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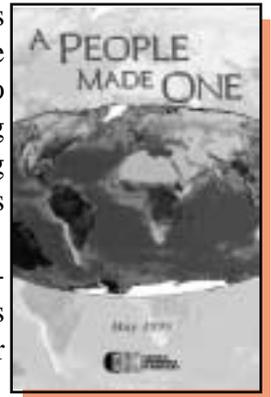
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**A PEOPLE
MADE ONE**

On Pentecost Sunday, Kentucky's bishops released their new pastoral letter entitled, "A People Made One". The pastoral calls on Catholics to embrace the ecumenical movement and seek greater understanding among Christians. The bishops identify practical steps for promoting unity and offer hope that through the work of the Holy Spirit, divisions among Christians will be healed.

Included in the pastoral is a small group study guide which outlines a four-week program for discussing the common bonds of Christians. Copies of the pastoral are available in most dioceses, or contact CCK to receive a copy (also available soon at www.ccky.org).



**FROM THE
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**

How can Kentucky's Catholic Bishops justify speaking in opposition to the expansion of for-profit, casino gambling? Considering that approximately 200 Catholic institutions are licensed to conduct charitable gaming activities, the credibility of CCK's opposition may be questioned. Answering this question requires a comprehensive look at the Gospel values, Catholic social teaching and the role of the Church in political process.

For Catholics, the Catechism is a repository of Catholic doctrine and theological teachings. It is not, however, the only source used in discerning and inspiring public policy positions. The Catechism was not written to serve as a quick-reference rule book, but instead serves as a reference point on faith and morality.

The Catechism speaks clearly to the morality of gambling: "Games of chance (card games, etc.) or wagers are not in themselves contrary to justice. They become morally unacceptable when they deprive someone of what is necessary to provide for his needs and those of others." (No. 2413) The Catechism goes on to recognize that the passion for gambling can become an enslavement and thereby become morally unacceptable. Gambling, though a luxury, is not considered morally wrong or sinful. *Well, if the Catechism says "O.K.", why oppose casinos?*

CCK analyzes public policy by how it impacts human life and the society as a whole. Careful consideration is given to an issue using a variety of

resources. One important resource is Catholic Social Teaching (CST) which has developed over the past one hundred years with a focus on the human person in society. CST serves as another reference point for expressing Church teachings on social policy. In short, it identifies a vision of life in which the value and dignity of the human person is respected. *Good to know, but what about casinos and slots?*

Allowing for-profit casinos or video lottery terminals (VLT) in Kentucky creates big risks for communities, risks that are more threatening than the potential loss of tax dollars to out-of-state casinos. A consistent theme throughout CST is the concern for the "common good" of all persons in a society. While common good is a broad term, it calls Catholics to work for a society in which individuals are free to reach their full human potential. The proper role of government is viewed as promoting an environment in which the common good is best served. Research from other states indicates that families, communities, employers and local governments are negatively impacted when for-profit casinos or VLT's are permitted. Overall, casinos and VLT's drain local communities of human and economic resources. Every dollar lost in casinos and VLT's is a dollar not spent in local communities. *Not exactly a commonly good thing.*

The American Psychological Association recognized the disease of compulsive gambling and added it to its list of diagnostic diseases in 1980. Over the past two years, the Kentucky Council on Compulsive Gambling notes a doubling in calls to its 1-800-GAMBLER help line. Addiction to gambling is as devastating as is chemical addiction and treatment is difficult to find. Should state government permit an

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activity known to increase the number, even if a small percentage, of persons addicted to gambling? In terms of human costs (personal bankruptcies, divorces, criminal activities), what price is state government willing to pay in order to collect an additional 200 million dollars in new tax revenue? *Somebody is going to lose.*

Families, employers and local communities, not the out-of-state corporations, share the aftermath of compulsive gambling. The lure of wealth without work and the false hope of a quick-win for easy-money is a powerful message. Government programs built on casino tax revenue face uncertainty in a fiercely competitive

Casinos are in the business of making a profit for stockholders, not investing in communities.

market for the gambling dollar. Areas hard hit by plant closings need real economic development investment,

not the quick-fix offered by casinos. Local economies face stiffer competition for consumers' disposable income. Local governments face additional costs associated with a shrinking tax base and increased costs of providing related government services (public assistance, policing and court costs). *There's no free lunch and entertainment has its price.*

For those who suggest that the Catholic Church has no role in this debate because of Church affiliated charitable gaming activities, the following needs to be considered: 1) Non-profit, community groups granted a license to conduct bingo and festivals are closely monitored by the IRS and regulated by the Department of Charitable Gaming; 2) bingo and festivals are limited in

duration; 3) net proceeds are re-invested in communities for charitable purposes; 4) wagering is limited by the type of game, or by the organization. Out-of-state corporations managing casinos do not provide communities with educational opportunities, volunteer fire fighting equipment, animal shelters, and children's athletics. Comparing bingo with casinos is like comparing apples and oranges. Casinos are in the business of making a profit for stockholders, not investing in communities.

