Pastoral Plan Brings Changes to Chancery
By Travis & Kelly Benson

The Pastoral Planning process is well underway, and decisions are being made about how best to structure our diocese so that the goals of the process are realized, namely, that the sacraments and solid faith formation are available regularly to all in the diocese, and that Catholics can come together in vibrant and viable parishes, while preserving the physical and spiritual well-being of priests.

As part of this process, Bishop Swain has been working on the reorganization of diocesan staff and offices. Last month, he announced those changes that have been determined. One affects us, as the Respect Life Office and Family Life Office will be merged and under our direction. Please pray for us during this transition time, as we begin to assume our new roles, and prepare for the future. We are honored, humbled, and very excited to begin anew, sharing the fullness of the truths of our faith on marriage, family, and respect life issues, and allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us in developing ways to help spouses and families in our diocese grow in love for our Lord and one another.

In prayer and supplication, we ask you all to join us in helping to fulfill Bishop Swain’s hope, expressed in his August 2010 column of the Bishop’s Bulletin, that “over the next few years we in our diocese will better take up the clarion call of Venerable Pope John Paul II for a ‘new evangelization’ recently underscored by Pope Benedict XVI’s declaration of a ‘renewed evangelization’”.

Prayer for Pastoral Planning

Almighty God, we the people of the diocese of Sioux Falls prayerfully look to the future. During this time of pastoral planning, we implore the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us the gifts of wisdom, courage and hope.

May we exercise the virtue of prudence by opening our hearts and minds to be good stewards of the legacy of faith inherited from those who built the Church on the prairie;

May we exercise the virtue of justice by opening our hearts and minds to assure that the voices of persons from all generations, all vocations and all areas of the diocese are welcomed and respected;

May we exercise the virtue of fortitude by opening our hearts and minds to understand and acknowledge the spiritual and practical realities of our day and prepare for the days to come; and

May we exercise the virtue of temperance by opening our hearts and minds to accept the changes in diocesan, parish and personal life that the Holy Spirit, through this planning process, is guiding us to make.

Under the protection of Blessed Mary, our Mother, and St. Joseph, our patron, may we discern and implement what is best for the diocesan Church and all the faithful of Eastern South Dakota.
Caught Red Handed: Federal Funds Designated for Abortions  
By Travis & Kelly Benson

A crucial question in the recent health care debate was whether federal dollars could be used to pay for abortions in the healthcare law championed by President Obama and passed by Congress. Those concerned about this moral tragedy were reassured that the President's executive order would legally stop any such funding. However, the United States Bishops, and many others, were not easily persuaded, and called for clear language in the bill to prevent this funding from happening. The calls for clarity were left unheeded, the national health care bill (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, PPACA) was passed, and pro-abortion groups like Planned Parenthood heralded its success for "reproductive rights".

So who was right? Can President Obama's new healthcare law fund abortions or not? This month the Obama administration, through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), announced a new high-risk health insurance program for Pennsylvania. Guess what? It was discovered that $160 million in federal funds would be used to provide abortion coverage in Pennsylvania. Further, it came to light that the state of New Mexico would be covering "elective abortions" in its federal high-risk pool, which was already enrolling citizens.

Pro-life groups raised the alarm and HHS reacted by announcing that it will act to exclude funds for abortion. Great news, but these examples only reaffirm the need to have someone in charge of watching the hen house?

The United States Bishops make the point that the above real life situation, as discovered in two different states, "illustrates once again the need for Congress to enact legislation clearly stating once and for all that funds appropriated by PPACA will not pay for abortions or for insurance coverage that includes abortion."

The reality is this: with a complicated law several thousands of pages in length, the possibility for loopholes is undoubtedly there, and with a pro-abortion administration that has surrounded itself with pro-abortion appointments, it is very difficult to keep up with the agencies who could funnel our tax dollars to abortion providers such as Planned Parenthood.

This is why we need to contact our national legislators and ask them to support Representative Chris Smith’s “No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act”, recently introduced. Please utilize the CAN website to contact our two senators and one representative and ask for their commitment to ensure our tax dollars do not fund abortions. You can read more about this and other efforts in the links below.

Related Articles:

Pro-Life Chair Welcomes HHS Exclusion of Abortion from Federal Insurance Program, Calls For Permanent Law by the USCCB, www.usccb.org

“No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act” Introduced by James Tillman, LifeSiteNews.com

Ground-breaking Bill Would Ban Tax-Funded Abortions -- For Good by Colin Mason, pop.org (Population Research Institute)

John Smeaton Talks to LSN’s Hilary White about the Role of the Catholic Church in the Pro-Life Fight

By John Smeaton | LifeSiteNews.com

When I was in Rome, earlier this month, I met Hilary White, the well-known writer for LifeSiteNews.com Hilary describes herself on her blog as "an Anglo-Canadian writer, researcher and art student recently re-assigned by God to Rome and desperately sand-bagging in sight of the coming flood." Read more...
WASHINGTON—Archbishop Joseph Kurtz of Louisville, chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage, expressed grave concern regarding recent rulings by a federal judge in Massachusetts rejecting the definition of marriage as between one man and one woman.

Archbishop Kurtz offered his remarks after two rulings on July 8 that held that section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional. Section 3 provides that for purposes of federal statutes, regulations, and rulings, “marriage” means the legal union of one man and one woman.

