



Christian Voices for Life

Weekly Pro-Life

Education

Prayer

Action

Changes in our Culture - Religious Freedom at Risk



Education: An earlier weekly email (“Conscience Protection and Religious Freedom”, 6/1/16) discussed the difficulties encountered by individuals and religious institutions when U. S. law or non-discrimination policies are in opposition to what conscience dictates. A recent statement by an international group of bioethicists clearly states that conscientious objection should not be allowed to interfere with providing patients with legal and accepted services they request. “Healthcare practitioners’ primary obligations are towards their patients, not towards their own personal conscience.”(1,2) When a patient requests a service that the doctor objects to performing, the doctor should refer them to someone who will perform it. However, “In emergency situations, when referral is not possible, **or when it poses too great a burden on patients or on the healthcare system, health practitioners should perform the treatment themselves.**” The document goes on to spell out that conscientious objectors should be required to defend their position to a tribunal, and to “compensate society and the health system for their failure to fulfill their professional obligations.”(1) It is also stated that “regional authorities, in order to be able to provide medical services in a timely manner, should be allowed to make hiring decisions on the basis of whether possible employees are willing to perform medical procedures to which other healthcare practitioners have a conscientious objection.” (1) The message seems clear – provide the legal services that patients want – or get out of medicine. The years ahead will see increasing controversy and debate over the rights of healthcare providers to practice their profession without violating their conscience.

1. <http://blog.practicaethics.ox.ac.uk/2016/08/consensus-statement-on-conscientious-objection-in-healthcare/>
2. <http://www.lifenews.com/2016/09/02/bioethicists-sign-consensus-statement-to-force-pro-life-doctors-to-promote-abortion/>



Prayer: Dear Father God, please grant courage and perseverance to all medical professionals who encounter difficulties associated with their conscientious objection to abortion, euthanasia, or other objectionable practices. Help those in authority to both respect the right of healthcare providers to refrain from violating their conscience, and come to understand themselves that abortion and euthanasia are not health care, not treatment of disease or injury, but rather the use of medical skills to bring death rather than life. Please help our society to return to a culture that respects the sanctity of human life.



Action: Societies change when enough individuals change. We need to hold fast to our beliefs and be willing to speak out in support of the sanctity of life. **This Sunday, Oct 2, 2016**, is **Life Chain Sunday** throughout the United States and Canada. Please join us in proclaiming the truth that “**Abortion Kills Children**”, “**The Pill & IUD Also Kill Children**”, “**Abortion Hurts Women**”, “**Pregnant? Need Help? 800-712-HELP**” and other messages. See www.ChristianVoicesforLife.org/life-chain for more information.