

Parents, Educators Seek Help from D.C.

Catholic parents, educators, and public policy leaders traveled from Kentucky to attend the annual US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Congressional Education Advocacy Days March 11-13, 2007 in Washington D.C. Advocacy Days bring constituents from across the U.S. to increase Catholic school presence and influence with members of Congress and the Administration, to heighten their understanding of federal issues affecting Catholic schools, their students and teachers, and to urge support for USCCB's federal education legislative agenda.

Louisville Archdiocesan School Superintendent, Leisa Speer, enjoyed the luncheon keynote on "School Choice for Families Choosing Private and Religious Schools," given by Morgan Brown, Assistant Deputy Secretary in the Office of Innovation and Improvement. Brown gave participants an overview of existing choice options as well as planning efforts underway in several states. "Advocacy days give Catholic school administrators an opportunity to meet together, receive updates on current federal legislation, and learn from each other." Speer said. "I always learn something new that I can take back and share at home."

At a March 13th breakfast in the U.S. Capitol, facilitated by Senator Jim Bunning, the Kentucky Catholic leaders met with members and staff of the Kentucky Congressional delegation. Sherry Bramer, a school parent and member of Saint Athanasius in Louisville, told elected leaders and staff how parents want to send their children to Catholic schools, but struggle to find financial resources. She spoke of the importance of services provided by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to meet the needs of certain public and private school children who require special resources.

"As Congress considers its appropriations bills," Sr. Bernadette McManigal, Superintendent of Schools for the Lexington Diocese, said, "we ask you to be mindful that education is an investment for the future. If it is not adequately funded, we pay a long-term price. Current programs benefit the non-public school children in Kentucky and this country, but adequate funding for Titles II, IV and V is not in the Administration's budget request. As members of Congress you can restore funding for programs to benefit our children."

Senator Bunning, who serves on the Senate Finance Committee, spoke about his personal commitment to Catholic schools and his experiences with IDEA services helping public and private schools students. Representative John Yarmuth, a new member of the House Education Committee, commented on the reauthorization process for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the upcoming presentation to the House Education Committee by the NCLB Commission that identified several recommendations to improve NCLB.

Kentucky enjoys a robust system of 128 Catholic schools with 48,434 students. But, since 1995, financial pressures have closed 30 Catholic schools. A 31st closing is coming soon. Communities across our state have an interest in the continuation of the Catholic

The Kentucky Catholic Leaders' Requests of the Kentucky Congressional Delegation

- ◆ Support choice in education for ALL parents, business tax credits for low-income scholarships, making permanent educational tax deductions, including Coverdell Education Savings accounts.
- ◆ Provide for full and equitable participation of eligible private students and teachers in programs funded by NCLB.
- ◆ Oppose using severe cuts in education programs, particularly those that serve our most needy children, to achieve balanced budget and eradicate the deficit.
- ◆ Fully fund Title I and IDEA, and Title IV, Part A, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program.
- ◆ Oppose elimination of funding for Technology Education Grants (Title II, Part D) and Innovative Programs (Title V, Part A).
- ◆ Provide continued funding of the E-Rate program that provides discounted telecommunications services, access to the Internet, and computer networking services to public and private schools and public libraries, and continued exemption from being subject to the Anti-Deficiency Act so that the services can be made available with the funding support following (HR 278 and S 609).

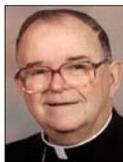
school system. If the 41,561 children in our 98 elementary and 25 secondary schools were in KY's public school system, an additional \$726 million would have to be allocated biennially by the state.

Advocating for better education public policy is important to Catholics. In *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium*, the Bishops wrote, "Young people are a valued treasure and the future leaders of our Church. It is the responsibility of the entire Catholic community—bishops, priests, deacons, religious, and laity—to continue to strive towards the goal of making our Catholic elementary and secondary schools available, accessible, and affordable to all Catholic parents and their children, including those who are poor and middle class."

