

Los Pequeños Pepper

Publication of Los Pequeños de Cristo

August/September 2015



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Newsletter of Los Pequeños de Cristo
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The Pequeños Pepper is published monthly

We are an Archdiocesan-wide Catholic lay organization committed to a charitable defense of the Catholic Faith by means of education, communication, and prayer. We are devoted to the Roman Catholic Magisterium, the Holy Father, and to the bishops and clergy in union with him. Our members believe what the Church believes and we promote what the Church teaches. To this end, we believe that no individual, whether cleric or lay person, has the right to alter the substance of the gospel message or moral truths which have been inerrantly and infallibly held by the Catholic Church since Her founding.

Agents of Death

Change agents hope to transform end-of-life care with “new” values

By Stephanie Block

Journalist Ellen Goodman was a 2015 National Summit on Advanced Illness Care keynote speaker for The Coalition to Transform Advanced Care (C-TAC). She addressed the room of professionals in their personal capacity, “as mothers, as fathers, as sons, as daughters, as well as change agents because, of course, whatever it says on your CV [curriculum vitae], you are actually all here as change agents”⁽¹⁾ for end-of-life issues.

What is to be changed? Death is nothing new, as Goodman herself humorously observed.

What’s new is that technological miracles can mean that there are complicated and sometimes expensive end-of-life decisions to be made. Catholic moral teaching is clear that no one needs to take heroic measures to artificially sustain life but is equally clear that food, oxygen, and nutrition are not “heroic,” so long as the body still accepts them.

However, C-TAC isn’t a Catholic coalition and its values aren’t grounded in Catholic moral teaching or the natural law. Goodman’s thesis – and that of a program she co-founded and directs, The Conversation Project, which is part of the C-TAC coalition and its work – hinges on the subjective end-of-life “wishes” of each person. Some individuals may want aggressive medical intervention, some may want minimal intervention, and some may want an “assisted” death.

Goodman doesn’t discuss these various positions during the C-TAC talk but The Conversation Project is frequently recommended as a tool by which the individual can meet death on his own terms.⁽²⁾

There’s a faith-based initiative in The Conversation Project, too. Rev. Rosemary Lloyd is its adviser.⁽³⁾ In 2012, motivated, in part, by a bill that was before Massachusetts voters titled Prescribing Medication to End Life, Rev. Lloyd delivered a sermon in which she said that Unitarian Universalist principles “support individual autonomy. Given the confines, limits, and safeguards embedded in Question 2, after a search of conscience and heart, I believe my religious values support this compassionate measure.”⁽⁴⁾ One presumes that is the measure of her advice: to each his own.

It seems fair to conclude that C-TAC and The Conversation Project C-TAC are working from a secular – i.e., relativistic – moral framework. Therefore, when C-TAC’s roomful of change agents are told by Goodman that the “the whole thing rests on public engagement and trust,” we would like to know what this “thing” is. What are we likely to *mistrust*?

“Why do we work inside of congregations?” Rev. Lloyd asks at the C-TAC Summit. “Because these are existing communities that are filled with people who want to live according to shared values and they are devoted to being of service to vulnerable populations....Some congregations are the places where the seeds of cultural change are actually planted.” Given the secular, relativistic framework, these are uncomfortable words.

ENTER THE ALINSKYIANS

Rev. Lloyd goes on to say that social justice is a part of “this” and that The Conversation Project has fostered a partnership with Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO). GBIO is an affiliate of the Alinskyian IAF network which was “the key force in achieving Health Care for All in Massachusetts....we’re hoping to use that power to... be a catalyst for change, towards making Boston a conversation-ready city, where we have conversations with our loved ones and our health care providers and that our health care providers are listening and our wishes are recorded and respected....We want to transform how we die in America.”⁽⁵⁾

Consistent with Catholic teaching, Cardinal Law, Archbishop of Boston, “and other Catholic leaders had a major impact on the demise of bills introduced in 1994 and 1996 that would have permitted physician-assisted suicide. In 1996, Law testified in person against the measure. Both times, the bills wound up buried in ‘study committees.’”⁽⁶⁾ The Catholic Church consistently rejects euthanasia as an ethical “choice”...regardless of how well-intentioned.⁽⁷⁾

But here is a tremendously ironic situation. Cardinal Law was supportive of the founding of GBIO. Several Catholic parishes are members of the organization. Yet, GBIO’s relationship to health care has always been morally problematic. It was a member of the ACT!! Coalition (Affordable Care Today!! Coalition) that included NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts⁽⁸⁾ and



Ellen Goodman, co-founder and director, The Conversation Project

fought for passage of Commonwealth Care, a state-run precursor to the nation's Affordable Care Act, that includes coverage of abortion services.⁽⁹⁾ It also assures that low-income people can obtain low or no-cost contraceptives and birth control counseling.⁽¹⁰⁾

As for end-of-life issues, Rev. Rosemary Lloyd, now representing GBIO,⁽¹¹⁾ served on a Massachusetts *Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST)* Committee to discuss "current concerns and priorities for improving end-of-life care."⁽¹²⁾ The Committee's recommendations included development and implementation of a public awareness campaign in the



Rev. Lloyd, faith-based advisor of The Conversation Project and GBIO leader.

state about advance care planning, palliative care, and end-of-life options. "It is crucial that the public become aware of available options for palliative care and end-of-life care ... Care and treatment decisions made by an informed and empowered public will result in greater concordance between the expressed preferences of patients and the care that is actually provided."⁽¹³⁾

What evidence is there for imagining that MOLST might also include "preferences" for euthanasia? MOLST is a directive to medical care professionals that tells them the patient's wishes regarding resuscitation, intubation (tubing in the windpipe to make breathing easier), administration of intravenous antibiotics, and the use of feeding tubes during what is presumed to be the last year of life.⁽¹⁴⁾ Many of these procedures constitute "ordinary care" and are not a moral "option." Removing food, water, or air will eventually cause death... what advocates term "passive euthanasia" in contrast to "actively" bringing about death, such as taking an overdose of painkillers.

