

Mary Immaculate of Lourdes

(Formerly St. Mary's Parish, 1870-1910)

Newton/Needham, Massachusetts

Newton & Needham's Oldest Roman Catholic Parish



October 21st, 2012 in the Year of Grace
The Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost and
the Twenty-Ninth Sunday of the Year
World Mission Sunday

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Mary Immaculate of Lourdes Parish

270 Elliot Street Newton, MA 02464

617 244 0558

Parish Staff

PASTOR: FATHER CHARLES JEREMIAH HIGGINS

VISITING ASSISTANT PRIESTS: FATHER ALVARO SILVA

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: JEAN JOHNSON (DIRECTOR)
PATTI STROM (LATIN MASS CHILDREN'S CATECHISM)

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: MRS. BOBBIE HOFFMANN

PARISH SECRETARY: MARGIE BIBBO

FIRST SACRISTAN: MANNY GOGUEN

SACRISTANS: FRANCIS GALLAGHER, CAMERON MACKENZIE,
TOM GOGUEN, PETER GOGUEN

SEXTON: SEAN WARD (RET. CEMETERY SUPERINTENDENT)

RECTORY HOUSEKEEPER: LAURIE SPINELLI

Telephones

Parish Office: 617-244-0558 / FAX 617-965-4815

Email: miol@parishmail.com

Website: www.maryimmaculatenewton.org

Parish Cemetery of Saint Mary's, Needham
GUARDIAN ESTATE MANAGEMENT INC.

Mr. Ron Goguen, Superintendent

Guardian Staff on-site for service hours Mon.-Fri.,
9a.m.-3 p.m., April through November

For all Cemetery business, please call Margie
Bibbo at the Parish Office: 617-244-0558

SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS FOR THE SUPPORT OF
OUR PARISH

*"What return can I make to the Lord for all His
kindness to Me?"*



**OFFERTORY FOR SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 14th: \$3,650.00 +
\$2,111.00 (OTHER OFFERINGS)
= \$5,761.00**

**PARISH AIR-CONDITIONING APPEAL AS
OF OCTOBER 15th:
\$5,338.00**

**SECOND COLLECTION FOR TODAY,
OCTOBER 20th: WORLD MISSIONS**

Mass Schedule

Sunday: 4:00 PM (Saturday Vigil), 7:30 AM
9:00 AM, 10:30 AM (Traditional Latin), 5:30 PM

Weekdays: Monday—Friday 7:30 AM

Traditional Latin Low Mass:

Mon., Wed. & Fri., 12:30 PM; Tues. & Thurs.,
5:30 PM, Sat. 9:00 AM.

Holy Days: if Mon-Fri., 7:30 AM., 12:30, 5:30 &
7:30 PM.; if on Saturday, 9 AM & 12:30 PM

SACRAMENTS

Baptism: Upon request. Please contact Father Higgins.

Penance (Confession):

Saturday 8:30-9:00 A.M. and 3:30-4:00 PM
Sunday, before and after the 10:30 a.m. AM Mass,
First Fridays (before the 12:30 p.m. Mass)

Matrimony:

Engaged couples should make arrangements with the
parish church so as to allow for adequate sacramental
preparation (six months), including a Pre-Cana program.

Pastoral Care of the Sick

Anointing of the Sick (for those who are gravely ill or
facing serious surgery); **Communion of the Sick for
the Homebound:** Please contact Father Higgins.

OCTOBER IS THE MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY



(Front Cover: Painting of the Great Procession into St. Peter's for the opening of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, October 11th, A.D. 1962. Artist, Franklin McMahon.)

“MISSILES IN OCTOBER”

On the night of October 11th, 1962, capping the opening day of Vatican Council II, two hundred thousand people filled St. Peter's Square. Youths from Catholic Action, carrying lighted torches, formed a giant cross of light around the central obelisk (photo:below). The



large, enthusiastic crowd was chanting and singing. Finally, Pope John XIII appeared at his window. “Dear children, dear children,” he called down to them, “I hear your voices.” There followed a conversation between the Pope and the crowds below. “Now go back home,”

October 21st, A.D. 2012 The 21st Sunday after Pentecost and the 29th of the Year

Mary Immaculate of Lourdes, Newton/Needham, Massachusetts

he concluded, “And give your little children a kiss—tell them it is from Pope John.”