In recognition of the importance of education, Kentucky's bishops established the Kentucky League for Educational Alternatives (KLEA) in 1991. Led by Harry Borders, KLEA has secured \$2.9 million yearly funding for the busing of students attending private schools in 22 Kentucky counties, and is working in Kentucky and nationally for business tax credit legislation that would fund scholarships for students who want to attend nonpublic schools but cannot afford the tuition. "We are confident that the Kentucky legislature will take action on this important legislation in 2008," said Harry Borders. "The business community along with financial institutions are very supportive of our efforts, and view the tax credit as a win-win proposition."

"Traveling to D.C. to discuss education with our public officials is imperative," said Ed Monahan, Executive Director of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky. "The Bishops' vision found in *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium*, is unambiguous: 'our Catholic schools are a vital part of the teaching mission of the Church. The challenges ahead are many, but our spirit and will to succeed are strong.'"

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“We Are All Really Responsible For All.”

The 2007 KY General Assembly: Uncommon Advances Amidst Continued Disappointments

By Ed Monahan
Executive Director



Spring has begun, the 2007 General Assembly has ended. There were 222 bills and 19 joint or concurrent resolutions filed in the Senate and 573 bills and 69 joint or concurrent resolutions in the House. Of these 883 measures, 141, 16%, passed both Houses and became law.

Focus is Human Life and Dignity

Catholics understand that our faith’s public policy agenda is extensive. A few complain that CCK’s agenda is too broad and does not sufficiently focus on a single issue or two. But when I travel to parishes across the state talking about CCK and asking parishioners what issues they want the Bishops to address, the response is uniformly a wide range of issues.

Believers understand our responsibility to build up the common good, not according to a narrow partisan agenda, but in a complete manner of advancing human life and dignity. As long as CCK addresses issues that affect people’s human life and human dignity, it is necessarily expansive.

In recognition of this duty, the Bishops organize their public policy around four moral priorities: protecting human life, promoting family life, pursuing social justice, and practicing global solidarity.

dignity, the needs of the family are central priorities, concern for the poor and vulnerable is critical, work for a more just and peaceful world is essential. A single issue or two does not meet our obligation.

Protecting the life of the unborn is a paramount public policy objective. Once a person is born, our responsibility to build up the common good and help our brothers and sisters does not end, but continues as a primary concern of Christians.

Some Catholics struggle with aspects of the Church’s public policy agenda. The Bishops ask Catholics regardless of political party to see public policy from the unity we share around the Eucharistic table. As stated in *Faithful Citizenship*, the altar is “where we find the direction and strength to take what we believe into the public square, using our voices and votes to defend life, advance justice, and find a place at the table for all God’s children.” The needs of people, all created in the image of God, compel public policy work across the spectrum of issues that affect their human life and human dignity. CCK’s 2007 agenda reflected this reality.

Significant 2007 Advances

Outlawing human trafficking, modern day slavery, for employment or sexual purposes was an initiative of President Bush at the national level and now a state law prohibiting this conduct was enacted (SB 43). Next year, CCK will work to have services provided for the victims of trafficking along with the necessary funding.

Section 2434 of the Catholic Catechism requires that in determining a just wage

“both the needs and contributions of each person must be taken into account.” CCK worked to pass HB 305 which increases the



Louisville Archbishop Thomas C. Kelly, O.P. traveled to Frankfort to speak at the annual Kentucky Right to Life Rally held February 20, 2007. The Catholic Conference of Kentucky sought passage of Senate Bill 179 requiring face-to-face, in-person meetings between a patient and medical personnel for an explanation of the abortion procedure and its consequences. The bill failed to gain support in the House of Representatives.

If we are faithful to the call of the Gospel, we recognize that abortion and euthanasia are preeminent threats to human life and

Minimum Wage, Human Trafficking Bills Pass

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minimum wage in stages up to \$7.25 per hour by 2009. The increase will help hard-working Kentuckians, including thousands of single mothers, who struggle to meet the necessities of living.

