



Charity Isn't Proselytizing, It's Professing Considers Identity of Catholic Social Work

DENVER, Colorado,
JUNE 24, 2011
(Zenit.org) (<http://www.zenit.org/>) - As the

Vatican calls the Church's international charity organization, Caritas Internationalis, to a deeper

and more visible Catholic identity, some have suggested that Church leaders are indicating that social work—if it bears the title Catholic—has to be gloved in proselytizing.

That's not the case, says Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver, who addressed a meeting of the Catholic Social Workers National Association on Tuesday.

Though the 66-year-old prelate did begin his address with a clear affirmation of Catholic identity, he went on to say that this identity has nothing to do with forcing the faith on the needy.

"Everything in Catholic social ministry begins and ends with Jesus Christ," he said. "If it doesn't, it isn't Catholic. And if our social work isn't deeply, confidently and explicitly Catholic in its identity, then we should stop using the word 'Catholic.' It's that simple."

Archbishop Chaput proposed that Christian charity is always a material and a religious act.

"To be authentic, Christian charity must be free and must be motivated to share God's love with others, in addition to offering material aid," he said.

Where does sharing the faith come in?

Archbishop Chaput proposed that "Christian charity doesn't require that we proselytize, that we speak out loud about our love for Jesus Christ and his love for us, in every circumstance. Some-



times, for prudential reasons, this is unwise. And Christian truth, even when openly professed, should never be offered in a coercive way."

"But," he added, "where possible and fruitful, acts of Christian charity should clearly witness our Catholic faith and our love for Jesus Christ."

The prelate spelled this out in two of the nine characteristics that he offered as distinguishing marks for Catholic charity work.

"Every Catholic social ministry, along with providing material aid, should allow for the possibility of verbally professing the Gospel, as prudence permits," he said.

But, "and this should be obvious," Archbishop Chaput added, "no Catholic charitable worker should ever engage in coercive proselytization. He or she should always embody respect for an individual's freedom and be governed by humility and common sense."

Success of Spina Bifida Study Opens Fetal Surgery Door

—by Pam Belluck

NY Times, Feb. 9, 2011 Article

—excerpt from *Bio Quarterly*

*A Publication of The Bioethics Network of Ohio
Spring 2011, Vol. 21, No. 1*

. . . Now, for the first time, a rigorous clinical trial shows that fetal surgery can help babies with a condition that is not usually life-threatening. Babies with a form of spina bifida, a debilitating spinal abnormality, were more likely to walk and experience fewer neurological problems if operated on before being born rather than afterward.

The \$22.5 million study, long awaited by experts and published online Wednesday in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, is likely to galvanize interest in trying to address problems before birth, including operating on serious heart defects and bladder blockages, and potentially using fetal bone marrow or stem cell transplants for sickle cell anemia and immune disorders . . .

From the Director

There are many hardships in the world and many decisions to make in the midst of such hardships. Making decisions without a well formed conscience or without respect for human life seems to be a common occurrence in the world. I understand that when hardships hit, our emotions can get the best of us and make decisions difficult. I also understand that if our conscience is formed without a baseline commitment to a respect for every human life, inconsistency and randomness seem to happen.

Recently two phone calls came into the Catholic Charities offices, mine and another, within a couple of hours of each other. Both callers named a similar problem, but the solutions they were considering were drastically different. The solutions did have something very basic in common. Neither solution was in compliance with Catholic moral teaching, yet both callers were Catholic and seeking help from the Church. Both calls had very serious ramifications for another person's life. Here's what happened.

My colleague received a phone call from someone who was experiencing difficulty in their marriage. Pain and suffering was expressed. Of course, my co-worker was offering compassion as well as suggestions to work towards improving the marriage. The caller said that they had a different idea. Since infertility was an issue, the solution the caller initiated was in vitro fertilization (IVF) to conceive a child and reduce the stress on the marriage.

Later that day, I received a phone call about another couple with marital challenges. In this instance a child was already conceived, but the caller said an abortion was needed to reduce their marital stress.