The Conversation Project's Starter Kit, like MOLST, treats "ordinary care" as if it were "extraordinary." It includes the question "Are there kinds of treatment you would want (or not want)?" In case one might not understand what has been asked, the questionnaire gives examples: "Resuscitation if your heart stops, breathing machine, feeding tube."⁽¹⁵⁾ This is a good example of offering or suggesting "passive" euthanasia as an end-of-life "option."

GBIO – and the legislation, policies and programs it supports – gives progressives a foot in the door of its member congregations, acculturating abortion, contraceptives, and now euthanasia.

C-TAC CALIFORNIA

C-TAC is largely an advocacy organization. That is, C-TAC pushes for federal and state legislative, regulatory, judicial and administrative initiatives. To achieve broader support, it also has a public engagement component to "help people make more informed decisions and to support delivery system and policy change."⁽¹⁶⁾

C-TAC is a national organization with specific values it intends to disseminate. Its pilot program, which C-TAC intends to replicate, is in Oakland, California and involves the faith-based community through another Alinskyian network, PICO. PICO's Oakland affiliate, Oakland Community Organization (OCO) is part of C-TAC public engagement efforts.

There are, of course, legitimate reasons why faith communities are involved with people at the end of their lives. They are concerned about the state of a person's soul, for one. They have humanitarian concerns that people don't die alone or in unnecessary pain, for another.

They should also be concerned that dying people are not prematurely or unnaturally denied "ordinary" means of survival. However, this is precisely the uncomfortable fact: and, as has already been noted, C-TAC's program is secular. To gain public trust, faith communities are "engaged" as the moral cover for secular programs that include immoral values.

"Public engagement" for C-TAC is, therefore, a pretty way of saying "manipulated public opinion" to support this new set of values. Local people are "engaged" in discussions that may make them feel as though they are part of a decision-making process but important decisions about how people are to live and die have already been made by others.

Oakland Community Organization has been involved in health care reform for several years. PICO and OCO were strong supporters of a national health care system⁽¹⁷⁾ and were members of the We Believe Together - Health Care for All coalition – along with the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.⁽¹⁸⁾ Like Commonwealth Care, the Affordable Care Act was determined to cover "reproductive services". Like GBIO, PICO was not disturbed by that fact, despite its Catholic member congregations, and OCO is actively "organizing health insurance enrollment events."⁽¹⁹⁾ And OCO member congregation, Allen Temple Baptist Church, hosted C-TAC's Interfaith Leader Consultation in 2013.⁽²⁰⁾

NORTH CAROLINA REGIONAL PLANNING

C-TAC isn't the only organization advancing problematic end-of-life care. Another affiliate of the Alinskyian IAF network, HELP (Helping Empower Local People) in North Carolina, is part of the "public engagement" component for a comprehensive regional plan to manage its population's health care, its environmental concerns, its housing, its food, and other things.

The plan is called Connect Our Future.⁽²¹⁾

Managed healthcare means that various government programs will be coordinated.⁽²²⁾ So, as part of the Connect Our Future plan, residents within the region can be connected to resources provided by the Mecklenburg County Health Department (which runs a Family Planning Clinic offering “comprehensive family planning & reproductive health services”)⁽²³⁾ or with Community Health Partners, a Medicaid program that, among other things, provides “palliative care.”⁽²⁴⁾

An “Accountability Care Guide for Community Health Partners: Preparing Community Health Partners for the Approaching Accountability Care Era” explains the health care goals that are part of North Carolina’s regional plan. Among them are the reduction of health care spending growth, the collection of data, and the creation of a “culture” of “full collaboration” among “hospitals, physicians, providers, and community health resources.”⁽²⁵⁾

Part of this is accomplished through “population health management.”⁽²⁶⁾ “Avoidable costs,” such as physical inactivity, tobacco use, and poor nutrition are addressed and health systems “engage with organizations ... [to] influence individuals’ behavior.”⁽²⁷⁾

If that isn’t sufficiently invasive, the Guide instructs its readers to: “Use the trust in the faith community to link patient, doctor, and the community’s resources.”⁽²⁸⁾ Presumably, involvement of one’s congregation in this medical “collaboration” can be used to overcome suspicions about government intrusion into its citizens’ health care and records. Faith communities represent the broader community. They are identified with positive values and are one of the pieces by which these programs “gain mutual trust and buy-in.”⁽²⁹⁾

When one considers all the *negative* values – birth control, sterilization, abortion, and so forth – included in this “value-based” community health care package, the regional planners have accomplished quite a coup.



Then there’s end-of-life care.

