

SPECIAL EDITION

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The Family Council, New Port Richey

October 2008

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ALL MEMBERS CONCERNING UPCOMING ELECTION

**Election Day
November 4, 2008**

GENERAL ELECTION EARLY VOTING DATES AND TIMES

Date	Time
Monday, October 20, 2008	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, October 21, 2008	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, October 22, 2008	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Thursday, October 23, 2008	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Friday, October 24, 2008	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 25, 2008	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday, October 27, 2008	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, October 28, 2008	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, October 29, 2008	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Thursday, October 30, 2008	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Friday, October 31, 2008	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 1, 2008	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

REGISTRATION IS CLOSED

ABSENTEE BALLOT, PLEASE CALL 727-847-8162 for ballot

OPEN LETTER TO SENATOR JOSEPH BIDEN

From Carl A. Anderson, Supreme Knight

September 19, 2008

Dear Senator Biden:



I write to you today as a fellow Catholic layman, on a subject that has become a major topic of concern in this year's presidential campaign.

The bishops who have taken public issue with your remarks on the Church's historical position on abortion are far from alone.

Senator Obama stressed your Catholic identity repeatedly when he introduced you as his running mate, and so your statements carry considerable weight, whether they are correct or not. You now have a unique responsibility when you make public statements about

Catholic teaching.

On NBC's Meet the Press, you appealed to the 13th Century writings of St. Thomas Aquinas to cast doubt on the consistent teaching of the Catholic Church on abortion

There are several problems with this.

First, Aquinas obviously had only a medieval understanding of biology, and thus could only speculate about how an unborn child develops in the womb. I doubt that there is any other area of public policy where you would appeal to a 13th Century knowledge of biology as the basis for modern law.

Second, Aquinas' theological view is in any case entirely consistent with the long history of Catholic Church teaching in this area, holding that abortion is a grave sin to be avoided at any time during pregnancy.

This teaching dates all the way back to the Didache, written in the second century. It is found in the writings of Tertullian, Jerome, Augustine and Aquinas, and was reaffirmed by the Second Vatican Council, which described abortion as "an unspeakable crime" and held that the right to life must be protected from the "moment of conception." This consistent teaching was restated most recently last month in the response of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to remarks by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Statements that suggest that our Church has anything less than a consistent teaching on abortion are not merely incorrect; they may lead Catholic women facing crisis pregnancies to misunderstand the moral gravity of an abortion decision.

Neither should a discussion about a medieval understanding of the first few days or weeks of life be allowed to draw attention away from the remaining portion of an unborn child's life. In those months, even ancient and medieval doctors agreed that a child is developing in the womb.

And as you are well aware, Roe v. Wade allows for abortion at any point during a pregnancy. While you voted for the ban on partial birth abortions, your unconditional support for Roe is a de facto endorsement of permitting all other late term abortions, and thus calls into question your appeal to Aquinas.

I recognize that you struggle with your conscience on the issue, and have said that you accept the Church's teaching that life begins at conception – as a matter of faith. But modern medical science leaves no doubt about the fact that each person's life begins at conception. It is not a matter of personal religious belief, but of science.

Finally, your unwillingness to bring your Catholic moral views into the public policy arena on this issue alone is troubling.

There were several remarkable ironies in your first appearance as Senator Obama's running mate on the steps of the old state capitol in Springfield, Illinois.

His selection as the first black American to be the nominee of a major party for president of the United States owes an incalculable debt to two movements that were led by people whose religious convictions motivated them to confront the moral evils of their day – the abolitionist movement of the 19th Century, and the civil rights movement of the 20th Century.

Your rally in Springfield took place just a mile or so from the tomb of Abraham Lincoln, who in April 1859 wrote these words in a letter to Henry Pierce:

"This is a world of compensations; and he who would be no slave, must consent to have no slave. Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves; and, under a just God, cannot long retain it."

Lincoln fought slavery in the name of “a just God” without embarrassment or apology. He confronted an America in which black Americans were not considered “persons” under the law, and were thus not entitled to fundamental Constitutional rights. Today, children of all races who are fully viable and only minutes from being born are also denied recognition as “persons” because of the Roe v. Wade regime that you so strongly support. Lincoln’s reasoning regarding slavery applies with equal force to children who are minutes, hours or days away from birth.

The American founders began our great national quest for liberty by declaring that we are all “created equal.” It took nearly a century to transform that bold statement into the letter of the law, and another century still to make it a reality. The founders believed that we are “endowed by [our] Creator with certain unalienable rights,” and that first among these is “life.”

You have a choice: you can listen to your conscience and work to secure the rights of the unborn to share in the fruits of our hard-won liberty, or you can choose to turn your back on them.

On behalf of the 1.28 million members of the Knights of Columbus and their families in the United States, I appeal to you, as a Catholic who acknowledges that life begins at conception, to resolve to protect this unalienable right. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues personally with you in greater detail during the weeks between now and November 4.