The following day, October 12th, Pope John XXIII had an audience with the diplomats of 79 nations who had come to Rome for the opening of the Council. In his welcome he expressed his hope that this Church Council would contribute towards world peace, “*peace based on growing respect for the human person and so leading to freedom of religion and worship.*”

The happiness and the expectation of the Vatican Council's opening days were quickly overshadowed, however, by the event of the Cuban Missile Crisis. On October 15th, US reconnaissance photos confirmed that the Soviets had placed nuclear missiles in Cuba in close range of the United States. On October 20th, President John F. Kennedy imposed a naval blockade on Cuba. For the next eight days the catastrophe of nuclear war threatened.

Behind the scenes diplomatic efforts were underway to avert war, and in those efforts Pope John XIII played a crucial part as a discreet intermediary. After the Crisis was past the Soviet leader Krushchev himself acknowledged the Pope's role: “*What the Pope has done for peace will go down in history.*”

On October 23rd, President Kennedy called Norman Cousins, author of a book which argued that the only “third-force” in a two-power stand-off was the Papacy, and said he wanted to make contact with the Vatican.

Cousins then spoke with a Belgian Dominican priest (over)

PHOTO: Jack Schlossberg, grandson of President Kennedy, receives a Russian coin from Sergei Krushchev, son of Nikita Krushchev, Kennedy Library, Boston, October 14th, 2012.



(continued from page 3)

Fr. Félix Morlion, O.P., who had contacts in the Vatican and who was also at that moment in Andover, Massachusetts, engaged in a dialogue with a delegation of visiting Soviet scientists. The scientists were anxiously trying to get home but Norman Cousins persuaded them to talk with Fr. Morlion, who had already received the go-ahead from the Vatican that Pope John would be willing to help in any way he could.

As a former Papal nuncio, Pope John understood what was expected of him. His help took the form of two signals to Krushchev—one through his weekly audience on October 24th, the other a message to the Soviet embassy in Rome, broadcast on Vatican Radio that afternoon, which would give the Soviet dictator the face-saving cover he needed to retreat, as a lover of peace. On Friday morning, October 26th, the official Soviet newspaper *Pravda* put Pope John's message on its front page under the banner head-line: 'WE BEG ALL RULERS NOT TO BE DEAF TO THE CRY OF ALL HUMANITY'.

On Sunday, October 28th, Pope John said the votive Mass for Peace in his private chapel. After the Mass he was brought a message which had just arrived from President Kennedy, thanking the Pope for his help. Krushchev had agreed to withdraw the missiles and the Soviet ships headed to Cuba were already turned back. Not only was the immediate crisis resolved but Krushchev wanted further contacts to discuss disarmament and *détente*. (*John XIII: Pope of the Century, by Peter Hebblethwaite, revised edition, A.D. 2000.*)

The newspapers in Rome that Sunday morning had been published before this latest news and were filled with alarm. At his noon Angelus Pope John XXIII was able to bring the anxious crowd gathered good news as well as hope. It was the Feast of Christ the King and the 4th Anniversary of his election as Pope.

There have been four years of prayer and service, of meetings and conversations, of joy but also some suffering: but everyday has been

lived with a readiness to do the divine will, and in the confidence that all things work together for the edification of all. On today's feast of Christ the King, I feel deeply moved and my spirit is led to serenity and calm. The word of the Gospel has not changed; but it rings out to the ends of the earth and finds its way into human hearts. Dangers and sufferings, human prudence and wisdom—all these should issue into a canticle of love, and a renewed plea, addressed to all men, to seek and restore the Kingdom of Christ.



Pope John XXIII

(Fr. Higgins)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



TODAY'S SECOND COLLECTION IS FOR THE SUPPORT OF CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN MORE THAN 1,150 MISSION

DIOCESES IN AFRICA, ASIA, THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, AND REMOTE REGIONS OF LATIN AMERICA. THE FUNDS GATHERED ON WORLD MISSION SUNDAY ARE DISTRIBUTED IN THE POPE'S NAME BY THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH—A PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETY.