One of the Community Health Partners is Carolinas Center for Hospice and End of Life Care which lobbied for a bill that would have legalized withholding or withdrawing life sustaining procedures and permitted prescribing pain medication which hastens death as long as that wasn’t the intention.⁽³⁰⁾ Thankfully, the bill failed but, several years later, the North Carolina Medical Society (of which Community Health Partners is a part) helped draft “advanced directive” legislation to allow health care providers to withhold or withdraw life-prolonging measures in certain situations.⁽³¹⁾ It’s called a “living will” or “natural death” but can actually be a form of “assisted suicide” – or “assisted murder” – if it’s interpreted to mean withholding water, nutrition, or oxygen... as is all too often the case. This legislation passed and is the driving engine behind the “Accountable Care Guide for Community Health Partners.”⁽³²⁾

As with the IAF’s local “public engagement” for education reform, “public engagement” actually means “managed public opinion.” Local people are engaged in discussions designed to make them feel as though they are part of the decision-making process when, in reality, decisions about governance and curriculum and which values are retained and which get tossed have already been made by others.

ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATIONS

The “public engagement” involvement of Alinskyian faith-based organizing in North Carolina for a new, managed healthcare system is being replicated around the country.

In Camden, New Jersey, a PICO associated doctor founded the **Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers.**⁽³³⁾ The Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers just announced that, together with two other groups, they will form a three year pilot program as New Jersey’s first Medicaid Accountable Care Organization (ACO).⁽³⁴⁾ The Camden PICO affiliate, Camden Churches Organized for People, is a member.⁽³⁵⁾

Together Colorado, PICO’s Denver-based affiliate, is in the process of creating a similar ACO initiative in Aurora, called **Bridges to Care.** In San Diego, PICO’s Southwest Organizing Project is part of the Multicultural Independent Physician Association Super-utilizer Project (**MultiCultural Primary Care Medical Group**) ACO.⁽³⁶⁾ These are just three ACOs; there are others.

All Accountable Care Organizations connect local healthcare providers together into a coordinated system. All ACOs collect patient data that is shared throughout the system. All have “public engagement” entities, some of which are affiliates of Alinskyian organizing networks.

All Accountable Care Organizations – even those whose primary managing institutions are Catholic – work from a secular perspective, providing (somewhere within the system) birth control, abortion, and advance directives.

So, for instance, Cooper University Health Care is one of Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers ACO members. At the

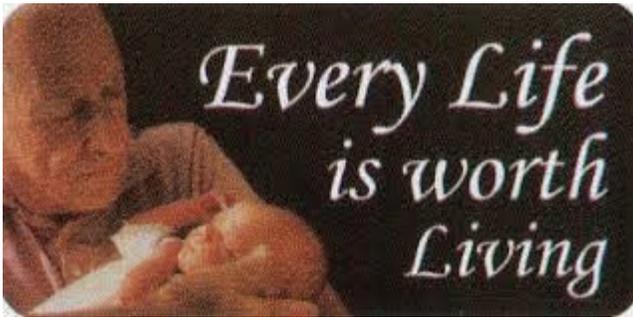
Cooper University Health Care website, you can download a Living Will and check a box saying whether you want or don't "want tube feeding or any other artificial or invasive form of nutrition (food) or hydration (water)."⁽³⁷⁾

Aurora's Bridges to Care includes Metro Community Provider Network, which is a provider of services that include birth control, emergency contraception, and pregnancy options counseling for teens.⁽³⁸⁾ On May 20-21, 2015 Metro Community Provider Network held a free class for seniors on advance directives. "During this class, participants will have the opportunity to possibly complete an advance directive form."⁽³⁹⁾

MultiCultural Primary Care Medical Group received a \$1.1 million federal Healthcare Innovation Challenge Grant in 2012 in collaboration with PICO's San Diego Organizing Project. The resulting Patient Health Improvement Initiative targeted chronically ill patients. Like the Camden model, patients are served by a team of providers that includes "a nurse case manager, a social worker, community health workers and faith-based volunteers. They work intimately with each patient, including visiting his or her home, to help manage the chronic illnesses, to coordinate medications and therapies and to accompany them to their appointments, all the while offering emotional and spiritual support."⁽⁴⁰⁾

This sounds good until one realizes that, because it is part of the Medicaid system, MultiCultural Primary Care Medical Group uses "managed care and quality improvement" infrastructure.⁽⁴¹⁾ Medicaid managed care organizations must provide their enrollees information about advance directives.⁽⁴²⁾

It's just part of the system. The price paid for a secular, nationally-managed health care system is the acceptance of its secular values. ...and too many of these "values" just aren't healthy. ❧



Notes

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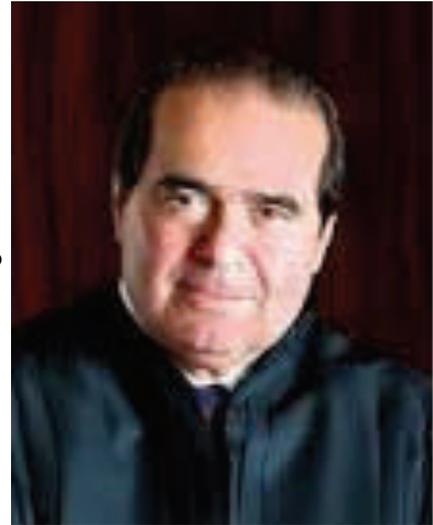
Top Quotes from Justice Scalia's Scathing Dissent in King v. Burwell

Commentary by Tiffany Bates and Elizabeth Slattery

Justice Antonin Scalia is known for his sharp wit and even sharper pen. He pulled no punches in his dissent today from the Supreme Court's decision in *King v. Burwell* allowing the Obama administration to allow Obamacare subsidies to flow through the federal exchange.

