

CATHOLIC PROFESSIONALS OF ILLINOIS

SUMMER
2014

July 26th:

Social Networking & Brainstorm
Help us assess past CPI events and
plan for the future!

August 30th:

Summer Social Event

September 27th:

Congressman Dan Lipinski
"The Challenge of Being a
Catholic Legislator in Secular
Times"

October 18th:

Martin D. Tighe
Founder and Owner
Donnelly Communications, Inc.
"How to Transform Your
Workplace Culture With
the Light of Christ"

November 15th:

Dr. Anthony Caruso MD
OB/GYN and Reproductive
Endocrinologist
Downers Grove, IL
"Ethical Issues and
Infertility Treatment"

December 13th:

Christmas Gathering

February 2015:

Lenten Retreat with Fr. Kevin
Baldwin and Fr. Thomas Koys

March 2015:

Mission Trip (Cancun, Mexico)

June 2015:

Holy Land Pilgrimage

CPI's Spring in Review

In case you weren't able to come out and hear the speakers who appeared before Catholic Professionals of Illinois between April and June, you certainly missed out on some great information, insights, and inspiring ideas for putting our faith into action.

We featured a number of programs: a talk by **Father Thomas Vendetti, LC**, about Pope Francis's *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*; a presentation on returning business ethics to its religious foundations by DePaul University Professors **Thomas O'Brien** and **Scott Paeth**, editors of the *Journal of Religion and Business Ethics*; a call to action by entrepreneur and politician, **Adam Andrzejewski**, on maintaining consistency between one's beliefs and public life; and, finally, a riveting account of work in the trenches by pro-life pediatrician and sidewalk counselor, **Dr. Greta Donahue, MD**.

A few highlights follow.

Apostolic Exhortation: Evangelii Gaudium

*"The Marxist ideology is wrong. But I have met many Marxists in my life who are good people, so I don't feel offended."*¹

For those in the audience old enough to remember, Fr. Vendetti's talk was reminiscent of the laid-back afternoon talk shows of the 1960s in that, comfortably seated in an arm chair, he chatted about the Pope's Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, demystifying complex ideas related to communion with God and our duty to each other.

Noting that the word "diabolic" stems from the Greek "diavolos" meaning "division," Father Vendetti explained that, although we are all called to be in communion with God and each other, that communion is hampered by the impediments of sin, division (the diabolic), and individualism. Father Vendetti continued, pointing out that interference with one's communal commitment takes multiple forms in our culture, among them: 1) subjectivism, which is one's own personal "truth"; 2) globalization, which hastens the deterioration of cultural roots and threatens traditional values, including cultural notions of marriage and family; 3) secularization, which tends to relegate faith to the private and personal sphere and reject the idea of the transcendent, resulting, in turn, in a concomitant deterioration of ethics, sense of personal and collective sin, and a rise in relativism; 4) the adherence to the absolute

Continued on page 2

¹ Pope Francis, on criticism launched at certain passages in *Evangelii Gaudium*, particularly that regarding "trickle-down theories" from "God is Patient," A. Torielli, *La Stampa* Dec. 15, 2013.

Continued from page 1

rights of the individual; and, 5) the threat to the family, the fundamental cell of society, “where we learn to live with others despite our differences and to belong to one another.”²

Father Vendetti also noted how the Pope even challenges pastoral workers when he refers to the “tomb psychology” that “transforms Christians into mummies in a museum.” As Father Vendetti explained, the Pope prods pastoral workers to step out of their comfort zones when he writes that “the spiritual life comes to be identified with a few religious exercises which can offer a certain comfort but which do not encourage encounter with others, engagement with the world or a passion for evangelization.” Pope Francis points out that the result is, even among religious, a “heightened individualism, a crisis of identity and a cooling of fervour,” each of which fuels the other.³

