

# October 22, 2017

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time



**“The Eucharist is not  
a prize for the perfect,  
but a powerful medicine  
and nourishment  
for the weak.”**

**Pope Francis**

## **CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC CHURCH**

6300 McKenna Drive, Mobile, Alabama 36608

Email: [Church@CorpusChristiParish.com](mailto:Church@CorpusChristiParish.com) • Website: [www.CorpusChristiParish.com](http://www.CorpusChristiParish.com)

### **TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Parish Office: 342-1852 • Fax 342-6313  
School Office: 342-5474, ext. 1 • Fax 380-0325  
Rel. Ed. Office: 342-5474, ext. 7 • Fax 380-0325  
Full-Day Care: 342-2424 • Fax 343-3119  
Youth Ministry: 342-1852 • Fax 342-6313

### **PARISH OFFICE HOURS**

Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### **PASTORAL STAFF**

Very Reverend James F. Zoghby, V.F.  
Reverend John S. Boudreaux  
Deacon Arthur W. Robbins  
Mrs. Kristy F. Martin, School Principal  
Mrs. Diane M. Stoyka, Parish Catechetical Leader  
Mrs. Judi B. Ankiewicz, R.C.I.A. Coordinator  
Mr. Peter J. Stoyka, Youth Ministry Director  
Mr. Thomas C. McKee, Gym Manager

### **TO REGISTER AS A MEMBER OF THE PARISH**

Please fill out a Census Form. Census Forms are available in the church vestibule and parish office.

### **COMMUNITY CENTER RENTALS & SERVICES**

For rental information and kitchen services, please call the parish office at 342-1852 or 342-1420.

### **SUNDAY MASSES**

Vigil: 5:30 p.m. Saturday  
Morning: 7:00, 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

### **WEEKDAY MASSES**

6:30 a.m.: Monday through Friday  
8:15 a.m.: Monday through Saturday

### **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

Saturday: 5:00 p.m. and by request, particularly after the 6:30 & 8:15 a.m. weekday Masses.

### **BAPTISM, MARRIAGE, ANOINTING OF SICK**

Please call the parish office (342-1852) or information and scheduling baptism, marriage, anointing of sick.

### **ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (R.C.I.A.)**

Please see published schedule for specific dates and times, or call the parish office (342-1852).

**SUNDAY SCHOOL (C.C.D.)** Grades K–12, Sundays during school year, 10:05-10:55 a.m. in school bldgs.

**SCHOOL**, *SACS-accredited* for Grades PreK3 through 8.

To register, or to obtain further information or to arrange for a personal tour of our school, please call the school office, 342-5474, ext. 1, or send an email to [kmartin@CorpusChristiParish.com](mailto:kmartin@CorpusChristiParish.com).

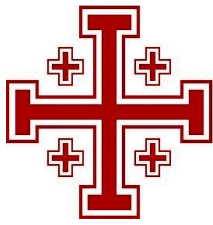
**Once a month**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday 5:30 p.m. Mass**

During the school year, we have an extra Sunday Mass during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month. Youth ministry students serve.

**Our Church Bulletins are also Online:**

Visit [DiscoverMass.com](http://DiscoverMass.com) or [CorpusChristiParish.com/Church](http://CorpusChristiParish.com/Church)



**ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** (R.C.I.A.)

Presented by Fr. James F. Zoghy

Continuing education for Catholic and other adults who would like to learn more about and/or join the Catholic Church. Meetings are in the Adult Ed. Room in the Community Center

**The 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month, 7 to 8 p.m.**

**THE BIBLE:** How to select a Bible: The difference between Catholic & Protestant Bibles; English translations; various editions. How to understand the Bible. An examination of specific scriptural passages, illustrating the use of commentaries, footnotes, cross references and introductions to the biblical books in various editions of the Bible in order to obtain a more enlightened understanding.

**Further Information:** Call 342-1852 to speak to one of the priests or email [Church@CorpusChristiParish.com](mailto:Church@CorpusChristiParish.com).