Here are nine highlights:

1. "We should start calling this law SCOTUScare ... [T]his Court's two decisions on the Act will surely be remembered through the years ... And the cases will publish forever the discouraging truth that the Supreme Court of the United States favors some laws over others, and is prepared to do whatever it takes to uphold and assist its favorites."
2. "This case requires us to decide whether someone who buys insurance on an Exchange established by the Secretary gets tax credits. You would think the answer would be obvious—so obvious there would hardly be a need for the Supreme Court to hear a case about it."
3. "Words no longer have meaning if an Exchange that is not established by a State is 'established by the State.'"
4. "Under all the usual rules of interpretation, in short, the Government should lose this case. But normal rules of interpretation seem always to yield to the overriding principle of the present Court: The Affordable Care Act must be saved."
5. "The Court interprets §36B to award tax credits on both federal and state Exchanges. It accepts that the 'most natural sense' of the phrase 'Exchange established by the State' is an Exchange established by a State. (Understatement, thy name is an opinion on the Affordable Care Act!) Yet the opinion continues, with no semblance of shame, that 'it is also possible that the phrase refers to all Exchanges—both State and Federal. (Impossible possibility, thy name is an opinion on the Affordable Care Act!)"
6. "Perhaps sensing the dismal failure of its efforts to show that 'established by the State' means 'established by the State or the Federal Government,' the Court tries to palm off the pertinent statutory phrase as 'inartful drafting.' This Court, however, has no free-floating power 'to rescue Congress from its drafting errors.'"
7. "The Court's decision reflects the philosophy that judges should endure whatever interpretive distortions it takes in order to correct a supposed flaw in the statutory machinery. That philosophy ignores the American people's decision to give Congress '[a]ll legislative Powers' enumerated in the Constitution. They made Congress, not this Court, responsible for both making laws and mending them."
8. "More importantly, the Court forgets that ours is a government of laws and not of men. That means we are governed by the terms of our laws, not by the unenacted will of our lawmakers. 'If Congress enacted into law something different from what it intended, then it should amend the statute to conform to its intent.' In the meantime, this Court 'has no roving license ... to disregard clear language simply on the view that ... Congress 'must have intended' something broader."
9. Rather than rewriting the law under the pretense of interpreting it, the Court should have left it to Congress to decide what to do about the Act's limitation of tax credits to state Exchanges."



Tiffany Bates writes about the Supreme Court and constitutional law as a legal research associate in The Heritage Foundation's Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies.

Elizabeth Slattery writes about the rule of law, the proper role of the courts, civil rights and equal protection, and the scope of constitutional provisions such as the Commerce Clause and the Recess Appointments Clause as a legal fellow in the Heritage Foundation's Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies.

Why is Eating Shrimp Alright and Gay Marriage Not?

By Fr. Casey Jones

Ok, here is the basic premise that is floating around: The bible says homosexual activity is a sin, but it also says that eating certain foods (or using certain fabrics, or working on the Sabbath, or cutting your hair, or shaving, or anything else in the Levitical code) is also a sin. So, all of you backward-thinking Christians should lighten up.

You pick and choose what you want. You follow your own version of the bible. So, stop “hating”, and embrace gay marriage since you make up the rules as you go along anyway.

Please know this is intended in love and in letting people know the truth about what the Sacred Scriptures and the Church teach about homosexuality, because, frankly I am tired of the memes and comments about the Bible and homosexuality that are straw men, constructed under poor logic with false premises whose aim seems to be only to ridicule.

Before I begin, let me make some opening comments.

First of all, to all my gay friends out there: I love you. I can't tell you how much I love you. I will never know the trials and prejudices that you have had to endure. This is not hate, but clarification. You know this, but I just want to say it. I say it because: one, it's true and two, I need everyone else to know that I love you. The catechism of the Catholic Church says it well: “[Homosexual persons] must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God's will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition.” (CCC 2358)



In that vein, **secondly, I say**: God loves you too. In fact, no matter who is reading this, I can assure you of God's radical love for you and that he has a plan for your salvation. This is true of each and every one of you. Know that I love you all very much. I am selective of my Facebook friends.

Thirdly, no one group of people has a monopoly on sin. Many of my friends are living lives apart from God's plan. I pray for you. I never preach at you. I never condemn. I try to present God's love as an invitation, not as an imposition. You all know where I stand on the moral issues; you know that I am a priest. You know that the Church teaches with the authority of Christ that certain moral actions are sins unto death and that these include sexual sins such as fornication (sex outside of marriage), adultery (sex with someone who is married, including those separated by a civil divorce, contraception), and anything else that takes God's gift of sexual love outside of its context, which is both unitive and procreative, ends that are inseparable.

Fourth, please do not comment about me forcing my beliefs on anyone, this is intended as a presentation of what the Catholic Church teaches on homosexuality in light of Scripture, not an argument for or against civil homosexual marriage. That is a debate for another place and time.