A comprehensive smoking cessation benefit was added to Medicaid (HB 337). Tobacco takes an inordinate toll in Kentucky on human life and has an adverse economic consequence, which robs resources for other social needs in our state.

The Cabinet for Family and Health Services estimates health care costs in our Commonwealth attributable to smoking at \$1.2 billion annually. More-over 1 in 4 pregnant women smoke during their pregnancy, and 1 of 6 middle school students smoke. By high school, 1 of 3 students smoke, and this carries over into adulthood.

The rate of smoking among pregnant women in Kentucky is the second highest in the nation, affecting not only the health of the woman but of the baby she carries. The cost savings from helping pregnant women quit are immediate (recovered within the first year the benefit is provided) because of the smoking-related neonatal health care costs averted. If a woman quits early in her pregnancy, low birth weight and other smoking related complications (all very costly) are completely avoided.

Three charitable gaming bills (HB 156, SB 212, HB 180) were enacted with modifications. Catholic organizations have one-third of the charitable gaming licenses in the state, using proceeds to support church and school ministries. These bills improve the oversight of charitable gaming with more commonsense parameters.

Many 2007 Disappointments

Attempts to have the informed consent laws upgraded by requiring that the consent be done in-person were frustrated by the House's refusal to have the bill (SB 179) considered in committee or reassigned to a committee that would hear the bill.

The Catholic Conference worked this legislation as one of just three bills highlighted at the annual gathering of *Catholics @ the Capitol*. Over 100 Catholics spoke to their Senators asking for support and co-

Education: Preparing the Way for 2008

Quality education for all Kentucky's children is a vital public policy issue. CCK supports efforts to fund public schools adequately and to establish policies that create excellent educational environments both for the 75% of our Catholic children who attend these schools and for all Kentucky's children. We support parents who choose a faith-based education for their children. In anticipation of a bill in the 2008 session that would provide tax credits for businesses who donate to organizations who can use the funds for public and private schools, those attending Catholics @ the Capitol spoke to their legislators about the value of Catholic education in Kentucky.

We educate 48,434 children in 98 Catholic elementary



Students from St. Bernard Parish School in Louisville attended Catholics @ the Capitol to help raise legislators' awareness about the value of Catholic educational efforts in Kentucky

schools, 25 secondary schools; and 5 post-secondary schools. These schools exist to give parents

a choice, not to compete with the public school systems. We believe the state has some responsibility for the education of children in nonpublic schools. So, we seek appropriate financial assistance that is constitutional. Asking for and receiving our fair share is important as the number of our schools declines and the cost to operate them continues to challenge our available fiscal resources.

Since 1995, 30 Catholic schools closed for lack of funding. The state has a significant fiscal interest in our continued ability to keep Catholic schools open. With the state and federal funding per elementary and secondary public school student at \$8,732, the 41,561 elementary and secondary Catholic school students represent a savings of over \$363 million per year to KY and federal taxpayers or \$726 million each biennium in state and federal dollars. If the closing of Catholic schools continues, the state's financial obligations for education will increase.

sponsorship. Legislative alerts were sent asking the 1000 people signed up to contact their legislators to have the bill moved in the House. Leadership and Committee Chairs were

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Bill to Restore Voting Rights Passes House, Fails in Senate

Continued from page 3

urged to advance the measure. All unsuccessful. But this commonsense measure is inevitable in 2008 if we maintain our resolve.

A bill (SB 152) that would have precluded government agencies from extending health care benefits based upon a domestic partnership status that equates that relationship to marriage died in the House Health and Welfare Committee by an 8-8 vote.

Even with passing the House 91-4 the bill (HB 64) that would have addressed bullying in schools, a matter of human dignity, was never called for a vote in the Senate Committee. At some point, our leaders are going to enact this measure to help our children.

