

Fall 2001

«Congress Shall Make No Law»:

Catholic Charities' Landmark Struggle In Defense of Religious Freedom

by Rev. Michael F. Kiernan and James F. Sweeney



Inside This Issue:

President's Perspective	2
Director's Desk	2
Ask The Expert	3
Capitolize on NFP	4
Clergy Corner	7
Esquina del Clero	7
Regional News	7

A landmark struggle is quietly being waged in the California court system—a clash between the fundamentally important principle of religious freedom and an attempt by the government to establish secularism as the official State religion. You may have read about this struggle in your local newspaper. Recently, the California Supreme Court granted review in a case innocuously called *Catholic Charities of Sacramento, Inc. v. Superior Court*. This case pits the notion of unchecked majoritarianism against the concepts of liberty of conscience and religious freedom as bulwarks against tyranny. The opponent's objectives are clear: marginalize religion as a factor in the American political discourse and public life and bring religious institutions to heel before the power of the state, relegating them to third-class citizenship in an emerging secular civil polity.

Catholic Charities is literally defending its right to conduct its ministry of charity with integrity, according to the religious and moral values and beliefs that constitute its very reason for being. In the next few years, the California Supreme Court, and quite possibly the U.S. Supreme Court, may well decide whether

government has the right to regulate churches and religious institutions, whose religious views it finds "objectionable," in order to coerce conduct morally and religiously unacceptable to the churches being regulated. To make matters worse, if the State prevails, the Supreme Court will have expressly placed its imprimatur on the government making religious judgments, using patently theological criteria, and involving itself in quintessentially religious matters. Once government gets into the business of making religious judgments and deciding which religious beliefs are "acceptable" and which are "objectionable," the notion of religious freedom becomes largely meaningless. To suggest that the stakes are high in this struggle is, to say the least, an understatement.

Catholic Charities' battle in defense of religious freedom began two years ago with an unprecedented assault by the California Legislature upon the religious freedom rights of the Catholic Church in California. For the first time in California history, the Legislature deliberately targeted Catholic religious organizations, imposing a mandate upon them to provide prescription contraceptive insurance coverage for their employees despite the fact that legislators were fully aware that the Church's compliance with such a mandate was contrary to Catholic moral teaching and religious belief. A 1998 study done by the respected international consulting firm PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP established that 90% of California health plans already offered prescription contraceptive insurance coverage for California women. The existing widespread availability of, and insurance coverage for, these medications contradicted the authors' and sponsors' hyperbolic claim that this "gap" constituted a "crisis." Nonetheless, Assembly Speaker Bob Hertzberg and Senator Jackie Speier, as well as the bills' sponsor, Planned Parenthood Federation of California, proposed the mandate legislation, clearly attempting to

TO CONTACT CANFP:

www.canfp.org
Executive Office
 1217 Tyler St.
 Salinas, CA 93906
E-Mail
info@canfp.org
Phone
 1-831-443-3746
 (voice & fax)
 1-877-33-CANFP
 (toll free)

Freedom continued on P.5

President's Perspective



CANFP

frees

people's

minds

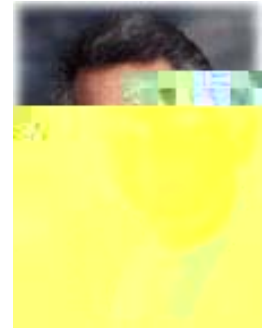
Freedom: Doesn't that word trigger a cascade of many emotions? What incredible foresight the founding fathers of America had to create a government that recognized there were areas of human existence that were "off limits" to the State (the inalienable rights of all human persons), and to create a rule of law and equality before the law as a "minimum moral framework" to allow the best of human achievement. Only through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit could such blessed, gifted documents as our Constitution and the Bill of Rights emerge.

We *are* a beacon to the world because our system of government allows us to maximally implement our potential as human beings—allows us to maximize our exercise of free will. Properly understood true freedom is the unlimited opportunity *to choose the good*, and because Americans have it we experience many wonderful examples of the generosity of our people. But we also see how truth may be suppressed, distorted, and ridiculed in a free society, thereby

leading people astray into making decisions that hurt them.