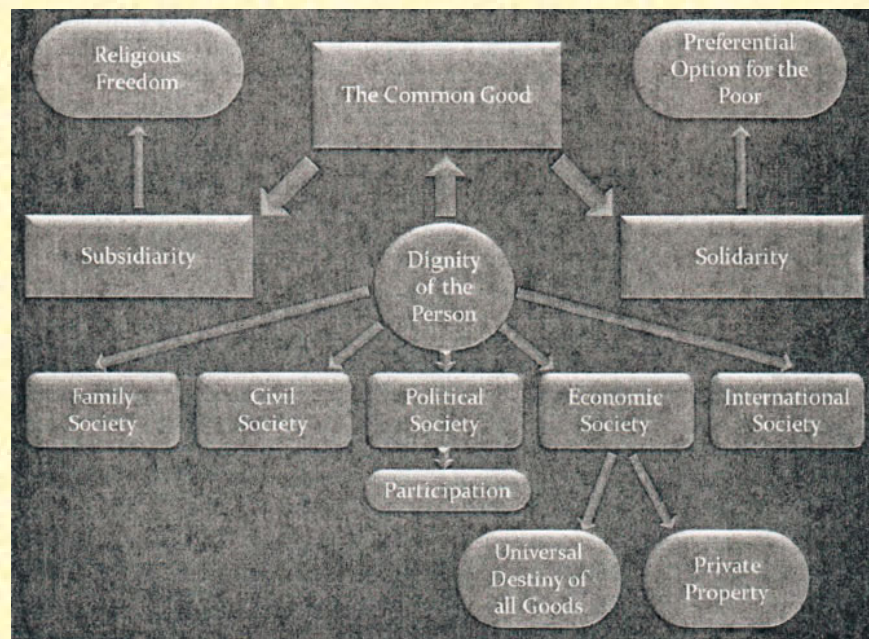
With respect to the economy, as Father Vendetti explained, the Pope’s Exhortation should be interpreted within the context of the world and particularly his native South America, where upward economic mobility is less easily attained than in the United States. Accordingly, the Pope decries the very limited access to wealth and the “widespread corruption and self-serving tax evasion” as an individualistic attitude that fosters exclusion and inequality. For example, “How can it be that it is not a

news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points? This is a case of exclusion. Can we continue to stand by when food is thrown away while people are starving? This is a case of inequality.”

Also pointing out that the Pope partly directs his remarks, not against capitalism *per se*, but against the “individualistic, indifferent and self-centered mentality” in favor of “a way of living and thinking which is more humane, noble and fruitful, and which will bring dignity to their presence on this earth.”⁴ Pope Francis notes that the idolatry of money has created a dictatorship of an impersonal economy lacking a truly human purpose or concern.

Acknowledging the criticism from certain ultraconservatives in the United States that he was promoting Marxism, the Pope later explained that there is nothing in the Exhortation that cannot be found in the social doctrine of the Church (see illustration below), which places the dignity of the human person in the center and, which, in turn, supports the common good. Indeed, as Father Vendetti clarified, the church has never been against private property, and in fact, at the beginning of the 20th century, when communism jeopardized the rights of the individual, the Church warned that Communism posed a serious threat to the

Continued on Page 3



Social Doctrine of the Church

2 EG 66.

3 EG 78.

4 EG 208.

Continued from page 2

natural right to private property. But today, private property has displaced the dignity of the human person and has gained a disproportionate level of importance that ultimately detracts from the human person and thus from the common good. The key is to maintain a proper balance among the various dimensions of society.

The Pope's Exhortation explains in part that the antidote to exclusion and inequality lies in the principal proclamation (the trinitarian *kerygma*) that "Jesus Christ loves you" and which is a response to the desire for the infinite in every human heart. This *kerygma*, writes Francis, "should not impose the truth but appeal to freedom; it should be marked by joy, encouragement, liveliness and a harmonious balance which will not reduce preaching to a few doctrines which are at times more philosophical than evangelical." The natural consequence is the reintroduction of an ethics that favors human beings and a financial system that serves rather than rules. Such a system is not represented by a welfare state that gives handouts or a few sporadic acts of generosity here and there by the wealthy, but rather a system built on a proper understanding of "solidarity,"

which "is a spontaneous reaction by those who recognize that the social function of property and the universal destination of goods are realities which come before private property." A system built on authentic solidarity promotes "education, access to health care, and above all employment, for it is through free, creative, participatory and mutually supportive labour that human beings express and enhance the dignity of their lives."

