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TRANSCRIPT

WELFARE REFORM AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: A "ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION"

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Brian Benestad  John Carr
Patricia King  Rev. Michael Baxter, C.S.C.
David Schindler  Rev. John Langan, S.J.
Rev. Arthur McGovern  Louis Nanni
Janice Pilarski  Patrick Fagan
Stanley Carlson-Thies  John Roos
Cathleen Kaveny  John H. Robinson
Nancy Wisdo  Msgr. Joseph Semancik
Msgr. William Fay

The following is the transcript from a "Round Table" discussion on welfare reform and the Catholic Church which was held at the University of Notre Dame's Center for Continuing Education on Saturday, February 8, 1997. The discussion followed presentations on February 6-7 from various individuals and scholars involved with both social services and the Catholic Church. The February 8th gathering was sponsored by the Notre Dame Law School's Thomas J. White Center on Law & Government, the United States Catholic Conference, and the Notre Dame Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.

John H. Robinson¹: On behalf of the Thomas J. White Center, the Notre Dame Law School, the College of Liberal Arts and the United States Catholic Conference, I would like to welcome all of you here. This is an unusual event, at least in our experience. But, fundamentally, it is a conversation among people with great shared faith concerns and some different political perspectives and policy options. Could I ask Bishop Murphy to begin?

¹. Assistant Professor of Law and Philosophy, University of Notre Dame, and Director of the Thomas J. White Center on Law & Government, Notre Dame Law School
Bishop William Murphy: I am Bishop William Murphy. I am the Vicar General and Moderator of the curia of the Archdiocese of Boston. Professor Robinson asked me a few months ago if I would come out here to moderate this discussion, assuring me that all I have to do is make sure that nobody starts punching another.

I think that we should have a lively and interesting discussion today. The issue of welfare reform, as you know, is a very timely issue. It has been widely debated. The Catholic Church has an important stake in this debate because of the fact that there are fundamental issues about the human person (about which our Catholic social teaching is very much concerned) and because our Catholic social teaching has something very important to bring to the debate. Also, the Church has an important stake in this debate because of the fact that the Catholic Church, perhaps more than any other single entity in our society, is an active participant in social services. The Church delivers services to women, men, and children who are in need. This double reality of the Church’s presence in our society needs to be kept in mind so that we both are able to continue our mission of ministry to the poor and to those who are in need, and are able to bring to the debate the insights of Catholic social teaching and the consequent value that it places on the human person and on the institutions of society. Obviously there are a number of serious issues that arise. I think the issue of work requirements in welfare reform comes up. The issue of teen parents, time caps and family caps, and the issues of both legal and undocumented immigrants. But underlying those are the general issues that have to do with our sense of the human person and, if you will, the kind of Christian anthropology that might shape our own approach to these issues.

We are very fortunate this morning that our discussion will be led off by three persons who are very well informed on these questions: Father Bryan Hehir, whom many of you know, is not only a long-standing friend—we go back to when we were in the seminary together—but is now professor at the Harvard Divinity School and consultant to Catholic Relief Services; Professor Brian Benestad is from the University of Scranton where he is professor of social ethics; and Mr. John Carr is secretary of the Bishops’ Conference Commission on Social Development and World Peace. Each one of them will speak for about ten minutes, and I will exercise my prerogative as Chair to remind them when they have reached the nine minute mark. After that, the floor

2. Auxiliary Bishop, the Archdiocese of Boston, Massachusetts
will be open for observations, comments, and suggestions so that we can have a good, open conversation. I would urge you not to make this an opportunity to give us another homily or speech, but rather to try to make your pont as pithily as possible, because that way you will have a chance, perhaps, to make a second pithy comment. Without anything further, I will pass the floor to Father Hehir and we will get started.

Rev. Bryan Hehir: Thank you very much. I much appreciate the chance to be a small part of this conference because its content and participants have been fascinating in its whole design from Thursday on. Bishop Murphy and I have been friends long enough that I know he will enforce the “ten-minute rule” with rigor—precisely relying on our friendship to do so. My Protestant colleagues at Harvard always find ten minute talks daunting. That is because they are used to giving half-hour homilies. But, I remind them that in the Catholic Church the rule is: you can talk about anything you want so long as you clear the parking lot in time. And that means that one gets used to ten minute homilies. (laughter) So, let me address three things: first, the situation we face; secondly, how we have to look at it; and thirdly, some principles for looking at it.

First, the situation we face. To talk about welfare reform in the 1990’s is, I take it, just the exact opposite of what one might call “Rawlsian ideal theory.” That is to say, in Rawlsian ideal theory I take it you eliminate all of the restraints that are factually present in order that you can think clearly about principle. To think about welfare reform in the middle of the 1990’s is to think under a situation of great constraint. There are constraints imposed on us precisely because of actions recently undertaken in terms of welfare legislation, and the situations to which those actions were meant to respond. Now, I take it that no one was prepared to support the old system. But, secondly, that does not mean that one rejoices with what we did to the old system. While no one wanted to support the old system, many of us wonder about whether the cure was worse than the cause. So I take that as a starting point. It is a “non-ideal theory” situation in which we speak. We speak under constraints. How are we to speak then?

My sense is that the Church ought to address this situation of constraint and look at it from two perspectives: both as a time of obligation and as a time of opportunity. It is a time of obligation because of what I will call ignorance and imminent consequences. I was much impressed all during the welfare debate by

3. Professor, Harvard Divinity School
the continual refrain of Senator Moynihan that we ought to be careful about taking certain steps when we had no idea what the consequences of those steps would be. Now, as you know, precisely those steps that Moynihan was worried about were taken. Therefore, we are now in the situation of trying to determine what the consequences will be. And while I watched this debate in a sense from afar, I am impressed by the sort of ominous predictions that people have about unintended consequences occurring. That is to say, you do not have to state that the people who passed the new legislation intended that consequences would be catastrophic for children in order to worry about the fact that they well may be catastrophic. And we are not quite clear how catastrophic they might be. So, it is a time of obligation because whatever one thinks of the legislation or of the approach to this question, the fact of the matter is we all now have a common obligation to take care of the most vulnerable people in our midst. Because while we all are vulnerable as human beings, children, I take it, are doubly vulnerable. So it is a time of obligation.

At the same time, I think it is also a time of opportunity. It is a time of opportunity to do two things: to think systematically—to think systematically at the level of Catholic principle—as part of the wider debate in our country; and then secondly, to think creatively in terms of Catholic social institutions. In a sense, playing off Bishop Murphy's comments, I think it is this two-leveled problem that we face. What do our principles say about the situation we face? And, secondly, where do our institutions fit in a wider pattern of very fundamental change if we are not quite clear of what the consequences of that change will be. I will use the remaining seven minutes that I have to talk about those two things: how to think systematically about principle; and how I propose to think creatively about Catholic institutions.

First, at the level of principle. I think again it is important to go back to define the situation we face. I suggest that if we try to think of the situation we face in the mid-1990's, we are to keep our focus on the welfare question—partly because that is what this conference is about—but also we ought to expand beyond the welfare question in terms of the larger social debate of the 1990's. For we, I think, are having a multilevel debate in the country. The first was about health care. We had a quite vigorous and quite conflict-laden debate about health care. Secondly, there is an ongoing debate about taxes in American society. Thirdly, there is now the more recent debate about welfare. Now, if you look at those three debates, it seems to me that the collective effect of discussing those three questions at the same
time in society means that what you are really talking about is not simply one set of issues. You are talking about the shape of the social contract. And, interestingly enough, one is talking, I think, at the level of principle about the nature and purpose of the state in a democratic, liberal, pluralistic, postindustrial society. So it does seem to me that while welfare is fundamental enough in itself to absorb our attention, it would be a mistake to think that it is the only question on the table. What is on the table, it seems to me, is the nature of the social contract seen through the prism of health care, welfare, the tax system, and the nature and function of the state.

How does Catholic social principle speak to this discussion? Again, my thought is that the comparative advantage—if we do this right—is to bring to bear a certain level of systematic reflection. And here I would argue that systematic reflection means systematic reflection across the range of Catholic moral vision, and systematic reflection within the context of Catholic social teaching. So my appeal in the first instance, in a sense, is to reach beyond the social teaching and to look at the way Catholic social teaching relates to other parts of Catholic moral vision. Now I can only use one example. But it does seem to me the way in which the Church was addressing both the abortion question and the welfare question, in the context of the welfare debate, is an example of what I mean by both comparative advantage and a very difficult proposal to carry into American public discourse. For us those two issues are interconnected as we saw the possible consequences of welfare legislation. For almost no one else in the country was there an approach to this debate that tried to take seriously both dimensions of that problem. Some people were interested in the right-to-life abortion question, but not so vigorously interested in the welfare reform. Others were deeply interested in welfare reform and could not understand why one would talk about the abortion question. It seems to me that it is an indication of the nature of what I will call systematic reflection to see that we were addressing both of those problems and were trying to do it together.

