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**NEWSLETTER OF THE JUSTICE, PEACE AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION OFFICE
1112 26TH STREET, SACRAMENTO, CA 95816
JPICSACRAMENTO@YAHOO.COM**

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CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS: A CALL to PROMOTE A CULTURE OF PEACE

VATICAN CITY, SEP 28, 2007 (VIS) –

Made public today was the annual Message to Muslims for the end of the month of Ramadan from the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue. It bears the signatures of Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran and Archbishop Pier Luigi Celata, respectively president and secretary of the council. The theme of the Message this year (1428 AH / 2006 AD) is, "Christians and Muslims: called to promote a culture of peace."

"In the troubled times we are passing through, religious believers have, as servants of the Almighty, a duty above all to work in favor of peace, by showing respect for the convictions of individuals and communities everywhere through freedom of religious practice. Religious freedom, which must not be reduced to mere freedom of worship,

is one of the essential aspects of freedom of conscience, which is the right of every individual and a cornerstone of human rights. It takes into account the requirement that a culture of peace and solidarity between men can be built in which everybody can be firmly engaged in the construction of an increasingly fraternal society, doing everything one can to reject, denounce and refuse every recourse to violence which can never be motivated by religion, since it wounds the very image of God in man." "We know that violence, especially terrorism which strikes blindly and claims countless innocent victims, is incapable of resolving conflicts and leads only to a deadly chain of destructive hatred, to the detriment of mankind and of societies.

"As religious believers, it is up to us all to be educators of peace, of

human rights, of a freedom which respects each person. ... No individual in the national community should be excluded on the grounds of his or her race, religion, or any other personal characteristic. ... We are particularly responsible for ensuring that our young people, who will be in charge of tomorrow's world, are formed in this spirit" providing "everyone an education appropriate to his or her particular circumstances, especially a civic education which invites each young person to respect those around him or her, and to consider them as brothers and sisters with whom he or she is daily called to live, not in indifference, but in fraternal care."

"In this spirit, the pursuit and intensification of dialogue between Christians and Muslims must be

considered important, in both educational and cultural dimensions.

Thus all forces can be mobilized in the service of mankind and humanity so that the younger generations do not become cultural or religious blocs opposed to one another, but genuine brothers and sisters in humanity. Dialogue is the tool which can help us to escape from the endless spiral of conflict and multiple tensions which mark our societies, so that all peoples can live in serenity and peace and with mutual respect and harmony among their component groups. ... This is the ardent hope I share with you: that Christians and Muslims continue to develop increasingly friendly and constructive relationships in order to share their specific riches, and that they will pay particular attention to the quality of the witness of their believers.

Pope Benedict Calls For Cooperation to Reduce Ozone Depletion

By Catholic News Service

CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy (CNS) -- Pope Benedict XVI called for more intensive cooperation to reduce ozone depletion, saying it was an important element in protecting the gifts of creation.

The comments Sept. 16 were the latest in a series of ecological statements by the pope, who has focused lately on the Christian responsibility of safeguarding the environment.

The pope noted that Sept. 16 marked the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Montreal Protocol, an agreement that curbed emissions of chemicals which reduce the earth's protective ozone layer in the stratosphere.

He said ozone depletion has caused "serious damage to the human being and the ecosystem." Experts have linked ozone depletion to an increase in ultraviolet radiation that causes skin cancer.

The pope said the landmark Montreal Protocol was an important step forward in dealing with the problem.

"In the last 20 years, thanks to an exemplary international cooperation involving politics, science and economics, important results have been obtained with positive consequences for present and future generations," he said.

"I hope that this cooperation will be intensified by all parties, with the aim of promoting the common good, development and the safeguarding of creation, and strengthening the alliance between man and the environment," he said.

He said the relationship between humans and the environment should

"mirror the creative love of God, from whom we originated and toward whom we are progressing."

The Montreal Protocol, which has been signed by 191 countries, is widely considered the most successful international agreement on environmental issues.
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Bishop Gerald Barnes: Immigration Reform Debate Is Inflammatory

WASHINGTON (CNS) -

The current tone in the immigration reform debate has "inflamed fears and misunderstanding among some portions of the American public, leading to a polarized and vitriolic atmosphere," said a U.S. church official. **Bishop Gerald R. Barnes of San Bernardino, Calif.**, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Migration, noted that while "voices of division and fear are loud" the "truth about immigration and migrants in this country ultimately will prevail." The bishop, in a Sept. 27 statement issued in Washington, said migrant workers,

including the undocumented, make important contributions to the nation's economy through their work in agriculture, construction and service industries. He faulted the United States for refusing "to acknowledge these contributions" and relegating migrants to "a permanent underclass of workers, without full rights."

The failure of the U.S. Senate to pass comprehensive immigration reform legislation this summer has set back, but not ended, attempts to repair the immigration system, according to the bishop.

