

# Catholic Citizenship News Archive 2012

Catholic Citizenship News is the e-mail newsletter from the Diocese of Manchester Office of Public Policy. To learn more about CCN or to subscribe visit [www.catholicnh.org/ccn](http://www.catholicnh.org/ccn).

## Urge your Senator to Support Catholic and Other Independent Schools

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*Jan 20, 2012*

### **Hearing before Senate Education Committee on January 24, 2012**

**Background:** SB 372 would provide tax incentives to businesses that donate scholarship money to independent schools. We support SB 372 but seek clarification in the bill to ensure that the bill would apply to religious schools.

#### **Take Action:**

- Testify before the Senate Education Committee at its hearing on Tuesday, January 24, 2012, at 1:00 p.m. at the Legislative Office Building, room 103.

[CLICK HERE](#) to contact members of the Senate Education Committee

#### **Talking Points:**

- Parents should have more options for educating their children. Most will remain in public schools, but a significant number will choose to enroll or remain enrolled in non-public schools. With fewer students in public school, some of the financial pressure will be lessened on state and local budgets because there will be lower instructional cost and less need for new construction.
- Non-public schools, including Catholic schools, already save tax dollars. Students attending New Hampshire Catholic Schools alone saved taxpayers an estimated \$89,738,178.00 in 2007-08.
- The bill should be amended to clarify and ensure that Catholic and other religious schools are covered under this bill.

**Additional Information:** For more information on how to express your support or opposition to state legislation, please visit: [catholicnh.org](http://catholicnh.org)

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## Pope Benedict XVI reaffirmed the Church's right to offer public moral witness

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Jan 25, 2012

In his Address to Bishops of the United States, the Pope reaffirms the right of the Church to intervene publicly.

***Convincing witness in the face of radical secularism***

In the face of the threats posed by radical secularism, Benedict XVI reaffirmed the Church's right to offer public moral witness. The Pope said this during his meeting with the Bishops of the United States of America, who he received on Thursday morning, 19 January, on the occasion of their visit "ad limina Apostolorum."

Dear Brother Bishops,

I greet all of you with fraternal affection and I pray that this pilgrimage of spiritual renewal and deepened communion will confirm you in faith and commitment to your task as Pastors of the Church in the United States of America. As you know, it is my intention in the course of this year to reflect with you on some of the spiritual and cultural challenges of the new evangelization.

One of the most memorable aspects of my Pastoral Visit to the United States was the opportunity it afforded me to reflect on America's historical experience of religious freedom, and specifically the relationship between religion and culture. At the heart of every culture, whether perceived or not, is a consensus about the nature of reality and the moral good, and thus about the conditions for human flourishing. In America, that consensus, as enshrined in your nation's founding documents, was grounded in a worldview shaped not only by faith but a commitment to certain ethical principles deriving from nature and nature's God. Today that consensus has eroded significantly in the face of powerful new cultural currents which are not only directly opposed to core moral teachings of the Judeo-Christian tradition, but increasingly hostile to Christianity as such.

For her part, the Church in the United States is called, in season and out of season, to proclaim a Gospel which not only proposes unchanging moral truths but proposes them precisely as the key to human happiness and social prospering (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 10). To the extent that some current cultural trends contain elements that would curtail the proclamation of these truths, whether constricting it within the limits of a merely scientific rationality, or suppressing it in the name of political power or majority rule, they represent a threat not just to Christian faith, but also to humanity itself and to the deepest truth about our being and ultimate vocation, our relationship to God. When a culture attempts to suppress the dimension of ultimate mystery, and to close the doors to transcendent truth, it inevitably becomes impoverished and falls prey, as the late Pope John Paul II so clearly saw, to reductionist and totalitarian readings of the human person and the nature of society.

With her long tradition of respect for the right relationship between faith and reason, the Church has a critical role to play in countering cultural currents which, on the basis of an extreme individualism, seek to promote notions of freedom detached from moral truth. Our tradition does not speak from blind faith, but from a rational perspective which links our commitment to building an authentically just, humane and prosperous society to our ultimate assurance that the cosmos is possessed of an inner logic accessible to

human reasoning. The Church's defense of a moral reasoning based on the natural law is grounded on her conviction that this law is not a threat to our freedom, but rather a "language" which enables us to understand ourselves and the truth of our being, and so to shape a more just and humane world. She thus proposes her moral teaching as a message not of constraint but of liberation, and as the basis for building a secure future.

The Church's witness, then, is of its nature public: she seeks to convince by proposing rational arguments in the public square. The legitimate separation of Church and State cannot be taken to mean that the Church must be silent on certain issues, nor that the State may choose not to engage, or be engaged by, the voices of committed believers in determining the values which will shape the future of the nation. In the light of these considerations, it is imperative that the entire Catholic community in the United States come to realize the grave threats to the Church's public moral witness presented by a radical secularism which finds increasing expression in the political and cultural spheres. The seriousness of these threats needs to be clearly appreciated at every level of ecclesial life. Of particular concern are certain attempts being made to limit that most cherished of American freedoms, the freedom of religion. Many of you have pointed out that concerted efforts have been made to deny the right of conscientious objection on the part of Catholic individuals and institutions with regard to cooperation in intrinsically evil practices. Others have spoken to me of a worrying tendency to reduce religious freedom to mere freedom of worship without guarantees of respect for freedom of conscience.

Here once more we see the need for an engaged, articulate and well-formed Catholic laity endowed with a strong critical sense vis-à-vis the dominant culture and with the courage to counter a reductive secularism which would delegitimize the Church's participation in public debate about the issues which are determining the future of American society. The preparation of committed lay leaders and the presentation of a convincing articulation of the Christian vision of man and society remain a primary task of the Church in your country; as essential components of the new evangelization, these concerns must shape the vision and goals of catechetical programs at every level.

In this regard, I would mention with appreciation your efforts to maintain contacts with Catholics involved in political life and to help them understand their personal responsibility to offer public witness to their faith, especially with regard to the great moral issues of our time: respect for God's gift of life, the protection of human dignity and the promotion of authentic human rights. As the Council noted, and I wished to reiterate during my Pastoral Visit, respect for the just autonomy of the secular sphere must also take into consideration the truth that there is no realm of worldly affairs which can be withdrawn from the Creator and his dominion (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 36). There can be no doubt that a more consistent witness on the part of America's Catholics to their deepest convictions would make a major contribution to the renewal of society as a whole.

Dear Brother Bishops, in these brief remarks I have wished to touch upon some of the pressing issues which you face in your service to the Gospel and their significance for the evangelization of American culture. No one who looks at these issues realistically can ignore the genuine difficulties which the Church encounters at the present moment. Yet in faith we can take heart from the growing awareness of the need to preserve a civil order clearly rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition, as well as from the promise

offered by a new generation of Catholics whose experience and convictions will have a decisive role in renewing the Church's presence and witness in American society. The hope which these "signs of the times" give us is itself a reason to renew our efforts to mobilize the intellectual and moral resources of the entire Catholic community in the service of the evangelization of American culture and the building of the civilization of love. With great affection I commend all of you, and the flock entrusted to your care, to the prayers of Mary, Mother of Hope, and cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of grace and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord.

January 20, 2012

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## HHS Mandate an Attack on Religious Liberty and Conscience Rights

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*Jan 27, 2012*

### Support the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act

On January 20, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reaffirmed a rule that virtually all private health care plans must cover sterilization, abortifacients, and contraception. The rule is set to take effect August 1, 2012. The exemption provided for "religious employers" is so narrow that it fails to cover the vast majority of faith-based organizations, including Catholic hospitals, universities, and service organizations that help millions every year. Non-profit religious employers that do not now provide such coverage, and are not exempt under the rule's extremely narrow definition of religious employer, will be given one year—until August 1, 2013—to comply.

"The HHS rule creates an alarming and serious concern that negatively impacts the Church in the United States directly, and that strikes at the fundamental right to religious liberty for all citizens of any faith," said Bishop Libasci. "The federal government, which claims to be 'of, by, and for the people,' has just dealt a heavy blow to almost a quarter of those people—the Catholic population—and to the millions more who are served by the Catholic faithful."

For more information, see: <http://www.usccb.org/conscience>

### Get Informed & Take Action Now

- [Write to Congress](#) urging support for the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act (H.R. 1179, S. 1467).

- Visit [www.usccb.org/conscience](http://www.usccb.org/conscience) for additional information and to share information with others through social media and email.
- Read the [Media Release](#) issued by the Diocese of Manchester.
- Read [Bishop Libasci Op-Ed](#) on HHS Mandate.
- [Letter from Bishop Libasci to Faithful](#) about HHS Mandate.
- Read [Testimony in Support of HR 29](#), urging HHS to Rescind its Contraceptive and Sterilization Mandate
- View and share [Cardinal-designate Dolan's video](#).
- Will contraception really be "free" under this coercive mandate? Read Richard Doerflinger's column "[The High Costs of 'Free' Birth Control](#)" to find out.
- Read the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document prepared by the USCCB.
- Read the [Preventive Services Backgrounder](#) prepared by the USCCB.
- Post a [Bulletin Announcement](#) in parish bulletins.

New! Bulletin Inserts as of Feb. 15, 2012

- [Cover Letter](#) (English)
- [Bulletin Insert](#) (English)
- [Cover Letter](#) (Spanish)
- [Bulletin Insert](#) (Spanish)

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## Urge Your State Representatives to Support Traditional Marriage

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*Jan 30, 2012*

### **Background:**

In 2009, by the narrowest of margins, the New Hampshire Legislature passed a law that overturned thousands of years of Western civilization by redefining marriage as the union of any two adults. In 2011, HB 437 was introduced to repeal that law and restore the definition of "marriage" as the union between one man and one woman. The Legislature is expected to vote on an amended version of HB 437 within the next two weeks.

In addition to repealing same sex marriage, the amended version of HB 437 would also re-establish civil unions for same sex couples. Civil unions were in place before the legislature created same sex marriage, and they were repealed when the same-sex marriage law was passed. Thus, the proposed amendment to HB 437 largely reinstates the situation which was in place before the same sex marriage law took effect. The Diocese of Manchester consistently has opposed legislation that would establish civil unions. However, the proposed amendment to HB 437 falls into a category of legislation which the US

Bishops have previously considered: bills in civil law which may not reflect the fullness of the Church's teaching, but which nonetheless provide an "incremental improvement" in the current law and a "step toward full restoration of justice." USCCB, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, 32. Because the proposed amendment to HB 437 would accomplish the tremendously important goal of repealing the same sex marriage law, the Diocese supports HB 437.

## Take Action:

- Contact your House representatives and ask them to support traditional marriage by supporting the amended version of HB 437. Tell them that the same sex marriage law was wrong when it was passed in 2009, and it continues to be wrong. Urge the legislature this year to correct the fundamental error that occurred in 2009.
- To find your representative, [CLICK HERE](#).
- Attend the Marriage Rally in support of marriage on Tuesday, February 7, 2012, at 12:00 noon at the State House in Concord. Please arrive by 11:45 a.m.