The Catholic Church in Kentucky has used charitable gaming to fund several ministries and the experience has taught several important lessons. Building budgets on bingo or festival income is an unsteady source of revenue. Once a significant portion of a budget becomes dependent on that revenue, it is difficult to replace. Catholics are accepting this challenge, however, and are taking steps to reduce this type of financial dependency. One diocese has eliminated the use of casino-style games and is studying the impact of eliminating bingo.

The bishops are speaking in opposition to expanding gambling opportunities based on their duty as teachers of the faithful and as concerned citizens of the Commonwealth. As citizens, Catholics have a Gospel mandate to evaluate social policy by how it "touches the human person; whether it enhances or diminishes human life... and how it advances the common good." As Kentucky debates the expansion of gambling, the Church can be a voice of reason and experience in its call to reject this fool's gold.

KLEA It's time for closure. In a long awaited decision, Kentucky's Supreme Court, in a 4 - 3 decision, upheld a lower court ruling allowing Jefferson County Fiscal Court to continue subsidizing the transportation of non-public school students. The decision ends the exhaustive legal battle between the Fiscal Court and the Jefferson County Teachers Association (JCTA).

In 1994, the Kentucky General Assembly authorized two million dollars to reimburse county governments providing transportation for nonpublic school students. Again in 1996 and 1998, the General Assembly authorized necessary funding, now at a current level of 2.5 million. Twenty-one counties are receiving reimbursement checks from Kentucky's Transportation Cabinet. The Cabinet's report for fiscal year 1998-1999 places total allocations at \$2,357,000.

Writing for the majority, Justice William Graves provides an illuminating discussion of the constitutionality and limits of the "child benefit rationale", a concept at the core of giving parents real choice in how their educational tax dollars are used. It is especially encouraging that the Court chose to cite the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP) - Jackson v. Benson . In the Milwaukee decision, recently allowed to remain in effect by the U.S. Supreme Court, the Wisconsin Court provided a noteworthy way to think about parental choice in

education: "The amended MPCP, therefore, places on equal footing options of public and private school choice, and vests power in the hands of parents to choose where to direct the funds allocated for their children's benefit."

Far too much time and resources were spent on the bus subsidy question and it's time to move forward. While tempting to call the Kentucky Court's decision a

"victory", it is time to build new bridges for the future

4 - 3 Supreme Court Decision Upholds Bus Subsidy

of education in Kentucky. Hopefully, the Court's decision will bring new understanding to the bigger picture of allowing parents to choose the best educational opportunity for their child. Perhaps the idea of allowing parents to choose how their tax dollars are used will seem less threatening to teachers' unions and others who oppose parental choice in education. The continuing challenge for Kentuckians is to look beyond ill-conceived notions of the separation of Church and state and take a fresh look at parental choice in education.

KLEA staff and Board members continue to build grassroots support for a tuition tax credit. KLEA welcomes opportunities to speak with school groups. To schedule a speaker on tax credit legislation, contact KLEA at 502-875-8010.

THE FALSE MERCY OF ASSISTED SUICIDE

By Archbishop Thomas C. Kelly, O.P.

People of compassion feel for terminally ill persons. They sympathize with pain and suffering experienced by patients and their families. They wish for an acceptable end -- a cure, relief from pain, even death. But compassion does not justify assisted suicide. The Catholic Church strongly opposes assisted suicide and euthanasia.

In the Roman Catholic tradition, we have developed a comprehensive approach to life issues, including assisted suicide, euthanasia, abortion, capital punishment and social policies that affect the quality of life. This "seamless garment" approach to life issues is based upon some fundamental principles. These are: (1) respect for the dignity of the human person, made in the image and likeness of God; (2) the belief that human life cannot be used as a means to an end, however laudable the end may be; (3) the conviction that we are stewards of creation, responsible for but not in total control of ourselves and our earth, and (4) the belief that death is not the end, but the beginning of new life with Jesus Christ.

Some of those principles are religious in nature, but others are part of the common parlance of a civilized society. The dignity of the person, rejection of absolute control and respect for human life as a basic good are principles that undergird our society. Many of our finer instincts—care for the environment, outreach to the oppressed, rejection of racism—are based upon our sense of stewardship, our belief in the power of community and our respect for human dignity.

So what does the Catholic tradition say to those families facing terminal illness and death? We reject the position that the compassionate response is to allow people to commit suicide, as well as the position that life must be preserved at any cost.

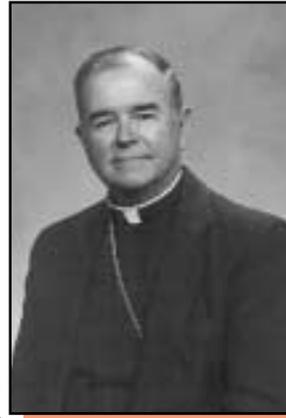
We do not believe that people have a right to intentionally take their own lives or that of others. Euthanasia and assisted suicide both involve the deliberate and morally unacceptable killing of a human person.