Secondly, in addition to thinking across the Catholic moral vision, I would propose that we ought to again renew our systematic reflection on the internal structure of Catholic social thought. As you try and envision rethinking the social contract, as you try and think about the nature and function and role of the state—sort of ideal theory questions, if you will—it seems to me that the Catholic approach is regulated by a fundamental value and three criteria. The fundamental value is the dignity and the sacredness of the human person. There is no place to
start on any of these questions other than "how do we think about that issue?" But, it seems to me that the real place that we need help is on what I would call the "regulative criteria." And I think there are three. They are solidarity, socialization, and subsidiarity. Now those three elements arise from different moments in Catholic social thought. They are not even similar realities. Subsidiarity, I think, is properly a moral principle. Socialization, as it is described in Mater et Magistra by Pope John XXIII, is really a process rather than a principle. And solidarity has been variously described as an attitude, as a virtue, and possibly as a principle. So, it seems to me that we have three different realities. But those three realities, I think, are what comes to bear when one thinks about the nature and function of the state and the role of the social contract. The structure of how to think of those three, it seems to me, is solidarity as the foundational "attitude/virtue" approach. Socialization is the argument that says while one clearly does not want the state to do everything—therefore, subsidiarity—it is clear that the function and nature of postindustrial society means that an activist state is necessary for the minimal protection of foundational human rights. And so, therefore, in the welfare debate, it seems to me, one has to watch not only the proposals but what the implications are of the function and nature of the state vis-a-vis non-governmental and other institutions. That is to say, the argument that we need to reform the system must be examined not only in terms of specific proposals, but what one is saying about the relative responsibilities of the state and of other elements in society in bearing responsibility for its most vulnerable people.

That brings me, finally, to the question of moving from systemic principle to creative reflection on Catholic social institutions. Here again, I would look at welfare as a piece of a larger set of issues. What strikes me is that the really interesting question is how we think about the interaction of our institutions with our principles and with the larger American social system. From one Church you now have the largest private education system in the country, the largest private social service agency in the country, and the largest private nonprofit health care system in the country. That puts you in a position of strategic leverage in a situation where you have declining public resources and exploding public needs. It also puts you in a situation of great constraint. But, I suggest that the moment of opportunity is to think about what the leverage is of being in that position, and how we ought to function both at the level of principle and practice.

_Bishop Murphy:_ Thank you very much. Professor Benestad.
Brian Benestad\textsuperscript{4}: With a ten minute time limit, there is no leisure for an introduction. In honor of my old debate partner, Father Hehir, let me say that I will also divide my remarks into three parts.

“What can the Catholic community do to serve poor families and children in the wake of the new approach to welfare?” Of course, the Catholic community can provide social services, propose public policy initiatives and attempt to influence the culture. It should not be overlooked, however, that the Catholic Church also makes a significant contribution to the welfare crisis by competent teaching of faith and morals.

1) LAW AND PUBLIC POLICY

The marriage laws in the several states should tell a different story from the one currently in vogue. Mary Ann Glendon alerted me to this need in her 1987 book, \textit{Abortion and Divorce in Western Law: American Failures, European Challenges}. She wrote: “The American story about marriage, as told in the law and much popular literature, goes something like this: marriage is a relationship that exists primarily for the fulfillment of the individual spouses. If it ceases to perform this function, no one is to blame and either spouse may terminate it at will. . . . Children hardly appear in the story; at most they are rather shadowy characters in the background. Other stories, of course, are still vigorous in American culture—about marriage as a union for life, for better or worse, even in sickness or poverty; stories about taking on responsibilities and carrying through; and about parenthood as an awesome commitment. But, by and large, they are not the ones that have been incorporated into the law. In the continuing cultural conversation about marriage and family life, American law has weighed in heavily on the side of individual self-fulfillment.” (p. 108) Since the law is a pedagogue, it should tell stories of fidelity between spouses and loving care of children.

It is high time for more accommodation in church-state laws. Everyone knows that Catholic schools can and do help the poor. Government should at least provide funding to religiously affiliated schools that serve the poor.

Welfare systems should provide some incentive to marry, or, at least, they should not impose a penalty on a welfare recipient who happens to marry. While attending an NEH seminar in 1980, I committed to memory one of Wilson Carey McWilliams’s obiter dicta. He said something to this effect: “We should give some kind of a tax break to people who don’t move. We move

\textsuperscript{4}. Professor of Social Ethics, University of Scranton
too much in America," he said "and that breaks up community." From this comment, I conclude that we should find some way in our welfare laws to encourage people to think well of marriage and even to marry. It is surely a truism that single parenthood and divorce often cast family members into poverty. (Of course, Catholics should oppose the legalization of same-sex marriage, and at the same time show that this opposition should not be regarded as a violation of civil rights.)

Cheryl Sullivan told a story of tracking down a man who owed $67,000 to his family. She did that in her role as a government official for the state of Indiana. Surely, the several states could do more to develop effective means of enforcing child support. (Glendon is very good on this subject in her book on abortion and divorce.)

Continued opposition to the legalization of euthanasia is another important means of serving the poor. I believe that the poor will be the first casualties of legalized euthanasia. Not a few insurance companies and hospitals will welcome euthanasia as a cost-cutting device.

2) CULTURE

The Catholic community must find a way to change attitudes towards partnership between religious institutions and government. For example, we should continue to work at persuading citizens that some financial support of religiously affiliated schools will serve the common good. In addition, we Catholics should have no hesitation in persuading our fellow citizens that lifelong fidelity in marriage and openness to children are goods of the highest order. Some of you may have noticed that Vice-President Al Gore felt free to give us Catholics some advice on 22 January 1997, when he talked to the National Abortion Rights Action League. He encouraged Catholics to give up their teaching on contraception in the following statement: "The truth is that a minority within a minority [of those opposing the right to choose abortion] also believes that family planning, in the form of birth control and even the giving of information about birth control, is morally wrong. . . . If they (Catholics) were willing to abandon that aspect of their common front, then there would be much more that we could do together to make abortions rare." Mr. Gore’s chutzpa should move Catholics both to be more faithful to their own principles and to be less reluctant to express their views on matters pertaining to the public morality of the nation. For example, Catholics should have no hesitation promoting a public morality of chastity and abstinence. In January Governor Thomas Ridge of Pennsylvania, who is a pro-choice
Catholic, celebrated abstinence in his “budget” speech. Teaching abstinence should replace the teaching of “safe sex,” which is not safe anyway. Catholics should oppose the so-called “value-free sex education.” It is not value-free or neutral to teach about sex and sexuality by just doing biology. Certainly, students need to read good literature, such as the works of Jane Austen, and other things of a religious nature in order to understand human sexuality, love and marriage.

The Catholic community should also encourage a public morality of generosity. We should find a way to make John Kennedy’s appeal attractive once again: “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.” Most of my Catholic students don’t readily think about serving the common good.

There are at least two things that the Catholic community should say about work. First, work inside the home and other non-wage work are very important for the country. Workers drawing a salary are not the only laborers deserving of society’s respect. Secondly, the new law requiring welfare recipients to work is, in principle, a good thing. Eventually, many will recognize that holding a job is a benefit and a privilege. Of course, some people with special needs should be exempt from the work requirement. Lastly, I would like to stress that the inability to hold a job can be a soul problem, which requires the education of the mind and the heart as a remedy, not simply public policy or the operation of the market.

3) THE INTERNAL LIFE OF THE CHURCH

The effective teaching of faith and morals within the Church is not only work for the salvation of souls, but also a significant contribution to the promotion of justice. When people really understand and live their faith, they serve others and cope with their own difficulties as well. The faithful need to hear about the privilege and duty of serving the common good through family life, work, volunteer activities and advocacy of good public policy. Formation for marriage is especially important today. That includes instruction about the harm of artificial contraception and divorce.

Instruction in Catholic social teaching needs to be improved. Most Catholics don’t have an adequate understanding of rights, human dignity and values. They have a hard time distinguishing the papal teaching on rights from that of John Locke. In the Catholic tradition human dignity is a given, but also something to be achieved. We achieve our human dignity by overcoming sin and by living a life of virtue. Unfortunately,
there is entirely too much talk in Catholic circles about the promotion of human dignity simply through the protection of rights. This is true, but insufficient and therefore misleading. The more fundamental point is that our human dignity requires the avoidance of evil doing, the practice of virtue and the fulfillment of duties. Values talk is everywhere and also misleading. My proposal is to avoid all talk of values. I cringe every time I hear the term "family values." I know what the Catholic Church is trying to do, but it doesn't work. The word value, as William Safire tells in his column on language, indicates a subjectivity of belief about good and evil. Would it be appropriate to say that the Nazis had different "values?" It would be absurd to talk this way. In my mind, the use of the term "values" reveals a lazy way of thinking.

Two final points regarding the work of the Church. Even if the government doesn't fund our schools, we should try to find a way to educate more of the truly disadvantaged, perhaps by tapping college volunteers or by linking suburban parishes with inner-city schools. We could also match parishes with families that need help.

We also would do well to persuade Catholic institutions of higher learning to retain or recover high quality liberal education that deals with questions of the common good and justice. Liberal education has been a casualty in the discussion of Ex Corde Ecclesiae between the bishops and university officials. Without a serious liberal education, Catholic college graduates will have a meager understanding of justice and the common good.

Bishop Murphy: I thank you very much. Without further delay, I turn to the Hegelian synthesizer, Professor Carr.

John Carr: It is not easy following the two Brians, particularly since I was just tasked to synthesize these two presentations. I was listening and I was struck by two other concerns: one is how am I going to get this into three parts? (laughter) My three parts are: one, what does the Church bring to this discussion; two, a brief look back at the welfare reform debate and the Conference's role in it; and third, a look around at our continuing challenge. My second concern was that Bishop Murphy is going to enforce this "ten minute rule." As he knows, and as some of you know, I have trouble saying hello in ten minutes.

My perspective is more mundane. I am not a theologian. I am an ecclesiastical bureaucrat who tries to help the Bishops

5. Secretary of the Bishops' Conference Commission on Social Development and World Peace
share and apply Catholic social teaching to this issue and others. At the outset, I should explain that the Bishops have a high degree of ownership and involvement in our policy work on welfare reform. Because welfare reform began and now has returned to the states, Bishops across the country have a lot of experience, information and commitment on this issue. They are not newcomers to the debate. They know the moral and social failures of the status quo, and the inadequacies of what is now called "reform."