## Talking Points and Catholic Teaching:

The starting point for any discussion about the Catholic Church's position on same sex marriage is that every person is of incomparable worth and has intrinsic dignity—a dignity that can never be taken away. The Church believes that affirming the meaning of marriage as a union between a man and a woman affirms the meaning and dignity of the human person, created as male and female.

One man and one woman are essential to marriage because of their differences—the difference is the difference, and true union is only possible in and through their difference. Marriage is a unique bond of husband and wife fundamentally open to the possibility of new life and is the context for mothering and fathering.

The uniqueness of marriage flows from the unique identities of man and woman. Each brings distinctive physical, emotional, and spiritual gifts to the marital union. Men and women complement one another. No other form of relationship between persons can be considered equivalent to a natural relationship between a man and a woman out of whose love it is possible for children to be born and reared by both a mother and a father.

Marriage is not merely a private institution or a personal commitment between two people who love one another. It is the foundation of the family, which has been, and must continue to be, the bedrock of every human society. There is no other relationship which symbolizes life and love as marriage between a man and a woman does. Justice requires that marriage as the union of one man and one woman be restored and protected.

This is not a matter of discrimination. Treating different things differently is not unjust discrimination. It is respecting the unique reality of the relationship between a husband and a wife who alone are capable of forming a union open to new life.

Please see Bishop Libasci's statement on the occasion of the Feast of the Holy Family (12/29/11), [CLICK HERE](#).

## Additional Information:

For more information on how to express your support or opposition to state legislation, [CLICK HERE](#).

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# NH State Legislators to Vote on Religious Exemption for Contraception Coverage

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*Feb 29, 2012*

There has been much press surrounding the mandate issued by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) requiring contraceptive and sterilization coverage in almost all private health plans nationwide. Here, in New Hampshire, a state law also mandates contraception coverage without regard for whether such coverage violates the rights of citizens to practice their faith. An amendment to HB 1546 provides that employers with a religious objection will not be required to provide contraceptive coverage. **A vote on this amendment is expected to be held March 7, 2012.**

The current New Hampshire laws require all insurers providing outpatient services or prescription coverage also to provide coverage for contraceptive services, drugs, and devices. The current state mandate, without an exception such as the one contemplated in an amendment to HB 1546, violates one of the most basic beliefs in our society – that religious freedom is a fundamental right of all.

Some have tried to frame the debate about this amendment as the Church attempting to impose its view on others. This is not true at all. Approving this amendment does not deny women access to contraceptives. Instead, approving the amendment would mean that those with a religious objection to contraceptive products and services would not be required to pay for them. Employers who do not have a religious objection to providing such coverage will be required to continue to offer contraception under their plans.

The Catholic Church consistently has supported and advocated for access for all men and women to life-affirming healthcare, healthcare that supports and sustains life. We, as Catholics, cannot and should not be compelled to violate the tenets of our faith by paying for or otherwise providing services that we consider to be immoral and disrespectful of life. Please consider contacting your legislator in support of religious liberty.

How to Take Action:

Contact your representatives by phone or email and ask them to support the amendment to HB 1546 providing a religious exemption to the State insurance contraception coverage mandate: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

### Additional Information:

For more information on how to express your support or opposition to state legislation, please visit: <http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/action/>

To read more on this issue visit: <http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/social-justice/healthcare/>

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# Oppose Payday Loans by Supporting Governor's Veto of SB 160

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*Mar 5, 2012*

### Background:

SB 160, which was passed by the Legislature and vetoed by the Governor, would create a new small loan product in New Hampshire known as payday loans. The bill also overturns the interest rate cap for these lenders and would allow them to charge interest rates in excess of 400 percent APR. SB 160 was strongly opposed in the legislature by the Attorney General's office, the local Welfare Administrator's Association, and a coalition of churches, including the Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester.

The vote in the House of Representatives on whether to override Governor Lynch's veto could come as soon as March 7, 2012.

### How to Take Action:

Contact your representatives by phone or email and ask them to vote to sustain the Governor's veto of SB 160: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

### Talking Points:

SB 160 would legalize excessive interest rates in excess of 400 percent APR.

- SB 160 authorizes lenders to charge up to \$15.50 per \$100 installment loan, and that could result in interest rates effectively being in excess of 400 percent over the life of the loan. As an example, lenders could charge consumers \$1,100 to repay a \$500 loan over six months.

Prohibition of usurious interest rates is a traditional New Hampshire value.

- New Hampshire had strict limits on small loan interest rates from our founding until 2000.

- The 36 percent cap on small loans that the Legislature passed in 2008 had the support of a broad coalition including the Banking Department and the Attorney General's office under now-U.S. Senator Kelly Ayotte.

New Hampshire's 36 percent cap on interest rates is consistent with the law in other states.

- 31 states outlaw high-cost car title lending. No state in New England allows it.

New Hampshire does not want high-cost title loans.

- A recent poll of New Hampshire voters found that only 4 percent support an increase in the maximum rate that car title lenders can charge.
- The Local Welfare Administrators' Association has opposed SB 160 because our cities and towns see families in their welfare offices looking for help with financial situations made worse by payday loans. Triple-digit interest rates increase the burden on local taxpayers.

High-interest payday loans harshly impact low wage earners and the poor.

- The excessive interest charged by payday lenders could force vulnerable individuals into a downward spiral of debt, hurting New Hampshire families, communities, and economy.

Under SB 160, regulation of payday lenders will be inconsistent with current practices for other forms of consumer credit.

- Unlike current law for the examination of banks, SB 160 requires the Banking Commissioner to provide a payday lender with advance notice before conducting an examination of its books, records, and loan documents.
- The administrative fine authority of the Banking Commissioner over payday lenders is less than half the existing authority over other lenders.

Additional information:

For more information on how to express your support or opposition to state legislation, please visit: <http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/action/>

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## New Hampshire House Votes on Marriage and Casinos

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*Mar 16, 2012*

The New Hampshire House will vote on two important bills in the near future:

- HB 437 (Supporting Traditional Marriage) – the House is expected to vote as early as March 21, 2012
- HB 593 (Legalizing 4 casinos and 14,000 video slot machines in New Hampshire) – the House is expected to vote as early as March 28, 2012



## HB 437 (Supporting Traditional Marriage)

House Vote Expected as Early as March 21, 2012

### Background:

In 2009, by the narrowest of margins, the New Hampshire Legislature passed a law that overturned thousands of years of Western civilization by redefining marriage as the union of any two adults. In 2011, HB 437 was introduced to repeal that law and restore the definition of “marriage” as the union between one man and one woman. The House is expected to vote on an amended version of HB 437 on March 21, 2012.

### How to Take Action:

Contact your House representatives before the vote on March 21 and ask them to support HB 437. To find your representative, visit: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

### Talking Points:

- Ask your House representatives to support traditional marriage by supporting HB 437. Tell them that the same sex marriage law was wrong when it was passed in 2009, and it continues to be wrong. Urge the legislature to correct the fundamental error that occurred in 2009.
- The starting point for any discussion about the Catholic Church’s position on same sex marriage is that every person is of incomparable worth and has intrinsic dignity—a dignity that can never be taken away. The Church believes that affirming the meaning of marriage as a union between a

man and a woman affirms the meaning and dignity of the human person, created as male and female.

- One man and one woman are essential to marriage because of their differences—the difference is the difference, and true union is only possible in and through their difference. Marriage is a unique bond of husband and wife fundamentally open to the possibility of new life and is the context for mothering and fathering.
- The uniqueness of marriage flows from the unique identities of man and woman. Each brings distinctive physical, emotional, and spiritual gifts to the marital union. Men and women complement one another. No other form of relationship between persons can be considered equivalent to a natural relationship between a man and a woman out of whose love it is possible for children to be born and reared by both a mother and a father.
- Marriage is not merely a private institution or a personal commitment between two people who love one another. It is the foundation of the family, which has been, and must continue to be, the bedrock of every human society. There is no other relationship which symbolizes life and love as marriage between a man and a woman does. Justice requires that marriage as the union of one man and one woman be restored and protected.
- This is not a matter of discrimination. Treating different things differently is not unjust discrimination. It is respecting the unique reality of the relationship between a husband and a wife who alone are capable of forming a union open to new life.

**Please see Bishop Libasci's statement** on the occasion of the Feast of the Holy Family (12/29/11): <http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/show/8>



# HB 593 (Legalizing 4 casinos and 14,000 video slot machines in New Hampshire)

House Vote Expected as Early as March 28, 2012

## **Background:**

HB 593, which would legalize four casinos and 14,000 slot machines, will be considered by the House as early as March 28, 2012. The objection of the Church to expanded gambling arises out of its beliefs that those who are in greatest need, including the poor and vulnerable, deserve preferential concern and that support for families should be a priority for economic and social policies. While the Church does not view gambling as morally unacceptable in and of itself, the behavior that often accompanies state-endorsed gambling results in the deprivation of basic needs of persons, particularly the poor, and harm to children and families.

## **How to Take Action:**

Contact your House representatives before the vote on March 28 and ask them to oppose HB 593. To find your representative, visit: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

## **Talking Points:**

- The reality is that if the gambling industry were allowed to expand in New Hampshire, it is unlikely that the State has any reasonable way to address human behavior that moves beyond intended recreational activity. “The passion for gambling risks becoming an enslavement” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2413). Gambling addictions can result in divorce, bankruptcy, family violence, attempted suicide, and teen addictions. Those who can least afford to gamble often are the ones who engage in it.
- We fear that any further expansion of the gambling industry in New Hampshire will destroy families and damage our family-focused environment. New Hampshire cannot afford the social costs of the addictive behavior that inevitably accompanies the presence of the gambling industry. If the gambling industry expands in New Hampshire, we believe that the State must be prepared to finance expanded human services to assist residents enslaved by addictive behavior.
- Information compiled by the Granite State Coalition Against Expanded Gambling suggests that HB 593 would degrade New Hampshire’s healthy, family-friendly brand image and harm charities that rely on charitable gaming: [details here](#)

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## Presentation - What is Faithful Citizenship?

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*Apr 12, 2012*

# What is Faithful Citizenship?

Presented by Meredith Cook

## What is Faithful Citizenship?

Forming  
Consciences



Have you ever wondered why the Catholic Church is involved in bills before the state and federal legislatures?

Do you want to learn more about the Church's teachings on social issues?

Then come find out about Faithful Citizenship at an informational meeting with Meredith Cook, Director of the Office of Public Policy.

April 26 at 7:00 p.m.