Each couple was looking for a solution to their marital problems. Each solution, though very different, violated basic human dignity of one or more children of God. Each solution to their marriage problem would cause the

end of another person's life, the unborn child or the embryos created but not wanted in the IVF process.

This projection of problems leading to the destruction of life is not limited to marriage. In our society, many lives are ended that are somehow a burden or inconsequential to people experiencing hardship.

There is article after article addressing poverty and starvation in our world. Most of these articles find abortion as a solution to the problem. They say our world is over populated, so to reduce suffering fewer children should be born. The Church says not. Studies show that there are enough resources in the world to feed and provide clean water to every person. However, our resources are often diverted to other things such as war, over consumption and other non-essentials for life. Again in hardship, innocent lives are offered as a solution.

In reference to the end of life, there is much talk about dying with dignity that seems to divert suffering to the vulnerable. Proponents of physician-assisted suicide feel that if you are too disabled or suffer from the wrong disease, you are a burden to family and society. Again, is the only solution to the hardship of caring for the disabled, sick and dying an end to their life?

A consistent commitment to life raises up for us different solutions to life's problems. Knowing that each person is created in God's image and respecting the inherent dignity of every person which that understanding implies, can change the course of our own lives and the whole world so that life is honored first, when hardships come along.

—Peggy Gerovac

When your loved one's baby is given a prenatal diagnosis

—from "good news!" Fall 2010

Focus on the baby, not the diagnosis. "Use the baby's name," she recommends. "Moms love to hear the name of their baby. We tell moms to name the baby right away; then the baby is your little Joseph, not the diagnosis. We warn against praying for healing unless it's something that can be fixed, like a heart condition, because you're still focusing on the diagnosis and not the dignity of that little person."

Be present, even when it's easier not to be. When parents are in this situation, some of their friends disappear. "It's just human nature," she says. "It's an uncomfortable situation, and nobody's prepared for it." Stick

around, but don't offer trite comments. It is better to say things like, "I don't know what to say, but whatever you need, I'm here," or "This must be so terrible for you. I'm sorry."

Tell them about the Be Not Afraid Ministry. Point them to the website, which shares people's stories about specific prenatal diagnoses and genetic conditions, offers a support forum and more. "Ask, 'Do you mind if I give them your number?' and then contact me," Sandy says. Parents don't have to be Catholic to receive support from this ministry.



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Vatican's UN Official Outlines Doctrine on Nuclear Weapons Says a World Without Nuclear Arms Is Possible, Urgent

KANSAS CITY, Missouri, JULY 6, 2011
(Zenit.org (<http://www.zenit.org/>))



Archbishop Francis Chullikatt made this assertion Saturday, not in the U.N. offices in New York, but in Kansas City. He was invited by that diocesan Human Rights Office to give an overview of

Church teaching on nuclear weapons.

His address was part of a diocesan endeavor to educate the public on Church doctrine in this matter, efforts which responded to a proposed nuclear weapon parts plant in Kansas City. The extensive address considered the history of the Church's position on the question of nuclear weapons.

"New attention is being paid to the unresolved problem of 20,000 nuclear weapons located at 111 sites in 14 countries," the prelate said. "More than half the population of the world lives in a nuclear-armed country. Each year, nations spend \$100 billion on maintaining and modernizing their nuclear arsenals."

"The indiscriminate use and devastating effects of nuclear weapons have led the Church to abhor any use of nuclear weapons," he added.

The 58-year-old India-native said that the fathers of the Second Vatican Council, though advocating a universal prohibition against war, "with the understanding they had at that time, seemed to have rather reluctantly accepted the strategy of nuclear deterrence. The accumulation of arms, they said, serves 'as a deterrent to possible enemy attack.'"

Pope John Paul II clarified in a 1982 address to the United Nations that " 'deterrence' based on balance, certainly not as an end in itself but as a step along the way toward a progressive disarmament, may still be judged morally acceptable."