The Bishops lead a community of faith, not a political interest group or a public policy think tank. They bring different assets to the debate. One is the consistent moral framework that we have been talking about here: life and dignity, rights and responsibilities, the centrality of family, the duty to work, the option for the poor, solidarity and subsidiarity, the common good. Our agenda as a community of faith comes not from polls or focus groups, but from the Scriptures and a century of social teaching. So we are not free to abandon the unborn because they are politically incorrect. We cannot support disproportionate cuts for poor children because they lack political power. We cannot go along with cutting off immigrants because they do not vote. And we are not free to accept a welfare status quo which is not about dignity, which is often bureaucratic, which is often anti-work and anti-family.

Ours is a complex and nuanced teaching and we need to resist the temptation to reduce our tradition to a sound bite for our own political or ideological preferences. Sometimes we see this when a new Encyclical or statement comes out. People try to "spin" it to support their own particular preconceived agenda. You see the op-ed pages that claim "the Pope agrees with me." When I was in school, I was taught the question was whether we agreed with the Pope. There is a danger, I think, of selective orthodoxy where solidarity becomes a sort of bumper-sticker response that ends up supporting the status quo, or where subsidiarity is used to applaud an abandonment of the national safety net. In many ways, the most important word in the Catholic social tradition is "and." We teach rights and responsibilities. We believe in personal responsibility and public responsibility. Subsidiarity and solidarity. So we have to beware, all of us, of selective and superficial uses of our traditions to advance partisan ideological agendas.

The second thing we bring is broad experience. It is not just what we believe but what we do that gives us a perspective and gets us a hearing. The poor are not abstract issues for us. They are in our parishes and in our schools. They are on our rectory
doorsteps and in our soup kitchens and shelters. They have names and faces. We are the largest non-governmental provider of human services in the country, and of education and health care. We have resettled half of the refugees that have come to the United States in the last twenty years. We help people move from welfare to work every day. We know very often that it is one step forward and two steps back, or two steps forward and one step back. It is not an easy process. In many ways, we are the community institutions which the politicians pontificate about. We know better than many the failures of the status quo, and the enormous potential and limitations of religious and private charity. That experience can keep us anchored, but one of the challenges for us is to make sure that our efforts in this area reflect who we are and what we believe to ensure that we do not find ourselves so secularized that we are just another social service agency.

Looking back at the debate, these principles and this experience pushed the Bishops in two directions. One as advocates of sweeping reform because of the damage done to children by the status quo. Secondly, and sadly I think, as opponents of what ended up being called welfare "reform." In my judgment, the process ended up being driven by political and fiscal forces. The bill served the interests of the politicians but not the needs of poor families. In the end, the most important factor was that they had to cut sixty-something billion dollars, so they ended up going after hungry families and immigrants. I do not think they wanted to, but they had to make the numbers work. The legislation shifted responsibility, it changed roles, and it reduced resources, but it failed to maintain the safety net. It did not demand much, frankly, from states. Bishops from Mississippi and Louisiana, if they were here, would tell you that every state is not Michigan and Wisconsin.

Now, for the future. Welfare reform has returned to the states where the energy was in the first place. I think we have several tasks. First, we have to reach out to those in need with new urgency and creativity. We know our efforts cannot replace a real safety net, but we must continue to do all we can to limit the damage, protect children and help families escape poverty. Our efforts serve the poor often with greater dignity, moral challenge, economy, and effectiveness. We should lead by example, demonstrating that there is no contradiction between compassion and responsibility, between our focus on family and work and our defense of the poor and vulnerable. We should seize the opportunities created by the act as we work to confront and overcome its inadequacies.
Secondly, we must do all we can to encourage states to meet their responsibilities, to use their increased flexibility to enhance the lives and dignity of poor people in their states. We will continue to oppose unwise measures like family caps which hurt children and encourage abortion. The states can enact their own safety nets, or further erode it. Thirdly, we should monitor the human impact of this huge national experiment—really fifty state experiments—joining with others to measure the strengths and weaknesses of state and local programs, assessing who is being helped and who is being left behind.

Finally, we should work to reshape the debate on poverty and recommit our nation to overcome it. We need to help our society get beyond the partisan games to focus on the reality of a fifth of our children growing up poor in the richest nation on earth—the moral, the economic, and other factors that leave children poor. We in particular can help get beyond the false choices between private and public responsibility; between community initiative and national commitment; between decent jobs for those who can work and a real safety net for those who cannot; and between the moral factors and economic factors undermining families. The debate, I think, is dominated by false choices: You are either for more community initiative or you are for maintaining a national safety net. They are not contradictory.

For me, the image I have of real welfare reform is a table with four legs. The first leg is what families need to do. They need to make responsible choices and sacrifice for their kids. Policy must support responsible choices. The second leg is the role of the market, which needs to offer opportunities and work so that people can support a family by their own labor. We have a lot of work to do in this area. Yesterday, unemployment went up by one tenth of one percent, and the stock market went up ninety points. There is a feeling that high unemployment keeps inflation down, which is a worthy goal, but at what price? What are we going to do in terms of work? The third leg is what churches and community groups can do to help families overcome poverty and confront the problems of violence, substance abuse, discrimination and family life that Brian [Benestad] talked about. The fourth leg is what government needs to do: promoting economic and social policies that make it possible for those to work who can get decent jobs that can support a family and provide an adequate safety net for those who cannot.

The saddest outcome of the debate is that it was a huge missed opportunity. I am attracted by Larry Mead's notion of "help and hassle," although I would probably phrase it differ-
But this legislation has been more hassle than help. It is very weak on the concrete help that must be given to families. The Church has to be clear about what we are for, as well as what we are against. We need a new social contract that expects and rewards responsible behavior, work, and persistent effort from those in need in exchange for a commitment from the broader society to create decent jobs, protect children and provide practical help in escaping poverty. We must resist the temptation to see poor women, minorities and immigrants either as passive victims or easy scapegoats for our society’s social and economic difficulties.

In closing, we need to tell the truth. Genuine welfare reform requires a real, not rhetorical, commitment to work. Where are the jobs that are going to support families? Secondly, we also need to be clear that the behaviors and attitudes which undermine family life in poor communities are society-wide. It is not just the poor who make lousy choices on occasion. I think, frankly, that Hollywood and Wall Street have as much to answer for as does East Los Angeles or Harlem. Last night Michael Jordan was on Nightline defending $145 sneakers. I think Madonna is as much a part of the problem as some young woman in Anacostia having children that she should not have. Yesterday Larry said that the test for the religious community is specificity. I have my doubts about that. The Bishops are pastors and leaders and teachers. They are not technicians and policy wonks. Their most significant role is not drafting bills, but helping to shape the debate, outlining moral criteria, lifting up the human dimensions, and speaking where necessary for the voiceless. Welfare reform continues to be a test for our society and it will also be a test for our Church.

_Bishop Murphy:_ Thank you, John. I think we have had three very fine presentations. There have been placed before us issues at a number of levels. There are the levels of: the role of the Church and the role of government; issues of our culture; issues which have to do with the way we bring our concerns and priorities; practical issues about welfare reform; and the challenges and opportunities that the Church in particular might have to face. So we have a wide-open and very extensive area for discussion as we go forward. Now, we simply open the discussion and invite you to either make your own comments or put a question to any of the three panelists.

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6. Professor Mead delivered a presentation on a previous day of the Conference.
Cathleen Kaveny⁷: I have some questions for Bryan Hehir, but whoever knows the facts of this situation, please chime in. I am really impressed by what you were talking about in terms of the Catholic Church being the largest provider of social services on a non-governmental basis in this country, and the largest not-for-profit health care provider in this country. I do think that there can be a lot of leverage gained by that. So, two questions. One, what are the sources of funding that each of these groups have? Where does the money for Catholic social services and hospitals come from? Are those funding sources likely to be stable or will they be threatened? What percent of that funding comes from the faithful themselves? And, secondly, what type of coordination exists among Catholic entities both to provide services, and to exercise political power, such as they have. I hate to use that word. I know Mike Baxter [Rev. Michael Baxter, C.S.C.] so I feel guilty about using the word "political power," but I still use it nonetheless. (laughter)

Rev. Bryan Hehir: I have never been embarrassed by power. (laughter) First of all, when you address the specific questions you raise, it is a question of perspective. The perspective, I would argue, is that there is no way that the private agencies can solve the questions of the social contract, so that is not my proposal. Secondly, in the nature of a society like ours, there is no way you resolve the questions of the social contract without the private agencies. So that is my twofold argument at the very beginning.

Secondly, I could not give you exact numbers except to say that I think the sources of funding are differentiated among the various agencies to which I referred. Obviously, the first question you have is the constitutional difference between the way education is treated and the way health care and social services are treated. So there is government funding for health care and social services and virtually none for education, except until you get to higher education. Thirdly, even in terms of health versus, for example, Catholic charities, the sources of the funding are different. It seems to me that the health care funding on the whole is open to a different stream of funding than is charity. But for a gross interpretation of what you asked, then others can correct me. The way I think about it is that the Church, in a sense, keeps the institutions in existence, and then you have to go out into a multiplicity of sources—government, market and otherwise—to keep them going.

