

THOMAS MORE NEWSLETTER

SOCIAL ACTION GROUP

Melbourne: 582 Queensberry St.,
North Melbourne. Vic 3051 Ph 9326 5757
Fax 93282877 Email: freedom@connexus.net.au

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Editorial
Issue
IDENTIFICATION



Solidarity... Our Call!

John Paul II is incredible. He has a real gift of working on and on for God, not by gritting his teeth, but by the strength of his spirit. It's hard to give a warm smile when you're gritting your teeth, but when you have a selfless spirit, then the kind of universal solidarity that our Pope has is natural.

Well, this month a number of people that we are privileged to have in our Thomas More Social Action Groups are going to see the Pope in Toronto! One of John Paul II's special themes is **the attitude, AND ACTIONS, of solidarity**. We regard the good and bad things that happen to ANY OTHER member of our human family as being just as important as if they happened to us. The plight of human embryos and other unborns, the struggles of the unemployed, etc., move our hearts, and our hearts move us to action.

What we will ask of ourselves this month is to try to make the attitude of solidarity contagious: to aid others in actions of solidarity with embryos; to gather a crowd to come to our Winter School; to open an appeal to people to make an act of solidarity with us in our work by supporting us financially. And if you are going to see the Pope, could you pray for us back home?

Michael Casanova.

Catholic Social Teachings APPLICATION

Discussion Questions

1. How far should our solidarity extend? What humans should be included in our circle of concern?
2. Throughout history, when people have been excluded from a sense of solidarity, there have been excuses: eg. "negros don't have souls." What reasons are given today?
3. How can we help solidarity spread? What hope does solidarity have of spreading in our individualistic society?

TMSAG meetings, July.

Doveton
Sat 13, 7:45pm
Holy Family
Presbytery
100 Power Rd

Hawthorn
Tues 6 AUGUST,
7:45 pm
Corner House - 182
Power St

Ballarat
Stem cell issue!
please phone Marie,
5331 9815

Preston
Contact Rosy

Ringwood
Wed 19, 8pm
16 Leonard Street

Flinders
Wed 24, 7:30 pm
Our Lady's Parish Hall
1 Foote St,
Dromana

Werribee
contact
Michael Casanova,
9974 2922.

**Universities On
Semester break:**
ACU Patrick,
La Trobe,
Monash,
Melbourne.

Further details, phone 9326 5757

Scripture

Genesis 4

Cain's murder of Abel

9 Then the Lord said to

Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?"

Luke 10 The Good Samaritan

33 But a Samaritan ... had compassion. 36 "Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" 37 He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Catholic Social Teachings READINGS

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Sin ... wounds man's nature and injures

human SOLIDARITY. CCC 1872.

The principle of SOLIDARITY, also articulated in terms of 'friendship' or 'social charity,' is a direct demand of human and Christian brotherhood. CCC1939.

Socio-economic problems can be resolved only with the help of all the forms of SOLIDARITY. CCC 1941.

Catholic Social ACTION

"I will make
you fishers
of men"



· For Young Adults ·

2002 Thomas More Winter School

St Kilian's Parish Centre Hall
118 Hargreaves Street
Bendigo

30 August - 1 September

WIN \$1500 WORTH OF BOOKS!

If Solidarity is going to spread, it really needs to be by person to person contact. The Winter School is coming up very soon. All it costs is \$33 (EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION), meals included!

Here is the challenge: bring along one new person, who hasn't been to any Thomas More School before, and your name will be put into the draw for a **box of books valued at \$1500!**

Embryo Action!

Do you know that it is precisely solidarity which is being abandoned in the stem cell debate? Prime Minister John Howard has put forward a bill to parliament (June 27th). If this bill becomes law, IVF embryos will be beyond human solidarity. People want to use them for experiments, even for testing cosmetics. So they excuse themselves by saying that human embryos are not human beings. Please:

A) If you haven't written to your local Lower House federal parliamentary member, please do!
B) If you would like to have a powerful impact, you can help inspire others to express their solidarity too. We have letter writing kits - all you need is a friend or contacts in a parish group, and courage to help others to write letters. Some of our group members are already doing this. Please get in touch with us.

Thomas More

FAITH TO ACTION Fund 2002.

We are launching our invitation to contribute to help the work of the Thomas More Centre. We rely on donations and try to cut any prices to the bone (eg. the Winter School). We will print the donations in forthcoming TMSAG Newsletters. More details, please contact Michael 9326 5757. If you can't afford anything - what about the cost of a Coke?

Solidarity: The Key to Life as a Social Creature?

“There is a **solidarity** among all creatures arising from the fact that all have the same Creator and are all ordered to his Glory”

What do we mean when we speak of solidarity and the social nature of man? Solidarity means living for one another in charity and humility, one body in Christ. ‘None of us lives to himself and none of us dies to himself’ [Rom 14:7.] **Solidarity** is founded on the commandment to love one’s neighbour and is inherent in the communion of saints. The smallest act done in charity for one’s neighbour has the potential to multiply its rewards to profit an entire community. In this way Christian Social Teaching presents an alternative to popular individualistic or humanistic culture, an alternative based upon a unique paradox. The Christian alternative recognises both the ‘**sacredness of the human person and the almost complete insufficiency of the isolated individual**’ (B.A. Santamaria, 1973). Pius XII described human **solidarity** (and charity) as the ‘law’ which ‘without excluding the rich variety of persons, cultures and peoples, assures us that all men are truly brethren. (Pius XII Summi Pontificatus 3).