"[B]usiness is a . . . noble vocation, provided that those engaged in it see themselves challenged by a greater meaning in life; this will enable them truly to serve the common good by striving to increase the goods of this world and to make them more accessible to all."⁵

The Pope also exhorts us to pray for politicians and financial leaders to ensure that all citizens have dignified work, education, and healthcare, recognizing that "politics, though often denigrated, remains a lofty vocation and one of the highest forms of charity, inasmuch as it seeks the common good[.]" but requires an "openness to the transcendent that can bring about a new political and economic mindset which would help to break down the wall of separation between the economy and the common good of society."⁶

DePaul University Professors Propose New Model of Business Ethics to Serve Others

Continuing the theme of business as a means to promote the common good and assist the poor and disadvantaged, DePaul University Professors O'Brien and Paeth argued that business ethics require firms to not only seek profits, but also to act on a duty of care to their employees and communities. They noted that without profits, firms would fail, but contended that ethics grounded in religion precludes profits from being viewed as the ONLY corporate goal.

One example of such a business is TOMS, which, according to its website, www.toms.com, is "in business to help improve lives. With every product you purchase, TOMS will help a person in need" and "also advance health, education and economic opportunity for children and their communities around the world."

Another example is the nongovernmental organization, One Acre Fund, a growing social enterprise in Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, and Tanzania that is implementing a

new way of helping farm families to achieve their full potential through asset-based financing and a flexible repayment schedule that is working for 180,000 smallholder farmers. Instead of cash, One Acre Fund lends the assets that farmers need for success. By buying through One Acre Fund, farmers are able to avoid the potential pitfalls associated with local sellers, such as poor quality or fraudulent inputs and high prices. The One Acre Fund organization sources materials from large suppliers, negotiates bulk rates, and imposes rigorous quality control standards. One Acre Fund stresses humble service, integrity, and hard work, and sees self-sufficient farmers as the solution to poverty and hunger.⁷

While businesses need revenue in order to survive, noted O'Brien and Paeth, the professors challenged the traditional business model as one that need not

Continued on Page 4

⁵ EG 203.

⁶ EG 205.

⁷ Description of One Acre Fund program available at: www.oneacrefund.org/blogs/information/category/microfinance/20

Continued from page 3

always generate revenues, maximize profits, or make rich people richer. Rather, they advocated using commercial activity as an “efficient way to organize goodness,” a concept in alignment with Pope Francis’s Exhortation.

Pointing out certain problems inherent in the exclusive focus on profits and in creating value for shareholders, notably, a tendency for selfishness, the professors reminded the audience that Adam Smith’s “invisible hand” describes the self-regulating behavior of the marketplace in which profits can be maximized without the need for government intervention, which, in turn, benefits society, even if these profit-seeking ambitions derive from no benevolent intentions whatsoever. However, according to Smith, the maximization of one’s own gain is not necessarily an endorsement of selfishness, but a means to achieve the common good, because the “invisible hand” – what Smith believed to be the providential hand of God maintaining the stability of the markets -- is the best guide for the economy.⁸

In short, business as a moral enterprise acknowledges the unique gift of humanity, seeks justice and the

common good in our relationships, forges bonds of solidarity, and attends to the needs of the ignored and abandoned and to those of the non-human realm as well.

In short, business as a moral enterprise acknowledges the unique gift of humanity, seeks justice and the common good in our relationships, forges bonds of solidarity, and attends to the needs of the ignored and abandoned and to those of the non-human realm as well.

Importantly, Paeth and O’Brien pointed out that this “business-as-mission” model works best in the context of closely held companies that attract like-minded investors. The model is less prevalent in publically traded companies, where the predominant common interest is profit making, rather than seeking to aid specific groups or the common good.