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⁷. Associate Professor of Law, Notre Dame Law School
The final thing I will say is that my impression is, and I keep trying to stress this in a number of forums, that we ought to think about these various sectors (education, health care, and social services) together. There is a twofold problem that each of them faces: namely, how do they maintain their identity and how do they think about their place creatively in terms of social policy? What happens is those problems are so complicated for each sector (for health care, for charities), that they think a lot about what happens to them. We think very little in a transverse way across sectors. My sense is that if we go to a Catholic Health Association convention and talk there, they will be immersed in health. If you go to Catholic Charities, they are immersed in social services. If you go to the ACCU, they are immersed in education. There is very little, to my knowledge, transverse systematic thinking about the Catholic Church as a social institution in countering the question of our society. So at the moment I would say that there is little of that, unless somebody can point out something that I do not know.

Msgr. Joseph Semancik: I address Professor Kaveny's question about the funding sources of Catholic Charities. The total of Catholic Charities programs in the United States is just at 1.9 billion dollars—almost two billion. About sixty percent or so is government funds. There is a great variance from diocese to diocese because each Catholic Charities agency is autonomous. In some dioceses there might be ninety percent government money. In another diocese there might be none. The average contribution across the country from the United Way is about four percent for Catholic Charities—not very large. But in some dioceses it might be seventy percent. So it is very difficult to judge this on an individual basis.

Nonetheless, I think that the Catholic challenge, in my mind, is twofold. One is to be able to take money from the government and still be able to use that money in the context of the mission of the charities and the Church. Money is not what we should be about. The other problem is in providing direct services and services that are of a development or self-help type, and then moving on to the issues that Catholic Charities USA is interested in now: the "advocacy and justice issues." That, it seems to me, is where we will encounter a great deal of difficulty. To be able to take money from the government and then, as it were, to advocate about justice issues is very difficult. To get money from the faithful for a poor child is no strain—you can frame it before

8. Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities, Gary, Indiana
anybody rich or poor. The real problem is getting money from the faithful and from any other source to do the works of justice, and to promote the justice agenda. I think that is where I see a challenge for us in the next generation.

*Bishop Murphy:* I would add just a word to that. By way of example, the Archdiocese of Boston is the largest social service provider in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts outside of the government. We have reorganized all social service agencies so that we can very clearly identify those that are dependent upon government funding, and those that are more specifically Catholic and that are funded by the freewill offerings of the faithful. The idea behind that is to make sure that we answer the very challenge that Father Semancik just mentioned: to make sure that we continue to maintain our own identity and not end up being compromised by one thing or another. This is not always an easy task. It is an ongoing task. But I think that is one way that we have attempted to meet that challenge.

*Janice Pilarski:* In addition to the work of Catholic Charities, the other way the U.S. Catholic Church helps the poor is through a program known as the Campaign for Human Development [CHD]. I am affiliated with the national CHD committee and would like to interject that perspective into this discussion. If we are looking at questions of social justice, then I feel that this [CHD] is a model for how the Catholic community enacts its concern for human dignity and participation. The Campaign for Human Development is one of the best-kept secrets of the Catholic Church. It has been working for twenty-five years providing seed money to local groups at the diocesan level to groups that are organizing around community issues. We look at what is affecting neighborhoods, at what is affecting families and how people might make a difference themselves on issues that affect their lives. It embodies the principles of subsidiarity and the principles of solidarity and of how the poor can have a stake in their own future. There is another stream of money that CHD provides for economic development and for the creation of jobs in local communities: job training and jobs that are managed and developed by the poor themselves. I think it is certainly relevant to this discussion because if we are looking for ways to involve the faithful, we have an example which needs to be better known across the country.

Essentially, we are looking at the question that the Bishops raised in their economics pastoral which is: what is the economy
doing to the poor, for the poor, and what is it enabling them to do for themselves? Similarly, we can raise the question of what the welfare system is doing in those respects. Most importantly, "what is it enabling the poor to do for themselves?" Are we as a society willing to listen to welfare recipients, to hear what they think will help them become self-sufficient? I think that the Campaign for Human Development is a model for participation, for bringing people together, and for making changes at the systems level, but also in giving people hope and jobs.

Rev. Arthur McGovern\textsuperscript{10}: One of the things that I really appreciate about this conference is that it brings together people who have common concerns but different political ideologies or viewpoints. I heard it in your talk, John, and in Brian's talk particularly. I think it was Arthur Fisher who wrote the book \textit{Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In}, and I guess I approach it from that perspective. I know we cannot do this as a large group today, but I started thinking: how does one get people with different values, although both coming from the same Church, to move practically in the same direction? I guess what I heard were two very fundamental values. One that I would tie into what Bryan Hehir said, I think is the subsidiarity issue. We have to get people to be responsible for their own lives, to have their own jobs, and to be responsible for marriage and for children, and so forth. I think that individual responsibility is a very strong fundamental value. The other one that I hear is that we must protect the vulnerable. In between is socialization: how do you get people who are abused and live in a drug-infested neighborhood to become, five or ten years later, a responsible agent? How do you get people to even feel and experience responsibility? So I guess my great hope is that we all can say "yes, we all have both of those values." Both of those fundamental values need to be preserved. How can you do that with welfare? How can you create such a welfare program? What steps do we all agree should be taken so that we may accomplish both of those goals—to protect the vulnerable and to encourage and to strengthen responsibility?

\textit{Louis Nanni}\textsuperscript{11}: I work at the local homeless center, the South Bend Center for the Homeless. I must say that while I appreciate the diversity of opinions and comments that have been put forth so far in this conference, I got home last night and spoke with another member of our staff at the Center. I said to him, "My

\textsuperscript{10.} University of Detroit-Mercy
\textsuperscript{11.} Executive Director, South Bend Center for the Homeless
God, are we doing everything wrong? I sit down at this conference and whether people are speaking from the political left or from the political right, they make it sound so easy.” They make it sound like if we just do “X” we can legislate self-sufficiency on the one hand. Or if we just put more money into current programs, we can fix these problems. But this just does not jive with our daily experiences.

Recently, the Center for the Homeless where I work was highlighted in an op-ed piece by Cokie and Steve Roberts. In a trip to Washington where we testified as to what works in welfare reform, they said that our message would be unsettling to both liberals and conservatives alike. And I think this is very much the case. Our experiences really transcend the typical political paradigms which I think have been put forth so far. It is unsettling on a number of counts. On the one hand, we believe that the government should get out of providing direct services altogether. I believe that people that have been forced to use child protective services or Welfare Department services typically have dehumanizing experiences. There is little spirit in these public institutions; the caseloads are enormous. When was the last time you heard of somebody volunteering at the Welfare Department? It just does not happen. They are not able to pull upon the local resources or leverage the support in those ways. Instead, I think that government should contribute financially to support a not-for-profit social service sector which would mobilize local efforts to solve problems.

Secondly, we think that it will cost more money rather than less in the short term because it takes intensive interventions often for two to three years, or perhaps even longer, if you are going to help people break the cycle of violence, of welfare dependency, of homelessness, or whatever it might be in their lives. The issue here is that the depth and diversity of the needs that we see on a daily basis are truly formidable. Some of the best success cases we see, people who have been out of the system for three and four years, still stumble because the support networks are not there. The recidivism rate is enormously high. So in the Church’s tradition of spirit and soul, I think that at this conference we are high on spirit, but I am not sure that we are rooted in soul. I am not sure that we are grounded in the brokenness and how truly challenging the problems are for us as a society today. I often think that when the political sector and the business sector try to grab hold of what we are doing at the Center, they misunderstand what it is truly about. They look exclusively at outcomes. They look at how many people we get into jobs and housing, and so forth. We do have a great deal of
success. But jobs and housing are not the answers, because there are a lot of people who have jobs and who have their own apartments yet live miserable lives. They lack meaning or joy. They lack a sense of community in their lives. Our deeper mission at the Center is to restore the torn fabric of our community. We try to bring people together and to build meaningful community. That which distinguishes welfare recipients and homeless persons from the rest of society more than anything is the disconnectedness they experience in their lives. So if we can build a meaningful community where there is respect, compassion and accountability, it is not only good for the homeless, but it is good for our entire society. It is just as important for the seven hundred volunteers who work at the Center each month as it is for those people who are there to receive services.

So I think we have a long way to go as a community. I think our fundamental challenge is about building a more meaningful community. The Catholic Church has a particular role to play in this because we understand that there is more about caring than just the cure. We understand what it means to accompany people in a Christian way. Christ did not go around and fix things in his day, but rather, he tried to build a more meaningful and lasting community. I think this is our challenge.

Patrick Fagan: I would like to pick up on this and carry that theme. I would think it is an illustration of what Father Hehir meant when he talked about the inability of government agencies to do things at the local level. There are things that agencies can do which government cannot. But you do need government, I would propose, on the material help, the material resources. Government is very good at delivering those things. It is, I think, incompetent at delivering the person-to-person help that is absolutely critical to people moving out of states of dependency. I would like to make two or three comments on the debate as I have heard it here.

One, I would think that in a Catholic setting both "liberal" and "conservative" labels have absolutely no place. They are ideological terms that essentially come from the alienated political process. In the family of the Church with goodwill we try to see our shortcomings, we see the Church’s ideal from its teachings, and we begin to apply it. It is a constant calibration. We will never build the City of God on earth. But if we get to the City of God in Heaven it will be because we tried to do it on earth. But we will always fall short. I come from the conservative end of the

12. The Heritage Foundation
spectrum as it is described outside, but within that what motivates me is trying to apply certain areas of the Church’s teaching to public policy. My impression is that the Catholic apparatus—and it has not been corrected during the last two days—has essentially been championing the poor very clearly, but without a concern for correcting what are some of the critical mistakes about which the populace at large are concerned. Work was one. The work requirement, handled properly, would be very salutary.

