

The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

(Waterloo, Ontario)
www.stedmund.ca



The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada
(A member of the worldwide Traditional Anglican Communion)

UPDATE

August 13, 2007 - St. Hippolytus, Bishop of Rome

September Schedule

September 2	Sunday	The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity
September 8	Saturday	The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
September 9	Sunday	The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity
September 14	Friday	The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
September 16	Sunday	The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity
September 21	Friday	St. Matthew the Apostle
September 23	Sunday	The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity
September 29	Saturday	St. Michael and All Angels
September 30	Sunday	The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Service Times and Location

- (1) All Services are held in the Chapel at Luther Village on the Park - 139 Father David Bauer Drive in Waterloo.
- (2) On Sundays, **Matins** is sung at **10:00 a.m.** (The **Litany** on the first Sunday of the month), and the **Holy Eucharist** is celebrated (sung) at **10:30 a.m.**
- (3) On weekdays - **Major Holy Days** - the **Holy Eucharist** is *usually* celebrated at **7:00 p.m.**, **10:00 a.m.** on Saturday.

Notes and Comments

1) **Parish Picnic** - Sunday, September 16 - right after Mass - at Waterloo Park - mark your calendar!

2) **Monthly Parish Lunch** - immediately following Mass, on the fourth Sunday of each month (not necessarily the last Sunday!) we meet for lunch and chit-chat in 'our' restaurant - Martin's.

3) Just a reminder - past issues of UPDATE are available on our parish website - www.stedmund.ca. (If you would prefer to receive UPDATE electronically, instead of by snail mail, please let us know.) In addition, the Sunday bulletin is posted on the website on the previous Tuesday.

4) **The Messenger Journal** - remember to make a contribution, to The Parish, so that we can bulk-order for parishioners and friends of The Parish.

5) From the July 2007 newsletter of *The Traditional Anglican Church* by the Vicar General, The Very Rev. Brian Gill - **Why is God calling me to be a priest?** - this page.

6) For **Robert's Ramblings - Book Review** - see page 3.

7) **Questioning Authority** - see page 4.

8) **Claims every Catholic should be able to answer** - the sixth of twelve parts - see page 6.

9) How to use - **The Rosary** - see page 7.

10) A selfless choice - **Adoption as an Abortion Alternative** - see page 8.

11) **Support for Amnesty International withdrawn** - by Catholic bishops - see page 10.

Why is God calling me to be a priest?

Who am I, why has God chosen me? God sees into our hearts, it is He who chooses us to do His work here on earth, by planting His seed in our hearts.

I first felt God's call when I was 16 years old. That was when I decided to become a Christian. I

started to go to church and was baptised and confirmed into the Christian Faith.

I felt the urge to read the Bible, don't ask me why, I don't know, I just had this strong urge to pick up the Bible and read it, so that is what I did. I know now that it was God urging me to go along the path that He wanted me to follow.

As I read, I found that I wanted to know more about God, and Jesus Christ who hung on a cross for me. That was the beginning of my wandering in the wilderness, in search of the truth that is God. I went from one Church to another, one Christian group to another, with this little voice in the back of my head driving me on. I felt that God wanted me for something, but no matter which church group I joined, there was something missing. This little voice in the back of my head kept telling me to keep on searching, and so this is what I did.

This unexplainable force, which I knew deep within me, was the voice of God driving me on to where He wanted me to be. Although I had not realised it then, my faith in God had grown so much, that when my wife nearly died in 2002, the first thing I did, without thinking about it was to turn to God and ask Him for help, and to show me what to do. I knew that if it were the will of God my wife Christine, would be alright. I remember saying to God, that I would serve Him faithfully for the rest of my days, if He would help us through this difficult time. God took care of my wife and she came home from hospital. A few months later I happened to read in the local paper an article about Fr Ian Westby and The Traditional Anglican Church. I thought no more about it, however, a few weeks later I felt this strong urge to go to this Church here in Darlington, and with the support of my wife Christine, I attended my first Mass at St Mary the Virgin, Traditional Anglican Church. That day, you could say changed my life, as soon as I entered the Church on North Road, I felt as though I had come home, it was weird to say the least.