Fifth, please do not come back at me with misplaced quotes from Pope Francis. Pope Francis upholds the teaching of the Church. Like him, (and for that matter, Jesus) I do not judge someone for an inclination, for an orientation that is not a choice made in freedom – but *actions* (be they hetero or homosexual) are choices. I do not judge anyone's soul. That is for God, not me. But I can and, as a priest and a follower of Christ, should make judgments on objective moral actions.

Lastly, I do welcome honest and sincere questions in charity if they are on topic and fall into the parameters set above. Again, the topic is the Bible and Homosexuality.

In regard to the ceremonial and dietary laws of the Old Testament (the latter generally being related to the for-

mer), these were abrogated by the sacrifice of Christ. They aren't necessary anymore. Christ has fulfilled the old law, it has passed away. It is not necessary to make sin offerings anymore. Christ came to fulfill it and to perfect these. They are done. He addresses this himself: "Hear me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a man which by going into him can defile him; but the things which come out of a man are what defile him... Do you not see that whatever goes into a man from outside cannot defile him, since it enters, not his heart but his stomach, and so passes on." (Mark 7:14-19)

In this Jesus declares all food to be clean. The same issue is addressed later in the Acts of the Apostles where Peter is given a vision in which he is told that there is no longer clean or unclean food, but that he is free to eat all; a message which he spoke to the Church. Just as Christ today guides his Church in the person of Peter's successor. (See Acts 11:1-18)

As the Catechism puts it: "Jesus perfects the dietary law, so important in Jewish daily life, by revealing its pedagogical meaning through a divine interpretation . . . What comes out of a man is what defiles a man." For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts" and further "In presenting with divine authority the definitive interpretation of the Law, Jesus found himself confronted by certain teachers of the Law who did not accept his interpretation of the Law, guaranteed though it was by the divine signs that accompanied it. This was the case especially with the Sabbath laws, for he recalls often with rabbinical arguments, that the Sabbath rest is not violated by serving God and neighbor, which his own healings did." (CCC #582)

Jesus also abrogated ceremonial laws about the Sabbath: "Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath." He said to them, "Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath." (Matt. 12:1-8)

Jesus was clear that he fulfilled the ceremony of the Old Law and therefore abrogated these aspects. In fact, large portions of St. Paul's writings in the New Testament are spent dealing with this issue. He speaks quite a bit on why we don't keep Jewish feasts, why we don't necessarily circumcise male children, why we are not bound to these ceremonial laws, because Christ, the perfect Sacrifice has fulfilled them.

This is not the case with the moral laws. These are eternal. In fact, Jesus typically holds us to even higher moral standards. Jesus demonstrates this several times in the Sermon on the Mount, when he uses the formula: "You have heard that it was said...but I say to you" for example: "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Matthew 5:38)

One of these actually happens to address marriage: "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, [πορνεία, a Greek word that is hard to translate into English whose exact meaning remains an enigma] makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery" (Matthew 5:31)

And another: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5: 27) So, Jesus does not abrogate the moral Law, particularly the laws about marriage and chastity. In fact, he holds us to an even higher standard than was acceptable before.

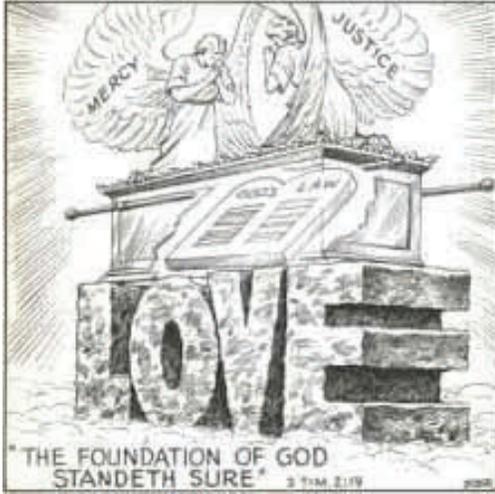
He specifies this again in Matthew 19:4-9: "He answered, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one'? So they are no longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder." They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" He said to them, "For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchas



tity, [πορνεία] and marries another, commits adultery; and he who marries a divorced woman, commits adultery.” Thus Jesus establishes that marriage is an insolvable unity between a man and a woman. He does not permit divorce.

Scripture also makes it clear that, as I said before, taking God’s gift of sexuality out of context is a grave offense.

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals [literally ‘sodomites’ i.e. those who participate in the actions, not those who have the orientation] nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.” [1 Corinthians 6:9-11]



Again, St. Paul makes the point that there is no one group who has a monopoly on sin, but that life in Christ entails putting sin behind us.

The same sentiment is found in the book of Revelation: “But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (Rev. 21:8) Again, fornication is sex outside of marriage.

Now, you may want to say “A-ha! If you would ‘let’ gay people get married that it wouldn’t be a sin.”

The problem is that from the beginning, the scriptures point that marriage is a union between a man and a woman. Yes, there were concessions made for polygamy and other circumstances, but Jesus ended that when he brought the law to perfection, (See Matthew 19 above). So to someone who reads scripture honestly, saying “gay marriage” is like saying “square circle”. It is not this way because the Bible or the Church says it is so. The scriptures and the Church say it is so because it *is* so.