I would agree with Larry Mead’s point yesterday that one cannot impose the whole area of marriage, and children, and sexuality. But I think here the Church must take leadership. I will give you a statistic to illustrate how bad it has become throughout the entire culture. In 1950, for every one hundred children born in this country, twelve entered a broken family through out-of-wedlock births or through divorce. In 1992, for every hundred children born in this country, sixty have entered a broken family. We are a culture of rejection and alienation.

Our poor actually have the worst of it because our elite and our middle class essentially are “getting away with it” to a certain extent. We now have second, third, or fourth generation out-of-wedlock families in the cultures of our poor. Ninety-two percent of the children who live in families with incomes under $15,000 are in single parent homes. They do not know what marriage is, and they do not know what the love between parents is.

Now to me, this one is tied critically to the disaster we have had in modern culture in the relations between men and women’s sexuality. The role of the Church here is absolutely critical. We must move with authority in the area of marriage where justice to the child is at issue. From the moment of conception every child—given what will happen to him if he does not have the love of his parents—has the absolute, inalienable right to the married love of his parents. This is an unaddressed area and a very big issue of social justice. One of our tasks is to find how to move prudently towards building the authority of truth in this area so eventually it can translate into some prescriptions on marriage which are not coercive in law—I think there is a place for that but it would be imprudent to argue for it now. It will help restore a good social order. Our children are being destroyed in the absence of that structure of love [marriage] which is very much within the competence of individuals to address and, with the help of the Church, to deliver.

John H. Robinson: These are very provisional thoughts, but one of our objectives this morning is to define a certain amount of common ground. If you take Bryan Hehir’s initial remarks in
which he said that the Catholic Church was virtually unique in identifying and addressing welfare issues and abortion not quite simultaneously but in the same conversation, Brian Benestad’s list of things we need to address, and Pat Fagan’s comments just now, it is quite clear that there is a serious linkage between sexuality (to which abortion is connected) and welfare. Now this strikes me as somewhat problematic and challenging. John Carr and his group work in a political process where they have wins and losses. The evidence that Cheryl [Sullivan] gave us on Thursday night which indicates that the American people want to help the poor—when the question is phrased that way—is of use to him. There is a mainstream feature to welfare policy debates. What the United States Catholic Conference wants, and what I suppose most people here want, is for the process to produce majoritarian outcomes that are agreeable to our basic beliefs and intuitions. But more and more we are seeing on the right-to-life side the marginalization or the “counter-culturization” of the Catholic position. This is quite clear to people who are involved in these things. Whatever the numbers are with respect to abortion—the partial-birth question to one side—there is a very worrisome tendency in the Catholic Church for Catholics to be independent of the ecclesiastical line on birth control and more and more, if you follow the data, on abortion. The behavior of Catholics is not really different from the behavior of non-Catholics, once you identify socioeconomic status, in any significant way. So the Church, it seems to me, in a room like this one is heading in two opposite directions simultaneously. This leads to a certain amount of pain. On the one hand, we are trying to form coalitions of a majoritarian sort that will eliminate the consequences of the 1996 law with respect to food stamps, with respect to the children of legal immigrants, and with respect to all kinds of things. On the other hand, it seems as if the Church is developing the consciousness of counter-culture-ness. On questions of at least abortion and perhaps on some questions of sexuality, we [Catholics] are going to teach our children and lead lives that are very different from those that are modeled on television and from those that are featured in the movies. I do not know how well we will operate in both the mainstream and the counterculture at the same time.

Audience Member: We have centered around a big problem, and that is the problem of how lay people (who are not working on behalf of the institutional Church) who are judges, policy makers, or teachers bring the Church to their field such as the universities or the courts. For example, someone made the com-
ment that Justice Antonin Scalia either does not know the social
teaching of the Church or he does not care about it too much.
More and more we find lay Catholics who are in positions of
influence or authority in society either ignore or simply do not
know the teaching of the Church. In some of our earlier talks we
have focused on how the Church must teach ideas. Many times
in the public debates the Catholic Church appears to be simply
another special interest group. We have many Catholics who are
opposing the institutional Church in the public policy debate.
Again, this comes down to how we are educating lay people to act
in society both independent of the Church and informed by its
principles. I think what Lou Nanni and Larry Mead have said—
how lay men and women could act in society—can bring more to
bear on this policy process than any of us in this room could.
The people who “get their hands dirty” in the neighborhoods
seem to have the practical experience that we who teach the
principles cannot get. It brings to light what the Second Vatican
Council taught: that there are many ways in which the lay people
will be responsible for the Church. Educationally, if we are not
addressing this, if we are not teaching our young people the prin-
ciples of the Church, they will never learn or live that unity of
life.

John Carr: To respond to that and follow up on it, I think you
are exactly on target in several respects. The most important
work is not being done in the Bishops' Conference or in Chan-
cery Offices. It is being done in the Congress, in the think tanks,
in the homeless shelters, and in the welfare offices where people
try to apply their values to these issues. The problem we have is
that for a lot of these folks, our social tradition is news to them. I
have kids going through Catholic schools and they have learned
a lot about Black history. That is a good thing because it
prepares one to live in our society. But they know almost noth-
ing about their social heritage as Catholics. One of the interest-
ing discoveries of the last year is that “subsidiarity,” which we
have talked a lot about, is not part of the spell-check for
WordPerfect. For most people this stuff is new news. And if a
pastor stands up and preaches on this, his parishioners will some-
times ask him why he is getting into politics. It is not politics. It is
who we are and what we believe. So I think we have one major
challenge, and that is to share the message. There is an intellec-
tual, substantive theological dimension to this. This is not just
“being nice to folks,” which is what my kids have been taught in
school. There is a lot more to it than that. Our children can not
define what human dignity is. There is a content to this that is
not being shared. At the United States Catholic Conference we are trying to bring people together. The education committee and our committee, and Bishop Murphy is part of this, are trying to work with educators from seminaries and universities to grade schools and CCD programs to define the content and to see how it is being shared.

There has been some talk in this meeting about earnest generalizations and their lack of utility. But for a lot of folks a document which states that there are moral dimensions to economic life is a useful thing because that never really had occurred to them before. My brother called last night. He is stuck in the middle of a corporate structure where to act on our values is counter-cultural. It is not just abortion that is counter-cultural. It can be an economic, corporate and political life as well. Senator Moynihan is doing the work. [Senator] Dan Coats, although not a Catholic, is doing the work. Even though I obviously have a bias on this, I think the work of the Conference is important, as is the work of the state conferences and of Catholic Charities. But it is not the most important work. Thus, we direct most of our resources not at the Congress, but at the communities. Scripture says that without a vision the people perish. But without a people the vision is invisible. I think we have a great vision. Not only is CHD the best-kept secret, but the tradition that has brought us together here in the past three days is entirely too much a secret in our own community.

**David Schindler**: I would like to address a question of principle which really goes back to some of Bryan Hehir’s comments, and then hopefully incorporate some of the fine comments that have been made along the way. Regarding presuppositions, it seems to me crucial to see that the theological context for social teaching is the full panoply of Christology, ecclesiology and soteriology. It is crucial to realize that this functions in an intrinsic way in our conception of social teaching. It affects in significant ways from the beginning what we mean by dignity, and what the foundation and first meaning of dignity is. I think it is found in the *imago Dei*. The thesis that I would like to propose—it is an argument to be made obviously, but it seems to me an implication of the ecclesiology adopted at the Second Vatican Council—is that evangelization must be the context of social teaching. The term evangelization in our culture evokes all sorts of negative things like coercion and instrumentalism, and so on. But the

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crux of the matter is understanding what the end of evangelization is. It is Church. What is Church? It seems to me that as Christians, as Catholics, our purpose in the world is to be Church. It is \textit{not} to be Church \textit{in order to be something else} in the world. It is \textit{to be Church} in the world. So the key is, what is the Church? It is a \textit{communio personarum}. It is a communion of persons, not in a vague sense, but in the Divine Trinitarian sense whose icon is the Church. It is the communion of God revealed in Jesus Christ and present sacramentally in the Church—it takes a sacramental form. It seems to me that our thrust in the world must be ordered from and towards that, and intrinsically affected by that. So, concretely it seems to me, it means that the Eucharist, for example, must be the inner dynamic and form of what we propose. Even things like confession. We need to see that this is not just a private reality. It is really a concrete universal, if I may use the words of Hans Urs von Balthasar. It is a sacrament that has “worldly” implications. It is a confession of sin that requires conversion and forgiveness by God which is the condition of transparency which in turn makes possible communion. Communion is not vague. Communion is Eucharistic sacrifice. It is gift of self. It involves death of “self” and total gift of self for the other. This radical notion, with its inner ordination to the sacramental Church, is indispensable. Only then can we go back to Lou Nanni’s concern and see from the beginning that we are not talking about liberal community. It is something much more radical. It entails an investment of our whole being. Then there are a whole range of things that become different.

I would end with a question. I am arguing that there is one end to the human being—one ultimate end. It seems to me that whatever else the Second Vatican Council said, it said that. \textit{Gaudium et Spes}, n. 22: It is in the light of the mystery of Jesus Christ that the mystery of the human being becomes clear. If there is one end for all human beings, then that also seems to include, for example, Americans. That is, it is something that holds \textit{even} in America. So if this end works from within, our social engagement has an intrinsically Christological form and dynamic. Thus, there is a specifically Christian social ethic. Now, that flies in the face of a lot. For example, I think the position of John Courtney Murray on this is inadequate, despite his great achievements. The Council endorsed his notion of religious freedom in which he played a great role. It did not, however, endorse the theology in terms of which he mediated that achievement. How does it change what we mean by human dignity, solidarity, socialization, and subsidiarity if from the beginning we
think there is a specifically Christian social ethic to which we are committed as Christians?