"This statement made clear that nuclear deterrence during the Cold War years could only be acceptable if it led to progressive disarmament. What is intended therefore is not nuclear deterrence as a single, permanent policy," Archbishop Chullikatt noted. "Here lies the central question of

deterrence: The Church's moral acceptance of nuclear deterrence was always conditioned on progress toward their elimination."

In the wake of the Cold War, international pressure increased to halt the proliferation of nuclear arms.

The Church's efforts also increased, becoming focused "on challenging what we came to see as the institutionalization of deterrence," the prelate said. "Deterrence was not being considered anymore as an interim measure.

Rather, nuclear-weapon states started to pursue nuclear advantage, maintaining that nuclear weapons were fundamental to their security doctrines."

The Holy See reiterated its position that deterrence was never accepted as a permanent measure and was tolerated only as "a step on the way towards progressive nuclear disarmament," he said.

Giving Hope to Persons with Cognitive Impairments

Human beings *as such* are persons with intrinsic dignity and worth. Since progressive cognitive impairments do not in any way undermine or reduce one's humanity, those living with such impairments are persons and continue to have moral status. They are to be valued and treated as having dignity and worth equal to that of other members of the human family.

Christians understand the intrinsic dignity and worth of human beings to rest, above all, on God's love for every human being and the call of every human being to communion with God.

Every human being is a unity and a totality of biological, psychological (emotional and intellectual), social and spiritual aspects. No human being is reducible to only a part, or function, of is or her whole being. For example, the irreversible loss or destruction of intellectual capacities in a person does not entail that he or she is reduced to being only a biological entity deprived of his or her spiritual capacities.

The notion of the unity of body and soul is fundamental to the Christian understanding of the human person and of God's plan of creation and redemption. It underlies the Catholic Church's teachings on the order of creation, the incarnation of Christ, his passion, death, and resurrection, the institution of the Church and the sacraments, and the resurrection of the dead.

—*excerpts from The National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly, Autumn 2010, Vol. 10, No. 3*

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two-minus-one-pregnancy

"Things would have been different if we were 15 years younger or if we hadn't had children already or if we were more financially secure," she said later. "If I had conceived these twins naturally, I wouldn't have reduced this pregnancy, because you feel like if there's a natural order, then you don't want to disturb it. But we created this child in such an artificial manner—in a test tube, choosing an egg donor, having the embryo placed in me—and somehow, making a decision about how many to carry seemed to be just another choice. The pregnancy was all so consumerish to begin with, and this became yet another thing we could control."

"She and her husband worked out this moral calculation on their own, and they intend to never tell anyone about it. Jenny is certain that no one, not even her closest friends, would understand, and she doesn't want to be the object of their curiosity or feel the sting of their judgment."

—Jenny, 45, waiting for "fetal reduction" procedure

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/14/magazine/the-two-minus-one-pregnancy.html?pagewanted=7&_r=2

The Pope on Condoms And HIV/AIDS

—excerpt from *Ethics & Medics*
March 2001, Vol. 36, No. 3



One reason for the lack of improvement in preventing the spread of AIDS, [said Edward C. Green, Harvard School of Public Health] is "risk compensation. That is, when people think they're made safe by using condoms at least some of the time, they actually engage in riskier sex." Another factor is that people rarely use condoms in steady relationships because this would imply a lack of trust. Studies show that the spread of AIDS is more prevalent in steady relationships than in high-risk groups. Moreover, those involved in steady relationships generally have two or more sex partners who overlap in time, creating a giant, invisible web of relationships through which HIV/AIDS spreads. In short, condom use is ineffective precisely because of the banalization of sexuality.

Important Points About What the Church Teaches About Immigration Policy

—excerpt from *Catholic Update*, May 2011
St. Anthony Messenger Press

Immigration is a moral issue and immigration laws impact human beings and their welfare. It is thus important to understand the full reality of immigration and our immigration system.

What are the elements of comprehensive immigration reform?

- A comprehensive immigration policy change would include a worker program allowing people to enter the country legally to do work needed here.
- Comprehensive immigration policy change would include a pathway to citizenship for the 12 million people who are in the country illegally.