To reject a course of treatment when the burdens outweigh the benefits is not the same as suicide or euthanasia.

of a more permissive approach to both of these issues.

What effect do depression, fear of pain, poverty and loneliness have on people's stated wish to die? In this era of spiraling health care costs and managed care, how much pressure could be brought to bear on ill persons and their families to choose the less costly means of lethal injection? How will assisted suicide affect those people with disabilities, who already have long experience with prejudicial attitudes of attitudes from others? How will assisted suicide affect physicians and their roles as healers?

We believe that there are other solutions to the admittedly difficult issues facing terminally ill patients and their families. Treatment for depression, effective pain relief, the availability of compassionate and appropriate health care, and the ability to reject disproportionate medical treatment will go a lot further to help patients face death with dignity than the quick-fix answers of assisted suicide and euthanasia.



Opinion polls reveal that one of the most prevalent fears related to the end of life is the fear of a physically painful death. Patients also worry about the cost of illness. They want to be able to choose a reasonable course of treatment that presents some hope of a good outcome without unacceptable burdens being placed upon the patient and his or her family. That is why the Church has developed the principles of proportionate and disproportionate means of treatment.

...we are stewards of creation, responsible for but not in total control of ourselves...

These principles are based upon the conviction that the person comes first. Medical technology must serve human beings, and treatment cannot be imposed without reference to the person receiving it. Therefore, we ask about the benefits and burdens of medical care: Is there some hope of success? How will it affect the quality of life? What is its cost? Do the ultimate benefits outweigh the burdens? To reject a course of treatment when the burdens outweigh the benefits is not the same as suicide or euthanasia. This approach allows nature to take its course and recognizes that death is a natural part of life.

In addition to articulating these important principles affecting the end of life, the Church also continues to call upon our society to address the issues that affect the quality of life, including health care. People must have access to affordable health care that includes effective pain control and appropriate mental health care. Treatment for depression and effective pain control will go a long way to removing the factors that motivate patient's wishes to hasten death in the first place.

As Pope John Paul II argues, assisted suicide and euthanasia reflect the false mercy of a throwaway society intent upon finding the easiest ways to deal with difficult issues. We

Reprints of the CCK Advance Directive Booklet are available by calling CCK (also soon available at www.ccky.org)

would like to shift the discussion to positive and life-affirming approaches that support human dignity.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIFE

OFL has a new address and a new Director. On an otherwise quiet Saturday morning in Lexington, Lyndie Ruschell and Jane Chiles drove to their parish, Cathedral of Christ the King. Both Jane and Lyndie thought they were just going to a prayer service and reunion of *Christ Renews His Parish* retreat groups. Neither expected what was about to happen.

As the prayer service ended, individuals offered prayers of petition and Jane asked for guidance and strength in the search for a new Executive Director of OFL. At that moment, Lyndie knew she needed to speak with Jane. The rest is history.

Lyndie brings a new vision and energy to OFL. She holds a B.A. in Elementary Education from the University of Kentucky and is a Certified Public Accountant. Lyndie's experience includes serving on the Boards of Baby Health Service, Inc.

and the Florence Crittenden Home.

Along with a new director, the OFL administrative office moved from Louisville to share space in the CCK building in Frankfort. Molly Forrest, a native of Frankfort, was hired in May to serve as the OFL administrative assistant.



Lyndie Ruschell, Opportunities for Life

While adjusting to change is often challenging, OFL staff and volunteers are strengthened by their dedication to OFL's mission of offering life affirming alternatives to abortion. OFL's 24 hour hotline number remains: **800-822-5824**.

CCK STANDING COMMITTEES

Ecumenism
Education
Family Life
Finance
Hospitals
KLEA
Long-term Care
Pro-life
Social Concerns

KCHIP KICK-OFF

One of the most valuable measures passed by the 1998 General Assembly is the **Kentucky Children's Health Insurance Program (KCHIP)**. Many of Kentucky's children are going without healthcare because their families earn too much income to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to purchase health insurance. An estimated 100,000 Kentucky kids are now eligible for free coverage under KCHIP.

The state has significantly raised the income levels for participation in this Medicaid expansion. Starting July 1 children from birth through their 19th birthday in families with incomes under 150% of the federal poverty rate qualify for KCHIP. For a family of four that would be \$25,050 a year.

The outreach effort must be aggressive. Many of us can assist in locating these families and encouraging them to enroll in this terrific program. This can be done by referring families to either the county Public Health Department or the Family Resource Center or Youth Service Center at the local public school. Families can call toll-free **1-877-KCHIP-18, 1-877-524-4719** for the hearing impaired, and have an application mailed. The form is simple and requires only a minimal sharing of information.

While KCHIP does not include coverage for parents, the benefits package for kids is generous: doctor's visits, hospitalization, medication, mental health services, dental services, hearing, vision, medical equipment and many other services. KCHIP is available at no cost whatsoever to qualifying children. Let's do our part to help families make the connection! Please call CCK with your questions.



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