You know people say, that they have chosen to follow God, or to do God's work, that is not so, we don't chose God, He chooses us. We are not God's agent, but his instrument, not the workman, but the tool that God uses for the job in hand. God to me is my best friend, as real as the person next door. I talk to him every day, and have done so since I was 16 years old. And, He always answers me, mind you not always as I want Him to answer. I see God's work all around me, in the clear night sky,

with the stars laying like diamonds on a blue velvet cushion, or in the Spring when nature begins to come alive again after her winters rest.

It is at Mass, that I feel closest to God. To me personally the Mass is one of the most important events in my relationship with God. When I go to Mass, I feel as though I am coming home to be with a loving Father. As Christians we are a family, and at Mass we come together as a family to be with, and to worship God. I am no theologian, no great talker, in fact far from it. I definitely am a poor choice for our Lord to choose to be a tool for His work here on earth. But I have utter faith in God, for He knows better than any of us, what's best for us, so no matter where He leads, I will follow. The more I doubt myself, the more it seems, that the voice in my mind (that of God), urges me on. I pray every day for guidance on what to do, and to thank Him for all that I have.

The two biggest influences in my life, apart from our Lord, is my friend and wife Christine, who backs me 100% in my journey with God, and also Fr Ian Westby, who has the patience of a saint with me. When God calls us, He gives us strength and knowledge to do the work He has for us to do. The road to finding out if a vocation is truly from God, is a long one and a hard road to walk, but if God is calling, you will feel God leading you by the hand along it. It is the duty of every priest to gather and mould his community, so that everyone may live and work in the communion of love, which is the Church of God.

By **The Rev. Deacon Terence Percival** - June 1, 1951 to June 13, 2007 - Deacon Terry was studying for and hoped to be ordained to the Priesthood in May 2008.

Robert's Ramblings

Book Review

"Prayer in the Workaday World "

by Arthur Middleton,

published by Gracewing, Leominster,

Herefordshire (pronounced Lemster), 184 pp.

Members of St Edmund's may remember that some five years ago Fr Middleton toured under the aegis of the Prayer Book Society and its then Director, Fr Graham Eglington who was also our diocesan Chancellor. Fr Middleton was lecturing both to members of the Anglican Church of

Canada and to members of the Traditional Anglican Communion. For South Western Ontario the lectures were hosted by St Edmund's. I could not myself attend as I was otherwise engaged on the Prairies, but several of our laity and clergy did, not least those of Kitchener-Waterloo. Mrs Joan de Catanzaro was there too.

Fr Middleton has been rector of several parishes in the diocese of Durham, England, and a hospital chaplain. Though recently retired he is still an honorary Canon of Durham cathedral and a lecturer at St Chad's Theological College in Durham university, where our Fr Michael Shier of Vancouver trained. He is an acknowledged authority on the theologians and spiritual masters of the Anglican church. He is a sought after retreat conductor and spiritual director. For example, earlier this year he gave a retreat on John Keble, priest and poet, feast day March 29.

He is the author of several books, such as *Towards a Renewed Priesthood* and *Fathers and Anglicans: the Limits of Orthodoxy*. *Prayer in the Workaday World* is his most recent book. The cover picture is of a busy shopping street in the city of Newcastle, close to Durham. The book is dedicated to the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, which the author first met as a thirteen year old choirboy when two of the Fathers preached a mission in his home parish. He had been encouraged to make a prayer corner in his room, marked by a crucifix, a candle, his Bible and Prayer Book.

This book is really a School of Prayer and like most schools it has something for everybody. It begins with two common sense but neat reminders. 1. Prayer involves body, mind and heart. 2. We begin prayer from where we are or from where we are not. That's to say, we start with our own immediate fears and joys, or we start from the life of Jesus. In the latter case, we need to give some thought to the theme of the day by looking at the relevant Scriptures or hymns or by gazing at a crib or a crucifix. The book continues with a blunt reminder needed by all, not least by those of us in the Continuum:

"Unless we are prepared to let go of attitudes, resentments, negative memories that prevent reconciliation with those to whom we refuse to speak or relate, and habitual sinful behaviour, there will be no progress in prayer."

I like anecdotes and there are some of those, such

as the South African farmer who resolved to rise early for five minutes of daily prayer. Eventually he found he couldn't manage with less than two hours of daily prayer. Or the woman with a paralysing illness and a non Christian husband, who maintained serenity by the daily recitation of compline and a daily reading from "*The Revelations of Divine Love*" by Mother Julian of Norwich. Canon Middleton sympathizes with the person who doubted how any Christian could survive on less than an hour of prayer each day.