**40 Days for Life**

During the 40 Days for Life, Corpus Christi parishioners cover the abortion site in prayer, 6 am – 6 pm. on Wednesdays. To sign up: [www.40daysforlife.com/mobile](http://www.40daysforlife.com/mobile) or contact Steve Pierre, [ahoalton322@gmail.com](mailto:ahoalton322@gmail.com) or Mae Rehm, [maemouse@aol.com](mailto:maemouse@aol.com).

**Society of St. Vincent de Paul**

Poor Box, Food, Clothing donations and “In-Need” Drop Box at the SVDP table in the vestibule. Join the Society of St. Vincent de Paul by attending a meeting on **the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon.** of the month, 6:30 p.m., the **Parish House** To seek help, call 243-4061; leave name & phone no.

*Thank you for your contribution of Time & Talent!*

**Women of Mary**

**Wednesdays, 7 to 8 p.m. Room 3** (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Community Center)

All women are welcome to meet for prayer, reading the Gospel, and discussion.

**Info:** Sr. Deborah Kennedy, R.S.M., 753-4872.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**Classes:** 10:05-10:55 a.m. in the main school bldg. Sunday School participants at 9 a.m. Mass are dismissed with the final blessing.  
**Info:** [DianeStoyka@yahoo.com](mailto:DianeStoyka@yahoo.com) or 342-5474, ext. 7.

**Men of St. Joseph**

**Tuesdays, 7 to 8 a.m.** in the Family Room

**Also Wednesdays, 7-8 p.m.** in the Parish House

All men are welcome to meet for prayer, reading the Gospel, and discussion.

**Info:** Damian Bell, 639-2522 or 367-4486 or [Damian@rockbwm.com](mailto:Damian@rockbwm.com).

**Wed Evening Info:** Walter Bracewell, 599-1650 or [walter.bracewell@gmail.com](mailto:walter.bracewell@gmail.com)

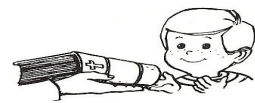
**CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

*Building the Body of Christ, one student at a time.*

**Oct. 23-27: Red Ribbon Week • Oct. 24: Archangel Radio**  
**CCCS students on air at noon • Oct. 27: Red Ribbon Fun Run**  
**and Noon Dismissal • Oct. 28: PTO Boo Bash, 4 to 7 p.m. •**  
**Nov. 1: Archbishop Rodi Visit, 8:15 a.m. All Saints Day Mass.**

**Tuesday Night Bible Study**

Meetings are at **6:30 p.m.** on Tuesdays in the Parish House. The Bible Timeline, a Catholic study with a series of 24 videos.  
**Info:** Dave Burchette, 251-367-6660 or [davebur1955@gmail.com](mailto:davebur1955@gmail.com).



**Children’s Liturgy of the Word**

**Looking for volunteers** to teach the pre-k through 1<sup>st</sup> grade children during the 9 or 11 a.m. Sunday Masses. The

material for the Children’s Liturgy of the Word is provided on an easy-to-use hand-out. A sign-up sheet is in the vestibule. Sign up for the month and Mass you would like to teach.

*Thank you for your contribution of Time & Talent!*

**Tuesday Women’s Bible Study**

10:00-1130 a.m., Room 3 (2<sup>nd</sup> Flr, Com. Ctr). Elevator available. We will study of the book of Exodus: Moses, Joshua, and the Migration to the Promised Land. All women are welcome. No previous Bible study required. Please bring your Bible. **Info:** Judi Ankiewicz, 251-344-0321. Please leave name and number.

**Thursday Women’s Bible Study**

9:15-10:45 a.m.. In the Com Ctr Conference Rm. “Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist” by Brant Pitre, and “The First, Second and Third Letters of St. John and the Revelation to St. John” by Ignatius Catholic Bible Study. All women are welcome. For info, or to sign up, please contact Joanne Donaghey, 251-554-6753 or [joannekd@alo.com](mailto:joannekd@alo.com). Nursery is available.



**Jazz Brunch**

in the Banquet Hall

With Jazz Musicians Performing Live!