“Marriage – the union of one man and one woman – is a unique, irreplaceable institution. The very fabric of our society depends upon it. Nothing compares to the exclusive and permanent union of husband and wife. The state has a duty to employ the civil law to reinforce – and, indeed, to privilege uniquely – this vital institution of civil society. The reasons to support marriage by law are countless, not least to protect the unique place of husbands and wives, the indispensable role of fathers and mothers, and the rights of children, who are often the most vulnerable among us. And yet, a judge has decided that a marriage-reinforcing law like DOMA fails to serve even a single, minimally rational government interest. On behalf of the bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage, I express grave concern over these dangerous and disappointing rulings which ignore even the most apparent purposes of marriage and thus offend true justice,” he said.

The court rulings were based on two separate lawsuits which had been filed in Massachusetts. One ruling states that section 3 of DOMA violates the equal protection principles of the Fifth Amendment Due Process Clause (see Gill v. Office of Personnel Management). The other ruling holds that section 3 of DOMA violates the Tenth Amendment and the Spending Clause (see Commonwealth of Mass. v. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services).

In the Gill ruling, U.S. District Judge Joseph Tauro commented that, “as irrational prejudice plainly never constitutes a legitimate government interest,” section 3 of DOMA is unconstitutional.

“To claim that defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman is somehow irrational, prejudiced, or even bigoted, is a great disservice not only to truth but to the good of our nation,” Archbishop Kurtz said. “Marriage exists prior to the state and is not open to redefinition by the state. The role of the state, instead, is to respect and reinforce marriage. Thursday’s decision, by contrast, uses the power of the state to attack the perennial definition of marriage, reducing it merely to the union of any two consenting adults. But only a man and a woman are capable of entering into the unique, life-giving bond of marriage, with all of its specific responsibilities. Protecting marriage as only the union of one man and one woman is not merely a legitimate, but a vital government interest.”

The USCCB Office of General Counsel noted that the two court rulings are mistaken, both on the basis of the unique meaning of marriage, and because nothing in the Constitution forbids Congress from defining “marriage” – as that term is used in federal statutes, regulations, and rulings—as the union of one man and one woman.

For more information, please visit the USCCB’s website on this issue at: www.usccb.org/marriageuniqueforareason

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**Fabric of Society Depends on Basic Legal Definition of Marriage**
**Position Protects Roles of Fathers, Mothers**
**Marriage Existed Before State, Not Open To Redefinition**

www.usccb.org

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**Divorce, Abortion and Gay “Marriage” Inevitable Products of Secularist Enlightenment:**
**A Conversation with Christopher Ferrara**

By Hilary White | LifeSiteNews.com

GARDONE RIVIERA, July 19, 2010 (LifeSiteNews.com) – The roots of the anti-life and anti-family movement in law around the world go deep into the history of philosophical errors of the 18th century, a pro-life legal expert told LifeSiteNews.com (LSN) recently. “Legal positivism,” or the idea that “the law is whatever is posited,” is an idea that is divorced from 3000 years of the legal philosophy of the west, said Christopher Ferrara. It is also an idea that has resulted, inevitably, in legalized abortion, contraception and “gay marriage.”

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**Pro-Life Billboard in Mitchell**

The Mitchell Knights of Columbus have sponsored this billboard located along Interstate 90 just west of Mitchell. The baby and Grandpa are members of Holy Spirit Parish in Mitchell. What a wonderful witness to the gift of life to the thousands of motorists who travel the Interstate each day. If you would like to see a similar billboard in your area, please contact our office.
Meditation

"Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death.’ The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son’s Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians: In giving birth you kept your virginity; in your Dormition you did not leave the world, O Mother of God, but were joined to the source of Life. You conceived the living God and, by your prayers, will deliver our souls from death.”  (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 966)

Prayer

Assumption Novena for Life - August 7th - 15th

Lord Jesus Christ, You have conquered the power of death and opened for humanity the hope of eternal life in body and soul. You granted your Mother a share in heavenly glory, and did not allow decay to touch her body. As we prepare for the Feast of the Assumption, grant us new confidence in the victory of life over death, and renewed reverence for the human body. As we honor Mary, Assumed into Heaven, may we proclaim the hope of Your Gospel: that you want every human life seated on your throne. May that hope strengthen us to protect every life here on earth. You live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

Recommended Reading

Won by Love
By Norma McCorvey
Jane Roe of Roe v. Wade, speaks out for the unborn as she shares her new conviction for life. Once an abortion activist, Norma shares the internal and external events that led to her baptism and her pro-life convictions.

In addition, please read this supplement to the book, “My Journey into the Catholic Church”, to learn how Norma came home to the faith that she remembered fondly from childhood, and to which she seemed pulled to throughout her life.

Upcoming Events

Life Chain Link Prayer with Bishop Paul J. Swain
Planned Parenthood on 41st Street, Sioux Falls
Tuesday, August 17th, 12:00 noon
To learn more about, and to sign up to participate in this prayer ministry, please visit the Life Chain Link Page of the Respect Life Website.

WHAT: Fall Conference
WHERE: Holy Trinity Parish, Huron, SD
WHEN: Saturday, October 2, 2010
Save the date. More information to come!