The book concludes with all sorts of practicalities for beginners: ways to examine one's conscience, ways to practise meditation, prayers to say, ways to get some order and method into one's stewardship of time, stimuli to adoration, advice about attending retreats. There are also warnings about activities advertised as retreats which are really narcissistic self indulgence, the sin of the 20th century church, "feeling good about oneself".

In between the beginning of the book and its end are all sorts of good things. More common sense, this time about different human personalities. There is frank recognition that a working single mother of five can not in fact find an hour of quiet for daily prayer. There is gentle, uncensorious encouragement for all of us, however much we may have slidden back, or however new to prayer we may be. There is an absence on the author's part of any desire to turn us into clones of himself. No, he wants us to be guided by the Spirit. He simply wants to introduce us to the rich treasures of the whole Christian Tradition. There are lots of quotations from the Greek fathers of the early church. And there is some heady doctrine which needs to be read slowly and then reread. For example:

"Each Person of the Trinity exists in relationship towards Another. God is Father in relationship towards the Son. The Son exists and lives only in and for the Father to Whom He gives Himself entirely. Their mutual love expresses itself in a procession of Personified love, the Holy Spirit. To pray is to share in the immense circulation of love within the divine "Family" drawing us into that same community of love".

One can skip the bits of this book for which one is not yet ready, or which will never speak to one. There is no need for us to be guilty that we are not like the author or not like one of his favourite saints. God's aim is to make us St Us not St

Author and not St John Cassian.

The real test of any book about prayer is, does it make us want to pray? In my experience this book passes the test.

+Robert Mercer CR

The retired, Third Bishop of The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

Questioning Authority

(The following was written before Pope John Paul II died, and was published shortly thereafter in *The New Oxford Review*. I may be the first Anglican to have been published in the NOR in several years. This may help us to remember some of the things that we all have in common with each other.)

When I drive behind a bumper sticker that says "Question Authority" I always wish that my car were equipped with a siren and flashing lights. I would love to pull the driver over so that I could ask one simple question: "Is that an order?" To expand, the meaning of the question would be "by what authority do you command this thing? Who gave you this authority? Was it from heaven or from men?"

Well, of course the whole point of displaying this imperative is to deny the idea of authority itself; and it is likely that the driver who put this on his car would be surprised to learn that he has issued a command to everyone behind him. It is unlikely that he would want to be thought of as authoritarian, just the opposite. This problem becomes more serious when it has consequences in the lives of people and of churches.

In August of 2003, within minutes after the approval to elevate Vickie Gene Robinson to the office of bishop in the Episcopal Church, the news was flashed across the world that a divorced and openly "gay" man, living with his homosexual lover, was going to be a bishop. An Episcopal priest who was present at that General Convention in Minneapolis that had done the deed by majority vote, stood beaming from ear to ear as he answered questions put to him by Bill O'Reilly of Fox News.

"What about the Biblical injunction against homosexuality?" asked O'Reilly.

"The scriptures aren't the final authority in Anglicanism," said the cleric, "the Holy Spirit is."

From the many apologetic responses that were subsequently issued by Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold, and by others, it is clear that what this priest said to O'Reilly was the simple version of their defense. In the final analysis, they were claiming to have been led by the Holy Spirit to overthrow 2,000 years of Church teaching from the Bible. Any such claim only makes sense in light of the promise that Jesus Christ gave to the apostles, "However, when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth (John 16:12)."

In an ecclesial body which claims for its validity the Apostolic Succession, this promise of Christ has to be connected to a claim that that body is at least part of the "One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church." As such, when they insist that the Holy Spirit made them do it, it means that their very liberal sounding agenda is that we must question every commandment of God and the whole authority of the Church in a Tradition going back past the Apostles to the Lawgiver of Sinai. And, also, that this anti-authoritarian agenda has been ordered by the Highest Authority. So that now "Question Authority" is clearly seen to be the command that it is, and a command from on high no less.

A further irony is that a change of Tradition in an ecclesial body that claims the Apostolic foundation is impossible without adding to itself the exclusive title, The One True Church. Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy make this claim, and each has reasons for doing so. But Anglicans have never made this claim about their whole Communion, let alone one national church - until now. What was alleged to be simply another General Convention of the Episcopal Church, resulted in this rather shrunken little denomination acting as if it were holding the Ecumenical Council of Minneapolis.