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Month**

(Every month except June, July, August)

**Buffet Served from 12 Noon to 1:30 p.m.**

**\$10.25 for Adults • \$4.25 for Children (Age 12 & under)**

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**

**Next K of C Meeting:** 4<sup>th</sup> Mon., Oct. 23, 7 p.m., The Parish House.  
**Info:** Chad Pugh, Grand Knight, 232-0648 or [chad.pugh34@gmail.com](mailto:chad.pugh34@gmail.com).

**Widowed Persons’ Support Group**

For information call parishioner Glen Porter at 666-8977.

**AA – Alanon – OA – CODA**

**AA:** Sun., 7 p.m., and Wed., 7 p.m., Cougar Den.

**Alanon:** Sun., 7 p.m., and Wed., 7 p.m., Arts & Sciences Bldg.

**OA:** Sat., 9 a.m., Arts & Sciences Bldg.

**CODA:** Tues., 6:45 p.m., Arts & Sciences Bldg.

***This Saturday, Oct. 28, from 4 to 7 p.m.***  
***on Corpus Christi Field***

## Corpus Christi Boo Bash

**Saturday, Oct. 28, from 4 to 7 p.m.**  
**on Corpus Christi Field**

Join us for fun and good on the big field! We will have carnival games, a bounce house, tea-cup ride, rock wall, mechanical bull, dunk booth, cake walk, bounce house, and plenty of other fun for all ages. Stick around for our first **Trunk-or-Treat** at 6:30 p.m. There are 30 parking spots for anyone who wants to participate. There is no cost to participate, but you need to provide your own candy for 200 trick-or-treaters. There will be an award for the best **Trunk-or-Treat**. There will also be a **Market** at Boo Bash. The cost for a booth is \$25. We are looking for High School volunteers to assist with set-up, and to work the event. We encourage you to bring your little ones dressed in their Halloween costumes. Contact PTO President, Melissa Overstreet, at 251-648-8378 for more info.

## Church Decorating Committee

***Please look for the Sign up sheet  
in the vestibule, and sign up!***

Volunteers wanted to assist in decorating the church for Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter. Some heavy lifting and climbing on tall ladders will be part of it. Men and Women of any age are welcome to help create beautiful settings for the liturgy. Main source of contact will be email. Coordinator is Becky Sheffield. *Thanks for your contribution of Time & Talent!*



## Sing with the Choir at the 11 a.m. Sunday Mass

Practice in the church on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday  
of the month at 7:00 p.m.

*Thank you for your contribution of Time & Talent!*

## Wednesday Night Dinner

**5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Banquet Hall**  
**\$9.25 for Adults • \$4.25 for Children (Age 12 & under)**

**Oct. 25:** Fried Pork Chops w/Gravy, Baked Fish, Roasted Sweet Potatoes, Turnip Greens, Sauteed Squash Medley, Garden Salad, Dinner Roll, Bread Pudding. Iced Tea, Lemonade, Coffee.  
 Kids Optional Menu on request: Chicken Tenders/Fries.)

***Must RSVP no later than TUESDAY EVENING***

Return an RSVP Card, or call 342-1852 or email  
[WedNightDinner@CorpusChristiParish.com](mailto:WedNightDinner@CorpusChristiParish.com)

## Children's 1st Reconciliation & 1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist

**Mon., Dec. 4, 2017:** 1<sup>st</sup> Reconciliation Service, 7:00 p.m.

**Mon., Feb. 19, 2018:** First Eucharist Parent Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

**Sun., Feb. 25, 2018:** 1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist Enrollment Mass, 9 a.m., followed by 1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist Mini Retreat, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

**Sat., April 14, 2018:** First Eucharist Practice, 10:00 a.m.

**Sun., April 15, 2018:** First Eucharist Mass, 1:00 p.m.

**Info:** Diane Stoyka, [DianeStoyka@yahoo.com](mailto:DianeStoyka@yahoo.com) or 342-5474, ext. 7.



FOR CHILDREN WHO WISH  
FOR JUST ONE GIFT

## Box of Joy

**Don't seal the boxes.** Use rubber bands if needed to keep closed.

Small boxes are available to fill with the simplest of gifts: small toys, soap, pencils, toothbrush, toothpaste, crayons, coloring books, hard candy, t-shirts (but no liquids, food or combat items), labeled for a boy or girl, age 2-4, 5-9 or 10-14, to be given to children in impoverished countries. This will be the **ONLY** gift these children receive for Christmas. You are asked to include a \$9 donation in a clearly-marked envelope, or pay it online. \$7 for shipping & handling, and \$2 to help support the missionaries. This is a program by Cross Catholic Outreach:

Visit <http://www.crosscatholic.org/boxofjoy>.