*Bishop Murphy:* I think that is a very important issue, and I would like to take a minute to get any specific reactions to this.

*John Roos*: Lou [Nanni] was really correct. I am going to use some “old-time” terminology. The specifically Christian ethic would seem to have to depend on what we used to call the infused virtues. What Lou is practicing is charity; in the deepest sense it is the habit of charity. As Americans we cannot use charity as the basis of the coalition for justice, at least at this time. As Christians we have to find ways in which we can also bring our specific acquired virtue of charity to the table, because they are not going to get it anywhere else. Lou was absolutely right: if you go to the Welfare Department and expect charity, it makes no sense. The Catholic ethic is a species within a genus. That is, Catholic ethics, or Christian ethics, is also *human* ethics. We are all temples of the Holy Spirit. That means two things, according to Thomas Aquinas: it means the natural light of intelligible reality, but also the acquired virtue. So for example, subsidiarity and solidarity. The question is: how do we find a way to say “both/and”? That is a coalition. I think the most key question asks what is the coalition’s basis as human beings, as Americans, for somebody standing and delivering if this thing does not work out? That is one question that we must ask. In talking about it, it seems to me, if you are going to use the state, you must have an answer that says we as human beings and Americans—regardless of Christian, Jew, Muslim, and so forth—must find a way to have a safety net that does not interfere with all the positive developmental changes. Then, over and above that, Catholic Christians have an obligation that is wider than simply that of justice. That seems to be charity, in John [Carr]’s language of “both/and”. I am a political scientist. One half of me as a political scientist says “let’s cut to the chase... we have to put together a power coalition which acknowledges a natural, basic human obligation to the meanest of them if this thing fails. And we must have the votes to get the material resources.” But how do we do that without interfering with or distorting the positive ends of reforms?

*Rev. Bryan Hehir:* In answer to David Schindler’s question, I think that there is an intrinsic Christian ethic. Secondly, I think that there are premises which lead to it. My own view is that if you read John Paul II, you move from anthropology to Christology to ecclesiology to ethics. So, I agree with that. Having

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14. *Professor of Government, University of Notre Dame*
agreed with that, I then probably disagree with you. It allows me to make one point that I wanted to make and that is: do not forsake the secular. I would say that in response to the very profound comments of Mr. Nanni. I would say that in a different way to the same kind of comments that Mr. Fagan made. That is to say, I think there is no Catholic witness without Dorothy Day and Mother Teresa. I do not think, however, that you can run all of Catholic witness through Dorothy Day and Mother Teresa. So, in a sense, I rise to [John Courtney] Murray’s defense. Essentially what I would argue is this: do not forsake the secular. I do not think you can build a secular civil society of saints. Therefore, I do not think you can handle the caseload only in terms of the kind of the quality witness to which you testify. Secondly, when one speaks of the “alienated political process” as Mr. Fagan does, I think it is part of the Catholic task to un-alienate the political process, not to forsake it. I think that is to what Murray was trying to call us. I think it is still part of the Catholic witness to do that.

Brian Benestad: I have a brief comment on Fr. Hehir’s defense of John Courtney Murray. Murray’s political thought is inadequate to the tasks at hand. He didn’t see the problem posed by historicism, understand the limits of rights-based liberalism, or appreciate all the ways law could still promote the bona animi even in a liberal society.

Rev. Michael Baxter, C.S.C. 15: First, I want to say that I am all for political power—I just would redefine Cathy Kaveny’s definition of both “power” and “political”. (laughter)

I wish to pick up on this animated and somewhat classic clash that has developed this morning. I would like to put it in historical context and explain another way to look at it. I feel very excited about the theoretical issues involved, but very attentive as well to the things “on the ground”, as they say, such as the people who are in the shelters right now as we talk. Maybe one way to begin to understand some of the differences that have emerged in our conversation is to go back historically and identify a point where, as I see it, Catholic social teaching—Catholic social theory and practice—underwent a split. I think it happened at the time of World War I. A sort of a division of labor developed. One form of labor that was put forth was done at the policy level, initially by the National Catholic War Council which then became the National Catholic Welfare Conference. It was headed up by John A. Ryan who very effectively put forth a set of

15. Visiting Assistant Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame
principles derived from *Rerum Novarum* before the nation, at first in the Bishops’ program of 1919, and then again in the 1930’s by extracting principles from *Quadragesimo Anno*. He put these forth as a challenge to the nation. I think that was a very exciting time for Catholics who were involved in that. I think it is a paradigm. That particular labor—formulating public policy—has become something in which Catholics have taken pride. I think it crystallized during the middle of the century in the work of John Courtney Murray. The way I see it, many of us here at the United States Catholic Conference—which is the progeny of the War Council and then the Welfare Conference—have continued to work out of this policy approach, an approach that I see embodied very clearly in the work of Bryan Hehir and somewhat in Bill’s [Rev. William O’Neill] talk yesterday—to put forth before the nation policy principles that should be embodied legislatively.

But there was another form of labor that split off from this one at the time of World War I. That was the labor of social work. Interestingly, that was regarded mainly as women’s work. What we have here, I think, in many ways is a type of Catholic version of the public/private split where the public work was mainly of men who were before the Congress and before the nation. Women went to work in the trenches doing social work, and having been trained at the National Catholic Service school at “Clifton.” This school was formed in 1919 and it institutionalized a long tradition of direct work with the poor and with those who were in need.

I myself come from that second division of labor: direct social service. That is the perspective that has commanded my interest, my devotion, and parts of my life. Having worked closely with the poor in this direct service approach, I feel it is very important to be personalist. What I have learned working with the poor is that every story is different. So when we talk in terms of policy, I think it is very important for us to be very realistic. Yesterday, my experience in listening to Larry Mead’s talk was jarring because it was very compelling. I was stuck because he said that we have to put welfare people to work. He had great command of statistics and was a very compelling speaker. But I went home last night and really had to think back to my work at Andre House in Phoenix, Arizona. I started to think of what all that means. When people do not have work, it is hard to get work. You need to have an address; you need to have a phone number. If you are going to work construction, for instance, you need to buy boots that have steel tips. You need to have a place to shower. You need to know how to handle yourself in an inter-
view, and then you need to know how to handle yourself on the job. You have to be able to keep a job. Those jobs are not stable jobs. If you are working at a minimum wage job and you break your leg, you lose that job because people are not going to wait for you to recover; they are going to hire someone else. It is very difficult. In the real, concrete circumstances this is a lot of hard work. I think that we need to be very attentive to the practical aspects of this work. There is a story about when Sargent Shriver went to visit the Catholic Worker House in Davenport, Iowa. He asked one of the homeless persons staying at the house "what do the poor need most?" The man looked at Shriver and answered, "teeth" because he did not have any teeth. (laughter) Shriver was probably looking for some principle like "justice." People want real things that they can use. I think we tend to underestimate the importance of this direct service. Art McGovern was asking before "what is the one thing we hold in common in this diverse group?" One thing is that we are all ready to look with pride upon the fact that the Catholic Church is doing more direct service than perhaps any other institution in this country. I think that we should be proud of that. What I also want, in the theoretical realm, is for us to be much more adept at giving a theological understanding of that. Instead of formulating it simply as a form of charity as opposed to the policy work of justice, I think that they are much more enmeshed. When you are in there trying to get people shoes, that is a matter of justice as well. It is distributive justice to go and get furniture from one side of town to bring it to a family on the other side of town which does not have any. That is happening a lot, and I think we need to take some encouragement from that.

In terms of how we negotiate with the public sphere, I think that it is going to vary. One decade we are going to use one principle, another decade we will use another principle. In one decade it will be "work." In the last decade it might have been "helping the homeless." In the next decade I do not know what it is going to be. But I do not think there is a principle that transcends different situations. We need to be much more ad hoc about how we want to put principles before the public. It is going to vary. It is not clear to me that an appeal to "human nature" is going to be more powerful to the American public than an appeal to the Beatitudes. I think the Beatitudes have a lot of appeal, even to people who are not Christian. I think this is a lot more variable in that sense. I would favor us being more adept at theologizing what we all agree we do best, and that is direct service to the poor.
Janice Pilarski: There is need for the Catholic community to be engaged directly in serving the poor and in asking questions about why people are poor. Raising concerns about justice is a vital contribution we Catholics can make. Recently, one of my students was responding to a reflection in which I asked them to examine the relationship between faith and politics. They were reading an article about two women who were lobbyists: one was a Catholic Charities lobbyist and the other was looking at welfare from a Fundamentalist perspective. What this student asked was how a certain senator, who spends a lot of time with big business and does not have close contacts to the poor, can properly represent their interests. As a Catholic and someone concerned deeply about the poor, I question how can we make policy of such magnitude without including the poor at the table? Why are they not brought to the table so that we may learn their needs in order to better fashion some plan that will work for our country? It is that voice that I do not see. So if we are looking at policy we must ask how we can do this together so that it is not “us” and “them”, but we who accomplish this.

I think in terms of the Catholic tradition that asks whether we begin from action or whether we begin from justice, in a sense that may not be an accurate division. I do not know if we can agree on which principles we collectively must seize. But I think the one we can look at is dignity. Where is the dignity of the people whom we are serving? There are lessons involved in some movements like Catholic Worker or in something like the Campaign for Human Development: the whole manner in which people are engaged in deciding their own futures. One thing that caught my attention the other night was when Cheryl Sullivan discussed the numbers, the sheer numbers of people that we “move” off of welfare. What is really going on there? Where is the self-sufficiency? Are people getting the proper training that they need in order to succeed? What I got was a collection of anecdotes and no “hard” statistics. The state of Indiana has been moving people off welfare for a number of years now, yet there is no evidence of success beyond the numbers.