And, this was not the first time. This Council should properly be called Minneapolis II, because the "First Ecumenical Council of Minneapolis" should be the name by which we remember the General Convention of 1976. It was held in the same city, and seen to have exercised the same authority to question authority concerning that other milestone "leading of the Spirit", women's "ordination". "Hear the word of the Lord: Thou shalt question authority. Obedience is better than sacrifice".

If we take a close look at the policy of the

Episcopal Church in the years that followed, we see that the situation grew from one in which dissent was not only tolerated, but treated with provisions out of respect for the consciences of parishes and dioceses, to one of outright intolerance. The Diocese of Quincy and the Diocese of Forth Worth found themselves under pressure from the headquarters of the Episcopal Church in New York to find a way to accept women "priests" in order to come into uniformity with the denomination as a whole. The fact that these Anglo-Catholic dioceses, and their respective bishops, could not conform without violating their consciences became unimportant.

In 2001 Acting "Bishop" Jane Dixon of the Diocese of Washington D.C. had sued St. John's Parish of Christ Church in Accokeek Maryland in order to force out their Rector, Fr. Samuel Edwards. This was because he was known to be opposed to women's "ordination" and could not, therefore, accept her position as a bishop in the sacramental sense, even though he had declared his willingness to accept it as a fact of Episcopal Church Canon Law. This is not the only case in which the promoters of the liberal agenda acted in a very authoritarian manner to force their will through legal power, or through denominational pressure. The liberals are not very liberal, especially when it comes to issues of power.

The Episcopal Church is a very easy target to strike, and lest it seem that this essay is unfair for picking on a little denomination, let me point out that this problem is wider in scope. It is the problem of the entire liberal movement in theology. Certainly it is found among rebellious members of the Roman Catholic Church. I have been present at Roman Catholic Masses, most recently the funeral of my own grandmother in January 2002, in which trendy Baltimore parishes offered in place of the "Our Father" an innovative offering that must have been to Baal and Ashteroth: "Our mother and father in heaven . . ." One person suggested that I write a complaint directly to Rome.

The difference is that in the Roman Catholic Church this rebellion cannot become policy. The problem, however, is that wherever it is inflicted on the people who come to Church it is done so by the authority on the scene. The priest who uses the sermon in the Mass to preach against the Church's teaching, as my wife heard one Catholic priest do when she was visiting relatives in Virginia, is abusing the authority he has in that congregation in

that time and place. In this case, a priest told the congregation that the See of Rome was wrong to deny women the "right" to be ordained. He spoke from the pulpit, using a place and symbol of authority to demand that authority be questioned. In such a place, the pulpit, he is speaking with authority to denounce authority.

As we look at various examples of the liberal agenda in churches, we see that the system of authority is always called into question by those who promote heresy. Higher criticism challenged the authority of the Bible in late Nineteenth Century German Lutheranism. Rebellious Catholic theologians and clerics rebel against the authority of the Pope throughout many Western countries, sometimes openly contradicting the Church. And Anglicans use Episcopal thrones and the similitude of Councils to assert their power by creating groundless Canons to overthrow the authority of Scripture, Right Reason and Tradition. But, once the authority is questioned, with what is it replaced?

Even more insidious than the use of legal power through the courts, as a means to overthrow orthodox authority, is the replacement of God's authority with that of the anti-authoritarian liberals themselves. If the doctrine of the Church is to be overthrown, those who do so are claiming a higher authority than all which has come before. They must claim that they have revelation, that they are guided by the Holy Spirit, and that their word ought to be law, if only Canon Law. The theology and teaching of the Church is to be replaced by their revelation, even if this revelation is that they deny that there is such a thing as revelation.

When they speak of their new doctrine as the leading of the Spirit, they claim the authority of the prophetic charisma; when they do so in the name of the Church, they claim the authority of apostles. The irony is that even while claiming that we should question everything, they put themselves above being questioned. They claim that the Holy Spirit is revealing all truth to them, and that every objective standard of public teaching must be overthrown.