**WE INVITE EVERYONE
TO JOIN US FOR
COFFEE HOUR
DOWNSTAIRS EACH SUNDAY
AFTER THE 10:30 LATIN MASS.**

Religious Education

Sunday, October 21st:
Grades Kindergarten-Grade 5, 8:30 a.m.
(lower church hall)

FOOD DRIVE

The Religious Education Classes invite the parish to join with them in contributing to a food-drive for the Newton Food Pantry. Donations of non-perishable food may be left in the baskets provided in the front vestibule of the main church. The food drive will continue through Sunday, November 11th. Thank you in advance for your generosity.



BENEDICTUM BOOK CLUB

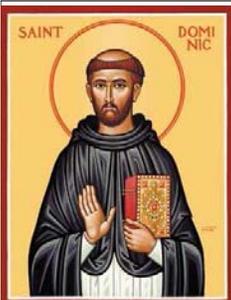
The Benedictum Book Club will meet this Thursday, October 25th, from 10:30 a.m.-12 Noon. The book for discussion will be Fr. George Rutler's "A Crisis of Saints: The Call to Heroic Faith in an Unheroic World". In view of the changing season, the meeting will be held in the lower rectory conference room instead of the lower church hall. All are welcome.
TinaM@post.harvard.edu or 617-970 1448.

"WINGS" (Women in God's Spirit) All women of Mary Immaculate of Lourdes are warmly invited to attend.

Wednesday, October 24th: "Inviting All to Follow Jesus". Dr. David Franks, PhD, vice-president of missions of the Theological Institute for the New Evangelization (TINE) at St. John's Seminary, will give an overview of Pope John Paul II's New Evangelization and what it means for preaching the kingdom in our lives today. WINGS meets Wednesday mornings from 9:45-11:30 a.m. in the Linse Room at Saint Joseph's Parish, Needham. For more details, please visit the parish website at www.saintjoes.com (Ministries and Prayer Ministries).

OUR PARISH THANKS to Mr. BOB QUINAN, who has decided to retire from his role of service as a parish lector after more than 40 years of service. Bob was one of the first parishioners to become a lector after Vatican II.

"THE BEST PRAYER, THAT MOST PLEASING TO GOD, IS THAT WHICH PRODUCES THE BEST RESULTS IN GOOD WORKS, NOT THAT WHICH WE ENJOY WITH NO OTHER EFFECT BUT OUR OWN SATISFACTION."—
ST. TERESA OF AVILA (+1582)



LAY DOMINICANS: TODAY, October 21st, 2012

The Great Boston Chapter of St. Dominic will meet TODAY, Sunday, October 21st at 1:00 p.m. in the lower rectory conference room of Mary Immaculate of Lourdes. Inquirers welcome to attend. More information can be obtained by either calling 617-472-4446 or by contacting the chapter website at: www.stdominics.opne.org

Lay Dominicans are Catholic men and women, both married and single, who live and work in the Greater Boston Community and are affiliated with the world-wide Order of Preachers (Dominicans). As Lay Dominicans, they commit themselves to conform with the teachings of the Church and to embrace Dominican Spirituality, namely a life of prayer, study, apostolate and community.

Calendar of Masses

(Intention of the Mass—Special Remarks—Requested by)

