



A clarification for people of the Church in northern Colorado on the personhood of the unborn child

Colorado, Oct. 8, 2008

For the past several months, Amendment 48 has been a source of confusion for many Catholics and other members of the Colorado prolife community.

Catholics are free to support or oppose Amendment 48, commonly known as the “Personhood Amendment,” as they judge appropriate. This is a prudential matter which requires personal reflection and decision. Colorado’s Catholic bishops do not support this amendment because of problems with its strategy outlined previously through the Colorado Catholic Conference. See :

<http://www.cocatholicconference.org/content/view/140/1/>

Catholics are not required by Church teaching to support Amendment 48. But they are required to respect the personhood of the developing child from life’s earliest beginning.

In that light, Governor Bill Ritter seriously confused the Amendment 48 debate on October 7 by saying -- according to news reports -- that, “My understanding is that there are things about calling a fertilized egg a person that do not square with Church doctrine.”

This is false. Catholic teaching holds that human life is sacred from the moment of fertilization, commonly called “conception,” to the moment of natural death. Separating a “fertilized egg” from the dignity of human personhood is bad theology and bad public policy. And Catholic public officials should know better.

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