



Support the Manhattan Declaration!

by Fr. Edmund Sylvia, C.S.C.

Dear Father Ed: “I have seldom, if ever, seen an ecumenical Declaration which calls all Christians to reaffirm fundamental truths about justice and the common good, and to call upon our fellow citizens, believers and non-believers alike, to join us in defending them. These truths are: 1. the sanctity of human life; 2. the dignity of marriage as the conjugal union of husband and wife; 3. the rights of conscience and religious liberty. How can we get the word out and rally support for this Manhattan Declaration?” ... Deacon John Edgerton, Florida



Thank you Deacon John for your reminder of this declaration that one of its authors, Chuck Colson, called “a WAKE UP CALL-A CALL TO CONSCIENCE.”

Your e-mail included a quote from the homepage of the Declaration [www.manhattandeclaration.org] that I think all should read and seriously reflect upon:

“Inasmuch as these truths [the three mentioned in your question] are foundational to human dignity and to the well being of society, they are inviolable and non-negotiable. Because they are increasingly under assault from powerful forces in our culture, we are compelled today to

speak out forcefully in their defense, and to commit ourselves to honoring them fully no matter what pressures are brought upon us and our institutions to abandon or compromise them. We make this commitment not as partisans of any political group but as followers of Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Lord, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.”

Father Roger Landry, priest of the Fall River diocese and editor of the diocesan paper, *The Anchor* [which publish the Declaration in its entirety], in an excellent article on Catholic Exchange (12/11/09) entitled “The Call

of Christian Conscience” called this “a brilliant analysis of the ongoing series of attacks on the foundational principles of justice and the common good in our country as well as a courageous, inspiring pledge to come together in conscience vigorously to oppose them.” I wholeheartedly agree!

Let me leave you with just a few poignant quotes from this masterpiece of faith and reason.

“We are Christians who have joined together across historic lines of ecclesial differences to affirm our right—and, more importantly, to embrace our obligation—to speak and act in defense of these truths. We pledge to each other, and to our fellow believers, that no power on earth, be it cultural or political, will intimidate us into silence or acquiescence.”

“We recognize the duty to comply with laws whether we happen to like them or not, unless the laws are gravely unjust or require those subject to them to do something unjust or otherwise immoral.”

“... We will not comply with any edict that purports to compel our institutions to participate in abortions, embryo-destructive research, assisted suicide and euthanasia, or any other anti-life act; nor will we bend to any rule purporting to force us to bless immoral sexual partnerships, treat them as marriage or the equivalent, or refrain from proclaiming the truth, as we know it, about morality and immorality and marriage and the family.”

A line has been drawn in the sand! We must courageously ACT!

Visit manhattandeclaration.org

I CAN NOT URGE YOU TOO STRONGLY to visit the website of this VERY IMPORTANT public statement, read and share the document, add your signature, bring this to the attention of everyone you know. E-mail it to friends and acquaintances. Suggest it as a topic for discussion groups, speak of it to your pastor and priests.

Check out the other materials available at the website including a “Message to all signers” about what to do next and excellent “frequently asked questions” and other valuable resources.