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| SATURDAY October 20th | 4:00 p.m. | David Jones | Special Intention | Marilyn Jones |
| SUNDAY October 21st The 21st Sunday after Pentecost and the 29th Sunday of the Year | 7:30 a.m. | Pro Populo | | |
| | 9:00 a.m. | Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Adams | Special Intention | Shawn Adams |
| | 10:30 a.m. | Deceased members of the Provencher Family Denise McNamara Emily Kwash Megan MacKenzie Barca, Romeo & Miller Families | Memorial Memorial Birthday Intention Birthday Intention Memorial | William & Karen Provencher Jim McNamara Kwash Family MacKenzie Family Kevin Miller |
| |  | | | |
| | 5:30 p.m. | Edward J. Flanagan | Memorial | Phil & Joanna Mack & Family |
| MONDAY October 22nd (Ferial Day) | 7:30 a.m. | Purgatorial Society of Mary Immaculate of Lourdes Parish | Memorial |  |
| | 12:30 p.m. (Ferial Day) | Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed | Memorial | |
| TUESDAY October 23rd (St. John Capistrano) | 7:30 a.m. | Magdalena Limanowska Jasienski | | Marie Schroter |
| | 5:30 p.m. (St. Anthony Mary Claret, Bishop & Confessor) | Susan DiMascio | Special Intention | Maria Centofanti |
| WEDNESDAY October 24th (St. Anthony Mary Claret) | 7:30 a.m. | <i>Intention of the Celebrant</i> | | |
| | 12:30 p.m. St. Raphael the Archangel | Julia Centofanti | Special Intention | Maria Centofanti |
| THURSDAY October 25th (Ferial Day) | 7:30 a.m. | Joyce Higgins | Health of the Sick | Mary, Rose & Jean |
| | 5:30 p.m. St. Isidore the Husbandman, Confessor | Grace Donovan | Memorial | Frances Donovan |
| FRIDAY October 26th (Ferial Day) (<i>Health of the Sick</i>) | 7:30 a.m. | <i>Intention of the Celebrant</i> | | |
| | 12:30 p.m. Ferial Day | Deceased members of the Kwash, Steinkrauss, Rulnick, Rizzo Family | |  |
| SATURDAY October 27th | 9:00 a.m. Ferial Day | Grace MacKecnzie Caitlin Ledwell | Birthday Intention Memorial | MacKenzie Family Neil & Regina McGrath |
| | 4:00 p.m. | Lila & Nicholas Larach | Memorial | Rosa Larach |

HEALTH OF THE SICK

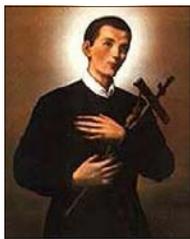
“In every man there is Jesus, but in the sick we see Jesus twice.”

—Padre Pio

For all those on our parish prayer list, especially for... Joseph Nolan, Barbara Nyhen, Rev. Walter Cuenin, Ronald Orlando, Dominic Gundrum, Louis Komuves, Sr. Catherine Grandfield, Mary Adams, Hugh Doyle, Lorraine Orlando, Rob Quagan, Paul Wenger, Nathan Johnston, Frank Downey, Janet Pino, Fr. Carney Gavin, Irene Campana, Gerry Mazzarella, Maureen Nyhen, Francis McNary, Warren Yee, Betty Chishi, Marie Rappazzini, Mary Trombetta, Helen Reid, Brenda Winegarner, Jean Johnson, Lois Ludwig, Paula Apothacary, Jeanne Ciocca, Sam Adams III, Altair da Silva, Christina Kwash, Kitty Ward, Missy Ochsner, Spagnuolo Family, Katie O’Connell, Janet Bourgeois, Judy Sartell, Lana Tomchik, Matthew Banks, Patrick Rainey, Judy Pederson, Ed Donovan, Danny O’Brien, Evelyn Donovan, Helen Donnelly, Priscilla Brossard, Mary Sims, Billy Hickey, Lee-Anne Ketchum, Arthur Nauss, Rod MacLeod, Monica Wellenstein, Teresa Tambunan, Mary Platt, Sean Monaghan, Bill McIlheny, Sheila Whittle, Michelle Fay, Bobbie Hoffmann, Beverly Balconi, Martial Rainey, Dennis McCarthy, Edward Crestitelli, Sharon Kopchik, Erin Marie Fell, Dominic Cantillo, Theresa Higgins, Lita Uilaoghaire, Norman Alibrandi, Joyce Higgins, Karen Starbird, Jack Buckley, Edward Fahey, Nancy Daly, Mary Hoffmann, Marie Schroter, Dorothy Alibrandi, Annie Procopio, Marie Danca, David Kase, Thaddeus Davulis, Andrew McCloskey, Barbara Sullivan, Wanda Lempitski, Thomas Corcoran, Tony Palladino, Joe Bellino, Lucia LoPresti, Polly Sullivan, Fred Strom.