Faith in Public Life

In June, Adam Andrzejewski, founder of Open the Books, Chairman of American Transparency, and former candidate for Illinois governor, the only politician to be endorsed by Solidarity leader Lech Walesa, gave a talk entitled *The Courage of Principles—Congruency of Faith and Public Action in Modern America*. Taking to heart St. John Paul II’s admonition, “Be Not Afraid; Be a Witness to History,” Andrzejewski recounted how he and his brother developed the HomePages® Directory, a business that experienced hair-raising twists and turns, but ultimately succeeded through perseverance, lots of sweat, and prayer.

Connecting his convictions in his socially-minded endeavors, he told real-life stories about his tenacious efforts to increase transparency in state and local government spending and activity. First, he explained how his non-partisan organization won a lengthy court battle against Illinois Comptroller Judy Barr Topinka under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act over the

Comptroller’s failure to disclose its checkbook to reveal how it spends taxpayers’ money. The Comptroller’s office had refused to release the public records on grounds that the disclosure would pose an “unreasonable burden” on the office. Those public records are now posted on the Comptroller’s website.

Another way taxpayers can keep tabs on government spending is through Andrzejewski’s website, www.OpentheBooks.com, a searchable database that allows users to look up, among other things, state and federal employee salaries, some of which will shock you.

Dedicated to maintaining integrity among public sector employees, Andrzejewski also urged all attendees to participate in an important upcoming meeting at the Orland Park Public Library on July 21st at 7pm. That meeting will address the library’s policies allowing any

Continued on Page 5

⁸ See Paul Oslington, *God and the Market: Adam Smith’s Invisible Hand*, 108 *J. Bus. Ethics*, 429-38 (Jul. 2012)

Continued from page 4

adult patron to watch unfiltered pornography, including child porn, on the library's computers, which has led to several unseemly incidents. Further, when patrons addressed the library's board of trustees about the easy access to unfiltered porn and related incidents, the board treated them extremely rudely and violated the Open Meetings Act. Outside of the meetings, moreover, certain board members have even verbally attacked individuals challenging the library's handling of the porn-access issue (available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=idu0lur4OCc&index=1&list=PLILXCDHJg4yL-AlrgRxCYIIFANM-uSzIz>).

And here is a video of an attorney explaining to the board of trustees that they are in violation of a number

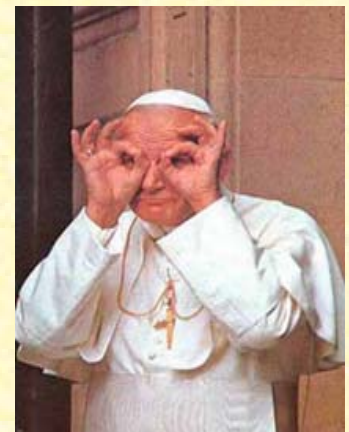
of laws applicable to public bodies: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkHK7m-5wEY&list=PLILXCDHJg4yL-AlrgRxCYIIFANM-uSzIz&index=8>

If you are interested in finding out more about this matter, please go to www.Youtube.com, where there are numerous video clips about the Orland Park Public Library porn issue. The videos show Library board members treating concerned respectful citizens in a contemptuous manner, which flies in the face of civil public discourse.

It is an outrage. Hope to see you on July 21st at the library. Remember: "Be not afraid."

Did You Know? CPI welcomes articles from guest writers. Submit proposals to: catholicproffil@gmail.com

Would you like to **sponsor an event or advertise** in the newsletter? Contact Barbara at: barbara@tishuklawllc.com



*"Stupidity is also a gift from God, but one mustn't misuse it."
-John Paul II*

DON'T FORGET!! ORLAND PARK LIBRARY BOARD MEETING, JULY 21ST @ 7PM Come out to the library to support the effort to put some common sense into the library's policies on viewing pornography in a public venue and demand that the board obey laws pertaining to open meetings.

Please visit our website at: www.catholicprofessionalsil.org



Catholic Professionals of Illinois
Summer 2014 Newsletter
Page 5 of 5

Our Next Night Out: "Social Networking and Brainstorming"
Saturday, July 26th @ 6:30 PM @ St. James at Sag Bridge Church
We need your brain power! What do you want? How do you want it? Help us assess CPI's prior programming and plan for 2015. Catering by Maggiano's. Please RSVP no later than July 23rd so that we know how much food to order.