Solidarity is a virtue that is fundamental to all social issues. **Solidarity** also involves an attitude that is expressed through conscious actions. Harmony of responsibilities and interests among individuals in a group magnifies the potential for collective action towards common goals. Our willingness to respect the dignity of all humankind, to recognise the just rights of our neighbours, especially those who are unable to protect themselves, pours forth in the spirit of **solidarity**. Even a brief glance over some of the social issues that have confronted our lives recently reminds us that the hearts of all humanity ache for **solidarity**.

Solidarity is a virtue that is fundamental to all social issues. [It] involves an attitude that is expressed through conscious actions.

- The practices of euthanasia and suicide not only harm ourselves but also the community to which we have obligations and responsibilities, thus breaking the tie of **solidarity**. So often the desire to commit suicide is caused by a breakdown in solidarity, a feeling of being abandoned.

- The plight of asylum seekers challenges more prosperous nations to exercise **solidarity** with respect and charity for the rights of those seeking security. In response, those receiving assistance are obliged to respect the material and spiritual heritage of their brothers.

- In the media we stand in **solidarity** against sexual exploitation of individuals for economic advantage, and encourage the nurturing of human dignity and morality.

- We recognise the call to those involved in science, and to all of us, to have a sense of solidarity with all members of the human family, from the very young embryo to the elderly and the disabled. We know that answering this call benefits the common good of all.

The resolution of local and global problems can only be achieved through a reawakening to the virtue of **solidarity**. The principle of **solidarity** transcends material goods and asks ultimately, for the sharing of spiritual goods. From this spiritual union our temporal needs can truly be answered with justice and equality. ‘The first unity is that of faith... the second aspect... is that of charity’ (JP II to the Church in Oceania).

“May you be praised, O Lord, in all your creatures... Praise and bless my Lord, give thanks and serve him in all humility”, [St. Francis of Assisi, *Canticle of the Creatures*]

Rosy de Castella.

Calling for Journalists.

The virtue of solidarity needs nurturing, feeding, by example and by words.

We need journalists of solidarity!

When you are in Toronto listening to the Pope or labouring away in Australia, please be on the lookout for things that are said or done which you can report and share with the rest of us.

It would be great for our newsletter to feature some of your experiences from Toronto or the things you are doing back home.

“It is his most profound conviction, [to serve] till martyrdom ...”

“I know he will not give up” Cardinal Andrej Maria Deskur, a longtime friend of John Paul II’s, said in a recent interview. “It is the Lord’s will.”

The Pope too knows well the phrase “to serve the Church till martyrdom,” said the 78 year old cardinal, who is confined to a wheelchair.

“I don’t have the Pope’s will power. He is strong, he is indestructible: It is a real gift of the Lord. Yes, I have never given in, and continue even with my

illness, but the Pope is on another level, and he will never abandon the Church, until the Lord wills it. “He was always a strong man. He is so today, as he was when he was young. He was a leader, an apostle for the youth in Poland. He taught others to be strong, to never be discouraged. And he himself never refused any sacrifice in the name of the Lord.

VATICAN CITY, July 3, 2002 (Zenit.org).

What have our members been up to?

Ballarat: Planned a visit to the local politician, who cancelled on the morning of the visit!

Hawthorn: nearly spoke with the local member of parliament! Published a letter in the Herald Sun.

Werribee: handing out letters to be written to the local member of parliament, speaking to local church groups, the dad of one member is visiting local politician.

Deakin / Ringwood: placed Question and Answers page in local church papers, with a list of MPs to write to.

What have you and your group been up to this month? Please email mjccasanova@yahoo.com or phone Michael Casanova 9326 5757.

TMSAG PRAYER

Lord, grant me a holy heart
that sees what is true and pure
and is not frightened at the sight of sin
but creates order wherever it goes.

Grant me a heart
that knows nothing of boredom,
weeping and sighing.

Let me not be too concerned
with the bothersome thing I call “myself”.

Lord, give me a sense of humour
and I will find happiness in life
and profit for others

-St Thomas More (1478-1535)

ARE YOU INTO YOUTH MINISTRY?

Catholic Youth Ministry and the Catholic Pastoral Formation Centre are offering a

CERTIFICATE IN YOUTH MINISTRY

For the commitment of **one night a week** for school terms throughout 2003 you will be trained in:

- Practical Skills for Youth Leadership
- Learning the Theory and Practice of Youth Ministry
- Tools for leading Prayer and Bible Studies
- Supervised Field Work
- What the Catholic Church has for Youth
- The Teachings of the Church for Young People

Contact Catholic Pastoral Formations Centre on (03) 9412 3333 or Catholic Youth Ministry on (03) 9926 5677 for details.

National Civic Council meetings near you.

The NCC has meetings every month in venues near our TMSAG meetings and in other areas too. There is a strong emphasis on action and understanding what we can do in a clever way to improve Australia's political and social environment. Highly recommended! Details: Anthony Cappello, 9236 5757.

Thomas More Social Action Group Newsletter

Editor: M Casanova. Sub-Editors: R de Castella, C Sheehan, A Cappello, E O'Reilly, L McCormick.

The Thomas More Social Action Groups are bringing together young people to be formed in the Catholic Social Teachings and to move on to activism and evangelisation.

If you are interested in knowing more about the work of the TMSAGs please call the Thomas More Centre on 9326 5757.

Hard copies of the Newsletter are also available – simply call the Thomas More Centre. Other journals available from the Thomas More Centre are: *AD2000*, *News Weekly* and the *Thomas More Bulletin*. Please call the Thomas More Centre for subscription details.

PLEASE NOTE: IN ORDER TO CONTINUE THIS WORK THE THOMAS MORE CENTRE WELCOMES DONATIONS- C/O The Director 582 Queensberry St. North Melbourne 3051