Why would people choose things that hurt them? It's a matter of our weak human nature. As the Greek philosophers so ably described, there are four levels of human happiness, and as we move up the scale to the more pervasive, enduring levels of happiness the amount of work and discipline to achieve them goes up. We are not willing to put out the effort to pursue the greatest level of happiness even though it is to our benefit.

Level one happiness is a satisfaction of our five senses (I am hungry/I eat)—immediate pleasure of short duration. Level two happiness is a satisfaction of my ego (I have a sense of control over things external to me)—I win at a game, have a great day at work. Level three happiness is when I become aware of the great "transcendental truths", those qualities that exist apart from the material universe (Truth, Goodness, Love, Beauty, Being), and desire to incorporate them into myself—I want to make the world a better place, I cannot help but look for the good in the other. Level four



Gregory Polito, MD, KM

happiness is to actively seek *unconditional* Truth, Goodness, Love, Beauty, Being—God Himself. I am a level four person if I "practice the presence of God" no matter what I am doing.

It is simple then: I hurt myself by choosing to act against my own human nature. I am trading an ephemeral, short-lived, shallow bit of lower level happiness for higher level long term peace and joy.

By our promotion of natural family planning CANFP frees people's minds from a culture that is hostile to God's truth about human reproduction. We will educate, encourage, and exhort an ever-widening audience to appreciate the beauty of human sexuality, and how this most intimate of marital acts is analogous to our unity with God after death. By your continued generosity we will help people choose the good by publicizing these truths.

Director's Desk

Sheila St. John

Why did God let this happen?" my daughter's 12 year old friend asked me, as she struggled to understand the images of evil she saw televised over and over again on Sept. 11th.

"God entrusted us with free will", began my clumsy attempt

at a response. I went on to explain that God has granted us the freedom to choose to love Him, or not — the freedom to choose good, or evil.

She didn't think we ought to be permitted such choices.

I asked her, "What kind of gift is our love, if not freely chosen?"

She pondered this for a few moments, deciding that we should be able to choose whether to love Him or not, but He should not permit us choose to do evil.

Which caused me to think aloud "Perhaps the decision to turn away from God's love IS the root of all evil?"

Desk continued on P.6

Ask The Expert



Q & A



Ask The Expert questions can be submitted through our web site, sent to the CANFP office, or emailed to experts@canfp.org

My niece is 11 years old. She started her period at age 10. She has been bleeding continuously for the last five weeks. Her pediatrician prescribed a low dosage birth control pill to stop the bleeding and regulate her periods. Is this appropriate treatment for such a young girl? Are there other, non-contraceptive, and natural treatments for such conditions? What are the dangers involved, first of all in the continuous bleeding, and secondly in the prescribed treatment? What could have caused this problem in the first place?

For teenagers, skipping periods, heavy bleeding, continuous bleeding and other abnormalities are very common. The reason for this is that the cyclical regulation of the ovarian hormones by the pituitary is not well established, and ovulation is not regular. So the lining of the uterus can build up so that it is too thick or disordered. Often the cause is a temporary excess of estrogen effect on the uterus without enough progesterone.

In the case of this young girl, the first thing is to determine the amount of bleeding - whether the bleeding is very heavy, involving clots, several soaked pads a day, etc. going on for a month, and anemia. Very mild cases of abnormal bleeding can just be observed without treatment or treated with just one course of hormones. Severe bleeding would require much closer watching and higher doses of hormones than prolonged, lighter, merely annoying bleeding.

For lighter spotting and bleeding, I would use oral natural micronized progesterone given for ten to twelve days out of the cycle, for one or two months at the most. For very heavy bleeding, it might be necessary to use estrogen and progesterone at the same time. Some insurance companies may not cover natural progesterone, which is sold in most pharmacies under the brand name, Prometrium. Natural micronized progesterone can also be obtained from compounding pharmacies. If necessary for financial reasons or because of more severe, heavy bleeding, Provera (an artificial progesterone-like hormone) could be used in addition to estrogen.