All of this being said we, as a Church, I feel, have a long way to go in reaching out to the LGBT community. I think it can be done in love. I know several people who identify as homosexual who are living chastely, even some in domestic partnerships, who follow the moral teachings of the Church. It’s not easy, just like it isn’t easy for the hetro couple who cannot perform the martial act for health reasons that arise during the marriage.

As the Catechism states, “Homosexual persons are called to chastity [glossed as ‘The moral virtue which, under the cardinal virtue of temperance, provides for the successful integration of sexuality within the person leading to the inner unity of the bodily and spiritual being]. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection.” (CCC 2359)

We all have the things we struggle with as far as an inclination to sin. Thank God I am not judged on my inclinations nor on the actions of which I have repented. By God’s grace, we all are called to be holy.

This, again, was an attempt to explain what many people see as a contradiction. I hope that it was successful. Boundaries being set, questions and discussion is encouraged. God bless you all. ☩

Fr. Casey Jones is a Priest of the Catholic Diocese of Venice in Florida, who is currently serving as the Parochial Vicar at San Pedro Parish in North Port . He writes a blog: The Priest's Posts—priestposts.blogspot.com.



The Earth is Not “Sick” and Mankind is Thriving as Never Before

Wealth creation can diminish poverty; poverty and despoliation often go hand in hand.

By Steve Mosher

As the father of nine children, I am necessarily no fan of “out-of-control consumerism.” On the home front, our “consumerism,” such that it is, is rationed to meet our needs, not our wants.

Nor could we be accused of being members of a “throwaway culture”, since we throw very little away. In fact, our unofficial family motto is “Use it up, wear it out; make do or do without.” Our children have to “make do” with hand-me-downs until they are “worn out.” Only then are they “thrown out.”

Add to this the fact that we live on a farm in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, where we are daily reminded of the beauty of the earth and our need to be good stewards of the land. I think Pope Francis would approve.

But having carefully read through *Laudato Si*, I am amazed at how many unsubstantiated claims and groundless assertions it contains. Many of its claims are so over-the-top that they can even be challenged by citing UN documents, which themselves tend to magnify environmental and other global problems as a fundraising ploy. From a strictly scientific point of view, in other words, the Encyclical is an embarrassment.

Before getting down to cases, let me first make clear that I am not referring to the document’s frequent lapses into hyperbole. I forgive Pope Francis his repeated references to the “environmental crisis” and his reference to “the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air, and in all forms of life.” (para. 2) I am a writer myself, and understand that occasional exaggeration for effect is part of the writer’s craft.

Nor am I talking about the much ballyhooed support the encyclical gives to global warming, climate change, or whatever we are calling it these days. An extended discussion of the rate, direction, and cause of projected future changes in the earth’s climate would only reveal that there are profound differences of opinion on each of these points. Here I will only address obvious factual errors.

Finally, I am not criticizing the Holy Father himself. The Pope is not trained in the natural sciences and so necessarily relied on environmental “experts” selected by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences to advise him on these matters. The responsibility for these embarrassing lapses lies with them, not with him.

Here are some of the fictions related in Chapter One, which is entitled “What is Happening to Our Common Home.”

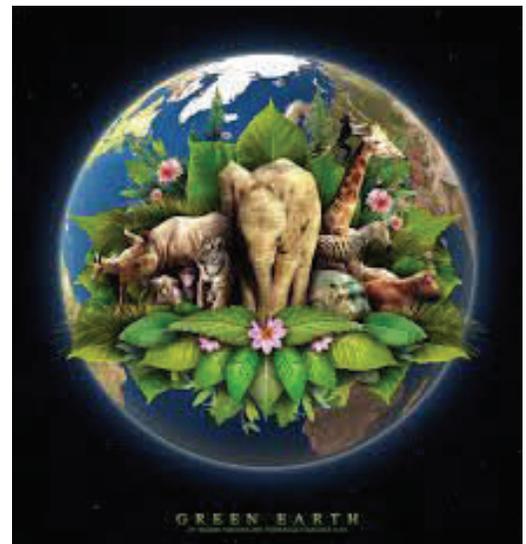
The Issue of Water (pp 27-31): “One particularly serious problem is the quality of water available to the poor ... the quality of available water is constantly diminishing ...” (pp 29-30) According to the The Millennium Development Goals 2014 Report, over the past twenty years “Access to an improved drinking water source became a reality for 2.3 billion people.”

As the MDG Report explains: “The target of halving the proportion of people without access to an improved drinking water source was achieved in 2010, five years ahead of schedule. In 2012, 89 per cent of the world’s population had access to an improved source, up from 76 per cent in 1990. Over 2.3 billion people gained access to an improved source of drinking water between 1990 and 2012.” (page 4)

Loss of Biodiversity (par 32-42): “Each year see the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, which our children will never see, because they have been lost forever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity.” (p. 33)

The MDG 2014 Report does not support this claim, saying only that “The Red List Index shows that, overall, species are declining in population and distribution and, hence, moving faster towards extinction.” (p. 33)

Many species have seen their natural habitats reduced, of course, and their numbers threatened. This is precisely why the Convention on Biological Diversity set a goal of setting aside 17 per cent of global terrestrial areas and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas by 2020 as nature preserves. Since such preserves now include some

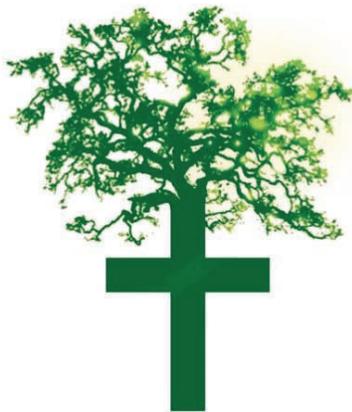


“14.6 per cent of the earth’s land surface area and 9.7 per cent of its coastal marine areas”(p. 33), anyone can see that we are close to achieving our internationally agreed upon goal of protecting biodiversity and reducing anthropogenic species extinction in this way. There is no need for panic.

