Center Director Carter Snead addressed a reception hosted at the Synod on the Family in Rome October 20. The gathering, cohosted by the Center for Ethics and Culture and Cardinal Timothy Dolan (Archdiocese of New York), was attended by Synod fathers, clergy, and members of the media. Professor Snead spoke on the relationship between the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision Obergefell vs. Hodges and the work of the Synod:

"In the domain of law and policy, expressive individualism holds that human desires are the source of fundamental rights. Expressive individualism underwrites the jurisprudence of abortion rights in the U.S. It anchors the arguments for unlimited access to dehumanizing and dangerous technologies of assisted reproduction. It undergirds the U.S. regulation compelling the Little Sisters of the Poor to facilitate access to contraception and abortifacients to their employees. And it justifies no-fault divorce. When operationalized in law and policy, expressive individualism often becomes a grave threat to the weakest and most vulnerable, who are seen as burdensome obstacles to the projects of the strong.

By contrast, the Church’s vision of persons and our shared life together is one in which we are understood to be embodied souls (not mere wills), whose embodiment has meaning. We live not in isolation, but situated in relationships of solidarity and reciprocal indebtedness. Others have claims on us and we on them, whether we choose them or not. What is fundamental about persons is not that they can construct and pursue future-directed plans, but that they are made in the image and likeness of God, deserving of unconditional love and protection.

Read his full remarks here [link: http://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2015/10/letter-number-twenty-one].