
From: Michael McFarland [MMCFARLA@holycross.edu]
Sent: Sunday, October 07, 2007 8:51 PM
To: Emily Turner
Subject: Re: For those who do not have a voice.

Dear Emily,

Thank you for your message. I commend your concern for the unborn. However, I cannot look at the Alliance on Teen Pregnancy as simplistically as you seem to do.

It is not and has never been the mainstream Catholic position, and certainly is not the Jesuit position, that we should run away from public discussions of issues that are important to us just because of the presence of those whose positions or activities we find to be wrong. For example, recent Popes, including John Paul II, have often welcomed pro-choice politicians to the Vatican for discussions of important issues of mutual interest.

I have supported and will continue to support the work of Students for Life. I think it is very important. However, I must point out that the strategy of some pro-life groups to shun Planned Parenthood and thus discredit them in the public eye, however justified in theory, has been a miserable failure in practice. To the extent that the Church has tried it, all it has done is marginalize its own voice, which is tragic. By refusing to take part in broad-based efforts to help young girls and their children, we play into the hands of Planned Parenthood, who want to portray us as only caring for our own ideology and not for the welfare of women. I think that Catholic Charities of the Boston Archdiocese, led by one of the finest Catholic moral theologians in the country, has a much sounder strategy of involving itself in important efforts to protect the welfare of children and young people in ways that we find morally acceptable. If successful these efforts could lead to fewer abortions. In any event, given importance of the work done by the Alliance and the involvement of Catholic Charities and other Catholic groups, I don't see that we are compelled to withdraw from the agreement to rent space to them.

Michael McFarland, SJ

>>> Emily Turner 10/5/2007 2:26 PM >>>

Hello, Fr. McFarland,

I wanted to speak with you after mass today but got caught up in talking with Joe Reilly instead. The topic, however, was the same. As a Catholic and a member of the Holy Cross Community, I am very disappointed to hear that you were not persuaded by Mr. Ruddy's letter, nor the countless emails, phone calls, etc that you and the college have been receiving regarding Planned Parenthood's imminent presence on our campus on October 24th.

There is no excuse to allow such a group to make any appearance, however "unhosted or unsupported" by the college it is. I understand that the majority of the member groups of the conference would serve a greater good, and that is something to be considered. However, as the point was made by a fellow pro-life friend of mine, if a request were made by a pro-slavery group to be allowed on campus, even as a ludicrous "ally" with the archdiocese of Boston or any other Catholic organization, there would be no question (I hope) that they would not be allowed. Or, to extend the analogy to a more likely situation, if an anti-gay group desired to have a workshop on campus about ways to peacefully alienate gay members of our community, they would be laughed off of Mt. St. James. Yet, when Planned Parenthood purports to plan workshops that do not necessarily mention abortion, but nonetheless describe safe methods of birth control (the only method of which that the Catholic Church supports is Natural Family Planning, which I am sure is NEVER mentioned by Planned Parenthood) they are allowed on campus.

What a travesty.

We are talking about human lives here. It is not by accident that Planned Parenthood will be here--and what a triumph it will be for them--to be able to say, once again that they made it onto supposed pro-life territory. SILENCE IS ACCEPTANCE,

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and I do not plan to be silent as Holy Cross is in addressing this situation.

You may propose the importance of not pulling up the weeds along with the wheat. But wouldn't it be foolish to mistake a poisonous vine for a mere weed as it infiltrates our field and strangles the fruits of our labor?

Please consider the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' views (which I am sure you are familiar with) on this issue.

"We need to continue to teach clearly and help other Catholic leaders to teach clearly on our unequivocal commitment to the legal protection of human life from the moment of conception until natural death. Our teaching on human life and dignity should be reflected in our parishes and our educational, health care and human service ministries.

We need to do more to persuade all people that human life is precious and human dignity must be defended. This requires more effective dialogue and engagement with all public officials, especially Catholic public officials. We welcome conversation initiated by political leaders themselves.

Catholics need to act in support of these principles and policies in public life. It is the particular vocation of the laity to transform the world. We have to encourage this vocation and do more to bring all believers to this mission. As bishops, we do not endorse or oppose candidates. Rather, we seek to form the consciences of our people so that they can examine the positions of candidates and make choices based on Catholic moral and social teaching."

I am copying this email to Bishop McManus of Worcester.

I hope that you will consider the lives of the 3500 children per day who are lost to abortion in America, many at the hands of Planned Parenthood. In your search for justice, remember those who cannot voice their opinion.

Sincerely,
Emily Turner