“I do not promise to make you happy in this life, but in the next”—Our Lady of Lourdes to St. Bernadette, February 18th, 1858



SPECIAL INTENTION: *For all the expectant mothers of our parish family.*

“St. Gerard Majella, pray for us”

Prayer for Motherhood:

O good St. Gerard, powerful intercessor before God and Wonderworker of our day, I call upon thee and seek thy aid. Thou who on this earth didst always fulfil God’s designs, help me to do the Holy Will of God. Beseech the Master of Life, from Whom all paternity proceedeth, to render me fruitful in offspring, that I may raise up children to God in this life and heirs to the Kingdom of His Glory in the world to come. Amen.

**PRAYER LINE OF THE
POOR CLARE COLLETTINE
SISTERS**



Hawarden, Wales
www.poorclarestmd.org

MILITARY SERVICE PRAYER LIST:

We remember all of our military servicemen and women, especially ... *Mark Gaudet, Army Special Forces, Pierre K. Ripert, USN, Matthew Simard, 1st Lt., USMC (Afghanistan), Michael Simard, PFC, USMC, Christopher Raymond, 82nd Airborne (Afghanistan), Lance Cpl. Alex Tomchik, USMC, Brian Rainey, US Army (Afghanistan), Joseph Rainey, US Army, Sgt. Kevin James Howard, USMC (Afghanistan), Sgt. Brian Joseph Howard, USMC Afghanistan), Sgt. William J. Duggan, U.S. Army, 342nd Military Police Detachment, deployed to Afghanistan March, 2010; 2nd Lt. Richard S. Pluta, deployed to Iraq; Sgt. 1st Class David Garduque; ;Sgt. Jeffrey R. Quinn, USMC; (Please let us know if you would like someone on active duty prayed for by name.)*

Pray for Tommy Holcum, severely wounded in a Taliban ambush in Afghanistan.

Pray for Pfc Bowe Bergdahl, captured by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

IN THANKSGIVING: Sgt. Dennis Geary and his unit have returned safely from Afghanistan.



LATIN MASS TEXTS

Traditional Propers

Twenty-First Sunday After Pentecost

Vestments: Green

INTROIT: Esther 13: 9, 10-11 All things are in Thy will, O Lord; and there is none that can resist Thy will: for Thou hast made all things, heaven and earth, and all things that are under the cope of heaven: Thou art Lord of all. *Psalm 118: 1* Blessed are the undefiled in the way; who walk in the law of the Lord. V. Glory be to the Father.

COLLECT Lord, we pray Thee, keep Thy household the Church in continual godliness; that through Thy protection it may be free from all adversities, and devoutly given to good works, to the glory of Thy holy name. Through our Lord.

EPISTLE: Ephesians 6: 10-17 Brethren: Be strengthened in the Lord, and in the might of His power. Put you on the armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places. Therefore, take unto you the armour of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and to stand in all things perfect; stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of justice, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.

GRADUAL: Psalm 89: 1-2 Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation. V. Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world was formed; from eternity and to eternity Thou art God.

ALLELUIA: Psalm 113: 1 Alleluia, alleluia. V. When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a barbarous people. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18: 23-35 At that time Jesus spoke to His disciples this parable: The kingdom of Heaven is likened to a king, who would take an account of his servants. And when he had begun to

take the account, one was brought to him that owed him ten thousand talents: and as he had not wherewith to pay it, his lord commanded that he should be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. But that servant falling down, besought him saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And the lord of that servant, being moved with pity, let him go, and forgave him the debt. But when that servant was gone out, he found one of his fellow-servants that owed him a hundred pence: and laying hold of him, he throttled him, saying: Pay what thou owest. And his fellow-servant falling down besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison till he paid the debt. Now his fellow-servants, seeing what was done, were very much grieved; and they came and told their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him, and saith to him: Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all the debt, because thou besoughtest me; shouldst not thou then have had compassion also on thy fellow-servant, even as I had compassion on thee? And his lord being angry delivered him to the torturers until he paid all the debt. So also shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts.

