



Summer 2012

Office for Social Concerns

Catholic Diocese of Columbus

Latest Updates

June 19 – Diocesan Senior Citizens Day Celebration

The 35th annual diocesan Senior Citizens Day Celebration will be held on Tuesday, June 19, at St. Cecilia Church, 434 Norton Road., Columbus. Bishop Frederick F. Campbell will celebrate Mass at 10:30 a.m. Mass will be followed by a luncheon. Registration for the celebration is \$10. This annual event is a great opportunity to meet with seniors from around the Catholic Diocese of Columbus. To register, please send a check payable to the Office for Social Concerns, Catholic Diocese of Columbus, 197 E. Gay Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. For questions, call (614) 241-2540 or email at socmailbox@colsdio.org. Registrations are requested by June 14.

June 21 to July 4 – Fortnight for Freedom

The U.S. Catholic Bishops called for "A Fortnight for Freedom," a two-week period from June 21 to July 4 -- beginning with the feasts of St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher and ending with Independence Day - to focus "all the energies the Catholic community can muster" for religious liberty. For more information, contact the diocesan Office for Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540 or go online at www.colsdio.org/Offices/SocialConcernsOfficefor/ReligiousLiberty.aspx.

June 27 – Public Forum on Religious Freedom

A Public Forum on Religious Liberty will be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, June 27, at Immaculate Conception Church, 414 E. North Broadway,



Columbus. This forum is part of the diocesan observance of the Fortnight for Freedom. Speakers include the Most Rev. Frederick F. Campbell, Bishop of Columbus; Sr. Pauline Ross, O.Carm, administrator of Mother Angeline McCrory Manor, and Dr. Bill Murphy, professor of moral theology of the Josephinum. The forum is free and open to the public. For more information, contact the diocesan Office for Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540 or go online at www.socialconcerns.colsdio.org.

June 30 – Morning Prayer – Fortnight for Freedom

Join us for a special morning prayer led by the Most Rev. Frederick F. Campbell, Bishop of Columbus, on Saturday, June 30, at 9:30 a.m. in St. Joseph Cathedral, 212 E. Broad Street, Columbus. The morning prayer is part of the diocesan observance of the Fortnight for Freedom. For more information, contact the diocesan Office for Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540 or go online at www.socialconcerns.colsdio.org.

July 21 – St. Stephen’s Community House’s BRAVO! For the Children

St. Stephen’s Community House’s annual BRAVO! For the Children event will be held on Saturday, July 21, 2012, at the Robert C. Walter Center, St. Charles Preparatory School, 2010 E. Broad Street, Columbus. Based in the Columbus Linden neighborhood, St. Stephen’s provides child care; comprehensive

services for seniors; emergency services such as food, utility and prescription assistance; and educational and counseling resources for youth and families. The BRAVO! event helps support the vital programs of St. Stephen’s Community House. Questions and ticket requests can be directed to Renea Williams (614) 294-6347, ext 124.

Resources

For additional resources visit www.socialconcerns.colstdioc.org.

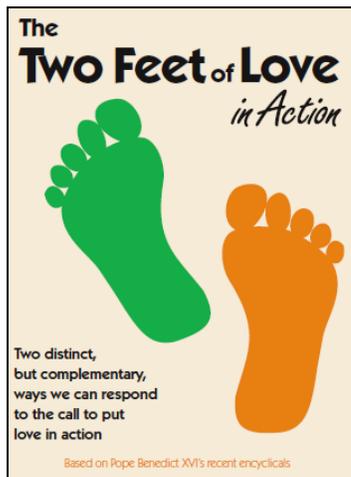
Faithful Citizenship

The campaign season is gearing up which provides us an opportunity to reflect on the priority issues for our nation. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops reissued their statement *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, which provides Church teaching about political responsibility and the important issues of our day. To read the statement and supplementary materials, visit www.faithfulcitizenship.org. To read about state level issues and faithful citizenship, visit the Catholic Conference of Ohio’s www.ohiocathconf.org/faithfulcitizenship/faithpolitics.htm.



Poverty Tour Video

Living in Poverty USA is a video produced by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development helps viewers understand the challenges of living at the Poverty Line. To view the video, go to <http://www.usccb.org/about/catholic-campaign-for-human-development/videos.cfm>. To learn more about the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, contact the diocesan CCHD Director at (614) 241-2540 or ecordle@colstdioc.org.



Two Feet of Love in Action

The USCCB’s Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development developed a newly revised model of the “Two Feet of Love in Action” which describes two distinct, but complementary, ways that we can put love in action. Social Justice and Charitable Works. For a copy of the handout and extensive session outline with activities and worksheets, go to <http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/resources-and-tools.cfm>.

