



# J/P ALERT

CONFERENCE OF MAJOR SUPERIORS OF MEN JUSTICE AND PEACE OFFICE



*April 2012 (en español)*

- Unveiling a Faithful Budget
- [Vocation of the Business Leader: A Reflection](#)
- [Amicus Curiae Brief for Arizona vs. US](#)
- [50 Faith-Based Groups Urge Overturn of Arizona Law](#)
- [June is Torture Awareness Month](#)

## *Prominent Religious Officials Unveil Principles, Priorities for a Faithful Federal Budget*

**WASHINGTON** -- Standing in stark contrast to partisan budget proposals that seek first to address a bottom line instead of the nation's needs and priorities, some of America's top religious officials today unveiled for congressional consideration a "Faithful Budget" proposal.

The Priorities for a Faithful Budget is a set of comprehensive and compassionate budget principles that will protect the common good, value each individual and help lift the burden on the poor. The Faithful Budget can be read in its entirety at:

<http://faithfulbudget.org/files/2012/03/Priorities-for-a-Faithful-Budget.pdf>



The Faithful Budget lays out ideas for restoring economic opportunity, ensuring adequate resources for the country's fiscal needs, fostering true security, reducing poverty and hardship, taking responsibility for future generations, caring for the environment, improving access to health care and

recognizing the robust role of government in combating poverty.

"Drafted by Jews, Christians, Muslims and other faith leaders, the Faithful Budget embraces our role as a united nation to take care of the most vulnerable among us, while making balanced investments in our future," said the Rev. Grady Parsons, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). "By following our sacred imperative to 'love our neighbor as ourselves,' we not only can pass a budget that makes sense, but pass a budget that begins to create a more just society and a healthier world."

Included in the Faithful Budget Preamble, which was endorsed by 37 religious denominations and organizations, is a call to Congress and the President to enact a budget that "enhances the well-being of all Americans and to make a good faith increase in funding for the impoverished and the vulnerable here and abroad in fiscal year 2013."

"For too long, our nation's political leaders have fallen into a trap of starting with an arbitrary top-line budget number and then working within its parameters to fund the programs on which we all rely. Rather than follow Washington's example, the Faithful Budget focuses on our national needs and priorities," said Sister Simone Campbell, Executive Director of NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby.

"We hope our Faithful Budget model can serve as a model that Congress and the Obama Administration can use to help build a more perfect union."

Following the unveiling of the Priorities for a Faithful Budget, the religious officials, among whom are some of the presiding religious officials of the country's largest denominations, were scheduled to meet with the offices of House Speaker John Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid to present the Faithful Budget in-person for congressional consideration.

"Regardless of if you are Republican or Democrat, a Christian, Jew, Muslim or a follower of another faith, the Faithful Budget embraces the reality that we live together in a community, not agreeing on everything, but sharing in the common purpose of bettering our nation," said Dr. Sayyid Syeed, National Director of the Islamic Society of North America. "The Faithful Budget seeks to transcend Washington's current political climate and find common ground."

On Monday, March 26, hundreds of faith advocates from around the country, participating in the annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days national gathering, delivered the Priorities for a Faithful Budget Preamble and Principles to their own senators and representatives. Ecumenical Advocacy Days is a movement of the ecumenical Christian community and over 50 recognized partners and allies to strengthen Christian voices and to mobilize for advocacy on a wide variety of U.S. domestic and international policy issues.

The Faithful Budget was spearheaded by some of the nation's most recognizable Christian, Jewish, Muslim and other faith-based organizations.

"Whether guided by the words of Isaiah, Luke or Muhammad, the values included in the Faithful Budget are inherent in all of our faiths," said Rabbi David Saperstein, Executive Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism. "During this time of great need in this country, it is essential that we lift our collective voices to speak to the social and ecological challenges our nation faces. The Faithful Budget begins that effort."

The Faithful Budget is a continuation of the Faithful Budget Campaign, an effort launched by the religious community in May 2011 to lift up faithful voices on behalf of the nation's most vulnerable in order to encourage the administration and Congress to maintain a robust commitment to domestic and international poverty assistance programs.

In July, the campaign organized high-level meetings with policymakers, a Washington fly-in of top religious leaders, and daily prayer vigils near the U.S. Capitol Building. The Faithful Budget Campaign also orchestrated a prayerful gathering in the Capitol Rotunda that culminated with the arrest of 11 faith leaders for refusing to stop praying on behalf of the nation's most vulnerable.