If this girl were a bit older, I would definitely recommend learning NFP charting from a certified instructor to help the hormonal therapy. Not only would she learn to appreciate her cycles, but it would also aid in her treatment and help determine when and if the cycles became ovulatory. Cooperative progesterone therapy, giving at the proper time in the cycle, is more specific therapy than giving the hormones by the calendar. But in the case of an 11-year old, I would let the mother determine whether the girl were sufficiently mature to learn to chart NFP cycles. Charting would definitely be superior to therapy by the calendar if the bleeding problem were persistent, rather than a one-time event.

About the recommendation for birth control pills: In our training as ob/gyn's, many of us were taught for both mild and severe



Dr. Mary Davenport is an obstetrician-gynecologist in private practice in El Sobrante, California. She is a Fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and an advisory board member for CANFP.

bleeding to use high-dose birth control pills (two or three a day for one week), and then for the young women to go off the pills to have an artificial period. We then were instructed to keep the young woman on birth control pills for at least a few cycles. I now think that it would be preferable to just use estrogen and progesterone/Provera in severe bleeding situations formulated as two separate pills. Although birth control pills combine estrogen and progesterone conveniently, there is a lot of baggage associated with their use that can be avoided by using different formulations of similar drugs. Most importantly, even if higher dose hormones are necessary over the short term to deal with a more severe bleeding problem, I absolutely would not KEEP a young woman on birth control pills. If she does not establish regular, normal periods soon and has recurrent abnormal bleeding, she can be given natural progesterone at intervals (minimum every three months) to prevent hemorrhage. For more severe, recurrent bleeding the young woman should be checked for clotting problems and thyroid disorders.

Capitolize on NFP: Now Is the Moment!

Winnie Neill, CNFPF



It's
my
goal
to
break
the
silence!

The Sacramento community is looking forward to welcoming you to the 9th Annual Conference of the California Association of Natural Family Planning, **Capitolize on NFP: Now is the Moment** on March 23, 2002 at the Lionsgate Hotel at McClellan Business Park. The conference will open with remarks from Sacramento's own Bishop Richard Garcia, and include presentations by Christopher West, Mercedes Wilson, and Oswaldo Lozano, among others.



Most Rev. Richard Garcia

Bishop Richard Garcia is a longtime supporter of NFP and a valued member of the Advisory Board of CANFP. A native Californian, he was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of San Francisco, and also served the Diocese of San Jose before being elevated to the Episcopacy as Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Sacramento in 1997.

Christopher West has been wowing audiences around the country with his exciting and insightful presentation on Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body. Formerly the Family Life Director for Archbishop Chaput

in Denver, Christopher now devotes himself fulltime to delivering this message: *"It's my goal to 'break the silence'. It's my goal to cut through the discomfort that often characterizes Catholic discussions of sexuality and talk frankly and openly about what few are willing to talk about at all. My candidness, my forthrightness is bound to disturb those who are accustomed to the status quo. But I am willing to venture into uncomfortable territory because countless lives are literally being destroyed by the misuse and abuse of sexuality. And it will continue to be passed from generation to generation until the Church—who alone offers the fullness of truth and freedom needed to lift this burden—speaks out."* His presentation is guaranteed to deepen your appreciation for the glory of the Catholic vision of man and woman and the incredible mind of Pope John Paul II.

Mercedes Wilson is well known to all as the Founder and Director of the Family of the Americas Foundation (FAF) and designer of the stamp record-keeping system for the Ovulation Method of Natural Family Planning now in use in over 100 countries. She has authored and produced numerous books and videos on NFP, including Love and Fertility, and Love & Family: Raising a Traditional Family in a Secular World. All who use, advocate, and teach NFP will be encouraged by her presentation of the exciting results of her research on the rarity of divorce among NFP users and the far reaching implications of this for the family, and society.

Anchoring the Spanish track will be Oswaldo Lozano speaking on the Theology of the Body. A professor of theology at the "Instituto Juan Pablo II para la Familia" in Monterrey, Mexico, he teaches courses on the Theology of the Body and the Sacramentality of Marriage at the college and masters level.