Despite a hearing, a resolution (HCR 88) that would merely study the death penalty in Kentucky was not voted on.

by providing an effective implementation process and it provides a tax credit for private industries contracting with Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs).

A bill (HB 75) that exempts church food sales at fundraisers from sales taxes passed the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee 22-0 and the House 96-0, yet it was not called for consideration by the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee. CCK will be working for this legislation in 2008.

A bill (SB 34) that would provide more substance abuse treatment for those charged with an offense passed the Senate 37-0 and passed the House Judiciary Committee, but did not receive a vote on the House floor.

SB 42 would have permitted the Department of Corrections to operate a Prison Industries Enhancement (PIE) program in which the labor of prisoners is leased to private entities to make products and perform services for private employers. It passed the Senate 26-8 but was never called in the House Judiciary Committee.

Our Policy is to Persevere

As we celebrate our success, we will work harder on our discontent. Our light is not hidden under a bushel basket. Dorothy Day said it well, "No one has the right to sit down and feel hopeless. There is too much to do." In a culture that desires light switch results, instantaneous pleasure, that sees winning the lottery as the way out of intractable problems, some wish that the legislature would just do what we wanted, now! However, there are 4 million Kentuckians with many views, interests, and values. In the pluralistic, democratic culture, there are real limits to what can be accomplished through the legislative process. To the extent that we realize our goals within this context, they are achieved with hard work that is political but never partisan, perseverance that is value centered, and a moral focus. Successful public policy work is increasingly being led by persuasive constituent

communications within a relationship. That is why CCK offers *Catholics @ the Capitol* and a legislative alert system. Join our efforts in the coming year by signing up for legislative alerts on our web page, www.ccky.org, and by giving *Catholics @ the Capitol* in 2008 a try. The 2008 session begins at Noon on January 8, 2008.

For more information about a bill and how your legislator voted, visit the Legislative Research Commission web page at <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/> and click on "Legislation and the Legislative Record."



Ed Monahan (l), Executive Director of the Catholic Conference, testified before the House Elections, Constitutional Amendments and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee in support of HB 70, a measure to place an amendment to the Kentucky Constitution on the ballot in 2008 to restore the right to vote to former felons. Other supporters from left to right are Mitchell Ford, an ex-offender, State Representative Jesse Crenshaw who sponsored the legislation, and Teena Halbig with the Kentucky League of Women Voters.

It passed in the House 70-28, but a measure (HB 70) that would allow Kentuckians to vote on whether they want to change the Constitution to provide for the automatic restoration of voting rights for felons who have completed their sentence was not considered by a Senate Committee. The people of Kentucky support this by a 56%-40% margin.

A bill that would increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities (HB 23) passed the House but was never called for a vote in the Senate Committee. It would have improved Kentucky's State Use Law, enacted in 1982,

Bishop Ronald Gainer of Lexington celebrated the Eucharist with participants at the Catholics @ the Capitol event. And Richard Dowling, Executive Director of the Maryland Catholic Conference, delivered the keynote address at the dinner which followed. You can read Bishop Gainer's homily and Dick Dowling's address on the website at www.ccky.org/2007%20General%20Assembly.htm.

Mark Your Calendar

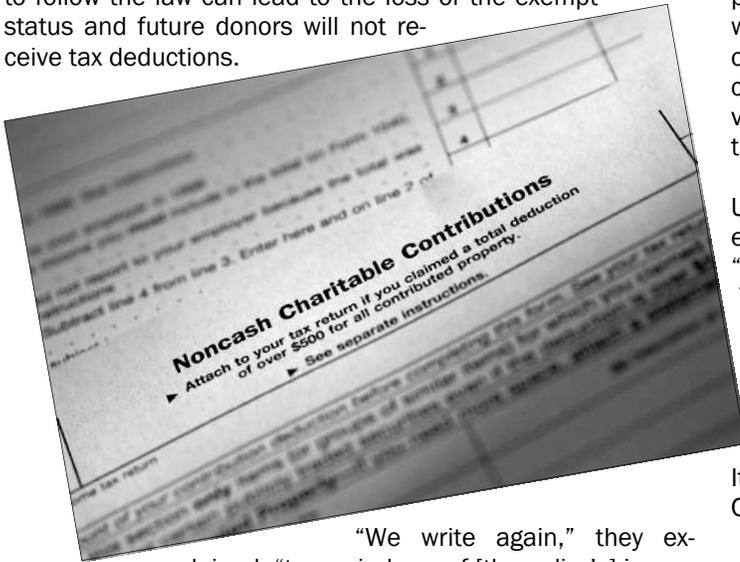
Catholics @ the Capitol 2008—February 11&12 at Good Shepherd Parish, Frankfort