In November, the Faithful Budget Campaign held a Super Prayer Vigil outside of the White House and around the country that called on members of the failed Congressional "Super Committee" to reject efforts to reduce the deficit by placing an undue burden on the poor while shielding the wealthiest from additional sacrifice.

Additional details about the Faithful Budget Campaign can be found at [www.faithfulbudget.org](http://www.faithfulbudget.org).

## ***Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace Releases New Document: Vocation of the Business Leader: A Reflection***

[Click Here to Read the Entire Document](#)

On 30 March, Cardinal Peter Turkson, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, presented *Vocation of the Business Leader: A Reflection*, at the XXIV UNIAPAC World Congress in Lyon, France.

Speaking to 2000 Christian businesspeople, Cardinal Turkson noted the common malady that afflicts many, particularly businesspeople: a tendency to separate one's faith from one's work. This leads to the modern affliction of a divided life. Citing the desire of the Church to help businesspeople live out their professional lives fruitfully for the common good, the Cardinal evoked the Church's social doctrine, with its desire to implement its principles in the concrete.

The 30-page reflection had its beginning at an international seminar of business leaders and scholars in Rome, 24-26 February 2011, entitled, "Caritas in Veritate: The Logic of Gift and the Meaning of Business". In the light of the lively exchanges, participants resolved to write a handbook or guide for business men and women and business educators, to address the important role of vocation for the business leader in today's global economy and the contribution of the Church's social principles for the modern corporation.

Cardinal Turkson explained, "The Vocation of the Business Leader, fulfills its purpose of being a helpful guide to business leaders seeking to grow in the virtue of charity as befits their vocation.... The book covers three constitutive, interconnected moments of the process of discernment: seeing, judging and acting."

*Seeing* focuses on how one interprets the "signs of the times" with special attention to the transformative developments of globalization, communications technologies, financialization, and cultural trends.

*Judging* "prepares entrepreneurs to make sound judgments with enduring principles within the complex reality of the world of business. They are given as 'lighthouses' two fundamental principles of the social doctrine of the Church: human dignity and the common good," The document also focuses on six social principles and their practical relation to business (see below).

*Acting* calls for action, the integration of the aforementioned principles into one's ordinary working-life.

"The crisis that we have been experiencing for the last three years," Cardinal Turkson explained, "is of course due to technical errors and lack of accountability, but also moral failures like greed and the sway of ideologies -foremost among these, an economic liberalism that spurns rules and controls. This the Holy Father sums up as a fundamentally moral and ultimately anthropological crisis.

So when The Vocation calls for "producing goods and services that meet genuine human needs...organizing productive and meaningful work recognizing the human dignity" of everyone involved, and "using resources wisely to create both profit and well-being, then obviously a turn-about is urgently needed and a very real change in gears."

"The Church does not relinquish the hope," affirmed the Cardinal in the book's preface, "that Christian business leaders will, despite the present darkness, restore trust, inspire hope, and keep burning the light of faith that fuels their daily pursuit of the good."

## ***U.S. Bishops, Other Denominations File Amicus Curiae Brief in Supreme Court Case of Arizona Vs. United States***

***Brief argues federal government best positioned to protect family unity, human dignity State laws could jeopardize religious freedom of churches to serve immigrants***

**WASHINGTON**—The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and several other Christian denominations filed an *amicus curiae* brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of Arizona vs. United States, supporting the principle that the federal government controls the enactment and implementation of the nation's immigration laws. The March 26 brief argued that the federal government is in the best position to protect the well-established goals of family unity and human dignity in the nation's immigration system.

The brief also made the case that a patchwork of state laws could inhibit the Church's mission to serve immigrants, thus impinging upon religious liberty. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service joined the bishops in filing the brief.

Citing numerous examples of federal immigration policies designed to further family unity and human dignity, the brief argued that Arizona's SB 1070 is not a solution to the problems in federal law and in fact creates more problems than it solves.

"The Conference has a strong interest in ensuring that courts adhere to two important goals of federal immigration law—the promotion of family unity and the protection of human dignity," the brief stated. "The provisions of SB 1070 at issue in this case would hinder these critical federal objectives by replacing them with the single goal of reducing the number of undocumented immigrants in Arizona at all costs."

The brief said that state laws such as SB 1070 threaten to restrict the Church's ability to provide pastoral and social service care to immigrants and their families, thus infringing upon the Church's religious liberty.

"The Catholic Church's religious faith, like that of many religious denominations, requires it to offer charity—ranging from soup kitchens to homeless shelters—to all in need, whether they are present in this country legally or not. Yet SB 1070 and related state immigration laws have provisions that could...criminalize this charity... [or] exclude from that charity all those whose presence Arizona and other states would criminalize," the brief argued.