But, without a known publicly taught doctrine, the people become utterly dependent on the purveyors of "revelation" in order to know right from wrong, and to do the will of God. When the authority of the Church's teaching office is overthrown, the new "prophets" carve for themselves unlimited power to teach and demand anything they please.

And, they become indispensable.

The perfect opposite of their whole endeavor is well symbolized by the papal office, especially when it is held by a humble man who sees clearly his episcopal and pastoral duty to defend the faith. A few years ago, when Pope John Paul II issued a statement about the question of women's "ordination", to close the door on the discussion, part of the statement said that the Church has no authority to make this change.

This is the trademark of orthodox pastors in the Church, and among Christian communities: They know the limits of their own authority. A defender of the faith has authority precisely because he has none whatsoever; he is only the instrument of the authority that already is understood to belong solely to God. Whether it is Pope John Paul II defending the teaching of the Church which has been entrusted and handed down to him, or the local Baptist Pastor trying to be faithful to what the Bible says, we see the humility of leaders who never would dare to assert themselves and their own ideas.

Authoritarian liberals love to tell us that "such men are dangerous," that they are despots and tyrants who command us to obey. But what do these innovators offer in place of the authority to which faithful pastors answer as unprofitable servants? Nothing but their own authority, authority such as no Pope ever claimed for himself, and that none of the Ecumenical Councils pretended to; for they have all been the defenders of the faith. But those who order us, in the name of "enlightenment," to "Question Authority" claim the highest authority of all; to change the truth of God for a lie.

By **The Rev. Robert Hart**

<http://anglicancontinuum.blogspot.com/>

Claims every Catholic should be able to answer - 6 of 12

Freedom of speech is a great thing. Unfortunately, it comes at an unavoidable price: When citizens are free to say what they want, they'll sometimes use that freedom to say some pretty silly things. And that's the case with the 12 claims we're about to cover. Some of them are made over and over, others are rare (though worth addressing). Either way, while the proponents of these errors are free to promote them, we as Catholics have a duty to

respond. These errors are widespread, and it's our responsibility to correct them. So, at long last, I present to you 12 claims EVERY Catholic should be able to answer.

6. "If the Church truly followed Jesus, they'd sell their lavish art, property, and architecture, and give the money to the poor."

When some people think of Vatican City, what they immediately picture is something like a wealthy kingdom, complete with palatial living accommodations for the pope and chests of gold tucked away in every corner, not to mention the fabulous collection of priceless art and artifacts. Looking at it that way, it's easy to see how some people would become indignant at what they think is an ostentatious and wasteful show of wealth.

But the truth is something quite different. While the main buildings are called the "Vatican Palace," it wasn't built to be the lavish living quarters of the pope. In fact, the residential part of the Vatican is relatively small. The greater portion of the Vatican is given over to purposes of art and science, administration of the Church's official business, and management of the Palace in general. Quite a number of Church and administrative officials live in the Vatican with the pope, making it more like the Church's main headquarters.

As for the impressive art collection, truly one of the finest in the world, the Vatican views it as "an irreplaceable treasure," but not in monetary terms. The pope doesn't "own" these works of art and couldn't sell them if he wanted to; they're merely in the care of the Holy See. The art doesn't even provide the Church with wealth; actually, it's just the opposite. The Holy See invests quite a bit of its resources into the upkeep of the collection.

The truth of the matter is that the See has a fairly tight financial budget. So why keep the art? It goes back to a belief in the Church's mission (one of many) as a civilizing force in the world. Just like the medieval monks who carefully transcribed ancient texts so they would be available to future generations - texts that otherwise would have been lost forever - the Church continues to care for the arts so they will not be forgotten over time. In today's culture of death where the term "civilization" can only be used loosely, the Church's civilizing mission is as important today as it ever was.

By Deal W. Hudson

The Holy Rosary



In order to use the Rosary as an aid to contemplation of the "Mysteries" associated with the events of our Lord's life, it is first necessary to know the components.