**Catholics@
the Capitol**

Internal Revenue Code Prohibits Political Campaign Activity by Non-Profits

Kentucky Bishops Remind Leaders of Law Governing Churches

For the second time within a year, Kentucky's Catholic Bishops have written pastors, pastoral leaders, school superintendents and Catholic Charities' directors regarding the prohibition of participation in political campaigns by organizations that are exempt from payment of federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Failure to follow the law can lead to the loss of the exempt status and future donors will not receive tax deductions.



"We write again," they explained, "to remind you of [the policy's] importance and to emphasize the policy because Kentucky's 2007 gubernatorial race, which will have a contested primary in May, and a contested general election in November, is under way; the November 2008 Presidential race has already begun; and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is actively pursuing those who violate the law."

The IRS announced in 2006, the start of its Political Activities Compliance Initiative (PACI), offering educational assistance and aggressively pursuing credible referrals of violations of the law, usually reported by third parties or as a result of seeing media reports of political activity by the organization. That initiative continues.

One current area of IRS focus involves charities that have made contributions directly to political organizations. IRS is combing the mandatory contributor reports filed by political organizations in order to identify potential violators.

IRS has sent examination letters to 179 non-churches with the 501(c)(3) non-profit status and 79 churches that the IRS has reason to believe made contributions to political organizations during the 2006 election season.

The IRS is also looking at links from charity websites to political websites, e.g., links that lead to information about candidates for public office that would be prohibited if the material was provided directly on the charity's web site.

The following information posted on a Catholic organization website or contained in an e-mail communication sent by a Catholic organization can be expected to violate the political campaign activity prohibition: (a) selective links to web-

sites maintained by a candidate, PAC or political party; (b) endorsements or statements of opposition of any candidate; (c) biased voter education materials or links to same; and (d) links to other web pages that support or oppose candidates.

"Our CCK policy," write Kentucky's Bishops, "prohibits contributions by churches or Catholic organizations directly to political organizations, links from church websites to political websites, and the use of computers by employees of church organizations who post or send e-mail or other messages containing material that constitutes political campaign intervention and that is clearly identified as having originated from the church organization."

To help pastors and others know what is permissible, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Office of General Counsel has updated a former guide and published it as "2007 Political Activity Guidelines for Catholic Organizations." This 31-page document is filled with 26 examples of possible situations a church personnel might face when interacting with candidates for office or their staff.

In their letter, Kentucky's Bishops urge leaders to read this important document and "educate the leaders in your parish or Catholic organization on it, and follow its advice. It is found in the right hand column of the home page of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky website: www.ccky.org."

The USCCB Guideline addresses how to deal with outside groups seeking to distribute their "voter education" materials: "Outside voter education materials should be approached with extreme caution.... Among other things, the issues covered in outside voter education materials typically do not illustrate the wide range of issues of importance to the Church, but rather reflect the issue focus of the preparing organization." This and previous Guideline documents have strongly urged (Arch)dioceses to adopt policies about the distribution of any voter education materials to insure that only those materials that meet legal criteria be available to Catholics through parishes and/or other church organizations.

In 1995 Kentucky's Catholic Bishops did instruct that only voter education materials approved by USCCB or the Catholic Conference of Kentucky may be distributed.