Decline in the Quality of Human Life and the Breakdown of Society (par. 43-47): “.. we cannot fail to consider the effects on people’s lives of environmental deterioration.... the growth of the past two centuries has not always led to ... an improvement in the quality of life.” (par. 43) In 1815 there were approximately 1 billion people alive on the planet. The average lifespan was 30 years, and the per capita income was a mere \$100. The life of man in nature, as Thomas Hobbes famously remarked, was nasty, brutish and short.

Today there are 7.2 billion people living on Planet Earth, the average lifespan is 71, and the GDP per capita, using purchasing power parity, is over \$12,000. In other words, as our numbers have grown so has our well-being and prosperity. Lifespans have more than doubled and per capita incomes have risen over a hundred times! How can this dramatic—and historically unprecedented—improvement in the quality of life be so cavalierly dismissed?

Global Inequality (par. 48-52): “[The poor, the excluded, the most vulnerable] are the majority of the planet’s population, billions of people.” (par. 49)



In fact, the worldwide reduction of poverty is a great success story. “The world has reduced extreme poverty by half. In 1990, almost half of the population in developing regions lived on less than \$1.25 a day. This rate dropped to 22 per cent by 2010, reducing the number of people living in extreme poverty by 700 million.” (MDG 2014 Report, p. 4) “This means that the world reached the MDG target—of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty—five years ahead of the 2015 deadline. Meantime, the absolute number of people living in extreme poverty fell from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 1.2 billion in 2010.” (p. 9)

One can always redefine poverty upward, as we have done repeatedly in the United States since the War on Poverty began. It is no secret that this has been done for political reasons by a certain political party to ensure that they “will always have the poor with them”... in the voting booth.

I could go on, but there is no need to pile up cases. Suffice to note that a dismal tone of environmental “apocalypse now” pervades the entire document, as when it breathlessly proclaims that: “Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or distain. We may well be leaving to coming

generations debris, desolation and filth. ... our contemporary lifestyle [is] unsustainable ...” (par. 161)

This reads for all the world like the discredited Club of Rome report published in 1972. Later revealed to be a hoax, this report predicted that the world would run out of various “nonrenewable resources” in the 1980s and 1990s, and that environmental, economic and societal collapse would follow. It didn’t happen then, and there is no evidence that it will happen now.

It is perhaps no coincidence that Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, who had a part in drafting the encyclical, is a member of the Club of Rome. Herr Doctor Professor Schellnhuber was apparently selected for this role by Archbishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, the head of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, who has since appointed him to the Academy.

This brings me back to the question of responsibility. Who but the head of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences should have ensured that this encyclical was free of errors of scientific fact? Who but the head of the PAS should have selected experts who were committed to both scientific reason and the Catholic faith. In selecting Schellnhuber, he might as well have turned the manuscript over to a fundraising copywriter for the Environmental Defense Fund.

Archbishop Sanchez Sorondo has squandered the moral authority of the Papacy. He should resign. ❧

Steve Mosher is an internationally-recognized authority on China and population issues and president of the Population Research Institute. He has authored *A Mother’s Ordeal: One Woman’s Fight Against China’s One-Child Policy* and *Hegemon: China’s Plan to Dominate Asia and the World*; *China Attacks, China Misperceived: American Illusions and Chinese Reality*; *Journey to the Forbidden China*; and *Broken Earth: The Rural Chinese*.

I Don't Make Deals

By Abby Johnson

I have written before about my journey to become a “no exceptions” prolifer. I have never shared this story publicly, but I think the time is right.

In 2011, I worked very hard to make sure that our “ultrasound law” was passed in Texas. It was a good bill and I was proud to support it. It did have a rape exception, but I figured that wasn't really a big deal since there are so few babies aborted that are conceived in rape. I mean...it's less than 1%...let's just work to save the 99%, right?

The bill was passed and shortly after that I had a one-on-one conversation with Rebecca Kiessling. Rebecca was conceived in a very violent rape against her birth mother. Even though I know she probably wanted to wring my neck because I supported these discriminatory bills, she was so patient with me...explaining the nuances of being a “no exceptions” prolifer. After several conversations with her, a lot of prayer, and a lot of reading, I realized that I had been wrong. I realized that to support a bill with a rape exception would be devaluing those who had already been so greatly marginalized.

So, I decided to do something about it. I had been such a huge voice in getting our ultrasound bill passed...I wanted to make it right and remove the rape exception. I made the decision that removing the rape exception would be my only priority in the 2013 session (Texas only has one legislative session every other year).

I went back to one of the key legislators behind the bill (who I was very close to) and **Abby Johnson, President Students for Life** told him that my ONLY goal this legislative session was to close that rape exception.