The other principle to bring in is the job situation and what is needed to prepare people for jobs. This is one place where Campaign for Human Development offers a different way of doing things. In its projects that involve economic development and job creation, there is much more of a systematic approach. There is one program in particular called Project Quest in Texas. This project brings together employers and it brings together people who need jobs. The training is designed so that the
employers are asked "what are your long-term needs?" The people who are being trained give shape to the program by saying "this is what I need." Dignity is respected in a process such as that.

Nancy Wisdo\textsuperscript{16}: I would like to make a plea for spending some time figuring out how we move together as a Catholic community. When I have been part of discussions like this, including this one, it sounds as though on the surface we all say we are in this together and we all have common principles and maybe even "values" (in all deference to Professor Benestad). Then the discussion moves into "but this is more important than that," or "we are not talking about family" or "we are not talking enough about education." That disturbs me because the uniqueness about this is not our principles in any one area, or our social teaching particularly, or our moral teaching. The uniqueness of the Catholic community is that it is all of that. When I think about the potential, I am very concerned that we are all going to leave here and go back to our own little boxes. The connectedness that we ought to make is as Catholics. I am glad that Pat Fagan is at the Heritage Foundation, not because he is a conservative, but because he is a Catholic. And I have faith that the fact that he is a Catholic is more important to him than the fact that he is a conservative. That is what we have to bring together. That is what we have to figure out in terms of moving on together. In our daily lives some of us are doing public policy and some of us are doing direct service. For some the marriage and family questions are most important, and for others the education questions are paramount. We as a Catholic community must figure out how to bring this together. I will give you an example from a diocesan perspective that relates to some of you, but not all. When we are working on public policy at the diocesan level we must figure out a way to bring together the education people, the marriage and family people, and the social justice people. Right now we are split in different directions. We do get caught up so much in the individual agendas or in what we think is more important about the teaching that we let it divide us. This does not include what also divides us in terms of partisan politics and what pulls us in those different directions.

John Langan\textsuperscript{17}: I am surprised at how irenic this conference has been because I thought of how acerbic the welfare debate as

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\textsuperscript{17} Loyola University, Chicago
such was. There are just two features of that broader debate that I would like to underline, and in a way I regret that we never focused on them. The transformation of welfare policy was carried out at a time of prolonged economic expansion. I think that accounts for some of the optimism that the reformers have, and maybe for some of the caution and uncertainty that the rest of us have. It is also a subject, I think, in which regional variations are very important. I was struck by a statistic in one of Larry Mead's charts about forty percent of the poor being in the South. I sense that the moral impulses to reform have been the strongest in this region of the country, in the Great Lake States, and in a way there is a bit more acceptance of the likely continuity of the welfare culture on the two coasts. I think that points to very interesting moral and political differences on which we ought to reflect more at some future time. This conference, in contrast to the broader debate, is an irenic and special moment. It is as though we have been able to go up on a mountain together. All things are possible at Notre Dame—we can even imagine mountains here. (laughter) We underline the importance of service, and as Fr. Bill O’Neill yesterday spoke so poignantly about, the voice of the poor. These are very much unifying themes. We recognize in this an expression of our character as Church, and of the virtue of charity. We can also, if we look at ourselves for a brief moment, think about this as a convergence of people involved with the poor immediately, and people who function or are members of elites—educational or policy-making elites. The very important part of the communications task means reaching the broad range of ordinary Americans with some of our shared understanding. There is a way in which welfare has become a polarizing issue and an issue onto which people read their own definition of the poor, and their understanding of what social and economic failure is in our society. It is very important that we not simply consign the people whose voices have not been powerful here to the outer darkness. In some cases in reaction to remarks about the heroism of a welfare mother, many would say “that is what I have to do every day and I do not get the benefits.” There is a fair amount of resentment in the culture which we as Church must understand and take seriously, and to which we must minister.

The last thing I will mention is two suggestions about shaping the future of discussion in this area. There was very little head-on confrontation in this conference. We came close in the extreme contrast between Bill O’Neill’s talk and Larry Mead’s talk. I think that is worth probing because it challenges us to think further about what it means to say that people have eco-
nomic rights, and in particular about who has the corresponding duties, and how we structure society without saying that this is a realm simply for government activity as the guarantor of rights. It seems to me that this approach has come up a "dry well" in this particular challenge. The other is the whole language used for talking about "the poor." This in some respects is a "remainder" category in terms of an economic benchmark, but it also covers a multitude of disparate problems of people who are very culturally alienated, psychologically fractured, physically handicapped, and so on. For many practical purposes you must disaggregate the category. It is useful to have a broad category in terms of ministry and service on the one hand. But, in terms of more refined moral understanding of the demands of a certain situation, the category really must be disaggregated.

Patrick Fagan: For years when I switched out of psychotherapy into public policy, I resisted the label of "conservative." I was at the Free Congress Foundation—one of those "far right" think tanks—and there were some policies there with which I disagreed. I do not mind saying at the Heritage Foundation quite openly, and they know it, that what I am doing there is Catholic, and very defensible. I really do think that the labels of conservative and liberal are bringing division into the House of our Lord that have absolutely no place there. We assume goodwill and that what we are trying to do is constantly repair the imperfections of the human condition, particularly in our work, in the legal and political situation. Through history how many politicians make it to sainthood or even have a chance of getting there? We are dealing in a very messy area.

We can learn a good lesson from our fellow American Jews. For instance, among Jews—loyal Jews—who are proud that their people are in so many different situations influencing and protecting that which their faith most treasures. I do think that as Catholics we ought to overcome our feelings of second-status citizenship and our tendency to put our Catholicism and Christ—and our ultimate dedication to Him—in the background. That weakens our eventual Christianization of our very secular culture, not in the good sense that Father Hehir means, but a very agnostic or atheistic culture. I have no idea what the Christian society of the year 2500 will look like, but it will be very different from Ireland in the seventh century. We have to return to a Christ-centered society—not to the Middle Ages, though there will be similarities.

Louis Nanni: I wanted to share something that I hate about justice. My understanding of justice in the Biblical sense, or
sedek, means fulfilling the demands of a relationship. What I hate about this is that I am not in control and that there is no definitive ending to when the needs of that relationship will be fulfilled. In working with people in need, I quite frankly find it terrifying that I cannot control or dictate how much I must give, or for how long I must give. The second question with regards to fulfilling a relationship is “how do we live that out?” At the Center for the Homeless we are always torn between the decisions of not shielding people from the consequences of their actions. Number one, if you make a bad decision we do not want to soften your fall because that is not good parenting; nor is it good discipleship either. At the same time, how can we let somebody fall flat on their face and still remain a compassionate participant in that action? That is why we talk about being both firm and compassionate. That is why we talk about tough love, and that is why we talk about “help and hassle”—or whatever term you want to give it. This is a very, very difficult tension. For example, at times we have to ask a person to leave the Center for the Homeless, and this is especially difficult when innocent children are involved.

I would like to share one story that illustrates this dichotomy. Every Monday night I meet with about one hundred adult homeless persons who are guests at the Center. One day we had an open discussion about welfare reform and the very strict rules at the Center for the Homeless. One man in the back, a tall heavy-set man, raised his hand to speak. He had lived for three years on Los Angeles’ “skid row” and had been in and out of dozens of homeless shelters during the past decade. He said “you can come up with whatever rules you want, but I am going to slip and slither around and through them, because that is what I am good at. The only way I am going to change is for you to help me believe that change is possible and to help me want to make that change in my life.” We cannot legislate self-sufficiency. The rules and the laws are important; they are critical. But they are always going to be peripheral to what is core, and that which is core will always be the type of community that we build. Fulfilling the demands of a relationship must speak very powerfully to each of us at whatever level, whether it is political, as Christians, or just as basic citizens. That is our harrowing challenge.

Robert Barger: Speakers throughout this discussion seem to be suggesting one of two approaches to social concern: either

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18. Professor Emeritus, Eastern Illinois University, and Adjunct Professor, Computer Applications Program, University of Notre Dame
that correct theological social doctrine leads one to the practice of charity or, on the contrary, that the practice of charity leads one to correct theological social doctrine. This seems to me to be reminiscent of the chicken and the egg controversy. Which came first, the chicken or the egg? So in our present discussion the question seems to be: which comes first, theological doctrine or the practice of charity. I would like to suggest that, while charity is indisputably the more important of the two, theology must come first. Theology is to the chicken what charity is to the egg. I admit that the debate concerning this priority has gone on for some time. In the Middle Ages the Dominicans stressed the primacy of the intellect and the Franciscans stressed the primacy of the will. I favor the priority of theology because theory leads to practice. In support of this view, I point to a couple of examples: Lou Nanni, famous for his work with the homeless, received his formation at the University of Notre Dame, not on a non-Catholic campus; likewise Dorothy Day came out of a solid Catholic tradition, not a secular one. I don’t wish to slight Protestant social doctrine. For example, the Protestant “Social Gospel” movement was responsible for much good in the last century. But I am thinking primarily of Catholic social doctrine and the fact that it is fundamental to social concern.

Stanley Carlson-Thies\textsuperscript{19}: I am a Presbyterian. I am looking at this from the outside, and I hear a lot of agreement indeed about the important role that a charitable organization can play. On the other side, that must be back-stopped by the appropriate kind of public policy. I do not think that has been thought through sufficiently. It is really critical in the public policy debate to lead with a statement that lets people know that “I think the things that need to be accented are the things like family, the correlation of duties along with rights, and subsidiarity and partnership.” In the American public debate, if you start by saying that you are for human rights or for the dignity of the poor, then everyone reads that in a way that is divorced from all the things that you hold to be quite valuable. So I would suggest that a very creative contribution could be made by emphasizing those things that go against the American grain such as combining public and private, having rules and compassion, and the importance of family as well as individual liberty.