Sacraments and Social Mission Series

The USCCB developed short, two-page handouts that can help Catholics who are preparing for the sacraments reflect on our Catholic call to mission in the world. Share this resource with catechists, religious educators, teachers, and all Catholics. The series can be found at www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/resources-and-tools.cfm.

Action Alerts

For current legislative action alerts visit www.socialconcerns.colsdioc.org.

Oppose HHS Mandate and Support Respect for Rights of Conscience Act

Last August, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a list of “preventive services for women” to be mandated in almost all private health plans under the new health care law. This will include sterilization, all FDA-approved birth control (such as the IUD, Depo-Provera, ‘morning-after’ pills, and the abortion-inducing drug Ella), and “education and counseling” to promote these to all “women of reproductive capacity.” HHS’s rule allows only *a very narrow* exemption for a “religious employer.” Religious organizations providing education, health care and charitable services to all in need cannot qualify for the exemption. On February 10, despite a storm of protest, President Obama adopted this policy as a final rule “without change” (*Federal Register*, 2/15/12, 8725). Religious organizations that cannot qualify for the exemption will have an extra year to comply; but before the end of that period, an additional rule will be issued to make sure that their employees receive the mandated coverage despite the employer’s objection.

Additional Rulemaking: In a March 21 notice proposing additional rulemaking, the Administration suggests various ways the new mandate can be applied to religious organizations (*Federal Register*, 3/21/12, 16501-08). The public has until June 19 to submit comments. The fundamental legal and moral concerns about government intrusion into religious ministries are not addressed. Whatever funding and administrative mechanisms are ultimately chosen, many deeply religious institutions that serve the common good will be forbidden to provide their own employees or students with health coverage consistent with their values. For comments by the U.S. bishops, see: nchla.org/datasource/idocuments/USCCB-ANPRM5.15.12.pdf.

Corrective Legislation: The Respect for Rights of Conscience Act (H.R. 1179, S. 1467) will ensure that those who participate in the health care system “retain the right to provide, purchase, or enroll in health coverage that is consistent with their religious beliefs and moral convictions.” On March 1, the Senate voted, 51-yes, 48-no, to table this bill when it was presented as Senate Amendment 1520 to the Transportation Authorization Bill (Vote Number 24). As Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO), the amendment’s sponsor, stated: “This fight is not over.” Continue to urge your Representatives and Senators to support and pass this bill.

For more information on religious liberty and conscience rights, see: www.usccb.org/conscience.

ACTION: To send an e-mail message to HHS regarding the March 21 rulemaking notice and a message to Congress in support of the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act [click here](#).---Written comments can be sent by U.S. Mail to: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Attention: CMS-9968-ANPRM, P.O. Box 8016, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850.---Additional Congressional contact info can be found on Members’ web sites at: www.senate.gov and www.house.gov.

Message to HHS: The Administration’s “advance notice” does not correct the fundamental problems in its contraceptive mandate.

Both the coercive mandate itself, and its extremely narrow exemption for “religious employers,” remain unchanged. Almost all private health plans, even those sponsored by many religious organizations, will be required to pay for or facilitate coverage for sterilization and all FDA-approved “contraceptives,” including drugs that can cause abortion. This coverage will be provided “automatically” to employees and their dependents, including minors, whether the employees want the coverage or not. Employers will have no right to act on their values when they provide health coverage. Employees, and those who provide or purchase health insurance outside the employer context, will have no freedom to opt out.

I urge you to allow all organizations and individuals to offer, sponsor and obtain health coverage that does not violate their moral and religious convictions.

Message to Congress: Please support and work for passage of the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act (H.R. 1179, S. 1467). The Administration’s decision to mandate coverage of sterilization and contraceptives, including drugs that can cause an abortion, makes passage of this measure especially urgent. The March 21 HHS notice of additional rulemaking does not change the coercive mandate itself or its extremely narrow

exception for “religious employers.” The Respect for Rights of Conscience Act will ensure that the religious liberty and conscience rights of all participants in our nation’s health care system are respected.

WHEN: The deadline for comments to HHS is June 19. Please act today! Thanks!

For the latest updates, prayer and education resources, and action alerts about the HHS Mandate and recent threats to Religious Liberty, visit the U.S. Catholic Bishops’ website at www.usccb.org/conscience.