Info: Lorie Colletti, 366-5250.

**Boxes need to be returned by Sunday, Nov. 5.**

## Outback Weekend Retreat

***This coming weekend!*** October 27-29

Camp Grace, 11081 Wanda Drive, Mobile, Al. 36608

Register Now at:

[www.menofstjoseph.com](http://www.menofstjoseph.com) or [www.mosjoutback.com](http://www.mosjoutback.com)

The Men of St Joseph Outback is a Catholic retreat weekend designed to give a husband & wife or parent & teen or engaged couple a practical strategy for daily living that focuses on their relationship with God, family, friends, the church & community. It also qualifies as a retreat for a parent & teen of Confirmation student.

This Outback retreat is a Catholic event like no other in the United States. It is a spirit-filled, adventurous, high-octane, two-person encounter that incorporates several reflective talks with interesting outdoor activities. The weekend also includes the celebration of Mass, Adoration and the sacrament of Reconciliation. Exceptional Praise & Worship music and great food round out the weekend.

The cost of this retreat is \$295 per couple. To register, please go to the Men of St. Joseph website, and click on "Outback Retreat." Know also that a few scholarships are available should there be a need.

This is a weekend experience that will have a positive impact on your life, your relationship with your family and with Jesus.

Please sign up today. You won't regret it.

## *Please support the advertisers on the back of the bulletin*

Their ads enable us to have our bulletins printed by Diocesan Publications at no cost to the parish. Ads are purchased from Diocesan Publications. For information about placing an ad, contact them at 1-800-292-9111 or [www.diocesan.com](http://www.diocesan.com).

## The Corpus Christi Women's Club

The CCWC invites parishioners to visit our table in the atrium after the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Masses for info on the **Making Strides for Breast Cancer 3.5K Walk** and/ or to make a donation for Breast Cancer awareness. The walk will be held on Saturday, Oct. 28. Registration starts at 6:45 a.m. at Bienville Square. The Walk starts at 8 a.m.

## CYO Basketball Registration is Open

For all 2nd-8th Graders in Corpus Christi School or Sunday School

Register online at [www.ccsboosterclub.com](http://www.ccsboosterclub.com)  
or at [www.CorpusChristiParish.com/School](http://www.CorpusChristiParish.com/School)

Registration ends Saturday, Oct. 28.

Info: Susan Graves at [Basketball@ccsboosterclub.com](mailto:Basketball@ccsboosterclub.com)

**Go Cougars!**

## Corpus Christi Youth Ministry

**Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday:** Middle school (6th, 7th, 8<sup>th</sup>), 4:00-5:15 p.m. • 5:30 p.m. Sunday Mass • High School (9th-12th), 6:30-8:00 p.m.

**Join us for lessons on faith, fellowship, and fun!**

**Stay in the know** — Check out our new youth table in the vestibule for flyers and reminders before or after Mass. We're on Facebook at Corpus Christi Youth Ministry. There is a page you can "like" as well as a private group you can join. We're also on Instagram at @ccyouthministry. Lastly, you may sign up for reminders via email. Check out the youth ministry table for more info on how to get set up. Info: Peter Stoyka, YM Director, [pstoyka@corpuschristiparish.com](mailto:pstoyka@corpuschristiparish.com)

## High School Confirmation Schedules

### H.S. Senior Class of 2019:

Sun., Jan. 21, 2018, Confirmation Luncheon, 12:00 to 2 p.m., in the Conference Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Community Center.