OFFERTORY: Job 1: 2 There was a man in the land of Hus, whose name was Job, simple, and upright, and fearing God: whom Satan besought that he might tempt: and power was given him from the Lord over his possessions and his flesh; and he destroyed all his substance and his children; and wounded his flesh also with a grievous ulcer.

SECRET Graciously receive, O Lord, this holy offering, by which Thou hast willed to be Thyself appeased: and in Thy powerful mercy restore salvation unto us. Through Our Lord.

COMMUNION: Psalm 118: 81, 84, 86 My soul is in Thy salvation, and in Thy word have I hoped, when wilt Thou execute judgment on them that persecute me? The wicked have persecuted me: help me, O Lord my God.

POSTCOMMUNION Having been fed with the food of immortality, O Lord: we beseech Thee, that what we have received with our mouth, we may follow with a pure mind. Through our Lord.

Music Programs for this Sunday's Masses

Mass of Pope Paul VI (1970 Missal)

October 21st, A.D. 2012, Saturday vigil, 4 p.m.
Sunday 7:30 and 9:00 a.m.

Twenty Ninth Sunday of the Year

Introit: Ps 17:6,8 **Ego clamavi**

*"I have called out because You answer me, O God;
Incline Your ear and hear my words; keep me, O Lord, like the
apple of Your eye; protect me under the shadow of Your wings."*

Kyrie – Chant

Gloria – Missa De Angelis (English)

Responsorial Psalm

Gospel Acclamation

Credo I: (extra sheet)

Offertory: Ps 119:47,48 **Meditabor**

*"I shall meditate upon Your commandments which I greatly love; I
will extend my hands towards Your commandments which I love."*

Mass Setting: Mass VIII Missa De Angelis

Sanctus(English)

*"Mortem tuam annuntiamus, Domine, et tuam
resurrectionem confitemur, donec venias"*

Lord's Prayer

Agnus Dei

Communion: Ps 8:2ab **Domine, Dominus noster**

*"O Lord our governor, how admirable is your name in all the
earth!"*

Post Communion Hymn

Salve Regina

(Gregorian Chant Solemn Tone)

Recessional Hymn:

The Blessing at the End of Mass
(Parish Hymnal No.111)

Mass of St. Gregory the Great (1962 Missal)

October 21st, A.D. 2012, Sunday, 10:30 a.m.

Twenty First Sunday after Pentecost

Processional Hymn

Lord, For Thy Tender Mercy's Sake

from Lidley's Prayers (Richard Farrant c. 1530 –1580)

*"Lord, for Thy tender mercy's sake, lay not our sins to our charge,
but forgive that which is past, and give us grace to amend our
sinful lives, to decline from sin and incline to virtue, that we may
walk in a perfect heart before Thee, now and evermore. Amen."*

Asperges: Chant

Introit: Esther 13:9,10,11; Ps. 118:1

*"In voluntate tua, Domine, universa sunt posita, et non est qui
possit resistere voluntati tuae: tu enim fecisti omnia, caelium et
terram, et universa quae caeli ambitu continentur: Dominus
universorum tu es. (Psalm) Beati immaculati in via: qui ambulat
in lege Domini."*

Ordinary Prayers: Missa O Rex Glorae

(Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina d.1594)

Gradual: Ps. 89:1-2

"Domine, refugium factus es nobis a generatione et progénie.

Priusquam montes fierent, aut formarétur terra et orbis:

A saeculo, et usque in saeculum tu es Deus." **Alleluia:** Ps. 113:1

*"Allelúja, allelúja. In exitu Israël de Aegypto, domus Jacob de
pópulo bárbaro. Allelúia."*

Offertory Verse: Job. 1

*"Vir erat in terra Hus nómine Job, simplex et rectus ad timens
Deum: quem Satan pétiit, ut tentáret; et data est ei potéstas a
Dómino in facultates, et in carnem ejus, perdiditque omnem
substántiam ipsius, et filios: carnem quoque ejus gravi úlcere
vulnerávit."*

Offertory Hymn: Ave Maris Stella

(Tomás Luis de Victoria, d.1611)

Communion Hymn: Veni, Jesu, Amor Mi

(Luigi Cherubini d.1842)