Supreme Court to Consider Constitutionality of Lethal Injection

September 26, 2007

WASHINGTON (CNS) -

The U.S. Supreme Court agreed Sept. 25 to hear oral arguments on whether lethal injection violates the constitutional ban on cruel and unusual punishment. The case before the court directly involves only Kentucky death-row inmates Ralph Baze and Thomas Clyde Bowling Jr., but it could have far-reaching

implications throughout the United States.

According to the Death Penalty Information Center, 928 of the nearly 1,100 U.S. executions since 1976 have been by lethal injection. Father Pat Delahanty, a priest of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Ky., who chairs the Kentucky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, applauded the high court's decision in a statement and said it was ironic that

the announcement was made on the same day that Baze was to have been executed. The Kentucky Supreme Court had stayed the execution Sept. 12.

At issue is whether the three-drug cocktail used for lethal injections in Kentucky and other states violates the

Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment. Opponents of the method say the combination of an anesthetic, a muscle paralyzer and a drug to stop the heart can cause unbearable pain that the inmates are not able to signal because of their paralysis.

New Director of USCCB Domestic Social Policy - From FRC

Lutheran Services staffer named USCCB domestic social policy director

September 19, 2007

WASHINGTON (CNS) —

Kathy Saile, who begins work in mid-October as director of domestic policy for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the thing that "sold me on the position" was the USCCB's commitment to integrate more closely the work of the pro-life, social policy and Catholic Campaign for Human Development offices. Catholic social ministry "is not piecemeal work," said Saile, who has been associate director of public policy for Lutheran Services in America in Washington since August 2004.

She previously worked as director of the Office of Peace and Justice for Catholic Social Service of Central and Northern Arizona and CCHD director for the Phoenix Diocese, 2001-2004; coordinator of social justice and outreach ministries at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Ariz., 1997-2001; and as a loaned executive to Catholic Charities USA, May-July 2003. Msgr. David Malloy, USCCB general secretary, announced the appointment Sept. 13.

US Conference of Catholic Bishops News Release
WASHINGTON (September 13, 2007)—

Kathy Saile, a church advocate with a decade of experience in Catholic social ministry and Washington policy work, has been named Director of Domestic Policy for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). She starts her new position in October.

Since August 2004, Saile has been Associate Director of Public Policy for Lutheran Services in America (USA), in Washington. Previous positions include Director of

the Office of Peace and Justice, Catholic Social Service of Central and Northern Arizona and director of the Archdiocese of Phoenix Catholic Campaign for Human Development, 2001-2004; and Coordinator of Social Justice and Outreach Ministries, Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona, 1997-2001. She also served as a Loaned Executive to Catholic Charities USA, May-July 2003.

She holds a master's degree in social work from Arizona State University, and a bachelor of science

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Since August 2004, Saile has been Associate Director of Public Policy for Lutheran Services in America (USA), in Washington. Previous positions include Director of the Office of Peace and Justice, Catholic Social Service of Central and Northern Arizona and director of the Archdiocese of Phoenix Catholic Campaign for Human Development, 2001-2004; and Coordinator of Social Justice and Outreach Ministries, Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona, 1997-2001. She also served as a Loaned Executive to Catholic Charities USA, May-July 2003.

She holds a master's degree in social work from Arizona State University, and a bachelor of science degree in organizational communication from Ohio University.

Msgr. David Malloy, USCCB General Secretary announced the

appointment September 13.

"Kathy Saile brings to this important position strong commitment to the Catholic Church and its social teaching, impressive knowledge of key domestic issues and extensive policy and advocacy experience. Her service in diocesan social ministry and here in the nation's capital will be great assets in helping the bishops articulate and advance the Church's principles and policies seeking economic and social justice in our nation."

Accepting the position, Saile highlighted her desire "to assist the Bishops in carrying out the Gospel mission" and expressed thanks for "this opportunity to integrate my commitment to social justice and my faith in my professional life."

The director of Domestic Social Development is the staff leader of the USCCB's efforts on U.S. poverty, health care, hunger, housing, work, agriculture, the death penalty and other national issues.

Her office is within the new USCCB Department of Justice and Peace and Human Development and will work with the Bishops' new committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

Cardinal Mahoney Speaks Out on Immigration Reform

"...although I am profoundly disappointed with the moral failure on the part of our legislators for not passing comprehensive immigration reform, I, your archbishop, your auxiliary bishops, your priests and our entire Catholic Church are not giving up....Our immigration laws are unjust and immoral. The present system causes much suffering, including

even the death of many immigrants....Yesterday's vote only served to strengthen and renew my personal commitment and the commitment of the Catholic Church to fight even harder to achieve immigration reform...I also want to assure all of you that you are always welcome in our Catholic parishes, our Catholic schools, our Catholic

hospitals and our Catholic social services....this is your house.....We don't have a civil law, but we are following a better law, the law of God...we are following the teaching

and example of Jesus in the Gospel. This law for me is a higher law, and we will keep following it."

Cardinal Roger Mahoney, 6/29/2007

text printed in Summer 2007 issue of Catholic Peace Voice, Pax Christ USA

Public Activism Must Become More Focused On Common Good.

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Catholics involved in the public square must above all follow the principles of the common good, though that's a countercultural approach in both politics and contemporary American life, said the chairman of the department of politics at The Catholic University of America in Washington.