Hosted by:

St. Catherine of Siena Parish

207 Hemlock St., Manchester

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## New Hampshire Legislature Marks Crossover Day

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*Apr 23, 2012*



Just before Holy Week, the New Hampshire Legislature marked its Crossover Day – the day when legislation that passed the House is sent to the Senate and legislation that passed the Senate goes to the House. As we enter the second half of the session, we provide you with a summary of the results of the bills we have been following and a look ahead at the legislation we will be tracking.

## Abortion

Last year, the New Hampshire House and Senate approved an abortion parental notification law over Governor Lynch's veto. Before this law went into effect, New Hampshire had no legal restrictions on abortion. This session, the House passed a number of bills relating to abortion, including:

- HB 1660, a bill to outlaw abortions after twenty weeks in most instances;
- HB 1659 which would create a Women's Right to Know Act requiring, in most circumstances, a 24-hour waiting period before an abortion and that medically-accurate information be provided; and
- HB 1679, a ban on partial-birth abortions in most circumstances.

The Diocese testified in support of all three of these bills at the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. The Senate Committee voted to recommend HB 1660 to interim study and HB 1659 as inexpedient to legislate. The Committee recommended an amended version of HB 1679 as ought to pass. The full Senate is expected to vote on these bills on April 25. Please urge your senator to support HB 1660, HB 1659, and HB 1679. Visit our website for copies of the Diocese's testimony on these three bills for talking points and additional information <http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/life/issues/start/#abortion>.

## Education

In January, we asked you to contact your senator to support SB 372, a bill that would provide tax incentives to businesses that donate scholarship money to independent schools. We supported SB 372 but sought clarification to ensure that the bill would apply to religious schools, and the Senate passed the bill by a 17 - 7 margin with clearer language. SB 372 has been scheduled for a hearing before the House Ways and Means Committee on April 24. A similar bill, HB 1607, passed the House by a 173 – 127 vote and was heard before the Senate Education Committee on April 17. Please urge your state legislators to support these two important bills. You can view our earlier Faithful Citizenship News piece for talking points <http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/show/9>.

## Gambling

Last month, the House considered HB 593, a measure that would legalize 4 casinos and 14,000 video slot machines in New Hampshire. After a string of unsuccessful amendments, the bill failed on its final vote by a margin of 236-108. Thank you for your efforts in defeating expanded gambling.

## Immigration

The House passed a bill allowing local governing bodies to establish moratoriums on refugee resettlement in New Hampshire. New Hampshire Catholic Charities counsels low-income individuals and families seeking immigration assistance and testified against HB 1405. This bill is not only contrary to the call we have received from Christ to welcome the stranger, but it also is unconstitutional in that it singles out a particular group of legal residents to restrict their right to freedom of movement. The Senate Public and Municipal Affairs Committee held its hearing and recommended that this bill be referred to interim study. Although the Diocese strongly opposes this bill, we urge you to contact your Senator and support the Committee's recommendation to refer this bill to interim study which would, in effect, kill the bill.

## Marriage

Over the past few months, we have updated you on the status of HB 437, the bill to repeal same-sex marriage. The Diocese supports repeal of the 2009 law that redefined marriage to include same-sex couples, and for that reason, the Diocese supported HB 437 when it was introduced. The Diocese is opposed to, and consistently has been opposed to, civil unions between same sex couples because they undermine the unique, fruitful lifelong union that is only possible between a man and a woman. Although the Judiciary Committee amendment would have restored civil unions and therefore returned to the situation which was in place prior to the passage of the same-sex marriage law, the Diocese continued to support that Judiciary Committee amendment. While the Committee amendment did not reflect the fullness of the Church's teaching, it nonetheless provided an "incremental improvement" in the current law and a "step toward full restoration of justice." USCCB, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, 32.

In the week before the House vote on HB 437, however, it was announced the bill would be further amended, including the removal of the religious conscience language. The Diocese could not support the enactment of any provisions that weaken any conscience protections or which would in any way threaten the religious liberty of religious institutions and individuals and did not support this amendment. The new amendment, and ultimately HB 437 as a whole, failed to pass the House.

## Payday Loans

In March, we urged you to support the Governor's veto of SB 160, a bill that would create a new small loan product in New Hampshire known as payday loans. The Diocese, together with a coalition of churches, opposed SB 160 because it would legalize excessive interest rates and harshly impact low-wage earners and the poor. The Senate voted to sustain the Governor's veto by a 13 – 11 margin, defeating the bill. Thank you for your help in this important cause.

## Religious Liberty

We continue to follow the activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on issues of religious liberty and conscience, especially with respect to the Department of Health and Human Services mandate for contraception, sterilization, and abortion-inducing drugs. We will be issuing a Faithful Citizenship News alert in the near future to alert you to changes to our website and additional resources available on this very important national issue.

In the meantime, here in New Hampshire, a state law also mandates contraception coverage without regard for whether the coverage violates the rights of citizens to practice their faith. HB 1546 provides that employers with a religious exemption will not be required to provide contraception services, drugs, and devices. HB 1546 passed the House by a 196 – 150 vote, and the Senate Public and Municipal Affairs Committee held a hearing on April 17. The Diocese offered testimony in support of HB 1546 at the hearing, but the Committee voted to recommend HB 1546 for interim study.

Although we would have preferred to have had the Committee recommend HB 1546 as ought to pass, we support the referral to interim study and believe this recommendation by the Committee recognizes the importance of this issue. We hope the Senate agrees with the Committee's recommendation so we may participate in the study and encourage others with religious objections to do the same. We believe the study will demonstrate that the current state law violates one of the most basic beliefs in society – that religious freedom is a fundamental right of all. Contact your senator to support the Committee's recommendation to refer HB 1546 to interim study, and click here for our earlier Faithful Citizenship News alert for additional information <http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/show/13>.

## How to Contact Your Representative

To find your representative and his or her contact information, visit: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

## Share Catholic Citizenship News!

We have received feedback from Catholic Citizenship News subscribers that a significant number of New Hampshire residents do not have computer access to receive e-mail alerts. You may share this copy of Catholic Citizenship News with those who may not otherwise receive it. [CLICK HERE to download a print-friendly version](#) of this issue of Catholic Citizenship News. For example, one group offered to post Catholic Citizenship News alerts on the bulletin boards in local churches. Future Catholic Citizenship News pieces also may be appropriate to print and distribute at meetings of parish Faithful Citizenship Committees or as a parish bulletin insert. Please also feel free encourage others to subscribe to receive Catholic Citizenship News alerts.

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## Send Messages to HHS and Congress

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*Apr 26, 2012*



***Please click on the link below to send messages to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Congress telling them to stand up for religious liberty and conscience rights.***

On February 10, the Administration adopted as a final rule “without change” a mandate requiring almost all private health plans under the new health care law to 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.” The 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. They will have an extra year to comply.

### **Message to HHS:**

On March 21, HHS published an “advance notice of proposed rulemaking” (ANPRM) that suggests various ways the new mandate can be applied to religious organizations (*Federal Register*, 3/21/12, 16501-08). The ANPRM does *not* address the fundamental legal and moral concerns about government intrusion into religious ministries. 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. *The deadline for comments is June 19.*

### **Message to Congress:**

While the response to the ANPRM is the primary focus of this alert, it is also important to continue to urge Members of Congress to support the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act (H.R. 1179, S. 1467). With the Administration’s insistence on its contraceptive mandate, this legislation is needed to 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. As Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO), the amendment’s sponsor, stated: “This fight is not over.”

Thanks for all that you do in support of life!

Click the link below to log in and send your message:

<http://actions.nchla.org/link/target/nchla/rBg353gf.aspx>

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## Votes on Education Tax Credit Bills Expected this Week

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May 15, 2012



**Background:** Bills were introduced in both the House and Senate this session to establish tax credits for businesses and offer scholarships to students who attend nonpublic schools. The education tax credit program would allow low- and middle-income students to receive an average of \$2,500 per year if they choose to attend a nonpublic school. Businesses would fund the scholarships and receive an 85% tax credit in return on either the business profits tax or the business enterprise tax. The House and Senate passed the respective bills (HB 1607 and SB 372), and a group has coordinate the two bills to create one framework. ***Both the House and Senate are expected to vote on the bills this week.***

**Take Action:** Contact your legislator to express support for HB 1607 and SB 372, the education tax credit bills. Visit the main page of the New Hampshire State Legislature to find your representative(s) and senator: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/>.

**Talking Points:**

- Parents should have more options for educating their children. Most will remain in public schools, but a significant number will choose to enroll or remain enrolled in nonpublic schools.
- With fewer students in public school, some of the financial pressure will be lessened on state and local budgets because there will be lower instructional cost and less need for new construction.
- Nonpublic schools, including Catholic schools, already save tax dollars. Students attending New Hampshire Catholic schools alone saved taxpayers an estimated \$89,738,178.00 in 2007-08.

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## Vote on Fetal Homicide Bill Expected on May 30

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May 25, 2012

Vote on Fetal Homicide Bill Expected on May 30

## Background:

In 2009, the New Hampshire Supreme Court heard the Lamy case, a criminal case concerning an intoxicated driver who struck a car driven by a woman who was pregnant. The child was delivered prematurely and died two weeks later as a result of injuries sustained in the collision. The Court overturned the conviction of the driver for causing the death of the child because current New Hampshire law does not support a conviction for the child's death. In the Lamy decision, Justice James Duggan wrote, "Should the legislature find this result in this case as unfortunate as we do, it should follow the lead of many other states and revisit the homicide statutes as they pertain to the fetus." HB 217 was introduced to include unborn children in the current homicide laws.

This year, the House passed a version of HB 217 applying the law to a fetus determined to be at 24 weeks of gestation or more. The Senate amended the bill so that the law applies to a fetus at approximately eight weeks, just beyond the embryo stage. The House Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee voted this week to recommend that the House concur with the Senate version. We expect the full House will consider the Senate version on May 30 and that there will be a strong effort by some House members to try to convince the House to return to the unacceptable House language.

## How to Take Action:

Contact your representatives by phone or email and ask them to concur with the Senate amendment to HB 217. Find your member of the House of Representatives, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Talking Points:

- The New Hampshire Supreme Court expressed that it found the decision in the Lamy case unfortunate and invited the legislature to revisit these laws to include unborn children.
- The Catholic Church believes life is sacred from the moment of conception to the time of natural death. The death of a pre-born child caused by a violent act, therefore, is equal to the death of any other person.
- Passing this bill will recognize there are two victims when a pregnant woman loses her baby due to a violent act, and the House can honor both victims by concurring with the Senate version of HB 217.

## Additional Information:

For more information on how to express your support or opposition to state legislation, please visit: <http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/action/>

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# The Senate is about to start votes on the Farm Bill!

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June 8, 2012



Urge your Senators to support a Farm Bill that feeds hungry people, promotes stewardship of creation, supports small family farmers, and helps rural America thrive.