Communion Verse: Ps. 118:81,84,86

*"In salutári tuo ánima mea, et in verbum tuum sperávi: quando
fácies de persequéntibus me judícium? Iniqui persecúti sunt me,
ádjuva me, Domine Deus meus."*

Recessional Hymn

Holy God, We Praise Thy Name

(Parish Hymnal No.148)

Noon Angelus (Chant)

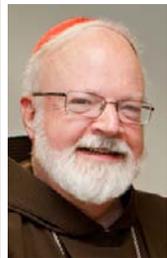
The Pilot

Friday, October 12, 2012 • Vol. 183, No. 39 • \$1.00 • www.thebostonpilot.com • America's Oldest Catholic Newspaper

The slippery slope of assisted suicide

Proponents of physician-assisted suicide tell us that there is no danger of a slippery slope, that in Oregon the cases are “not that numerous” and are “carefully monitored.” I hope that reasonable people will question these claims and reflect further on whether a law with insufficient safeguards is what we want in the commonwealth.

Slippery slope arguments involve small decisions that lead to undesirable outcomes that never would have been supported at the outset. Often, it is impossible to prove that one small step will have significant negative effects, but common sense allows reasonable people to judge the likelihood that a sequence of events that have happened in one place are likely to happen in another place in a similar way.



Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley, OFM Cap.

Question 2 proposes to allow physician-assisted suicide for those diagnosed with a terminal illness with six months or less to live. Many groups are concerned that, if passed, it not only would be harmful in itself, but could lead

to unintended tragic outcomes. (1) Elder advocates are concerned that it could become a new form of elder abuse. (2) Advocates for the disabled are concerned it could lead to “quality of life” standards in our society, where those with a lower perceived quality of life receive fewer benefits or protections. (3) Doctors and nurses are concerned it could lead to a lower “quality of care” for those at the end of life. (4) Doctors are also concerned that it could undermine the doctor-patient relationship. (5) Ethicists are concerned that it could lead to a devaluing of human life. (6) Suicide-prevention organizations are concerned that the state legally allowing suicide for one group (those with terminal diagnoses of fewer than six months to live) could lead to increased suicide rates for the rest of the population. (7) Those who have studied the evolution of this matter in the Netherlands are concerned that assisted suicide could lead, first to voluntary euthanasia (requesting direct help to end one's life), and then to involuntary euthanasia (where a third-party determines that, if the patient were in his right mind, he would choose euthanasia).

Asserting that something could happen is not the same as stating that something will happen. Here are some facts that lead the groups above to be concerned. Please judge for yourself whether you agree with the risk that one or all of these concerns might occur in Massachusetts if we took the first step this Election Day by voting to legalize assisted suicide.

It could lead to increased elder abuse: Data on the crime of elder abuse show that perpetrators are frequently a spouse or an adult relative. Question 2 does not have safeguards to prevent an unscrupulous heir or indifferent family member from pressuring a sick person, either directly or in subtle ways, to end his or her life. That hardly gives sick people “greater freedom” and “enhanced autonomy” at the end of their lives.

It could lead to adoption of “quality of life” standards: Advocacy groups for the disabled are concerned that a policy of assisted suicide will inevitably lead to establishing social standards of acceptable life. When “quality of life” becomes more important than life itself, the mentally ill, the disabled, the depressed, and those who cannot defend themselves will be at risk of being targeted for assisted suicide, and perhaps eventually, for euthanasia. They fear that misunderstandings and false compassion could result in their being considered “better off dead,” devalued, and treated as second class citizens in respect to their medical care.

It could lead to lower quality of care: Doctors' and nurses' groups have expressed concern that efforts to enhance hospice and palliative care will be weakened if a “lazy” path to end-of-life care like physician-assisted-suicide is chosen by voters. They share grave concerns that medical cost-containment pressures will lead to a preference for a \$100 prescription for lethal drugs over more expensive treatments.