The Apostles Creed

(Said on the Crucifix)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son Our Lord. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into Hell, the third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the Life Everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

(Said on each Large Bead)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen

The Angelic Salutation

(Said on each Small Bead)

Hail Mary full of Grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art Thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary mother of God pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen

The Gloria Patri

(Said on the chain after each Decade)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

The Joyful Mysteries

(Sundays, Advent – Lent: and Mondays and Thursdays)

- 1) The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-39)
- 2) The Visitation (Luke 1: 39-56)
- 3) The Nativity of our Lord (Luke 2: 1-7)
- 4) The Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2 22-40)
- 5) The finding in the Temple (Luke 2: 22-40)

The Sorrowful Mysteries

(Sundays, in Lent: and Tuesdays and Fridays)

- 1) The Agony in the garden (Luke 22: 39-47)
- 2) The Scourging at the Pillar (Mark 15: 7-10)
- 3) The Crown of Thorns (Matt.27-.27-3!)
- 4) The Carrying of the Cross (John 19:14-17)
- 5) The Crucifixion (Luke 23: 33-50)

The Glorious Mysteries

(Sundays, Easter – Advent: and Wednesdays and Saturdays)

- 1) The Resurrection (Matt. 28: 1-10)
- 2) The Ascension (Luke 24: 33-50)
- 3) The coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 1-5)
- 4) The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Rev. 12:1)
- 5) The Coronation of Our Lady and the glory of all the Saints (Rev. 3: 21 & 19: 6-10)

The Mysteries are contemplated while reciting the Angelic Salutation on each Small Bead of each decade.

Usual Form

- * A sign of the cross on the Crucifix and then the "Apostles Creed"
- * An "Our Father" on the first large bead
- * A "Hail Mary" on each of the three small beads with the following intentions (the theological virtues):
 1. For the increase of faith
 2. For the increase of hope
 3. For the increase of love
- * A "Glory Be" on the chain
- * Announce the Mystery
- * An "Our Father" on the large bead
- * A "Hail Mary" on each of the adjacent ten small beads, while meditating on the Mystery
- * A "Glory Be" on the chain
- * Again an "Our Father" on the large bead, ten "Hail Marys" while meditating. The "Glory Be" on the chain for each of the following decades.

Since writing this explanation of the use of the Rosary I notice that newer versions do not differentiate between small and large beads which makes the above instructions confusing to those who are not familiar with the older style, so a diagram is included to show which are the "large" beads.

By **The Rev. Ted Bowles**

Adoption as an Abortion Alternative

In the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision upholding the ban on partial birth abortion, proponents of abortion have reacted as if the sky were falling. Abortion proponents have grimly announced that a "woman's right to choose" is in peril. Of course, they speak about the "right to choose" only in the abstract; they are careful not to identify the choice they have in view.

The morality of any "choice" under consideration, however, cannot be divorced from the thing that is being chosen. Choices are not mere abstractions. They are concrete, and they have consequences. Let's not kid ourselves about what is at stake in the "choice" debate. When abortion advocates talk about the "right to choose", they are not talking about the right to choose between chocolate and vanilla. They are talking about the right to choose to kill an innocent unborn child.

The fact that a mother would contemplate killing her child, and that there are those who zealously advocate such a "choice", is evidence that something has gone very, very wrong in our society. As the Feminists for Life slogan puts it, "women deserve better than abortion." Indeed they do, and so do their children.

Adoption is an option that is not discussed nearly enough in the public debate about "choice". Rarely is the case for adoption made with the same vigor as the case for abortion. Part of the zeal for abortion is fueled by money. We should never forget that abortion is a multi-million dollar industry. With that kind of money at stake, it is easy to see why abortion proponents get so pumped up.

In the abortion debate, Americans are being asked to choose between a woman and her child. We are asked to come down on one side or the other. The debate is framed as an "either / or" proposition. When the adoption option is introduced, however, the debate is transformed into a "both / and" proposition. We do not have to choose between a woman and her child. Our hearts are big enough to love them both.

Adoption is truly a win/win/win situation. With adoption, the child "wins" because he or she is not only given the chance to live, but to live in a home with loving parents who can provide for his or her needs. Adoption is also a win for those couples who choose to adopt because they have the benefit of a precious new life to nurture. Finally, adoption is a win for the birth mother because she benefits from knowing that she has made the mature and beautiful choice of giving life to a child, providing for that child by finding a safe and happy home, and selflessly sharing that new life with others. When adoptions are done right they are occasions for joy all around.

Studies have shown that children who were born out-of-wedlock but are raised by adoptive parents do better in a number of categories than those who are raised by single mothers. They attain higher levels of education, have higher self-esteem, and enjoy better health.