## Click Here to Take Action Now!

**ACTION:** The Senate is expected to vote on its version of the 2012 Farm Bill with debate starting as early as this Thursday. [E-mail](#) or [call](#) your Senators and urge them to support a fair Farm Bill and related amendments that will help feed hungry people here at home and abroad, support international development, promote growth in U.S. rural communities and encourage stewardship of creation. Tell your Senators to oppose cuts to these critical programs that help people and communities in need.

The **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**, in partnership with **Catholic Relief Services** and the **National Catholic Rural Life Conference**, supports important provisions in the 2012 Farm Bill that will uphold the life and dignity of the human person and promote stewardship of creation. We urge the Senate to support a Farm Bill and amendments that prioritize:

- **Domestic Hunger and Nutrition:** Catholic teaching maintains that food is a basic need and a fundamental right of the human person. With continued high unemployment and a struggling economy, the need for adequate funding levels for domestic hunger and nutrition programs such as the SNAP (formerly food stamps) program is essential;
- **International Food Security and Development:** The Food for Peace program combats chronic hunger, builds resilience against drought and other natural disasters and provides needed nutrition for poor families abroad. International development assistance should be protected in the development "safe box" which funds long-term anti-hunger programs that help people better feed themselves;

- **Conservation:** We support full funding for conservation initiatives that promote stewardship of the land and environmentally sound agriculture practices. These programs provide technical assistance and financial incentives for farmers and ranchers to adopt practices aimed at fostering healthy, productive and non-eroding soils, clean air and water, energy savings and wildlife habitat;
- **Rural Development:** Rural communities and small towns are the backbone of the social and economic life of America. Effective policies and programs are needed to encourage rural development and promote the culture and well-being of these communities;
- **Subsidies:** It is important to provide a reasonable amount of support for our commodity and dairy farmers. However, in these times of financial hardship, our public policies should call for shared sacrifice. Given current high commodity prices and federal budget constraints, agricultural subsidies should be reduced overall and targeted to small and moderate-sized farms, especially minority owned-farms. Government resources should help those who truly need assistance and support those who comply with environmentally sound and sustainable farming practices.

**CURRENT SITUATION:** The Senate will likely bring up the Farm Bill for debate and a vote as early as Thursday, June 7th! It is still unknown how many amendments the Senate will debate. A series of amendments will be offered one at a time to address different sections of the bill. Reports indicate that consideration of the Farm Bill could last as long as three weeks.

The Senate plan proposes reducing agriculture funding over 10 years by \$23 billion. This includes over **\$4 billion in proposed cuts to the SNAP (food stamps) program and over \$6 billion in cuts to conservation programs.** At a time of continued unemployment and high levels of poverty, the Senate should oppose cuts to effective anti-hunger programs that help people live in dignity and strengthen and support programs that help conserve our land and resources for future generations.

The Senate's proposal calls for ending some subsidies (direct payments) and this is a step in the right direction. However, to offset the reductions to direct payments, crop insurance programs were reformed. We urge further reductions in subsidies and additional reforms to crop insurance that would target small and medium-sized farmers and ranchers who truly need assistance, especially minority owned farms, and end assistance that is disproportionately given to larger growers and agribusinesses. 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 the USCCB's recent letter on potential SNAP cuts [here](#).

**USCCB POSITION/CHURCH TEACHING:** Last October in his Address on the Occasion of World Food Day 2011, Pope Benedict XVI 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 recognizing 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.

## Click Here to Take Action Now!

Your voice is needed now to ensure that the Senate supports programs that feed hungry people, preserves creation and supports small family farmers and rural America. Please see the attached letter that highlights the detailed changes we are urging the Senate to support. To send the letter in an e-mail to your Senators, [click here](#). To call, [visit this website](#) where you will find their office telephone numbers.

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# New Hampshire Session Ending – Your Help Needed

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*Jun 22, 2012*

[CLICK HERE](#) to download a print version of this newsletter.

Welcome to Catholic Citizenship News! The Diocese of Manchester Newsletter on Public Issues has a new name to lift up our dual heritage as both faithful Catholics and American citizens. In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us, "It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person . . . As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life" (nos. 1913-1915). Through Catholic Citizenship News, we will continue to communicate with you about state and federal legislation, Catholic social teaching, and events that may be of interest to you.

## Your Help Needed!

The New Hampshire Legislature ended its session, and bills that passed both the House and Senate have been heading to Governor Lynch. Your advocacy made a difference this session, and now we need your help on the remaining bills to be considered by the Governor and those returning to the Legislature for veto override votes. Here is a summary of the bills we tracked in the second half of the session:

### Abortion

In our [Crossover Day newsletter](#), we summarized three abortion-related bills that passed the House:

- The House and Senate passed HB 1679, a ban on partial-birth abortion in most instances. This procedure crosses the line from abortion to infanticide and ends the lives of children who are inches away from birth. On June 15, 2012, Governor Lynch vetoed HB 1679. Although we will continue to work toward the creation of a society where abortion is outlawed entirely, in the meantime, **contact your representatives and urge them to override the veto of HB 1679** to bring an end to this method of abortion. Visit the House website to locate the contact information for your representative. <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

- The Senate referred HB 1660 to interim study, effectively ending action on this bill for this session. HB 1660 would have outlawed abortion after 20 weeks in most instances.
- HB 1659, the Women's Right to Know Act, would have required, in most instances, a 24-hour waiting period before an abortion and that medically-accurate information be provided. Unfortunately, the Senate voted down HB 1659 as inexpedient to legislate.
- A fourth bill concerning abortion was signed into law by Governor Lynch on May 14, 2012. HB 1680 establishes a subcommittee to advise the Legislature on the collection of abortion statistics.

## Education Tax Credits

We updated you throughout the session on the status of the bills to provide tax incentives to businesses donating scholarship money to nonpublic schools, including Catholic schools. Both of the education tax credit bills, HB 1607 and SB 372, passed the House and Senate, but Governor Lynch vetoed SB 372 on June 18, 2012.

**Background:** The education tax credit program would establish tax credits for businesses and offer scholarships to students who attend nonpublic schools. The program would allow low- and middle-income families to receive an average scholarship of \$2,500 per student per year. Businesses would fund the scholarships and receive an 85% tax credit on either the business profits tax or the business enterprise tax. If the bill is passed, all New Hampshire residents from age 5 to 20 who have not yet graduated from high school would be eligible. Students also must be from a household whose income is less than or equal to 300% of the federal poverty guidelines in order to qualify (as an example, the 300% standard currently equals \$69,160 per year in income for a family of four).

**Take Action: Contact your legislators and ask them to override the veto of the education tax credit bill.** Visit the main page of the New Hampshire State Legislature to find your representative(s) and senator: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/>.

### Talking Points:

- Providing quality education for our children is the most critical investment we can make for our future.
- The education tax credit program is not a public v. private school issue. Parents should have the opportunity to determine the school that best meets the needs of their children, whether than school is public or private. School choice empowers families to find the best educational environment for each student.
- The education tax credit program is projected to save money in the short-term. Under even the most conservative assumptions, the program will impact only a very small portion of state spending on public schools. Any loss in state aid to public school districts as a result of students leaving to attend nonpublic schools would be much less than the cost to educate students in the public school – and families will continue to pay property taxes for students who no longer attend public schools.

## End-of-Life Decisions

Two bills were introduced in the House to address end-of-life decision-making. **HB 1217** provides that an advance directive, living will, or similar document executed in another state and valid according to the laws of the state where the document was executed will be treated as effective in New Hampshire. **HB 1216** revises current law to make clear that a health care facility only may implement its protocol with respect to the withdrawing or withholding of medically-administered nutrition and hydration or life-sustaining treatment from a mentally incompetent or developmentally disabled person in the absence of an advance directive, guardianship, or court order. There was some concern that under the current law, a facility's protocol could be given equal standing with an advance directive, guardianship, or court order. The House and Senate have agreed on both HB 1216 and HB 1217, and the Diocese supports both of these bills. **Ask Governor Lynch to sign HB 1216 and HB 1217.** Visit Governor Lynch's website for his contact information: <http://www.governor.nh.gov/contact/index.htm>

## Fetal Homicide

HB 217 was introduced to include unborn children in the current homicide laws. The House and Senate have passed HB 217, but Governor Lynch vetoed the bill on June 18, 2012. Review our previous alert for additional information and talking points <http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/show/20>, and then **contact your representatives and urge them to override the veto of HB 217.** Visit the House website to locate the contact information for your representative. <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

## Immigration

HB 1405 was introduced to allow local governing bodies to establish moratoriums on refugee resettlement in New Hampshire. In our [Crossover Day newsletter](#), we explained our concerns with this bill that had passed the House. We asked that you contact your Senator to support the Committee's recommendation to refer this bill to interim study because it would, in effect, kill the bill. Thanks to your efforts, the Senate voted to refer this bill to interim study and no further action will be taken this session.

## Religious Liberty

Since our [Crossover Day newsletter](#) summarizing the state and federal religious liberty issues, a number of Catholic organizations around the country have filed suit to prevent enforcement of the United States Department of Health and Human Services' mandate for contraception, sterilization, and abortion-inducing drugs.

In the meantime, here in New Hampshire, HB 1546 would have provided an exemption to the state contraception mandate for employers with a religious exemption. HB 1546 passed the House by a 196-150 vote, but Senate voted to refer the bill to interim study. Although this result was disappointing, we

hope the study will offer the opportunity to demonstrate that the current state law violates one of the most basic beliefs in our society – that religious freedom is a fundamental right of all.

## How to Contact Your Representative

To find your representative and his or her contact information, visit: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

## Share Catholic Citizenship News!

We have received feedback from Catholic Citizenship News subscribers that a significant number of New Hampshire residents do not have computer access to receive e-mail alerts. You may share this copy of Catholic Citizenship News with those who may not otherwise receive it. For example, one group offered to post Catholic Citizenship News alerts on the bulletin boards in local churches. Future Catholic Citizenship News pieces also may be appropriate to print and distribute at meetings of parish Catholic Citizenship Committees or as a parish bulletin insert. Please also feel free encourage others to subscribe to receive Catholic Citizenship News alerts.

## School Choice and Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Bills Become Law

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*June 29, 2012*



## **School Choice and Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Bills Become Law**

Thanks to your efforts this session, key measures will become law in New Hampshire:

- **Education Tax Credits** – The House and Senate voted to override Governor Lynch’s vetoes of HB 1607 and SB 372, making New Hampshire the 9th state to establish an education tax credit program. Businesses will receive tax credits for donations to scholarship funds to help low- and middle-income students attend nonpublic schools. For more information on the eligibility requirements of the education tax program, go to: [www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/show/22](http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/show/22). Thanks to your advocacy, families meeting the guidelines of the law will have the opportunity to determine the school that best meets the needs of their children.
- **Partial-Birth Abortion** – A ban on partial-birth abortion will become law in New Hampshire after the New Hampshire legislature voted to override Governor Lynch’s veto. New Hampshire has made clear that it will not allow this procedure that crosses the line from abortion to infanticide.
- **End-of-Life Decisions** – Governor Lynch signed two bills addressing end-of-life decision-making supported by the Diocese of Manchester. Under HB 1217, New Hampshire will recognize an advance directive, living will, or similar document executed in another state and valid according to the state where the document was executed. HB 1216 will make it clear that a health care facility may implement its protocol with respect to the withdrawing or withholding of medically-administered nutrition and hydration or life-sustaining treatment from a mentally incompetent or developmentally disabled person only when no advance directive, guardianship, or court order exists.