The other thing I wanted to add is that although the other Christian traditions, certainly at least the Protestant one, do not have the depth of thinking like Catholic social teaching, a lot of

\textsuperscript{19.} Senior Fellow, Center for Public Justice, Washington, D.C.
us have the same intimations that must be held together. So when you think about the public, do not just read public sentiment or the nature of American society by the very secular elite discourse. A lot of people have Christian commitments, even though our public talk is very secularized. But I think we all ought to be free—certainly Catholics ought to be as well as Protestants also—to bring into the public those things that matter most to us. We should not pretend that this is somehow illegitimate.

Bishop Murphy: I would like to go to the panelists in reverse order for each of their closing thoughts on the conference.

John Carr: I think at the real level, maybe not at the theoretical level, the debate between service and justice is over. In the Catholic community probably two decades ago we had big petty arguments about which was more important and about which made you a better person, about who was in touch and about who was more effective. It is settled. The Scriptures require both service to those in need and pursuit of justice. The Church must do both. They enrich each other. Thankfully, people listen to us because of what we do, not just because of our highfalutin principles. It ought to be our principles that dictate what we do. Maybe others deeper than me can figure out a fight in this, but for the Church I do not think it is a problem.

We talk a lot about principles, and the core principle of John Paul II’s leadership has been solidarity. I talked about how my kids do not know this tradition. The only way that I know of to explain solidarity to a fourteen year old boy is to tell him that it requires treating other people as if they are members of our family. The reason I bring that up is because I was once on a panel where somebody disagreed sharply with the Bishops’ policies on welfare. The person said that our problem is that we do not hold people accountable. I do not think he had read our positions, and I think that there are some people who still do not know what our positions are. He said, “You do not treat them like you would treat your sister. You would tell your sister not to have children until she was married. You would tell her to go to school, to get a job. You would tell your brother to get off drugs. You would push them and push them.”

I thought about that a lot when I went home because I really did not have a good answer for him at the conference. If we believe in solidarity, and if we are to really treat other people as though they are members of our own families, then you do demand accountability from your brother and sister. You do tell them to get a job. But when they lose their job, you do not throw
them out of your house. You see what it will require to get him another job, and you try to meet the challenge together. That is the problem. We have one crowd that says, "we are going to push you and we are going to hold you accountable." We have another crowd that says, "we are going to help you." The reason why we all have been able to talk together is because we believe in both. The current debate does not reflect that. So somehow we must bring this all together. This requires getting over the false choices. We need a national safety net. We also need much more flexible, creative community-oriented approaches. If you put those together it says we are not going to let kids fall through the cracks, but we also are going to deliver these services in a way which challenges people, holds them accountable, and helps them when they stumble. That might be the essence of the Catholic approach, but it is not reflected at all in the current public debate.

Brian Benestad: One of the things that has split Catholics in their pursuit of justice is division over the role of the government and the operation of the market. Important matters are left out when people simply argue that justice should be promoted by relying on public policy and/or the market.

We must integrate the teaching of the entire Catholic faith into the pursuit of justice. Failing to do this, we will not effectively promote the common good. There is a twofold obstacle to this work of integration. Some don't understand the connections between an understanding of the faith, the practice of virtue and the realization of the common good. Others, such as specialists in religious education, object to focusing on instruction in the content of the faith. Instead, they want to rely on "experience." In my mind, focusing on content in the proper manner appeals not only to the mind, but also to the heart and to the whole person. Pope John Paul II is very persuasive in arguing that we reach the heart through the mind and reach justice through evangelization.

Permit me to return to the subject of rights one more time. I often ask my students why they respect rights. They usually give a utilitarian answer, asserting that they respect rights so that other people will respect theirs. This approach will not stand up when push comes to shove. Rights are only secure when people respect them because it is the right thing to do. If this is true, then virtue is more fundamental than rights. This needs to be explained in courses on Catholic social thought.

The communio personarum depends on the order in a person's soul, which is achieved by the practice of virtue, prayer, the
reception of the sacraments, etc. There will be no community where people's souls are disordered.

A final comment on the relation of law to the common good. Both Leo XIII and John XXIII said that the law has a role in promoting the *bona animi*. A little while ago we talked about the story the law tells about marriage. If the law promotes fidelity in marriage, then it is promoting the *bona animi* or the goods of the soul. What can be done by law to promote the *bona animi* will vary from age to age, but should never be neglected in the discipline of Catholic social thought.

*Rev. Bryan Hehir:* Two points. One is what I will call the irreducible witness of the Church, and the second I will call the wider workings of the Church.

I think this meeting is testimony to the irreducible witness of the Church. That is to say, it takes an ongoing community that does something every day, like the Eucharist, to produce people like those who work or volunteer at the Catholic Worker House or at the Center for the Homeless. You do not produce those people out of nowhere. So I think there is an irreducible witness to do that. Mike Baxter is correct to say that we ought to be able to explain that theologically. The irreducible witness also produces the Campaign for Human Development. What is interesting about CHD is not only what it does in the field, but the fact that a community of Catholics who are divided politically and who remain divided over what to do about welfare reform have supported that program over twenty-five years. They pay for that program in spite of their divisions. That is irreducible witness. It is specifically Christian Catholic.

There is also the wider witness of the Church. It is not only the specifically Christian and Catholic about which we must worry. I talked about the secular and I will now close with how difficult it is to care for the secular. First of all, it is difficult because there are people in the secular who do not think that our witness is all that helpful. They do not think it is all that helpful on pro-life issues, and they do not think that it is helpful on social services. So the secular is not intrinsically friendly to us today. But we still must love what is not intrinsically friendly to us. It is like loving your enemies. But we need to do it. We ought not let go of that.

Finally, the question of the laity. I feel a little like George Will on Sunday morning's *This Week With David Brinkley* where everyone else wants to close with harmony and he tries to put a little solvent into the mix. (*laughter*) I think about the question of teaching the laity and of teaching the clergy. By the way, I think
there is a better chance that a politician will have his soul saved than will a theologian. I think of names. I think of Justice Scalia and Senator Moynihan. I think of James Q. Wilson and Joe Califano, of Henry Hyde and Pat Leahy. I would hate to be the one asked to tell them that they do not know what they are talking about. I would hate to be the guy to tell them they do not know Catholic teaching. The fact of the matter is that they represent the irreducible complexity of our community that witnesses for us. I think that wider witness in the secular is necessary. It is not going to be easy, but it needs to be carried on along with the specifically irreducibly Christian witness.

Bishop Murphy: Thank you all. I think that we have had a very good discussion. It is clear to me that, as Pope Paul VI said in *Evangelii nuntiandi*, we give witness by the way we live. That is something that we have all agreed to here. We all see that the way we live and the Church’s commitment to hands-on care for people is something for which we have every right to be quite proud and thankful to God. It is something to which we must recommit ourselves day by day. The other issues that came up, particularly how we theologize about our presence and our activity and how we make that presence felt, is part of the ongoing debate. I remember when John Paul II first went to the United Nations he said that he was speaking to them out of his “Faith vision” as it is informed by our whole theological tradition. He asserted his belief, however, that the arguments he made were intelligible to every man and woman of goodwill. I think there is a reality to which he points us. That is, we must continue our theology, but we must do so in such a way that enables us to speak to the secular world even as we nourish our own folk. That brings me to my third point. We must continue our discussion about which priorities we as a Catholic community want to keep before us. Those priorities, it seems to me, are built upon two realities: first, the ongoing commitment that we have to evangelization. That means that we need to have the content of our faith constantly and consistently presented in all of its fullness, not partially, but in all of its fullness. The second reality upon which those priorities are built is a need that is dictated by the particular circumstances of our society. That is, we must see to it that we become the witnesses to those values of which society is most in need.

Msgr. William Fay: I coordinate the public policy of the conference. I want to make two points. Bryan Hehir raised the need
that we must have for some transverse conversations, that is, conversations across many levels. I am a firm believer in that. I think as Nancy Wisdo, John Carr and Patricia King will tell you, we have been doing that kind of thing at the United States Catholic Conference in some very significant ways. We will continue to do that. It is a very important thing. We hope that what we are doing there is something that will be known and seen so that it ultimately may become a model for other kinds of conversations.

Secondly, I picked up a sense that we need to do more of the kind of thing that we did here today. In that regard, I want to thank John Robinson for the gracious manner in which he facilitated things here at the White Center. I would like to thank the White Center and the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts for bringing us to Notre Dame so that we could talk on this level. The fact that we came here together and entered into this conversation with the kind of goodwill that we did illustrates something to which Pat Fagan alluded: that we came to this table to talk as Catholics about an issue, and not as partisans. That is something very substantial. We have not always done that as Catholics, and we should applaud the fact that we were able to do it today. My own vision is that, as Pat Fagan alluded to in his comments, we are one household. It can become very easy for us to run into our own room and slam the doors, and cook up a scheme within our own environments. In reality, there are a lot of common spaces in the household. The time was long overdue for us to come to this place to sit and talk. It is my hope that what we began today will happen again. To the extent that I am able in my role at the Conference to facilitate such a thing, you can rely on the fact that it is a significant interest of mine to do so. I know that it is a very significant interest of Bishop Pilla who is the president of our Conference, and of the bishops who work so closely with him. Thanks to all who were very much involved in making these few days what they have been. I was much surprised by what I learned, what I heard, and by the kinds of the relationships that started to form during this common gathering. I think we have much for which we should be grateful to God. Thank you very much.