



Focus on Religious Freedom

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A Bishop Calls the Faithful to Action

“The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time...” - Thomas Jefferson

Bishop Michael Burbidge of Arlington, Virginia has issued a forceful letter calling Catholics to oppose “two dangerous ballot initiatives” that pose “serious legal threats to the sacredness of human life and the sanctity of marriage.” <https://tinyurl.com/2bepafnu>

“Ballot Question 1,” Bishop Burbidge explains, “would create a legal right to unregulated abortions, performed by unlicensed abortion practitioners at any time during pregnancy. This threatens the health and safety of mothers and would allow for abortions targeting healthy babies all the way up to birth.”

He and Bishop Barry Knestout of Richmond <https://tinyurl.com/yzfwd442> note that “legislators even rejected a proposal to require that any baby born alive after an attempted abortion would receive the same level of care and treatment as any other infant.” With abortion already legal in Virginia, this proposal “is extreme, dangerous, radical and horrific,” the bishops warn.

“Ballot Question 2,” Bishop Burbidge writes, “would remove from our state constitution the truth, as Jesus taught, that marriage is between one man and one woman. It would also enshrine gender ideology by falsely separating the reality of one's sex and gender, obscuring the truth that we are created in the image and likeness of God.”

“God is the author of life and marriage,” the bishops wrote. “We must protect and preserve these extraordinary gifts from our Creator. As Catholics, we have a sacred duty to form our consciences prayerfully and correctly, and to vote NO on Ballot Questions 1 and 2.”

Echoing George Washington’s declaration that “Religion and morality are indispensable supports” to our system of self-government, Bishop Burbidge also forthrightly proclaims the Church’s right and duty to make its voice heard on vital moral issues.

While “not partisan,” he writes, “the Church, in fidelity to the Gospel and her mission, always speaks clearly, faithfully, and truthfully concerning matters of faith and morals in public life.”