Sun., Jan 21, 2018, Sponsors must be present with their Confirmation candidates for the Confirmation Practice from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Tues., Jan. 23, 2018, **Confirmation**, 6:00 p.m. Candidates: Report to the Adult Ed. Room by 4:45 p.m. to meet with the Archbishop.

**H.S. Senior Class of 2020:** Sun., Nov. 12, 2017, Spirit Day, at Corpus Christi, 2:00 to 6:30 p.m., Lesson 6.

Sat., Jan. 27, 2018, Confirmation Retreat, at Visitation Monastery, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Lessons 2/3/4.

**H.S. Senior Class of 2021:** Sun., Feb. 18, 2018, Spirit Day, at Corpus Christi, 2:00 to 6:30 p.m., Lessons 5 & 7.

## Volunteer to sell SCRIP after weekend Masses

For more info, please contact the Parish Office,  
342-1852 or [Church@CorpusChristiParish.com](mailto:Church@CorpusChristiParish.com).

**SCRIP** is for sale in the atrium after the 9:00 a.m. Mass every Sunday. SCRIP gift cards provided by our parish school include grocery stores, department stores, restaurants, gas stations and many more retailers. Cards are available in \$5, \$10, \$15, \$20, and larger amounts. For more detailed information, please contact our SCRIP office at 342-5474, ext. 1204 or [SCRIP@CorpusChristiParish.com](mailto:SCRIP@CorpusChristiParish.com).

**Welcome New Parishioners**  
Anna Fredricks

## BAPTIZED IN CHRIST

David Andrew Rodgers, III  
(son of David Andrew Rodgers, Jr. & Lauren Moreno Sutura Rodgers)

## Flowers

The flowers before the altar last weekend  
were placed in memory of  
**Terry Porter**  
on the 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her death.  
Given by Glen Porter and Family.

**Around the Archdiocese:** **Shrimp Boil** to benefit the Knights of Columbus annual fundraiser to support persons with Intellectual Disabilities, Sat., Oct. 28, 12 noon-4 pm at Grand Mariner Marina on Dog River, 6036 Rock Point Rd., just southwest of the Dog River bridge off of DIP. Shrimp platter \$15 cash or check (payable to Knights of Columbus). Beer and soft drinks will be sold by the Marina dock store NO BYOB allowed. Relax on the dock and listen to music and karaoke as you enjoy a seafood feast. Info: Mike Doran 610-8853 or [mdoran@southalabama.edu](mailto:mdoran@southalabama.edu). **Rolling Tigers Draw Down**, Nov. 8 at St. Dominic's Murphy Center to benefit adaptive athletics programs at Auburn, Camp ASCCA, the US Paralympic Team, and others. This program is main streaming adaptive athletics where non disabled participants can play in wheel chairs also. **Our Savior Catholic Church's 11th Annual Merry Mart/ Santa's Work Shop**, hosted by the Youth Group, Sunday, Nov. 5, Noon-4 pm. Many vendors, a Santa Shop for kids, Bake Goods, Concessions and gift wrapping.

**FIRST COLLECTION TODAY:** Tithing Offerings.

**SECOND COLLECTION TODAY:** Propagation of the Faith.

**OCT. 8<sup>TH</sup> BUILDING FUND ONLINE & COLLECTION:** \$674.50

**OCT. 8<sup>TH</sup> TITHING ONLINE & COLLECTION:** \$12,320.04

## Thank You and God Bless You

Receive a detail listing of your contributions  
by mail, email or fax at any time:

Call 342-1852 or email [Church@CorpusChristiParish.com](mailto:Church@CorpusChristiParish.com). God bless all for tithing, contributions, bequests, remembrances in wills in support of God's work here at Corpus Christi Parish. To make a donation of stock, ask your financial manager, or call Selena Hemphill at Morgan Stanley at 470-1084 or 800-624-7814.