We must continue to educate the American public and our Catholic people about the need for a comprehensive and humane solution to this problem. As a moral matter, we cannot continue to exploit and dehumanize these brothers and sisters, who simply want to survive.



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For Life is a quarterly publication of the Pro Life Office, Catholic Charities, Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, as an educational service for the people of this diocese.

The mission of the Pro Life Office is to proclaim the sanctity and value of human life as a gift from God and the foundation of human dignity, and work to ensure the quality of life at all stages of existence. This office encourages a Consistent Ethic of Life approach in promoting reverence for life, which is rooted in the Gospel and teachings of the Church.

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The United States' Response to Human Trafficking: Achievements and Challenges



—*excerpts from The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Department of Migration and Refugee Services*

This commitment to end slavery in all its forms is rooted in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It forbids acts or enterprises that, for any reason, lead to the enslavement of human beings—to their being bought, sold, and ex-

changed like merchandise, in disregard for their personal dignity. During the Second Vatican Council in 1965, the Catholic Church reaffirmed its historic concern about human trafficking, stating that “slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children, [and] disgraceful working conditions where [people] are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed. They poison human society ... and are supreme dishonor to the Creator.”

Since that time, Papal teaching has reflected this concern. In his Letter to Women in 1995, Pope John Paul II pointed out the broader implications of this affront to human dignity in 2002, adding that “The alarming increase in the trade in human beings is one of the pressing political, social, and economic problems associated with the process of globalization; it presents a serious threat to the security of individual nations and a question of international justice which cannot be deferred.”

The U.S. Bishops have also been vocal in their opposition to human trafficking. In 2004, Bishop Thomas Wenski, then Chair of the USCCB Committee on Migration, declared that “The Catholic Church...in the United States stands ready to work with our government to end this scourge. We cannot rest until trafficking in human persons is eliminated from the globe.” Addressing the need for eradicating the demand which fuels the illicit trade in human beings, the Conference of Catholic Bishops noted that “human trafficking will never be truly defeated without eliminating the consumerism that feeds it and prosecuting those actors in receiving countries, including our own, that benefit because of the exploitation of vulnerable human beings.”

POISONING HUMAN SOCIETY

“Furthermore, whatever is opposed to life itself, such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, or willful self-destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on the body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where [people] are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed. They poison human society, but they do more harm to those who practice them than those who suffer from the injury.”

—*Gaudium et Spes, 24*



Makes you go hmmm....

(A Column of Quotes)

Life is always a good, because it is the manifestation of God in the world, a sign of his presence, the footprint of his glory.”

—*Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio
Archbishop of Buenos Aires
and Primate of Argentina*

“If you can't take care of your disabled babies, don't throw them away or leave them on the street. Bring them here.”

—*Pastor Lee Jong-rak, 57, wrote on the baby
Drop box outside his door in South Korea,
where parents leave their unwanted
disabled children.*

“It's very tragic, because the very government born out of a need for freedom ... is not only saying that human life is not going to be protected, but wants to discriminate against those of us who are trying to protect human life,” said Hilliard, who also has degrees in nursing and canon law.

—*Marie Hilliard, director of bioethics and public
policy at the National Catholic Bioethics Center
(NCBC)*

*She increasingly gets calls from young people
asking if they can go into health care, given the
threats to conscience rights.*

“Far from protecting the dignity of those who are seriously ill and suffering, a euthanasia law would undermine dignity by undermining our sense of individual worth, no matter our suffering and disability,” he argued.

—*Tonti-Filipini, associate dean at the
John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family
in Melbourne*

“Life is a gift from God. It isn't up to us to take it away. Whether you take an innocent life of a baby, or of a person who has committed a heinous act, it is still an act at our hands, and it makes us a less caring and less sensitive society.” Tom Neuville leading Republican on Minnesota's Senate Judiciary Committee, on Governor Pawlenty's efforts to reinstate the death penalty.

—*Minneapolis Star Tribune,
December 7, 2003*