Similarly, adoption is also good for birth mothers. Such women are more likely to be employed a year after the adoption, more likely to complete their educations, and they are more likely to express overall satisfaction with life than their single-mother counterparts.

Despite all its advantages, adoption has fallen on hard times. According to research, there has been a precipitous drop in adoption since the year 1973 when abortion was legalized across America. Before 1973, 8.7 percent of children born out-of-wedlock were placed for adoption. Recent statistics put the number at around one-percent. This huge drop in adoption has many causes.

First, there is less social stigma than there used to be attached to the idea of raising a child as a single parent. Second, there is more social pressure in favor of abortion today than there was in the past. Third, there is a lack of information about adoption provided to women who find themselves in a crisis pregnancy. Fourth, adoption can be legally confusing and expensive. There are any number of other reasons that can be added to this list.

One matter that should be of significant concern for the pro-life movement is that young women facing crisis pregnancies often have false ideas about adoption. A study commissioned by Family Research Council several years ago, entitled *The Missing Piece: Adoption Counseling in Pregnancy Resource Centers*, did a magnificent job of shedding light on the painful assumptions that many women have when it comes to adoption.

Women in crisis pregnancies tend to think of adoption as an abandonment of their child. They are often convinced that no other family can love their child as much as they do. They have heard horror stories about children mistreated by adoptive parents, and they assume that to place a child for adoption is to simply give the child away without any control over where he or she is placed.

Many women do not think they are strong enough to "give away" their children, that it is too great of a sacrifice, and that abortion is actually easier than adoption. *The Missing Piece* also found, however, that more emotionally mature women were usually in a better position to seriously consider the option of adoption. They were able to see that by choosing adoption they were putting their child's needs over their own.

Women facing crisis pregnancies need to know that, today, placing their child for adoption is not simply handing the baby over without any knowledge of how he or she will be raised. The modern adoption process frequently gives pregnant women an opportunity to be a big part of the process.

These days, mothers are often afforded the opportunity to help choose the type of family in which their child will be placed. And many women who choose adoption are often allowed to maintain an element of continuing involvement that helps them know that they are not in any way abandoning their baby.

Sadly, we do not spend enough time celebrating women who make such a mature and strong choice in favor of life. Needless to say, thousands of lives across America attest to the success of adoption. It is one thing to demand a right to choose; it is another thing to choose well. Here's to the mothers who have chosen life and shared that life with others!

By **Ken Connor**
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Support for Amnesty International withdrawn

The nation's Catholic bishops released a statement on Monday criticizing Amnesty International's decision in April to take a pro-abortion position after decades of neutrality. They applauded recent comments from a Vatican spokesman urging Catholics to boycott AI and withdraw their donations from the human rights group.

Bishop William Skylstad, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, outlined the position of the Catholic leaders.

"The action of the Executive Council undermines Amnesty's long-standing moral credibility, diverts its mission, divides its own members (many of whom are Catholic or defend the rights of unborn children), and jeopardizes Amnesty's support by people in many nations, cultures and religion," Bishop Skylstad said.

Skylstad said AI took the decision to advocate abortion for women in tenuous regions of the world who become pregnant after sexual abuse, but he said the AI position simply subjects women to more violence.

"Abortion injures the health and dignity of women at the same time that it ends the life of the unborn child," he said.

"A far more compassionate response is to provide

support and services for pregnant women, advance their educational and economic standing in society, and resist all forms of violence and stigmatization against them," he added.

He called on Amnesty International to reverse the decision when its International Council meets in Mexico in August.

Skylstad also applauded the words of Cardinal Renato Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, who recently called for a boycott.

"If in fact Amnesty International persists in this course of action, individuals and Catholic organizations must withdraw their support," Cardinal Martino said weeks ago.

Bishop Skylstad said he hopes AI reverses its position so Catholics could once again support the group and its work on behalf of prisoners of conscience and victims of abuse and torture.

"AI has been a source of inspiration to millions of supporters, including the many Catholics who are members," Bishop Skylstad said. "Much more urgent work remains, work which we believe will be harmed by this unprecedented and unnecessary involvement in the abortion debate."

The Catholic leader also explained that the Church supports AI's position that women who have illegal abortions not be punished but said that criminal penalties against abortion practitioners who do them should remain on the books in countries that make abortion illegal.

A Catholic layman, Peter Benenson, founded Amnesty International.

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