We are disappointed to report that Governor Lynch vetoed HB 217, the fetal homicide bill, and that the New Hampshire legislature failed to secure the votes necessary to override the veto.

Your advocacy made a difference this session. Thank you for all your work to support bills consistent with Catholic social teaching.

## **How to Contact Your Representative**

To find your representative and his or her contact information, visit: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

## **About Catholic Citizenship News**

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### **Tell Your Friends and Colleagues about Catholic Citizenship News:**

- **Bulletin Editors:** [CLICK HERE](#) for a bulletin announcement that you can use in your parish bulletins.
- **Forward to a Friend:** Forward this and other e-mail newsletters from the Diocese of Manchester to your friends and colleagues.
- [CLICK HERE](#) for a print version of this issue.

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# Catholic Citizenship News Launches Fall Education Campaign

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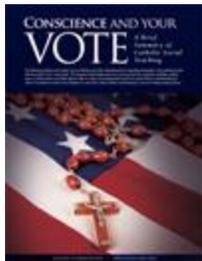
*Sep 10, 2012*

In preparation for the fall elections, we are proud to announce the launch of Conscience and Your Vote, an education and awareness drive dedicated to encouraging Catholics in New Hampshire to learn about Church teaching on today's pressing issues, pray as we form our consciences, and get out and vote. This

year, we face great challenges as a nation, but also are presented with great opportunities to build a future based upon the principles laid forth by Christ.

Starting this week, Catholic Citizenship News will feature a weekly program to help Catholics learn about Church teaching. Watch for future issues highlighting the key themes of Catholic social teaching:

- The Right of Life and the Dignity of the Human Person
- Call to Family, Community, and Participation
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
- Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
- Solidarity
- Caring for God's Creation



## ***Conscience and Your Vote – A Brief Summary of Catholic Social Teaching***

Bishop Peter A. Libasci developed a document, *Conscience and Your Vote*, to assist Catholics and other interested persons in understanding the nature of conscience, the moral obligation to vote, and Church teaching on today's pressing issues. [CLICK HERE](#) to read *Conscience and Your Vote*.

### **Important Voting Dates**

- **September 11, 2012 – State Primary Election Day**
- October 27, 2012 – Last day to register to vote before General Election Day
  
- November 6, 2012 – General Election Day

For more information on voting in New Hampshire, including a summary of the new voter ID law, visit <http://sos.nh.gov/VoteNH.aspx>.

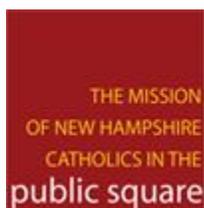
### **Resources for Parishes and Schools**

Our website has been updated with resources for parishes, including prayer resources and political activity guidelines. We also have included plans and ideas for catechetical leaders, schools, youth ministers, and campus ministers. For more information, visit [www.catholicnh.org/vote](http://www.catholicnh.org/vote).

## Parable Magazine Features Catholic Social Teaching

The latest issue of Parable magazine is dedicated to conscience formation as a Catholic voter, including profiles of individuals and groups modeling the themes of Church teaching and a message from Bishop Libasci on the importance of voting. [CLICK HERE](#) to read Parable.

In a time when our nation struggles with the issues of human dignity, religious liberty, poverty, immigration, peace, justice, and stewardship, we hope you find these resources a helpful part of your reflection before exercising your right to vote.



## The Moral Dimensions of Budget Choices

The Diocese of Manchester is sponsoring the program, "The Mission of NH Catholics in the Public Square: The Moral Dimensions of Budget Choices." John Carr, a Resident Fellow at the Institute of Politics at the Harvard Kennedy School will be the keynote speaker.

The topics to be discussed include:

- Why does the Church take a position on budgets and public assistance programs?
- What is the Catholic teaching on overcoming poverty?
- What role do solidarity and subsidiarity play in evaluating budgets?

### **Saturday, November 10, 2012**

8:30 a.m. registration

9:00 a.m. – 12 p.m. program

Saint Elizabeth Seton Parish Hall

190 Meetinghouse Road

Bedford, NH 03110

**This event is free of charge.**

[DOWNLOAD FLYER \(pdf\)](#)

**Register on or before November 6, 2012**

By phone: Kimberly Low (603) 663-0131

By e-mail: [klow@rcbm.org](mailto:klow@rcbm.org)

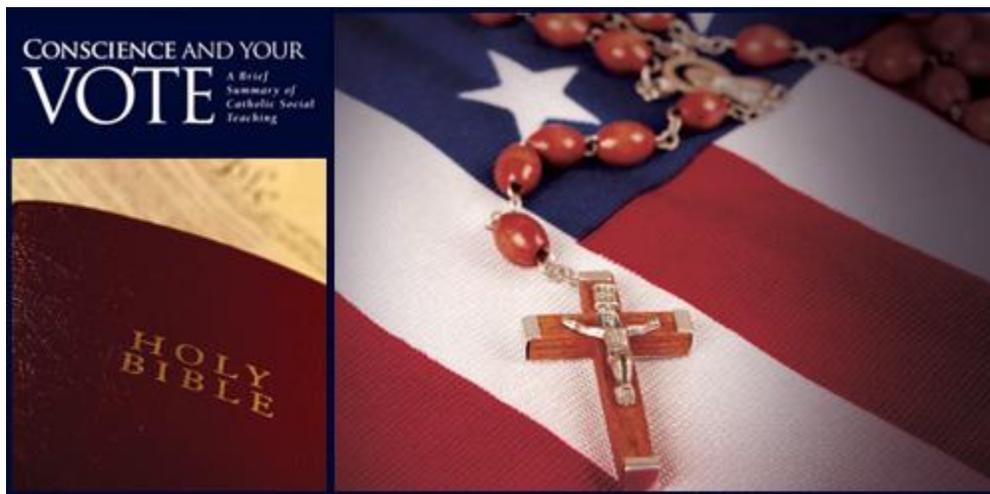
Online: [publicsquare.eventbrite.com](http://publicsquare.eventbrite.com)

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# The Right to Life and the Dignity of the Human Person

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Sep 17, 2012



This fall, Catholic Citizenship News features a weekly program to help Catholics learn about the seven key themes of Church teaching as we form our consciences in preparation for the general election. In this issue, we begin with the Right to Life and the Dignity of the Human Person.

## The Right to Life and the Dignity of the Human Person – a Summary

*When he presents the heart of his redemptive mission, Jesus says: “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (Jn 10:10). In truth, he is referring to that “new” and “eternal” life which consists in communion with the Father, to which every person is freely called in the Son by the power of the Sanctifying Spirit. It is precisely in this “life” that all aspects and stages of human life achieve their full significance. – Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, no. 1*

As a gift from God, every human life is sacred from conception to natural death. The life and dignity of every person must be respected and protected at every stage and in every condition. The right to life is

the first and most fundamental principle of human rights that leads Catholics to seek to build a world where there is greater respect for human life and commitment to justice and peace.

*Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being. – Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation*, Introduction, no. 5*

The dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. In *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops explains that there are some things we must never do, as individuals or as a society, because they are incompatible with love of God and neighbor. These actions are called “intrinsically evil” because they must always be rejected and opposed and must never be supported or condoned. A prime example is the intentional taking of innocent human life, as in abortion and euthanasia. Similarly, direct threats to the sanctity and dignity of human life that always must be opposed include human cloning, destructive research on human embryos, genocide, torture, racism, and the targeting of noncombatants in acts of terror or war.

Catholic teaching about the dignity of life also calls us to oppose the use of the death penalty and to overcome poverty and suffering. Opposition to intrinsically evil acts that undercut the dignity of the human person also should open our eyes to the good we must do – to our positive duty to contribute to the common good and act in solidarity with those in need. As Pope John Paul II said, “The fact that only the negative commandments oblige always and under all circumstances does not mean that in the moral life prohibitions are more important than the obligation to do good indicated by the positive commandment. (*Veritatis Splendor*, no. 52).

## Applying the Teaching to Political Life

Applying the Church’s teaching on respect for human life can be challenging when we bring these beliefs to the public square. The Church’s teaching on human life and dignity has been misunderstood and misused in two ways:

- The first is a moral equivalence that makes no ethical distinctions between different kinds of issues involving human life and dignity. The direct and intentional destruction of innocent human life from the moment of conception until natural death is always wrong and is not just one issue among many. It always must be opposed.
- The second is the misuse of these necessary moral distinctions as a way of dismissing or ignoring other threats to human life and dignity such as racism, the use of the death penalty, unjust war, the use of torture, war crimes, and addressing the serious issues of poverty, health care, and immigration. Catholics are urged to seriously consider Church teaching on these issues. Although choices about how best to respond to these and other compelling threats to human life and dignity are matters for principled debate and decision, this does not make them optional concerns or permit Catholics to dismiss or ignore Church teaching on these important issues.

The themes of Catholic social teaching are not a quantitative list of issues for equal consideration – there are important distinctions among moral issues acknowledging that some involve the clear obligation to oppose acts which never can be justified and that others require action to pursue justice and promote the common good. At the same time, “A political commitment to a single isolated aspect of the Church’s social doctrine does not exhaust one’s responsibility towards the common good.” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life*, no. 4) The Church calls upon Catholics to form their consciences in the light of their Catholic faith, learning about the candidates and issues.

## Where can I Learn More?

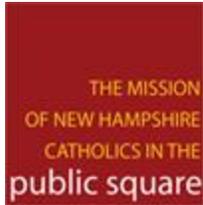
Visit the [Understanding Life Issues page](#) of the website of the Catholic Diocese of Manchester to view resources from the Start of Life Issues (such as contraception and abortion) to the End of Life (including euthanasia, advanced directives, and the death penalty). You also will find links to information on stem cell research, human cloning, reproductive technologies, and torture.

The [website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) includes extensive materials on Human Life and Dignity at Human Life and Dignity. Click the individual topics on the left side of the page for more information.

## Parable Magazine Features Catholic Social Teaching

The latest issue of the magazine of the Diocese of Manchester, Parable, is dedicated to conscience formation as a Catholic voter, including profiles of individuals and groups modeling themes of Church teaching. [CLICK HERE](#) to read the reflection on the Right to Life and the Dignity of the Human Person as Christopher Duffley’s adoptive parents share how God moved their hearts.