In their August 2006 letter, they set forth the policy in this fashion:

We restate our long-standing Catholic Conference of Kentucky policy that only voting guide materials published directly by United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (e.g., Faithful Citizenship) or by the Catholic Conference of Kentucky may be distributed in parishes. Other materials, even if they are published by a Catholic organization and seem non-partisan, shall not be distributed.

The text of last August's letter and the one just issued can be found at www.ccky.org/Public%20Witness.htm (see Position Statements).

Readers with questions about this policy can contact staff of the Catholic Conference at 502-875-4345.



This is the fifth in a series of articles by the CCK Hispanic Committee on the **Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform** which aims to reach beyond the networks of the participating national agencies, and to enlist the support of Catholic individuals and institutions in dioceses throughout the country.

Visit www.justiceforimmigrants.org for more information. *Le invitamos a visitar nuestra página con regularidad, debido a que se estará actualizando constantemente con materiales, noticias relevantes y otra información que esperamos sea de su utilidad.*

Common Immigration Myths: Beyond the Chips and Salsa

By Jose Neil Donis

Food is the first or one of the first opportunities people have to experience a different culture or to get to know something different from their own cultures.

In the United States and Kentucky, there are a lot of Mexican restaurants. Therefore it is in these restaurants where many locals have their first experience with the immigrant communities. Maybe that is why many have the misconception that all immigrants eat spicy salsa, speak “Mexican” and that all Latinos are Mexicans.

If such simple things as differences between nationalities, foods and languages get people confused, it is easy to understand why there are a lot of misconceptions about immigrants on more serious issues such as employment, taxes, and the economy.

One of the myths that anti-immigrant groups promote is that immigrants come to the U.S. to take jobs from Americans. For me there is nothing more wrong than this. From my own personal experience, I realized of the need for workers that existed in Shelbyville at the end of the 90s. During those years thousands of new immigrants moved from big cities to the southeast part of the country looking for more job opportunities.

Purnell’s Sausage Company located in Simpsonville, Kentucky is an example of how immigrants came to fill the demand for workers. Thanks to these workers, Purnell’s company was able keep growing and filling the demands of its buyers.

Also, there are several national studies concluding that immigrants do not increase the unemployment of the local population. One of these studies, (www.aila.org) done by economists Richard Vedder, Lowell Gallaway and Stephen Moore, found that cities with high concentrations of immigrants actually had low unemployment. These economists attribute this to the fact that immigrants increase the demand for goods and services, and this demand increases the need to produce more goods and services, which creates the need for more employees.

The same study says that immigrants in general have a greater tendency to become entrepreneurs, which at some point creates more businesses and more jobs for local workers.



Jose Neil Donis

Thus, an increase in population, appears to increase the need for more employees.¹

Daniel E. Hecker, an economist at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, has reported that the number of jobs in the U.S. increased to 15 million between 1990 and 2003 and the U.S. Department of Labor estimates that between 2000 and 2010, more than 33 million new jobs will be created.²

Another myth that confuses people is that immigrants don’t pay taxes. When an immigrant, documented or not, receives his paycheck, taxes have already been deducted from it. Therefore, documented or not, all immigrants who receive a paycheck pay taxes. The difference is that undocumented immigrants can’t claim benefits from the taxes they pay.

In a column titled “The Earnings Suspense File: Social Security’s Secret Flash”, Martin H. Bosworth asks what happens with all the money the Social Security office collects from all people who never have access to it. Bosworth explains that a file known as “ESF,” or the Earnings Suspense File, exists within the Social Security Administration.

Due to the immigration debate, the money deposited in the ESF has become a subject of discussion because it has continued to grow at a rate of \$6 billion every year, totaling \$519 billion by the end of 2005. All this money is collected from people who have mismatched social security numbers. The ESF account was established by the Social Security Administration to collect money from people whose social security numbers don’t match their names.