Urge Your Senators to Support a Fair Farm Bill

Take the opportunity to visit, call, or write your Senators and urge them to support a Farm Bill that will help feed hungry people here at home and abroad, support growth in U.S. rural communities and promote stewardship of God’s creation. The Senate will vote soon on its version of 2012 Farm Bill and their decisions will impact the lives of hungry people at home and abroad and the lives of our brothers and sisters around the world.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, in partnership with Catholic Relief Services, Catholic Charities USA, and the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, have identified some positive provisions in the bill that we support as well as some provisions that need improving. We ask you to set up a district meeting with your Senators and urge them to support policies in the Farm Bill that:

- Oppose cuts or harmful changes in domestic hunger and nutrition programs such as SNAP (formerly food stamps) that will harm hungry and vulnerable people;
- Maintain funding for the Food for Peace Food Aid program to combat chronic hunger and provide nutritious foods to poor and malnourished families overseas;
- Preserve funding for overseas anti-hunger programs that provide resiliency in the face of emergencies and are funded through the Food for Peace development "safe box";
- Fully fund important conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and other programs that promote stewardship of God’s creation;
- Preserve funding for rural development programs such as Value-Added Producer Grants, the Rural Micro-Entrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP) and other programs that helps rural communities thrive and;
- Redirect subsidies to small and medium-sized farms, especially minority owned farms and ranches that truly need assistance. Savings from reductions should be used to fund domestic nutrition and international assistance programs.

CURRENT SITUATION: The Senate is considering Farm Bill legislation that will reduce agriculture funding over 10 years by \$23 billion. This includes over \$4 billion in proposed cuts to the food stamp (SNAP) program and over \$6 billion in cuts to conservation programs. At this time of continued unemployment and high levels of poverty, the Senate should oppose cuts to effective and efficient anti-hunger programs that help people live in dignity.

The Senate’s proposal calls for ending some subsidies (direct payments) and this is a step in the right direction. Further reductions and re-directing subsidies that disproportionately go to larger growers and agribusiness are still needed. Savings from cuts to subsidies should be used to support hunger and nutrition programs that feed hungry, poor and vulnerable people at home and abroad.

The bishops acknowledge that reducing future unsustainable deficits is important but remind Congress that their decisions are not just economic in nature but are "political and moral choices with human consequences." As pastors and teachers they offer several moral criteria to help guide difficult budgetary decisions. Read their recent

letter on potential SNAP cuts <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/hunger-food-nutrition/upload/Joint-Letter-to-Senate-2012-04-16.pdf>

USCCB POSITION/CHURCH TEACHING: Last October in his Address on the Occasion of World Food Day 2011, Pope Benedict stated that "liberation from the yoke of hunger is the first concrete expression of the right to life." The U.S. bishops join the Holy Father in asserting that food is a fundamental human right. In, *For I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food*," the bishops wrote, "the primary goals of agriculture policies should be providing food for all people and reducing poverty among farmers and farm workers in this country and abroad." The U.S. bishops urge Congress to join them and other Christian leaders by forming a "circle of protection" around programs that serve hungry, poor and vulnerable people.



Your voice is needed now to make sure that the Farm Bill feeds the hungry, preserves God's creation, and supports small family farmers and rural America. To set up an appointment and meet with Senators, visit http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm where you will find their websites with district office address and telephone information. To send an e-mail to your Senators, click <http://www.capwiz.com/catholicbishops/issues/alert/?alertid=61361921&type=CO>.

Immigration

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops urge Congress to block the extension of the E-Verify Program in the absence of comprehensive immigration reform. The conference also urges passage of the DREAM Act. For more information about these issues visit the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Justice for Immigrants Campaign at www.justiceforimmigrants.org.

Domestic and International Issues

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops urge action on a number of domestic and international issues which include conscience protection and religious freedom, domestic and international poverty assistance programs, and deficit reduction discussions. To view policy positions and action alerts, visit www.usccb.org/jphd.

Urgent Food Need at St. Francis Center

The St. Francis Center is located in McArthur, Ohio, in the Southeastern part of our diocese, serving our brothers and sisters with their most basic needs of food and clothing. Our Center is in a dire predicament. The food bank from which we purchase our food has a nearly bare warehouse. We have not been able to purchase a full supply of canned goods for several weeks and are very concerned for our neighbors in need. In order to serve all those requesting assistance we have decreased the amount of food given to our bigger families. We are asking for any assistance that the individuals and parishes are able to give. Canned food drives are wonderful. Things like peanut butter, soup, tuna, applesauce, corn, green beans and boxes of macaroni and cheese would allow us to continue to serve our community. If a financial donation is easier for you, we have a Save A Lot and an Odd Lots not too far and will be able to purchase items there, albeit at a much higher price than at the food bank. Please contact me, Lisa Keita at 740-596-5820 or at lkeita04@hotmail.com. Our address is 108 W. Mill Street, McArthur, Ohio 45651. God Bless you and Thank you for helping us to serve these children of God.

Information and Response Network

If you would like to receive legislative action alerts and upcoming events from the diocesan Office for Social Concerns via email, subscribe to the Information and Response Network. Please send an email to socmailbox@colsdio.org. Don't forget to visit our website at www.socialconcerns.colsdio.org.