## The Moral Dimensions of Budget Choices



The Diocese of Manchester is sponsoring the program, “The Mission of NH Catholics in the Public Square: The Moral Dimensions of Budget Choices.” John Carr, a Resident Fellow at the Institute of Politics at the Harvard Kennedy School will be the keynote speaker.

The topics to be discussed include:

- Why does the Church take a position on budgets and public assistance programs?
- What is the Catholic teaching on overcoming poverty?
- What role do solidarity and subsidiarity play in evaluating budgets?

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**[DOWNLOAD FLYER \(pdf\)](#)**

**Register on or before November 6, 2012**

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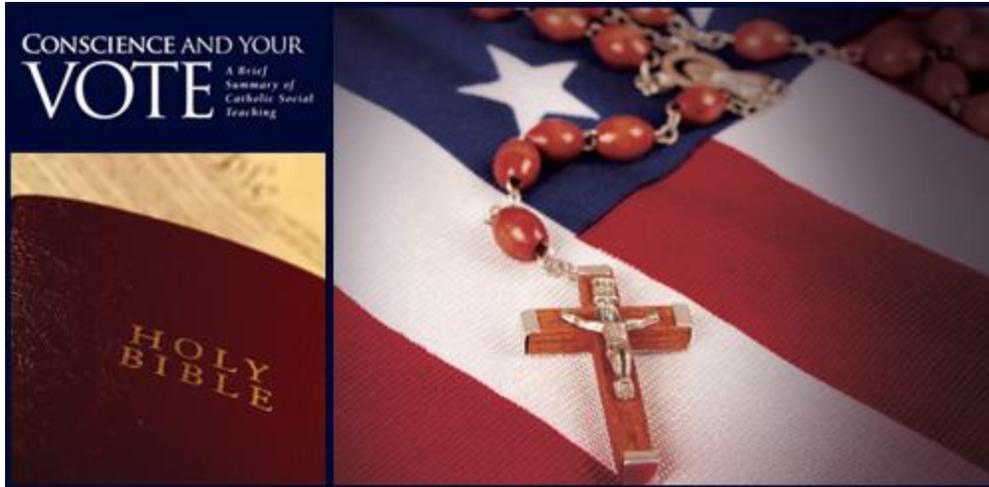
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## Call to Family, Community, and Participation

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*Sep 24, 2012*



This fall, Catholic Citizenship News features a weekly program to help Catholics learn about the seven key themes of Church teaching as we form our consciences in preparation for the general election. This week, we examine the Call to Family, Community, and Participation.

## Call to Family, Community, and Participation – a Summary

*It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person. Participation is achieved first of all by taking charge of the areas for which one assumes personal responsibility: by the care taken for the education of his family, by conscientious work, and so forth, man participates in the good of others and of society. As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life. – Catechism of the Catholic Church, nos. 1913 – 1915.*

The human person is not only sacred but also social. Full human development takes place in relationship with others. How we organize in society directly impacts human dignity and the capacity of individuals to flourish in community.

The family – based on marriage between a man and a woman – is the first and fundamental unit of society and is a sanctuary for the creation and nurturing of children. “God himself is the author of marriage.” *Gaudium et Spes*, no.48. Marriage is not a creation of human society or any religion – instead, it springs from who the human person is, as male and female, and society and religion affirm and reinforce it. Therefore, the truth of marriage is accessible to everyone, regardless of their religious beliefs or lack thereof.

Social and economic policies should work to strengthen the family, not weaken it. This includes the rights

and responsibilities of parents to care for their children, including the right to choose their children's education.

Every person has a right and a duty to participate in shaping society to promote the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. As Catholics, our baptismal commitment to bear public witness to the value of Jesus Christ requires our active participation in the free and democratic life of our nation.

This theme of Catholic teaching also calls us to apply subsidiarity – the principle

that larger institutions in society should not overwhelm or interfere with smaller or local institutions, yet larger institutions have essential responsibilities when the more local institutions cannot adequately protect human dignity, meet human needs, and advance the common good. – *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, no. 48.

As Blessed Pope John Paul II reminded us, “*the principle of subsidiarity* must be respected: a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to coordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good.” *Centesimus Annus*, no. 48.

## Where can I Learn More?

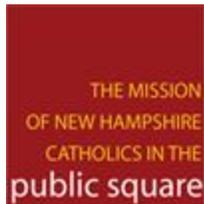
For additional information on the Catholic teaching on marriage and the family, visit [www.marriageuniqueforareason.org](http://www.marriageuniqueforareason.org), an initiative of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops. The site includes information on Church teachings and FAQs.

To learn more about how to participate in public life in New Hampshire by speaking out on state legislation, visit [www.catholicnh.org/action](http://www.catholicnh.org/action).

## Parable Magazine Features Catholic Social Teaching

The latest issue of the magazine of the Diocese of Manchester, Parable, is dedicated to conscience formation as a Catholic voter, including profiles of individuals and groups modeling themes of Church teaching. [CLICK HERE](#) to read the reflection on the Call to Family, Community, and Participation as George Harne, president of The College of Saint Mary Magdalen, talks about what it means to live sacramentally both within the family unit and in our lives as citizens of the world.

## The Moral Dimensions of Budget Choices



The Diocese of Manchester is sponsoring the program, “The Mission of NH Catholics in the Public Square: The Moral Dimensions of Budget Choices.” John Carr, a Resident Fellow at the Institute of Politics at the Harvard Kennedy School will be the keynote speaker.

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8:30 a.m. registration

9:00 a.m. – 12 p.m. program

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## Rights and Responsibilities

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Oct 1, 2012



This fall, Catholic Citizenship News features a weekly program to help Catholics learn about the seven key themes of Church teaching as we form our consciences in preparation for the general election. This week, we focus on Rights and Responsibilities.

### Rights and Responsibilities – a Summary

*Every human being has a right to life, the fundamental right that makes all other rights possible, and a right to access to those things required for human decency – food and shelter, education and employment, health care and housing, freedom of religion and family life. The right to exercise religious*

*freedom publicly and privately by individuals and institutions along with freedom of conscience need to be constantly defended . . . Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities – to one another, to our families, and to the larger society. Rights should be understood and exercised in a moral framework rooted in the dignity of the human person.* Catholic Bishops of the United States, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, no. 49

The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Every human being has a right to life, which makes all other rights possible. Everyone has a right to those things required for basic human decency: food, shelter, education, employment, health care, housing, freedom of religion, and family life.

Everyone has a right to religious freedom, which enables one to worship freely, to refuse to participate in actions contrary to one's religious beliefs, and to share and defend one's creed and moral principles in the public forum. Individuals and institutions have the right to exercise their religious freedoms publicly and privately.

With these rights come duties to one another, our families, and the larger society. We have the right and the duty to participate fully in all aspects of life: political, social, cultural, and economic. Our Baptism calls us to bear public witness to the values of Jesus Christ by active participation in the free and democratic life of our nation. We have a responsibility to act on our faith because "faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead." Jas 2:14-18.

In the most recent issue of the magazine of the Diocese of Manchester, *Parable*, Sister Lucille Gravel beautifully summarizes this area of both rights and responsibilities:

*"That all may be one," the Gospel tells us, and it breaks my heart that God created us all equal and there is such a discrepancy between the very rich and the very poor. I am especially saddened when I see children and young mothers deprived of life's most basic necessities. Advocating for those without a voice is hard work, but it is the work of life, and necessary if we are to truly love our neighbor as ourselves.*

## Applying the Teaching to Political Life – What about the Separation of Church and State?

When Catholics exercise their right and responsibility to participate in public life, many often respond by saying a "separation of Church and State" prohibits any influence of religion in the public square, but this view is inaccurate. The drafters of the United States Constitution held religious freedom in such high regard that it is addressed as the first phrase in the First Amendment and protects the right of individual believers and religious bodies to participate and speak out without government interference, favoritism, or discrimination. The First Amendment plainly states:

*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof*

The first part of the First Amendment concerns the *establishment of religion*. This phrase prohibits Congress from mandating a national religion, requiring citizens to follow a particular religion, or favoring one religion over another. The second part addresses the *free exercise* of religion and guarantees that every person has the right to free expression of religious beliefs.

The First Amendment speaks in terms of what “Congress” cannot do; it restrains the actions of the government, not the actions of individuals or organizations. The First Amendment does not prohibit individuals from bringing their religious beliefs and history with them to the public square, nor does it forbid religious institutions from participating in political life. As Americans, we treasure this freedom, which protects our right and obligation to express freely our moral principles and convictions within the public arena without fear of penalty or exclusion. We uphold this same right for all other religious groups, including those whose positions differ from ours.

As Catholics, we bring important assets to the discussion about our nation’s future. We bring a consistent moral framework for assessing issues – drawn from basic human reason that is illuminated by the Scripture and the teaching of the Church. We also bring a broad, first-hand experience serving those in need – educating the young, caring for the sick, sheltering the homeless, helping women who face difficult pregnancies, feeding the hungry, welcoming immigrants and refugees, reaching out in global solidarity, and pursuing peace.

## Where can I Learn More?

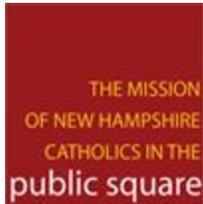
Visit the [USCCB](#) for references to Scripture and Catholic teaching in the area of Rights and Responsibilities by [clicking here](#).

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# Parable Magazine Features Catholic Social Teaching

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## The Moral Dimensions of Budget Choices



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# Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

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Oct 9, 2012



This fall, Catholic Citizenship News features a weekly program to help Catholics learn about the seven key themes of Church teaching as we form our consciences in preparation for the general election. This week, we examine the Option for the Poor and Vulnerable.

## Option for the Poor and Vulnerable – a Summary

While the common good embraces all, those who are weak, vulnerable, and most in need deserve preferential concern. Scripture gives us the story of the Last Judgment and reminds us we will be judged by our response to the “least among us.”

*‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’ (Mt. 25:37-40)*

A basic moral test for our society is how we treat the most vulnerable in our midst. The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains:

*Those who are oppressed by poverty are the object of a preferential love on the part of the Church which, since her origin and in spite of the failings of many of her members, has not ceased to work for their relief, defense, and liberation through numerous works of charity which remain indispensable always and everywhere. (no. 2448)*

Pope Benedict XVI has taught that “love for widows and orphans, prisoners, and the sick and needy of every kind, is as essential to [the Church] as the ministry of the sacraments and preaching of the Gospel” (*Deus Caritas Est*, no. 22). The preferential option for the poor and vulnerable includes all who are

marginalized in our nation and beyond – unborn children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and terminally ill, and victims of injustice and oppression.

## How Can I Help the Poor and Vulnerable?

There are two distinct but complementary ways we can put the Gospel in action in response to the preferential love for the poor and vulnerable: *advocacy* (addressing systemic, root causes of problems that affect many people) and *charitable works* (short-term, emergency assistance for individuals).