According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the ESF registered a total of 250 million reports of people in 2004, a number almost equal to the total population of the United States.

GAO’s report says that a disproportionate number of the mismatched numbers and names come from restaurants and construction companies. It is common knowledge that many undocumented immigrants work in these two fields.

The report alludes to the fact that much of the earnings reported from people with mismatched numbers comes from people using false social security numbers or numbers that have been stolen or sold to undocumented workers.

However, this issue receives little attention. Neither Republicans nor Democrats, conservatives nor liberals seem to want to discuss it, and Bosworth feels that it is not convenient for liberals to talk about the issue because they support immigrant rights. Conservatives don’t talk about it either because they support corporations, which benefit from both documented and undocumented workers.

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Jose Neil Donis is publisher of the newspaper, **Al Dia en America**, and a member of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky Hispanic Committee representing the Archdiocese of Louisville.

Forty Years after *Nostra Aetate*

The Church's Relationship to the Jewish People

By Rev. Ronald Ketteler

At the center of *Nostra Aetate*, the "Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions," stands the revolutionary stance taken by the Catholic Church in what has been called a "tormented history" with Judaism.

Shortly after the close of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (now the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops) issued *Guidelines for Catholic Jewish Relations* (1967). It opened with a succinct appraisal of the historic importance of *Nostra Aetate*.

The Statement was, in effect, a culminating point of initiatives and pronouncements of recent pontiffs and of numerous endeavors in the Church concerned with Catholic-Jewish harmony. The Guidelines noted here that the conciliar declaration was "the point of convergence of many insights opened by Pope Paul's *Ecclesiam Suam* and the Council's Constitution on the Church and Decree on Ecumenism." In issuing a call for fraternal encounter with Jews, the N.C.C.B. Guidelines also judged the Declaration to be "one of the more important fruits of the renewal generated by the council in its deliberations and decrees."

Later, a decade after the Council, the N.C.C.B. published a *Statement on Catholic-Jewish Relations*. This 1975 statement observed that "Christians have not fully appreciated their Jewish roots." It noted that "[s]ome catechists, homilists, and teachers still convey little appreciation of the Jewishness of that heritage [Christian history] and rich spirituality which we derive from Abraham, Moses, the prophets, the psalmists, and other spiritual giants of the Hebrew Scriptures."

Nostra Aetate acknowledged the special place held by the Jewish people in relationship to Christians. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* confirms that perspective when, in accord with the Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*, 1965), it considers in the first place "[t]he relationship of the Church with the Jewish People." (CCC n. 839) The Catechism states:

When she delves into her own mystery, the Church, the People of God in the New Covenant, discovers her link with the Jewish People [cf. NA n. 4], 'the first to hear the Word of God.' To the Jews 'belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the land, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ [Rom 9:4-5];' 'for the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable [Rom11:29]'



Rev. Ronald Ketteler

The identification of the common spiritual kinship between the Church and the Jewish people in *Nostra Aetate* was a major *theological* development. God remains faithful to his promises in the First Testament.

Accordingly, the Declaration emphatically repudiated several doctrinal and biblical misconceptions which at times had generated and erroneously justified anti-Semitic prejudices.

Thus, the Declaration firmly denied the specious grounds for impugning a collective guilt for the death of Christ indiscriminately on all Jews of the New Testament era or on contemporary Jews. The Jewish people are not accursed and cannot be guilty of deicide.

True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ [Cf. Jn. 19:6]; still what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all Jews without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures. ... [NA n. 4]

Again, the Catechism of the Catholic Church incorporates this seminal teaching when treating the Creed. (CCC nn. 596-598)

Once and for all, the Council had repudiated the foundation, rooted in erroneous and unjust reading of the scriptures, for discrimination against or persecution of the Jewish people. Yet there remains a protracted need for the healing of memories incurred by the tragic history of sin, specifically the "unspeakable tragedy which never can be forgotten"—the Holocaust.