It could undermine the doctor-patient relationship: The American Medical Association (AMA) and Massachusetts Medical Society oppose physician assisted suicide because it violates the Hippocratic Oath to “do no harm” and changes the nature of the doctor's role of healing and comforting the patient. The AMA stated “Physician-assisted suicide is fundamentally incompatible with the physician's role as healer, would be difficult or impossible to control, and would pose serious societal risks.” The goal of medicine is to heal and to cure and, where that is not possible, to comfort the patient. Doctors are expected to act always in the best interests of the patient. Dr. Leon Kass, former chair of the President's Council on Bioethics, asks the following common sense question: “Will doctors be able to care wholeheartedly for patients when it is always possible to think of killing them as a ‘therapeutic option?’” In Holland, reports have been published documenting the sad fact that elderly patients, out of fear of euthanasia, refuse hospitalization and even avoid consulting doctors. Dutch citizens have begun to fear that their doctors, instead of being caregivers, will become their executioners.

It could lead to a devaluing of human life: “Taking life in the name of compassion also invites a slippery slope toward ending the lives of people with non-terminal conditions. Dutch doctors, who once limited euthanasia to terminally ill patients, now provide lethal drugs to people with chronic illnesses and disabilities, mental illness, and even melancholy. Once they convinced themselves that ending a short life can be an act of compassion, it was morbidly logical to conclude that ending a longer life may show even more compassion. Psychologically, as well, the physician who has begun to offer death as a solution for some illnesses is tempted to view it as the answer for an ever-broader range of problems.” (USCCB, To Live Each Day with Dignity)

It could lead to an increase of suicide generally: Oregon, the first state to legalize physician-assisted suicide, has one of the highest rates of suicide (not including deaths from PAS) of any state in the nation. It begs a logical question: How can a state effectively both try to minimize suicide in some situations and promote

it as a legal alternative in other situations? Is it reasonable to expect that efforts to prevent suicides will be undermined by legalizing suicide and presenting it as normal and acceptable for those with terminal diagnoses?

It could lead, eventually, to euthanasia — like it has in the Netherlands: It is very sobering to see the evolution of physician-assisted suicide in the Netherlands, a modern industrialized country. In 1973 the “Right to Die — NL” was founded and euthanasia has been legal in the Netherlands for more than a decade. The New York Times reported in their April 3, 2012, edition that “Right to Die — NL” is campaigning for expanded euthanasia, in the form of mobile teams to go out to people's homes to euthanize them. They are also promoting the idea that euthanasia should no longer be limited just to the terminally ill, and their proposal envisions the service for any individual over 70 years of age who requests it.

The Dutch patients' organization, NPV, strongly criticizes the current application of the law, saying the practice of euthanasia has been extended to include patients with dementia and other conditions who may not, by definition, be competent to request help in dying, including children. Elise Van Hock-Burgerhart, a spokeswoman for NPV, told the New York Times reporter that the idea of mobile euthanasia teams was a matter of concern because there was no way for the mobile team doctors to get to know the patients. Moreover, she stated that research in the Netherlands indicated that requests for euthanasia from the elderly would be substantially reduced if palliative care were better in their country and that the country should be working toward improving palliative care, not increasing euthanasia. She also indicated that the law in the Netherlands required review committees to sign off on every reported case of euthanasia, but that 469 cases from 2010 had still not been reviewed; 2010 is the latest year for which data is available. That year 3,136 notifications of termination of life on request were reported, indicating that it was not clear how well doctors were adhering to the official guidelines. Anyone that believes that a “slippery slope” doesn't exist with assisted suicide and euthanasia only has to look at its “evolution” in the Netherlands.

In the United States we are still a long way from the Dutch situation; however, this is not because the laws in the two states that allow PAS are well written or because of careful oversight. What has put the brakes on the growth of physician-assisted suicide in the U.S. is that more than 20 states have rejected proposed legislation and ballot initiatives.

Now it is our turn in Massachusetts to stop this bad idea and bad law from going into effect. Please join me to stop assisted suicide by voting “No on Question 2” on Election Day.

The Archdiocese of Boston has developed an educational website on the Church's teachings on end of life issues, www.SuicideIsAlwaysATragedy.org. The archdiocese is also part of a large coalition of groups from other faiths, from the medical community, and from disabilities rights groups that are advocating a no vote on Question 2. The coalition's website is www.StopAssistedSuicide.org.

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