the world, or the teachings of Jesus in the Scriptures, [these are] not the issues that we will be judged on if we are Catholics/Christians."

The following month, **Sr. Paula Gallagher** will give her "Writing for Healing and Integration" talk. The Norbertine Community of New Mexico is another "Catholic Link" of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe ... as is the **Canossian Spirituality Center**, which this past summer had two weekends of retreats presented by **Rev. Michael Crosby, OFM**, yet another CTA speaker who believes repressive Church teaching about sexual morality is responsible for its pedophile issues.

Busy, busy, busy... ☞

*Note to Anonymous: Far from lacking the courage to read your abusive letter, we cheerfully invite you to meet with us for coffee or tea to discuss your objections to past articles. SB*