Consider coming a day early and/or staying through Sunday to enjoy the sights of Sacramento. In McClellan Park close to the hotel is the Aviation Museum. In downtown Sacramento, Old Sacramento holds the largest concentration of restored buildings in the West. The area is home to the California State Railroad Museum—featuring beautifully restored locomotives and cars from the 1860s to the 1960s; the Discovery Museum—showcasing Sacramento's rich cultural history, science and technology; the Sacramento Waterfront—depicting an 1870 riverside scene, complete with sailing vessels and paddle wheelers and many other historic sites. More than one hundred shops await your explorations where you can find antiques and collectibles, fine arts and crafts, jewelry, hats, homemade candy and treats, ethnic & imported goods and much more. Sit down to breakfast, brunch, lunch or dinner at one of the more than 20 fine restaurants. Or move up the street a few blocks and enjoy a tour of the State Capitol, visit the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Crocker Art Museum or the Towe Ford Museum.

Conference continued on P.7

*Now
the
State,
not the
Church,
will
decide
who is
Catholic*

“close the gap” left by Catholic religious institutions. For Hertzberg, Speier and Planned Parenthood, Catholic religious institutional employers were viewed as *the problem*—a problem to be “dealt with” by imposing the contraceptive mandate upon them.

The Catholic Church immediately objected to the absence of a “conscience clause” in the bill that would exempt Catholic religious institutions from being mandated to provide contraceptive insurance to employees of Church organizations and institutions and requested that such a provision be added. The legislative inclusion of such “conscience clauses” for religious organizations was, until recently, commonplace in the Legislature. But the environment in the California Legislature had changed. In 1999, as is the case today, the well-funded, politically influential pro-abortion lobby wields tremendous power in the California Legislature. Consequently, when the Catholic Church requested that a “conscience clause” be amended into the bills, Planned Parenthood vehemently objected to the inclusion of any exemption whatsoever for the Catholic Church. At a June 30, 1999 hearing before the Senate Insurance Committee, Kathy Kneer, the CEO of Planned Parenthood of California, testified that Planned Parenthood’s intention was “to close the gap in insurance coverage for contraception and prescription benefit plans. Our concern with granting an exemption [for religious

employers] is that that defeats the original purpose of the bill.”



James F. Sweeney

Consequently, when Speier, Hertzberg and their Planned Parenthood supporters turned their attention to the question of an exemption, they deliberately fashioned a narrow and vague exemption to cover as few Catholic religious institutions as possible, meticulously assuring that every possible institution, especially every Catholic hospital, social service agency, and educational institution was subject to the mandate. The exemption provision was painstakingly designed to deny exemption to most Catholic Church institutions as “religious employers.” More troubling, perhaps, was the Legislature’s effort to define what is, and what is not, “the Catholic Church,” using criteria that require the government to make judgments based upon religious criteria. Now, the State—not the Church—will decide who is “Catholic,” and who is not, and which ministries of the Church are “religious” and which are “secular.” Never before has the State ever so blatantly attempted to inject itself into the internal religious affairs of any Church, let alone the Catholic Church,

and taken upon itself to tell clergy and members of the faithful what is religious and what is not.

The Legislature deliberately targeted the Catholic Church, and its pro-life and pro-family religious beliefs, in order to coerce it into compliance with the pro-abortion, secularist political agenda of groups such as Planned Parenthood. Those who oppose the Church, and its teachings, want to marginalize us. They desire nothing more than to silence the Church’s voice as a moral force in support of justice for the poor, the unborn, the vulnerable, the sick, the prisoner, and the condemned. Their objective is clearly to silence the voice of the Church as a moral force in support of life and the dignity of human personhood. Their endgame is to coerce the Church into withdrawing from the public square and to forcibly secularize our healthcare, social service and educational ministries. Our Lord enjoined us to be leaven in the world. We cannot be “leaven” if we are marginalized, silenced and relegated to second-class citizenship. Following our Lord’s glorious example, we must heed His call to stand up for what is right and just, despite worldly contempt.