*Advocacy* “concerns the social, political, and economic aspects and above all, the structural dimension of problems and their respective solutions.” (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 201)

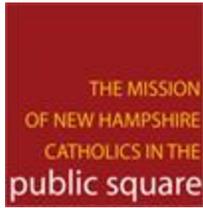
Advocacy addresses the root causes of problems facing our communities by seeking just public policies and helping to change the social structures that contribute to suffering and injustice at home and around the world. Examples of advocacy include contacting your state and federal legislators on issues of interest to the poor and vulnerable. You can learn more about how to speak out to support or oppose state legislation by [clicking here](#).

*Charitable Works* are “our response to immediate needs and specific situations: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, caring and healing the sick, visiting those in prison, etc.” (Deus Caritas Est, no. 31). Charitable works aid or assist others both locally and globally to meet their immediate, short-term needs. Examples include engaging in a direct service such as mentoring children or providing food, clothing, shelter, or monetary assistance to those in need. There are many organizations performing charitable works in New Hampshire every day. You can get involved through [your parish](#) and by contacting the nearest field office of [New Hampshire Catholic Charities](#).

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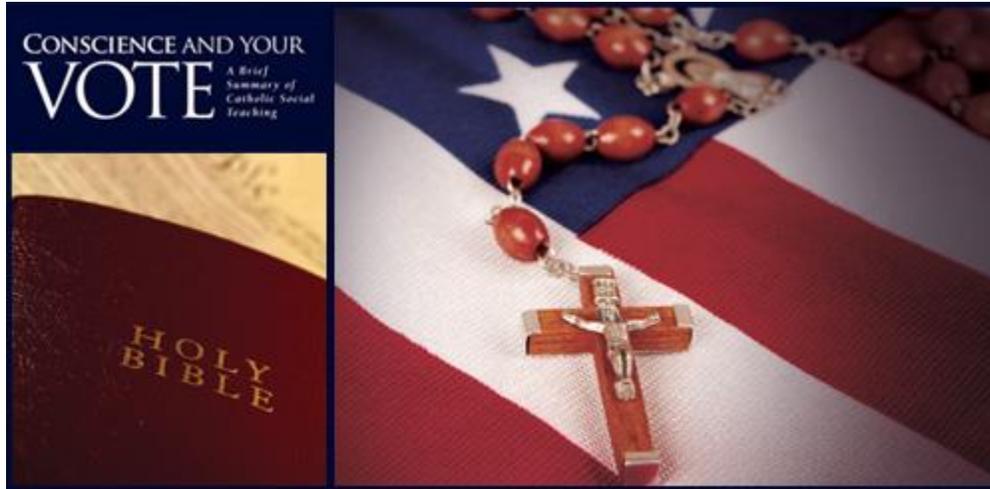
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# Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

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Oct 15, 2012



## Fall 2012 Weekly Education Campaign Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

This fall, Catholic Citizenship News features a weekly program to help Catholics learn about the seven key themes of Church teaching as we form our consciences in preparation for the general election. In this installment, we focus on the Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers.

## Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers – a Summary

*the primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is man, the human person in his or her own integrity:* “Man is the source, the focus and the aim of all economic and social life.” (Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, no. 25, June 29, 2009) (emphasis in original).

In 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued *Rerum Novarum*, which provided the first Catholic evaluation of the Industrial Revolution, especially its impact on the dignity of workers, many of whom had lost their former independence as their skills become obsolete.

In response to widespread employer resistance to reasonable worker demands, Pope Leo did two things: first, he recognized the right of workers to form unions for the purpose of collective bargaining with their employers; and, second, he proposed that employers set wages according to the needs of working families, not solely according to raw market calculations.

Since the time of Pope Leo XIII, every Pope has reinforced these essential teachings, especially Blessed John Paul II, who issued *Laborem Exercens* in 1981. In that encyclical, the Holy Father taught “the principle of the priority of labor over capital,” which means that the human person, whether worker or manager, is the true source of wealth, not capital, which is simply material. In light of this, Blessed John Paul II forcefully restated the rights of workers to share fairly in the fruits of their labor, to have job security, and to participate in the operation of enterprises. He especially praised the practice of collective bargaining, which allows workers to organize freely to express their views to management. The Catholic Church has long supported laws and institutions that facilitate collective bargaining.

Rights always have corresponding responsibilities. Hence, employees have the responsibility to provide a full day’s work in return for their pay, to treat employers and co-workers with respect, and to consider the true needs of the entire enterprise, not just their own interests.

Employers contribute to the common good by raising and investing capital; and by managing the production process in ways that are efficient but also respectful of the essential dignity of employees.

Catholic social teaching reminds workers, employers, and investors that their combined activity is a crucial form of Man’s continuing participation in God’s creation. Through sharing in God’s creative power, human beings discover their own dignity by what they do rather than by what they own.

## What is the Position of the Church regarding Unions?

*Two are better than one: they get a good wage for their labor. If the one falls, the other will lift up his companion. Woe to the solitary man! For if he should fall, he has no one to lift him up. (Eccl. 4:9-10)*

As we saw in prior issues of this fall education series of Catholic Citizenship News, the Catholic vision carefully balances and links the “personal” and “social” dimensions of the human person. We uphold the [right to life](#) and dignity of each individual and unrepeatable human person. Each person also is profoundly social, inevitably emerging from a [community](#), living always within a community, and having [rights and responsibilities](#) within a community.

More than 100 years ago, the Catholic Church expressed its support for the right of human beings to form free and independent associations. These associations act as intermediating structures between individuals and other organizations such as corporations, public entities, and the state itself. Examples of such “intermediating structures” are political parties, labor organizations, charitable organizations, and ad hoc citizen groups established to advance a particular cause. The Church supports these “intermediating structures” and opposes proposals to undermine their existence and to marginalize their influence.

As Pope John Paul II summarized in *Laborem Exercens*:

*All these rights [of workers], together with the need for the workers themselves to secure them, give rise to yet another right: **the right of association**, that is to form associations for the purpose of defending the vital interests of those employed in the various professions. These associations are called labour or trade unions . . . Their task is to defend the existential interests of workers in all sectors in which their rights are*

*concerned. The experience of history teaches that organizations of this type are indispensable element of social life, especially in modern industrialized societies. (no. 20) (emphasis in original)*

## Where can I Learn More?

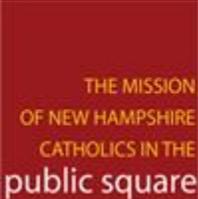
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## About Catholic Citizenship News

Welcome to Catholic Citizenship News! The Diocese of Manchester Newsletter on Public Issues has a new name to lift up our dual heritage as both faithful Catholics and American citizens. In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us, "It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person . . . As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life" (nos. 1913-1915). Through Catholic Citizenship News, we will continue to communicate with you about state and federal legislation, Catholic social teaching, and events that may be of interest to you.

## Share Catholic Citizenship News!

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# Solidarity

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Oct 22, 2012



## Fall 2012 Weekly Education Campaign Solidarity

This fall, Catholic Citizenship News features a weekly program to help Catholics learn about the seven key themes of Church teaching as we form our consciences in preparation for the general election. This week, we learn about Solidarity.

### Solidarity – a Summary

*There is a solidarity among all creatures arising from the fact that all have the same Creator and are all ordered to his glory. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 344)*

We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. As Pope John Paul II noted in *Evangelium Vitae*, there is a contradiction between the solemn affirmation of human rights and their tragic denial rooted in a notion of freedom exalting the individual and failing to provide a place for solidarity. We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers (Gen 4:9) "because God entrusts us to one another." (*Evangelium Vitae*, no. 19). As Pope John Paul II summarized: *[Solidarity] is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all. (Sollicitudo rei Socialis, no. 38)*

Jesus taught us one of the greatest commandments: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Mk 12:31). Loving our neighbor has global dimensions, and this commandment calls us to eradicate racism and address the extreme poverty and disease plaguing so much of the world. Solidarity also includes the call of the Gospel to welcome the stranger among us (Mt 25:31-46), including immigrants seeking work, a safe home, education for their children, and a decent life for their families.

The Gospel lifts up those who work for peace: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” (Mt 5:9). In light of this invitation to be peacemakers, our commitment to solidarity with our neighbors – at home and abroad – also demands that we promote peace and pursue justice in a world marred by violence and conflict. Decisions on the use of force should be guided by the traditional moral criteria and undertaken only as a last resort.

More than fifty years ago, Pope John XXIII wrote these words still applicable today:

*The solidarity which binds all men together as members of a common family makes it impossible for wealthy nations to look with indifference upon the hunger, misery and poverty of other nations whose citizens are unable to enjoy even elementary human rights. The nations of the world are becoming more and more dependent on one another and it will not be possible to preserve a lasting peace so long as glaring economic and social imbalances persist. (Mater et Magistra, no. 157)*

## Where Can I Learn More about Solidarity?

To learn more about the global peace and development efforts of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), visit Catholic Relief Services (CRS) at [www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org).

To subscribe to Catholics Confront Global Poverty advocacy action alerts, [click here](#).

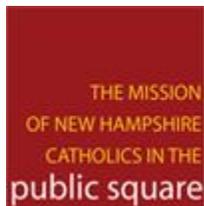
Learn how you can use CRS Rice Bowl as a resource in your parish, school, and family to deepen the Lenten experience and increase awareness of global solidarity by visiting [www.crsricebowl.org](http://www.crsricebowl.org)

For information on the Just War Tradition and the call to resist resorting to violence as a means to resolve conflict, visit <http://www.catholicnh.org/public-issues/social-justice/just-war/>.

# Parable Magazine Features Catholic Social Teaching

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[CLICK HERE](#) to read about the how the Fryckowski family was welcomed to the United States after leaving Poland but long to reunite with their son.



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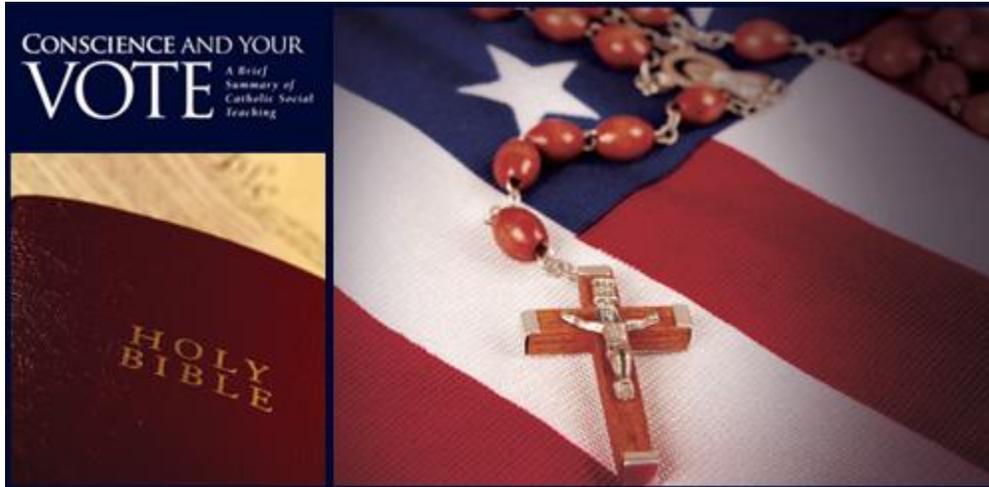
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# Caring for God's Creation

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Oct 29, 2012



This fall, Catholic Citizenship News features a weekly program to help Catholics learn about the seven key themes of Church teaching as we form our consciences in preparation for the general election. We examine our seventh theme this week – Caring for God’s Creation.

