

## A Note from the Pastor

Dear Parishioners,

I am writing in this column about a few pressing matters in terms of civil society which have an effect on every human person and on the Church as a whole.

Laws and politics have always had a major impact on people. Nowadays, it seems new laws may have a greater impact on society and lawmakers don't seem to be able to set things out clearly. In other words, there is much confusion in our civil society. Quite frankly, it often seems that politics and laws are seeking to change and direct public life in non-traditional ways. Those in public office frequently seem to be trying to create new traditions and eliminate older ones according to their preference.

The Pastoral Constitution of the Second Vatican Council, Gaudium et Spes (1965) asserted: "It is very important that there be a correct notion of the relationship between the political Community and the Church, and a clear distinction between the tasks which Christians undertake, individually or as a group, on their own responsibility as citizens guided by the dictates of a Christian conscience, and the activities which, in union with their pastors, they carry out in the name of the Church." (76)

In the face of new laws, for example, expanding abortion rights, or legalizing assisted suicide or even legalizing marijuana, to name a few, the Church herself should speak out clearly, but individuals also can work to influence the conversations about such issues, and seek to change hearts and laws.

The Church, for example, can propose support for a certain petition, but individuals have to decide to participate. The Church must highlight moral principles, but individuals have to decide how those principles translate into action, and for whom to vote when moral and social values are at stake.

Listen to the Church in forming your conscience and then act in a manner consistent with your beliefs. Of course, pray for God's guidance also.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monsignor Giandurco". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.