Respectfully,

Carl A. Anderson
Supreme Knight
September 19, 2008

**ANYONE NEEDING TRANSPORTATION
TO THE POLLS
ON ELECTION DAY**

NOVEMBER 4, 2008

**PLEASE CONTACT GRAND KNIGHT
GEORGE MOUNTFORD**

727-847-5945

Catholic Bishops of Florida 2008 Election Year Statement
Vote with a properly formed conscience in order to defend human life and protect dignity

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As citizens of the United States, we have a duty to participate in framing the debate of public issues and the selection of those who occupy positions of civic leadership. As Catholics, we are called to carry the values of the Gospel and the sacredness of human life into the public square. These dual responsibilities to faith and citizenship are at the heart of what it means to be a Catholic in a free and democratic nation.

Participation in elections requires careful discernment and prudential judgment in light of moral principles and values of our faith. As faithful citizens, our decisions in the voting booth should respect the interests of all, particularly those members of our society who are weak and marginalized, often without a voice of their own. When we register to vote, we willingly accept the task of becoming educated on the issues and candidates and voting with a properly formed conscience.

Conscience is more than a voice within calling us to follow what is considered acceptable behavior for the day. It provides a constant moral foundation that guides our thoughts and actions from the very simple to the most complex. We have a duty to fully form our conscience and increase its sensitivity to how the issues before us address human life and dignity, protect and promote the welfare of our most vulnerable and serve the common good.

May the Holy Spirit guide us as we make our voting decisions

Archbishop John C. Favalora
Archdiocese of Miami

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski
Diocese of Orlando

Bishop Frank J. Dewane
Diocese of Venice

Bishop Victor Galeone
Diocese of St. Augustine

Bishop John H. Ricard, SSJ
Diocese of Pensacola/Tallahassee

Auxiliary Bishop Felipe J. Estevez
Archdiocese of Miami

Bishop Robert N. Lynch
Diocese of St. Petersburg

Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito
Diocese of Palm Beach

Auxiliary Bishop John G. Noonan
Archdiocese of Miami

Making a decision about a candidate can be very difficult, but a well-formed conscience aided by the virtue of prudence will guide us. As Catholics, we are not single-issue voters, but at the same time we recognize that all issues do not carry the same moral weight. Some issues involve acts that are always wrong, and we are morally obligated to oppose them. We must never abandon the moral requirement to seek full protection for all human life. A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who takes a position in favor of an intrinsic evil, such as the direct and intentional destruction of innocent human life, if the voter's intent is to support that position. There may be times when a Catholic who rejects a candidate's unacceptable position may decide to vote for that candidate, but this would be permissible only for truly grave moral reasons, and not to overlook a fundamental moral evil in order to advance a narrow interest or partisan preference.

Catholics are challenged to use the resources of our faith and the opportunities of our democracy to defend human life and to work for a more peaceful and just society. Before casting our votes, we are responsible to: (1) become familiar with sacred scripture and moral and social doctrine of the Church; (2) obtain accurate information on issues without relying strictly on party affiliation or campaign advertisements; (3) consult the Candidate Questionnaire Project (www.informedcatholicvoter.com) and encourage candidates to clarify their positions on key issues; (4) actively participate in discussions with others, especially our family and those close to us; and (5) seek wisdom through prayer and reflection.

The Union of One Man and One Woman
Bishops of Florida Support 2008 Amendment 2 - Marriage Protection

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

As teachers and pastors, we seek to educate Florida's Catholic faithful on the true nature and meaning of marriage as established by God and honored by Catholic teaching and tradition.

In the beginning, the Lord showed us in scripture his plan for marriage as the joining of a man and a woman. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh." (Genesis 2:24)

Marriage between the baptized is a sacrament, a sacred bond of husband and wife publicly witnessed in a church in the presence of the Lord. The sacrament of Matrimony gives spouses the grace to love each other with the same love Christ has for his Church. This grace perfects the couple's love and strengthens their indissoluble unity. From a valid marriage arises a perpetual and exclusive bond between the spouses. It is within this nuptial covenant that a man and a woman remain open to fertility and the gift of children is received and nurtured.

The common good and the future of our society are served best through the natural order of a union of a man and a woman. Research and history support the traditional family as the best environment to nurture and raise healthy children who thrive both physically and emotionally. "... the union of life and love based on the marriage between a man and a woman, which constitutes the family, is an indispensable good for

In view of the above, we support Amendment 2.

Archbishop John C. Favalora
Archdiocese of Miami

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski
Diocese of Orlando

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society as a whole and must not be confused or likened to other types of unions". (Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to Participants in the Forum of Family Associations, May 16, 2008)

Amendment 2 on the November 2008 ballot states, "In as much as marriage is the legal union of only one man and one woman as husband and wife, no other legal union that is treated as marriage or the substantial equivalent thereof shall be valid or recognized." This amendment to the Florida Constitution affirms Florida's existing marriage law (Section 741.212 FS) and protects marriage as currently defined in law from being negated or overturned by legislative process or judicial ruling.

The Church's teaching about marriage, "ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 1601), is clear. Our support for this proposed constitutional amendment is not motivated by discrimination or animosity toward any group. The amendment does not affect benefits offered or contracted in the private sector. Health care and government benefits currently being received by individuals, including seniors, will not be impacted. Through proper legal consultation for estate planning, health and end-of-life care, family members or others may be granted many of the same rights and privileges available to a spouse.