## Caring for God’s Creation – a Summary

The environment is God’s gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole. – Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, no. 48, June 29, 2009.

As stewards, not owners, of the earth God created for us, we have an obligation to cherish and care for the environment. We have a moral obligation to protect the planet on which we live – to respect God’s creation and to ensure a safe and hospitable environment for human beings, especially children at their most vulnerable stages of development. The earth yields forth many resources needed for human flourishing, especially energy and the capacity to produce food. These precious resources must be used prudently, fairly, safely, and with a constant concern for future generations.

In his 1990 World Day of Peace Message, Pope John Paul II observed “a lack of due respect for nature, by the plundering of natural resources and by a progressive decline in the quality of life.” He encouraged ecological awareness to develop concrete programs and initiatives.

Twenty years later, Pope Benedict XVI dedicated his World Day of Peace message to the theme *If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation*. In his message, Pope Benedict XVI drew attention to climate

change, desertification, the deterioration and loss of productivity in agricultural areas, the pollution of rivers and aquifers, the loss of biodiversity, the increase of natural catastrophes, and the deforestation of equatorial and tropical regions. He also spoke about “environmental refugees,” people who are forced by the degradation of their natural habitat to forsake it – and often their possessions as well – in order to face the dangers and uncertainties of forced displacement. Pope Benedict XVI summarized that all of these issues have a profound impact on the exercise of human rights, such as the right to life, food, health, and development. He called for a greater sense of intergenerational solidarity, urging the use of natural resources “in such a way that immediate benefits do not have a negative impact on living creatures, human and not, present and future.”

Climate change is at the center of the environmental challenges facing our nation and the world, and the Church has placed a particular focus on the needs of the poor, the weak, and the vulnerable in examining this issue. People living in poverty – both at home and abroad – contribute least to climate change, but they are likely to suffer its worst consequences with few resources to adapt and respond. According to Catholic Relief Services, the effects of climate change – increasingly limited access to water, reduced crop yields, more widespread disease, increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters, and conflict over declining resources – are making the lives of the world’s poorest people even more precarious. “Action to mitigate global climate change must be built upon a foundation of social and economic justice that does not put the poor at greater risk or place disproportionate and unfair burdens on developing nations.” United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*, June 15, 2001.

## Where can I Learn More?

- [Pope Benedict XVI's 2012 World Day of Peace message, If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation](#)
- [Pope John Paul II's 1990 World Day of Peace message, The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility](#)
- [Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good](#) – a statement of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
- [Global Climate Change and Our Catholic Response](#) – educational resources from Catholic Relief Services
- [Protecting Human Life and Caring for Creation: Why Protecting Unborn Children in Their First Environment Matters](#) – a discussion and study guide

## Parable Magazine Features Catholic Social Teaching

The latest issue of the magazine of the Diocese of Manchester, *Parable*, is dedicated to conscience formation as a Catholic voter, including profiles of individuals and groups modeling themes of Church

teaching. [CLICK HERE](#) to read the reflection on Caring for God's Creation and learn how Peter Loughlin expresses his love of God's creation throughout Portsmouth.

## About Catholic Citizenship News

Welcome to Catholic Citizenship News! The Diocese of Manchester Newsletter on Public Issues has a new name to lift up our dual heritage as both faithful Catholics and American citizens. In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us, "It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person . . . As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life" (nos. 1913-1915). Through Catholic Citizenship News, we will continue to communicate with you about state and federal legislation, Catholic social teaching, and events that may be of interest to you.

## Share Catholic Citizenship News!

We have received feedback from Catholic Citizenship News subscribers that a significant number of New Hampshire residents do not have computer access to receive e-mail alerts. You may share this copy of Catholic Citizenship News with those who may not otherwise receive it. For example, one group offered to post Catholic Citizenship News alerts on the bulletin boards in local churches. Future Catholic Citizenship News pieces also may be appropriate to print and distribute at meetings of parish Catholic Citizenship Committees or as a parish bulletin insert. Please also feel free encourage others to subscribe to receive Catholic Citizenship News alerts.

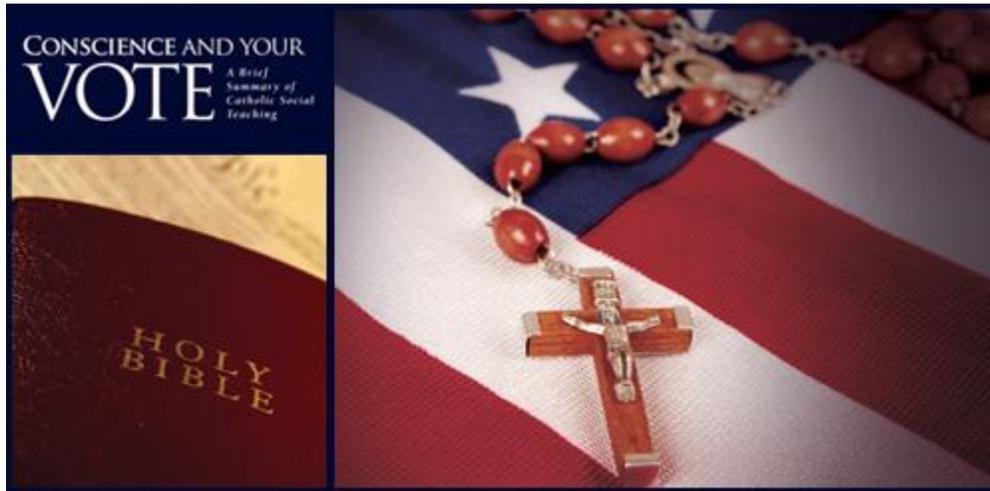
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# Prayerfully Consider Your Vote Tomorrow

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Nov 5, 2012



Many eyes will be turned toward New Hampshire tomorrow. We face great challenges as a nation, but we also are presented with great opportunities to build a future based upon the principles laid forth by Christ. May we take this opportunity seriously, obtain factual information about the candidates and their positions, and get out and vote tomorrow.

## Bishop's Letter on Voting

[CLICK HERE](#) to read a letter from Bishop Peter A. Libasci urging Catholics to prayerfully consider their vote.

[CLICK HERE](#) to listen to recording of Bishop Peter A. Libasci reading his letter.

## Where and When Can I Vote? What do I need to bring?

Visit the [website New Hampshire Secretary of State](#) to search your city or town and determine your polling location and the times of day when you will be able to vote.

**NEW THIS YEAR** – all voters at the polls will be asked to show photo identification. If you do not present a photo ID, you will be permitted to vote after completing a “challenged voter affidavit.” If you complete an affidavit, you will receive a verification letter from the Secretary of State after the election requesting verification you voted in the election. If you do not respond in writing within 90 days, the Attorney General will conduct an investigation to determine if fraudulent voting occurred. The New Hampshire Secretary of State has provided this summary of the new law, including a list of approved photo ID, [CLICK HERE](#).

# Resources to Learn More about Catholic Teaching and Voting

Bishop Libasci developed a document, *Conscience and Your Vote*, to assist Catholics and other interested persons in understanding the nature of conscience, the moral obligation to vote, and Church teaching on today's pressing issues. [CLICK HERE](#) to read *Conscience and Your Vote*.

This fall, Catholic Citizenship News featured a weekly program to help Catholics learn about the seven key themes of Church teaching as we form our consciences in preparation for the general election. Click on the headings below to read each of the previous issues.

- [The Right to Life and the Dignity of the Human Person](#)
- [Call to Family, Community, and Participation](#)
- [Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [Option for the Poor and Vulnerable](#)
- [Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers](#)
- [Solidarity](#)
- [Caring for God's Creation](#)

In a time when our nation struggles with the issues of human dignity, religious liberty, poverty, immigration, peace, justice, and stewardship, we hope you find these resources a helpful part of your reflection before exercising your right to vote tomorrow.

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## Why does the Church take a position on budgets and public assistance programs?

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*Nov 8, 2012*

**Why does the Church take a position on budgets & public assistance programs?**

**Learn more at the next public square event:**

**“The Moral Dimensions of Budget Choices”**

THE MISSION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE CATHOLICS IN THE public square

Now that the election is over and the ads have stopped, significant work will begin immediately. Our newly senators and representatives will introduce bills, and you can get involved by learning about the issues, following legislation, and engaging your elected officials.

You can start by joining us this Saturday, November 10 to learn about why the Church takes a position on budgets and public assistance programs. We will explore Catholic teaching on overcoming poverty, including the role that solidarity and subsidiarity play in evaluating budgets. The keynote speaker, John Carr, is a Resident Fellow at the Institute of Politics at the Harvard Kennedy School and previously

worked for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for nearly 25 years, advocating on major issues of justice and peace.

Saturday, November 10, 2012

8:30 a.m. registration

9:00 a.m. – 12 p.m. program

Saint Elizabeth Seton Parish Hall  
190 Meetinghouse Road  
Bedford, NH 03110

This event is free of charge.

[DOWNLOAD FLYER](#) (pdf)

REGISTER TODAY!

By phone: Kimberly Low (603) 663-0131

By e-mail: [klow@rcbm.org](mailto:klow@rcbm.org)

Online: [publicsquare.eventbrite.com](http://publicsquare.eventbrite.com)

## Prayer After an Election

We ask for God's blessing upon our newly-elected public servants. May we seek to better understand the issues that confront us and how the Gospel compels us to respond as faithful citizens in our community.

[CLICK HERE](#) for a Prayer After an Election.

## Bob Curley to Speak on Death Penalty November 15

Bob Curley will discuss his journey from advocating for the death penalty as a grieving father to becoming a world-renowned speaker denouncing the death penalty. Regardless of your opinion on the death penalty, come hear Bob on November 15 at 6:00 p.m. in Salem.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

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## We Need Your Input!

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Nov 26, 2012



Catholic Citizenship News is conducting a survey to determine how we can best deliver information to you about election resources, legislation, and events. Your feedback is important and will help us as we plan future communications.

This survey only should take about 5 minutes of your time, and your answers will be anonymous. Any questions marked with an asterisk (\*) require an answer in order to submit your responses.

This survey only will be available until December 14, 2012, so respond today!

[CLICK HERE](#) to start the survey.

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