That is precisely why Catholic Charities, with the strong support of our bishops, is now defending the Church’s religious freedom rights and, more specifically, Catholic Charities’ right to conduct its ministry of charity with integrity, according to the religious beliefs and moral

Desk *continued*

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, God is offended by us only when we act against our own good.

As a contracepting society, we have been acting against our own good in the most intimate expressions of love—the marital embrace. Contraception is a rejection of God's great gift of love, by rejecting His design for married love, and the fruit of that love—children.

Is the decision to contracept a conscious rejection of God's love, a deliberate choice to *not* love and serve Him?

Of course not—at least not usually. Usually the “decision” to contracept is made in a void of information. It is much less a decision to contracept than an acceptance of a societal norm that contraception is just what you do. Usually the only conscious decision made is which method. Contraception is advertised on TV and magazines, promoted to teens, and advocated by our health care providers.

In contrast, where do we hear about NFP? Promoters lack the funding to advertise in media or medical journals, physicians receive little or no training in it, and there certainly is no “NFP rep” visiting their office (though be assured the pharmaceutical companies producing contraceptives are a regular visitor). Preachers have little to say on the topic, shying away from it as a decision between the woman and her doctor.

How *freely chosen* is contraception if it is the only option we are provided?



Sheila St. John
Executive Director, CANFP

CANFP is about changing the status quo. We exist to provide professional resources, accurate information, and heightened visibility of the healthy, safe, effective way to plan families: NFP.

Inserted in this newsletter you will find an order form for a weapon in the battle for true freedom, a packet of information to assist engaged and newly married couples in making more informed choices. God honors us with the gift of free will, and I am convinced that if family planning decisions were made in the light of the information in this packet, we would see newlyweds and oldyweds alike *freely* choosing to embrace God's design for married love.

Conference *continued*

To help you plan your conference expenses the registration will be \$140 per person for members, and \$165 per person for non-members, which includes breakfast, lunch, reception and evening banquet. Those who register by Feb. 28 will receive a \$30 discount (\$110 / member, and \$135 / non-members). Childcare can be reserved for a fee.



The hotel room rates are:

Standard (Queen) for 1-2 persons: \$69

Deluxe (two Doubles) for 1-2 person: \$79

Grand 2 Bedroom for 1-2 persons: \$119.

Additional person is \$12 (no charge for children under 12 in the same room as parents). Quoted rates guaranteed on a space available basis through Feb. 28, 2001. Request

CANFP rates when reserving the room, by calling toll free 1-866-866-7100.

Freedom *continued*

values that constitute its very reason for being. The Supreme Court will be called upon to decide whether the most fundamental philosophical beliefs of the Framers remain vital and valid today. The Founder Fathers had an abiding conviction that American liberty and the integrity of American government depended upon the right to religious freedom, profoundly believing that there was no more abhorrent form of tyranny than government coercing a person or institution to act against his or her conscience. Yet that is exactly what has happened here.

The fate of these fundamental freedoms now rests with the seven justices of the California Supreme Court. As the aftermath of the recent attack on our nation so movingly reaffirmed, we Americans are, at our core, a religious people. Despite trendy and worldly distractions, we have always historically respected and protected the religious freedom and liberty of conscience of all of our citizens. This long and distinguished history has now been imperiled by means of a direct, political attack. If the Court allows this abhorrent abrogation of our most precious rights to stand, our nation and our Church will suffer a grievous loss. We must all pray that these seven men and women, who have sworn to uphold our Constitution, will see through all of the rhetoric, political correctness and pro-abortion hyperbole and understand what is really at stake—our “first freedoms.”

