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August 30, 2012

Most Rev. Gerhard Ludwig Muller, Prefect
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Piazza del S. Uffizio 11, 00193, Roma, Italy

Pro-life policy on abortion in Canada

Your Grace,

Congratulations on your recent appointment! Thank you for your dedication to the Truth.

Blessed John Paul II stated in *Evangelium Vitae*, paragraph 73.3: “..... In a case like the one just mentioned, when it is not possible to overturn or completely abrogate a pro-abortion law, an elected official, whose absolute personal opposition to procured abortion was well known, could licitly support proposals aimed at limiting the harm done by such a law and at lessening its negative consequences at the level of general opinion and public morality. This does not in fact represent an illicit cooperation with an unjust law, but rather a legitimate and proper attempt to limit its evil aspects.”

In Canada, abortion on demand has been legal and permitted for over twenty years. This includes surgical abortion and abortifacient contraceptive pills and devices, (which cause about six more times the number of abortions than surgical abortion).¹ Surgical abortions are funded by our government in almost every province and are done by our physicians in hospitals and clinics. There are no penalties for abortion at any stage of fetal development.

At present, there are two conflicting interpretations of *Evangelium Vitae* paragraph 73.3 in Canada:

1. Some groups insist that in Canada the term “pro-abortion law” must be strictly interpreted. There is no written legislation. They insist that it is never licit to support and vote for legislation that would gestationally restrict abortion and not totally abolish abortion.
2. Other groups hold that we have the moral equivalent of a law in Canada. Therefore, *Evangelium Vitae* may be applied in Canada and when the conditions there stipulated are

¹ Enclosure: “Infant Homicides through Contraception”, Eternal Life, Study of Abortion Deaths Ad Hoc Commission.

fulfilled, an elected official may support a law which would gestationally restrict abortion (for example, to the first trimester.) This would save lives.

Finally, *Evangelium Vitae* paragraph 73.3 uses the phrase “could licitly support proposals”. May we interpret “support” to include writing, helping prepare, introducing and voting for such legislation?

Your Grace, what is the correct interpretation? An authoritative reply would be appreciated.

Most Respectfully Yours,

Rev. Msgr. Vincent N. Foy