On March 16, 1998, the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews issued *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*. ["Shoah" is the Hebrew word for the Jewish Holocaust.] *We Remember* called for Catholics to confront the implications of the Shoah. The Commission exhorted Catholics to undergo purification of conscience through repentance of past errors and infidelities.

The document expressed the hope that consciousness of past sins would effect "a firm resolve to build a new future in which there will be no more anti-Judaism among Christians and anti-Christian sentiments among Jews, but rather a shared mutual respect as befits those who adore the one Creator and Lord have a common father in faith, Abraham."

In addition to assisting in the healing of "the wounds of past misunderstandings and injustices," the Holy Father envisioned *We Remember* as enabling "memory to play its necessary part in the process of shaping a future in which the unspeakable iniquity of the *Shoah* will never again be possible."

Pope John Paul II's jubilee year pilgrimage to the Holy Land reached a defining moment at his visit to Jerusalem's Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial on March 23, 2000. There the late Holy Father's words

The Church's Relationship to the Jewish People

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Holocaust—"How can we fail to hear their cry? No one can forget or ignore what happened."

In 2004, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops published *The Bible, the Jews, and the Death of Jesus: A Collection of Catholic Documents*. This documentary collection is a valuable resource for studying the roots of the Church in Judaism as well as for understanding the evil of anti-Semitism.

In addition to conciliar, papal, and other Vatican documents, this anthology reprints the U.S.C.C.B.'s "Guidelines on the Presentation of Jews and Judaism in Catholic Preaching" (1988) and "Criteria for Evaluation of Dramatizations of the Passion" (1988).

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* (October 28, 1965), Pope Benedict XVI forwarded a letter to Cardinal Walter Kasper, the President of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews. The letter, dated October 25, 2005, praised the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate* and rededicated the Church's "commitment to work that yet remains to be done."

The Holy Father personally witnessed to his own "determination to walk in the footsteps traced by my beloved predecessor Pope John Paul II."

Pope Benedict XVI expressed the hope "that both in theological dialogue and in everyday contacts and collaboration, Christians and Jews will offer more compelling shared witness to the One God and his commandments, the sanctity of life, the promotion of human dignity, the rights of family and the need to build a world of justice, reconciliation and peace for future generations."

In general, the common responsibility to establish justice and peace among peoples and nations establishes a common ground for interreligious dialogue and relationships. In particular, with regard to the Church's relationship to the Jewish people, a specific article in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004) treats the need for that

distinctive dialogue:

In the common tradition of the Old Testament, the Catholic Church is able to engage in dialogue with her Jewish brothers and sisters, which she does through her social doctrine, in order to build together a future of justice and peace for all people, as sons and daughters of the one God. [CSDC n. 536]

On account of a continuity within the biblical tradition, interreligious dialogue with the Jewish people especially fosters "mutual knowledge and reciprocal esteem (NA n. 4)," the foundation on which consensus can be intensified for defending human dignity and eradicating discrimination in all

Beyond the Chips and Salsa

Continued from page 6

However the money deposited in the ESF continues to grow by billions. Immigrants are paying taxes.

As mentioned before, all immigrants, documented or not, pay taxes, and therefore they help the economy. Preston Highway in Louisville is an example of this. Along 5 miles there are now at least 25 Hispanic-owned businesses and a growing number of companies that try to market to the Hispanic community.

Last year Governor Ernie Fletcher proclaimed September 27th as Hispanic Heritage Day in Kentucky. During the proclamation and in the written proclamation itself, it is established that in 2002 alone, Latinos in Kentucky generated the impressive number of \$783 million in sales revenue.⁴

Between 1990 and 2000 Kentucky experienced the eight fastest rates in Latin growth in the nation. Between 1997 and 2000, Hispanic business increased 40%, above the national average of 31%.

These numbers clearly demonstrate that, in Kentucky, immigrants contribute to the economy, so strongly so that the Governor noticed and proclaimed it for all to know.



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