Clergy Corner: Freedom in Christ

Fr. Michael Drury



Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; he has come to his people and set them free” (Lk 1:68). Freedom to worship the Lord without fear of persecution was cause for Zechariah to praise God. In Jesus, that freedom is realized, especially when we go so far as to worship by “offering our bodies as a living sacrifice.” (Rom 12:1)

Jesus offers us the life of true freedom. This includes the ability to make loving and life-giving sacrifices. At an earlier age, it was easy for me to criticize

those who didn't make sacrifices of time, loss of personal comforts, etc. in following Christ. Now, after 17 years of ordination and 47 years of life, I am much more understanding of those who struggle to give every aspect of their lives to God, including couples who find it difficult to use NFP. I also realize much more than before what *Humanae Vitae* means in emphasizing the need for prayer, the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the encouragement of a genuine life of Christian discipline (cf. no.

25). The strength comes from Christ and his Holy Spirit, not just from gritting our teeth and trying harder.

With sacrifice comes blessing. The cross precedes the resurrection. I believe that struggles to teach and practice NFP will bring lasting results of joy, peace and true freedom, both in marriage and in society. And that's worth it!



Father Michael Drury is a member of the Oratorian community and serves as chaplain at the Presidio of Monterey.

Esquina del Clero:

La Libertad Para Seguir A Cristo †

Padre Michael Drury



Bendito sea el Señor, Dios de Israel. El ha visitado su pueblo y lo liberó. (Lc.1:68) La libertad para adorar a Dios sin temer la persecución era el motivo de esta alabanza de Zecarías. En Jesús, se realizó esa libertad, especialmente cuando le adoramos por la “ofrenda de nuestros cuerpos como sacrificios vivos.” (Rom 12:1)

Jesús nos ofrece vida en verdadera libertad, que incluye la posibilidad de hacer devotos sacrificios que dan vida. Cuando fui joven, era fácil para mi, criticar a los que no sacrificaban

su tiempo y comodidad para seguir a Cristo. Ahora, con 17 años del sacerdocio y 47 de vida, tengo mayor y mejor comprensión de aquellos que se esfuerzan por dar todos los aspectos de sus vidas a Dios. Esto incluye a las parejas que encuentran difícil el uso de PNF. También, me doy cuenta, más que nunca, que para llevar a la práctica la encíclica “*Humanae Vitae*” y las otras enseñanzas de la Iglesia, se necesita la oración, la Eucaristía y el Sacramento de la Reconciliación para animar a los cristianos a una vida de genuina disciplina. La fuerza

viene de Cristo y su Santo Espíritu, y no solamente de aguantar el sufrimiento y poner mas empeño en ello.

El sacrificio viene acompañado con bendiciones. La cruz precede la resurrección. Creo que los esfuerzos por enseñar y practicar la PNF traerán los frutos perdurables de alegría, paz y verdadera libertad. ¡Vale la pena!

Regional News

CCL will be conducting a Teacher Training Seminar in Benicia this spring, March 16-17 and April 13-14, 2002. Those interested in this training should contact CCL directly at 513-471-2000 to begin the process of teacher training that culminates on these weekends. E-mail: ccli@ccli.org

CANFP is collaborating with the Diocese of Fresno to provide a four day convocation for clergy Jan.28-31, 2002. “God’s Design for Married Love” will include 20 presenters, featuring [Dr. T. Murphy Goodwin](#) and [Christopher West](#). In preparation for this event [Bishop Steinbock](#) has released an insightful pastoral letter on the spirituality of NFP. You can find a link to that letter on our web site. www.canfp.org

CANFP 9th Annual Conference

March 23, 2002

Sacramento



*CANFP NEWS is edited and published quarterly by the California Association of Natural Family Planning.
Produced by: High Rise Designs 213-892-8252 webmaster@canfp.org www.highrisedesigns.com*

CANFP NEWS

is edited and published by
the California Association
of Natural Family Planning.

**To receive future editions
of this newsletter,
become a CANFP member!**

**E-mail us
info@canfp.org
or call toll-free
1-877-33-CANFP**

**Annual dues:
\$30 Individual/Family
\$50 Professionals/Clergy
\$100 Organizations**

**Make check payable to
CANFP, and send to
1217 Tyler Street,
Salinas, CA 93906**



CANFP NEWS

1217 Tyler St. • Salinas, CA 93906