His response was, “That isn't going to happen, Abby. You need to find something else. Deals were made to several different politicians to get that passed and the deals included exceptions for rape. I won't go back on those deals. It would be bad business for me.” Wow. So we make deals on the backs of babies conceived in rape. I sat there with tears in my eyes. I couldn't believe that I had fallen for the idea that one day we would “go back” to protect them all. That had been a total lie.

So, I thought bigger. I said to myself...okay, then let's go after the exceptions in the Hyde amendment. I went to the Hill and made some appointments with several prolife legislators. EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM told me that they would NEVER try to repeal the exceptions in the Hyde Amendment. One of them actually told me that if he went after that, it would be an “election killer” for him. I had one female legislator tell me that closing any rape exceptions would be “unkind” to women who had been raped. Seriously?? Unkind? Unkind for who? It is certainly not unkind for these unborn babies. And it can't be unkind for a woman who has conceived in rape to have equal rights and information as women who have not conceived in rape.

So that was it for me. I knew that we had to have clean bills go in and clean bills come out...because our politicians will NEVER allow rape exceptions to be closed. To be perfectly honest, they don't want them closed.

All the time I hear, “We will just pass this bill and then we will go back for the 1%.” Really now? How many times have people “gone back” for those babies? 5 times? 10 times? Nope. NEVER. We have never gone back. And apparently, we never will because of those pesky deals that were made on the lives of these marginalized children. The people who keep saying that we will go back are the people who have no ability to actually go back and close the gap. The only people who can do that are our politicians, and they won't do it as long as we don't demand it. We have already told them over and over again that these children aren't as important.

So, how do we get our politicians to stop including the rape exception? Well, first, the prolife movement has to take a stand...a strong one. We have to stop accepting these rape exceptions and stand against any bills where they are included. And then we need to tell these politicians that IF THEY PUT RAPE EXCEPTIONS IN BILLS OR IF THEY VOTE FOR THEM, then we will vote them out. We need to tell them that they will lose our endorsement. WE have to stand strong and hold them accountable.

You see, they keep doing it because we keep allowing it.

If the prolife movement would take a stand against these bills with exceptions, they would think twice about adding them in the first place. If we said to these politicians, “If you put in a rape exception, we will make sure this is your last term,” they would stop. But we don't! We just roll over and accept them!!

I am an incrementalist...but not if a bill is discriminatory against a particular group of people. When people give me the “burning building” analogy, my answer is simple. My goal is to prevent the fire from starting so that we don't have to choose whose life is valuable. If you ran into a burning building to save children, would you only pick the ones that had a certain hair



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color or were a certain ethnicity? Because that is what you are doing when you support these bills. You are picking and choosing who has value and who is worth saving.

Would you support a bill that said only white babies should be protected from abortion? Would you support a bill that said abortions would be performed on all babies unless their parents are college educated? Would you support a bill that only protected babies from abortion as long as they are male? No? Why not? Because that would be sexist? Because that would be racist? Because that would be discriminatory? Yes, you are right. These bills are just as discriminatory as bills that allow babies in rape to be killed.

You may say, "But Abby, could that actually work?" Why yes, yes it can. States like Georgia and Michigan have NEVER passed a bill with an exception. Why? Because their legislators know that if they even suggest that an exception should be added to a bill, they will lose their endorsement. It can work. It does work. But it won't happen unless we actually start acting like we are seriously prolife and take a stand!

One of our children is the product of an abusive situation. I can't tell you how painful it is, as his mother, to scroll through my Facebook newsfeed and see so many of my "prolife friends" supporting bills that marginalize his life...that say that his life does not have equal value. Because when I hold him and look at his face, I see that he is destined for something incredibly special. He is equally human, equally valuable, equally worthy of life, and deserves equal protection. And most importantly, he is equally precious in the eyes of God.

And while I hurt for my own child, I can't even imagine how painful this is for people like Rebecca Kiessling. To see her friends support a bill that says her life isn't valuable?? I can't even fathom that type of hurt and betrayal.

So, the question is this. Would you support a bill that only allowed white babies to be aborted? If you would not, then you should stop discriminating against children conceived in rape. Say "no" to rape exceptions. Stand up, have courage and stop accepting the exception.

"What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying? If it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray. So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish." [Mt 18:12-14]☞

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August/September Calendar

Los Pequeños Monthly Meeting
September 18, 2015
Call (505) 293-8006 for information.

Pro-life Prayer:
Planned Parenthood Abortuary
701 San Mateo Blvd.
Holy Innocents Chapel:
(505) 266-4100
Times: Monday-Friday 8 AM – 3 PM

Helpers of God's Precious Infants
Planned Parenthood Abortuary
701 San Mateo Blvd.
Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays: 8 AM – 11:30 AM
Wednesdays: 12 Noon – 3:00 PM
For more information, call Phil Leahy:
(505) 440-3040

Mass at the Holy Innocents Chapel
Tuesdays, Thursdays: noon, including
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Rosary, and Prayers of Exorcism.

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3:00 pm.

You courageously rebuked the pious king who had formerly sinned, just as Nathan rebuked David, O all-blessed Ambrose. You publicly excluded him from communion. After submitting himself to penance and correction, he was numbered again in your fold.

- Byzantine Catholic stichera from the feast of St. Ambrose Vespers

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