The brief asked the Supreme Court to affirm the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in striking down the Arizona law.

The brief is available online: [www.usccb.org/about/general-counsel/amicus-briefs/upload/state-of-arizona-v-united-states-of-america.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/about/general-counsel/amicus-briefs/upload/state-of-arizona-v-united-states-of-america.pdf)

## ***50 Faith-Based Groups Join Legal Brief Urging Supreme Court to Overturn Arizona's Anti-Immigrant Law***

As the Supreme Court prepares to take up legal challenges to Arizona's controversial immigration law (SB-1070), more than 50 prominent Catholic, Protestant and Jewish groups [including CMSM and LCWR] signed on to an *amicus curiae* brief arguing for suspension of the law.

"People of faith are compelled to oppose unjust laws that fail to uphold the dignity of every human being," said Lisa Sharon Harper, Director of Mobilizing at *Sojourners*. "All people are created in the image of God, and the Arizona law is an assault on that moral reality."

According to the brief, SB-1070 "endangers a large swath of Arizonans" by requiring law enforcement officials to demand that residents provide proof of citizenship. As the brief

points out, the law deputizes local police officers as immigration agents, creating a host of legal problems and humanitarian issues.

"This immoral law is turning people of faith into criminals," said Rev. Luis Cortés, president of Esperanza, a prominent Latino evangelical organization. "Laws that promote inhumane treatment of God's children have no place in our country and will lead to civil disobedience. Christ demands that of his followers."

People of faith provided a constant witness at the Arizona Statehouse as SB-1070 was debated, and after its passage they have pressed the courts to dismantle the draconian legislation. Arizona was the first state in the U.S. to pass this type of "attrition through enforcement" anti-immigrant law, and dozens of other states have since taken up similar proposals, which have passed in states such as Alabama and Georgia. Faith leaders in these states have spoken out against these laws that divide communities and separate immigrant families.

"We have seen firsthand the devastating effect of anti-immigrant legislation on all Arizonans, immigrant and non-immigrant alike," said Bishop Minerva Carcaño of the Desert Southwest Conference of the United Methodist Church. "I have confidence that the U.S. Supreme Court will repeal SB 1070. However, even if the Supreme Court is unable to make this right and bold decision, United Methodists in Arizona and across the U.S. will stand firmly and compassionately with our immigrant brothers and sisters."

Signers of the brief expect the Supreme Court to overturn the law, but regardless of the verdict remain focused on the higher law that commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

"As people of faith, we are called to welcome others as God has welcomed us," said Dr. Sharon E. Watkins, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). "May God move the hearts of our political leaders in the direction of greater hospitality and compassion toward our sisters and brothers in immigrant communities across this nation."

Read the whole brief here: [www.nilc.org/document.html?id=641](http://www.nilc.org/document.html?id=641) (full site of all briefs: [www.nilc.org/USvAZamici.html](http://www.nilc.org/USvAZamici.html)).

## *June is Torture Awareness Month*



With an overall theme of [2012 - Confronting the Culture of Torture](#), recognizing the degree to which torture has taken root in American culture and consciousness, the [National Religious Campaign against Torture](#) (NRCAT) is highlighting the following aspects of our work as opportunities for congregations, religious organizations and people of faith to mark Torture Awareness Month:

- Push back against the public advocacy of torture with a faith-based response
- Repeal indefinite detention
- End prolonged solitary confinement
- Combat anti-Muslim bigotry
- Pursue accountability for U.S.-sponsored torture

You'll find ways to get involved in one or more of these areas on NRCAT's [Torture Awareness Month webpage](#).

In addition to promoting these activities for congregations, NRCAT is helping to coordinate planning with other religious and human rights organizations for coalition events in June.

**CMSM**



- *assists major superiors in their role as leaders;*
- *promotes dialogue and collaboration with the conference of bishops and other major groups in church and society;*
- *provides a corporate influence in church and society.*

8808 Cameron St., Silver Spring, MD 20910-4152

Tel: 301-588-4030 • Fax: 301-587-4575 • [www.cmsm.org](http://www.cmsm.org)

This newsletter is sent to members and associate members of CMSM.

It is also sent to justice and peace directors of CMSM member organizations, and to others who have expressed an interest.

If you fall into the last category and no longer wish to receive this newsletter, send an e-mail to [postmaster@cmsm.org](mailto:postmaster@cmsm.org) and you will be removed from the list.