Speaking Oct. 30 to a gathering of the group Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, Stephen Schneck, who also heads the university's Life Cycle Institute, a public policy research program, outlined a five-step agenda for bringing a "common good agenda" to American public policy.

"The foundation for Catholic thinking about politics, governance and policy is the idea of the common good," Schneck said. But that's "a hard notion for contemporary Americans to understand."

And the momentum in American politics "is one accelerating (away) from anything like the common good," he said. "Let's remember that ours is a politics where citizens are encouraged -- after a terrorist attack -- to go shopping. Where even military service is sometimes privatized.

"Ours has become a politics of self-interest, of wedges to divide us, of ever-narrower and ever more antagonistic group interests," Schneck continued. "It's become the pathetically mean-spirited politics of Ann Coulter and Al Franken, a politics of ideology and mere elections ... where important policy making is 'quagmired' in partisan posturing."

To get beyond that atmosphere toward one where seeking the common good is the priority in the public square, Schneck said the first step is to change the language of policy. For instance, he noted that although Catholics, in particular, consider abortion a foremost issue, there has been imperceptible change in policies since the 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling that legalized abortion.

One reason for that, he suggested, has been that discussion about abortion is not phrased in the language of the common good, but in the language of rights.

"We need to stop using and being used by abortion politics that makes 'life' and 'choice' into weapons for partisan gain and get on with feasible policies that do everything possible to reduce the number of abortions in America," Schneck said.

To do that means policies that support mothers and infants, make adoption easier and provides medical and financial support for mothers in difficult situations, he said. A second necessary step is for public policy to be measured by what they do for the "least of our brethren," said Schneck.

"The measure of civilization, the measure of the common good, is the life of these 'least,'" he said, explaining that the "least" in modern society include those who are vulnerable, weak, disempowered, marginalized or oppressed. They might include the unborn, or victims of racism, homophobia, misogyny or anti-Semitism. Schneck said they might be the poor, especially children such as those who have inadequate health care.

Schneck said a third step should be returning to a long view of the historical scope of politics. "We have to get beyond policies that pander to immediate desires and adopt the longer, historical perspective of the common good," he said. Immigration and treatment of immigrants is especially illustrative of current shortsighted approach, given the history of Catholic immigrants, in particular.

"The prejudices faced, the ghettos and shantytowns, the Know-Nothings and the KKK, and all those so-called 'pure Americans' who resented our religion, our languages and our different cultures," Schneck said. "When we consider the many complex issues of today's immigration, let's never forget the trials Catholic immigrants from Europe experienced as 'micks,' 'krauts,' 'polacks' and 'wops' -- legal and illegal -- on the way to becoming Americans."

The common good also looks to the good of future generations, he said. "Whether it's the issue of passing on the costs of the Iraq war or the costs of social security to our children, or not developing a responsible energy policy that will keep the lights on for the next generation, or investing in the physical and virtual infrastructure for tomorrow's commerce -- the common good demands that we weigh the passionate yens of the moment against the future good of the whole."

Other guiding principles should include acting as if the common good transcends national interests and with the recognition that the common good calls everyone to a "citizenship of service," he said.

Thomas Melady, former U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, in response to Schneck's presentation concurred that "participation in political life should be understood as service," a notion that is too little evident. "What has happened to the dialogue?" Melady asked. He told of working for the GOP during the 1968 election and of regularly having lunch with the man who served as the "Catholic adviser" to Democratic candidate Sen. Hubert Humphrey, despite their work for

opposing parties.

Melady said Catholics should work to "change the flavor" of political rhetoric. With only a year before the next presidential election, he acknowledged that changing the tone of politics might be overly ambitious, but "we can improve the flavor to include more civility."

END

Bishop John Wester (Diocese of Utah) Speaks Out for Immigrants

By Jessica Ravitz

The Salt Lake Tribune 11-16-2007

Utah's **Bishop John Wester** joined in a Christian chorus from Washington, D.C., this week, calling for better treatment of immigrants, legal and otherwise. **Wester**, of the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City and *formerly of the Archdiocese of San Francisco*, was one of four featured speakers at a news conference organized by Christians for Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CCIR), a coalition born in May to push for humane reforms. The media event, accessible by phone to out-of-state reporters, coincided with the release of a new CCIR report, "A House Divided: Why Americans of Faith Are Concerned About Undocumented Immigrants."

The joint message decried the demonization of others, the rise in hate and the atmosphere of fear and anger that has swirled around immigration policy debates - among elected officials and in bedroom communities. It was a cry to protect families, not force them apart or into the shadows, especially in light of the coming holidays. It reflected a hope to uphold the American way.

"No person is illegal in God's eyes," said **Wester**, recently named chairman of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops' Committee on Migration. "We cannot sustain a status quo that accepts the toil and taxes of the undocumented population on one hand yet scapegoats and dehumanizes them on the other. We cannot employ workers and then refuse to offer them the protection of the law. This is contrary to our history and to the democratic principles we all cherish."