



Catholic Truth League

13 January 2017

Induite vos arma Dei

Ineffable Creator, who from the treasures of your wisdom, have established three hierarchies of angels, have arrayed them in marvelous order above the fiery Heavens, and have marshaled the regions of the universe with such artful skill, You are proclaimed the True Font of Light and Wisdom, and the primal origin raised high beyond all things.

Pour forth a ray of your brightness into the darkened places of my mind; disperse from my soul the twofold darkness into which I was born: sin and ignorance. You make eloquent the tongues of infants. Refine my speech, and pour forth upon my lips the goodness of your blessings. Grant to me keenness of mind, capacity to remember, skill in learning, subtlety to interpret and eloquence in speech.

May you guide the beginning of my work, direct its progress, and bring it to completion. You who are True God and True Man, who live and reign world without end. Amen.
(St. Thomas Aquinas)

Our Lady of Fatima, Pray for Us!

Announcements

Next Meeting: 7 pm Friday, 1/20

Topic: Christian Economics

Watch for the full tentative semester schedule via Flocknote, Facebook and our website.



General Information

President: David Schena

Vice President: Mick Krane

Secretary/Webmaster: Christine Mintert

Treasurer: John Redding

Contact CTL: catholictruthleague@gmail.com

Website: www.purdue.edu/TRUTH

This Week in CTL

Topic: Christian Politics

Questions/Subtopics

1. What is the proper relationship between the Church and state?
2. Is there a particular political system endorsed by the Church?
4. Legitimate authority and conscientious objection
5. The principles of solidarity and subsidiarity
3. The heresy of Americanism

Political Systems

- The Church does not endorse any particular type of government, although it does disapprove of certain types.
 - The Church has particularly opposed communism in the past century because it is essentially materialistic, permissive of human rights abuses and in its purest form is an atheist state.
- According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the best regime is the monarchy.
 - Any governing body should move toward acting as one, with one will and a common mind.
 - The wise and capable are best used when freed from dragging along the less wise/capable.
 - However, the worst possible regime is tyranny.
 - The best *possible* regime combines elements of a monarchy, aristocracy and democracy/republic.
- The Church tends to object to or approve of *practices* of certain governments, rather than to their style:
 - Deprivation of basic rights or persecution of certain groups

This Week in CTL (continued)

- Mandating citizens to perform actions or support programs which are against Catholic doctrine or social teaching
- The Church has worked with a wide range of government styles, including:
 - Republics
 - Democracies
 - Monarchies
 - Oligarchies
 - Socialist states
- The Church's most major political contributions tend to be local ones such as workers' unions, school systems and medical centers.

Americanism

Americanism is a heresy condemned by Pope Leo XIII in 1898; it is an umbrella term for heresies revolving around classically liberal American ideals.

- Arose from American Catholics' desires to be accepted as fully American at the expense of "un-American" Church doctrines.
- Centered around the American ideal of separation of Church and state
 - Although disestablishment allowed the Church in the U.S. to grow despite a primarily Protestant government, it denies the Church its rightful distinction as the one true Church.
 - The Church exists as a society and is naturally inclined to be a part of every aspect of society, including government.
 - Although non-Catholics have the freedom to exercise their own beliefs and raise their children in them, governments should recognize the authority of the Church above all other religions.
- Americanism also includes:
 - Downplaying the importance of Church hierarchy
 - Emphasizing individualism over obedience to authority
 - Reducing the Church to just another denomination
 - Considering oneself American first, Catholic second

Solidarity and Subsidiarity

"Solidarity is first and foremost a sense of responsibility on the part of everyone with regard to everyone, and it cannot therefore be merely delegated to the State. [...]"

Unfortunately, too much confidence was placed in those institutions, as if they were able to deliver the desired objective automatically.

In reality, institutions by themselves are not enough, because integral human development is primarily a vocation, and therefore it involves a free assumption of responsibility in solidarity on the part of everyone." - Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*

"Excessive intervention by the state can threaten personal freedom and initiative. The teaching of the Church has elaborated the principle of subsidiarity, according to which 'a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to co-ordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good.'" - CCC 1883

"The principle of subsidiarity must remain closely linked to the principle of solidarity and vice versa, since the former without the latter gives way to social privatism, while the latter without the former gives way to paternalist social assistance that is demeaning to those in need." - BXVI, *Caritas in Veritate*

Resources and Further Reading

Catechism of the Catholic Church, n. 1878-1896 - *The Person and Society*

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, 58 - on justice

Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* (2009) - on charity and solidarity in Catholic social teaching

Pope Leo XIII, *Testem Benevolentiae Nostrae* (1898) - condemnation of Americanism

Peter Koritansky, "Thomas Aquinas: Political Philosophy." (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy)