



# *Word of Life*

*March 2012*

**March 4<sup>th</sup>                      Second Sunday of Lent**

That in carrying out the duties of their office,  
all public servants will vigorously defend  
the religious freedoms guaranteed in our Constitution;  
We pray to the Lord:

**March 11<sup>th</sup>                      Third Sunday of Lent**

That the heart of every expectant father  
may be turned toward his unborn child and his child's mother,  
with offerings of love and support;  
We pray to the Lord:

**March 18<sup>th</sup>                      Fourth Sunday of Lent**

That those—whom some may treat as burdens  
due to age, illness, or poverty—  
receive the love, respect, and material assistance they need;  
We pray to the Lord:

**March 25<sup>th</sup>                      Fifth Sunday of Lent**

That out of love for their children, all Catholic parents  
will learn and pass on the teachings of our faith  
on the sanctity of life, sexuality, and marriage;  
We pray to the Lord:



[It] is imperative that the entire Catholic community in the United States come to realize the grave threats to the Church's public moral witness presented by a radical secularism which finds increasing expression in the political and cultural spheres. ... Of particular concern are certain attempts being made to limit that most cherished of American freedoms, the freedom of religion. Many of you have pointed out that concerted efforts have been made to deny the right of conscientious objection on the part of Catholic individuals and institutions with regard to cooperation in intrinsically evil practices. Others have spoken to me of a worrying tendency to reduce religious freedom to mere freedom of worship without guarantees of respect for freedom of conscience.

~Pope Benedict XVI, Address to the Bishops of the United States on their *Ad Limina* Visit, January 19, 2012

This is the fundamental question that must be asked: *who is man?* Man is a being who bears within his heart a thirst for the infinite, a thirst for truth – a truth which is not partial but capable of explaining life's meaning – since he was created in the image and likeness of God. The grateful recognition that life is an inestimable gift, then, leads to the discovery of one's own profound dignity and the inviolability of every single person. Hence the first step in education is learning to recognize the Creator's image in man, and consequently learning to have a profound respect for every human being and helping others to live a life consonant with this supreme dignity.

~Pope Benedict XVI, Message for the World Day of Peace, January 1, 2012

As a result [of the Administration's mandate], all but a few employers will be forced to purchase coverage for contraception, abortion drugs, and sterilization services even when they seriously object to them. All who share the cost of health plans that include such services will be forced to pay for them as well. Surely it violates the freedom of religion to force religious ministries and citizens to buy health coverage to which they object as a matter of conscience and religious principle.

~Cardinal-designate Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York, President of the USCCB, "ObamaCare and Religious Freedom," *The Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 25, 2012

This is government by fiat that attacks the rights of everyone – not only Catholics; not only people of all religion. At no other time in memory or history has there been such a governmental intrusion on freedom not only with regard to religion, but even across-the-board with all citizens. It forces [nearly] every employer to subsidize an ideology or pay a penalty while searching for alternatives to health care coverage. It undermines the whole concept and hope for health care reform by inextricably linking it to the zealotry of pro-abortion bureaucrats.

~Bishop David A. Zubik, Bishop of Pittsburgh, Statement on HHS "contraceptive mandate," posted at <http://www.diopitt.org/hhs-delays-rule-contraceptive-coverage>