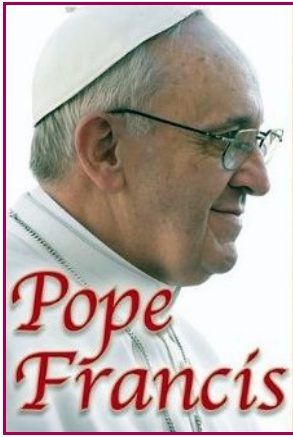
**To set up Online Giving:** Please go to [www.CorpusChristiParish.com](http://www.CorpusChristiParish.com); click "Church"; then click the green Online Giving icon on the left side of the church's homepage. Follow the instructions to either make a one-time contribution, or set up a recurring withdrawal, from a checking, saving or credit card account to tithing or building fund, school annual fund or other special collection. **For assistance**, call 800-348-2886, ext 4, or the parish office, 342-1852.



## Offering Envelopes

If you wish to use Offering Envelopes, just notify the parish office (342-1852). An initial set will be sent to you right away, and then, every two months, you will receive a two-month's supply of envelopes.

**Peace be with you.**



## Pope Francis: "We must learn to listen more to our conscience..."

Pope Francis praised his predecessor, Benedict XVI, as a model of paying attention to the voice of one's conscience. Pope Francis said, "Pope Benedict XVI has given us a great example because when the Lord had made it clear to him in prayer what was the next step he had to take (*resign as pope*), he followed his conscience with a great sense of discernment and courage. He followed the will of God speaking to his heart."

"Conscience was important even to Jesus. Jesus, in his earthly life, was not, so to speak, 'remote-controlled.' He was free. But he always listened to the Father's voice, and followed it. At one point he made a firm decision to go up to Jerusalem for the last time

— a decision made in his conscience. His decision was made in obedience to the Father, in profound intimate attunement to the Father's will. But Jesus was free. His decision was a free one.

"Jesus wants us Christians to be free, as he is: to have liberty which comes from dialogue with the Father. Jesus wants neither selfish Christians, who follow their egos and do not speak with God. Nor does he want weak Christians, without free will: remote-controlled Christians, incapable of creativity, who always seek to connect with the will of someone else. They are not free. Jesus wants us to be free, and this freedom is to be found in inner dialogue with God. If a Christian does not know how to talk with God, does not know how to listen to God in his own conscience, then he is not free.

"So we must learn to listen more to our conscience. Be careful, however. This does not mean we ought to follow our ego, do whatever interests us, whatever suits us, whatever pleases us. That is not conscience. Conscience is the interior space in which we can listen to and hear the truth, the good, the voice of God. It is the inner place of our relationship with Him who speaks to our heart, and helps us to discern, to understand the path we ought to take, and, once the decision is made, to move forward, to remain faithful."

**"A penitent's sins are forgiven, not when the priest says the sacramental words of absolution over him or her, nor when the penitent completes the assigned penance, but the instant the penitent is truly sorry for his or her sins."**

— St. Thomas Aquinas

**An inmate asked the pope why he had to go to confession for pardon instead of just getting on his knees and asking God for forgiveness. Pope Benedict, XVI responded, "Naturally, if you get on your knees and, with real love for God, pray that God forgive you, he will. But sin doesn't disturb only the relationship between an individual and God. It also harms the community of the Church and wider society. The sacrament of Reconciliation is the great gift by which, through confession, I can receive real forgiveness from, and a full re-admission into, the community of the Church."**

— *CNS, Dec. 18, 2011, during Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Rome's Rebibbia prison.*

**"Pastors must always remember what the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches quite clearly: 'Responsibility for an action can be diminished or even nullified by immaturity, force of acquired habit, conditions of anxiety, or other psychological or social forces.'"**

— Pope Francis



# Conscience

*I always thought that when we have to decide whether something is right or wrong, we are supposed to follow our conscience. I mentioned this in a group recently and the priest said it was not true. According to him, we are obliged to follow the teaching of those in authority, especially in the Church. Who is right?*

What the priest possibly was attempting to tell you was that an honest conscience is not, as many people might think, a kind of blind instinct or spontaneous feeling. This could come more from selfishness or cowardice than from any good motive. People can rationalize morally when they know what they want to do, know their motives are doubtful, and yet fish around for some phony justification to delude themselves and others. This is pure dishonesty from scratch, and has nothing to do with genuine moral decision-making.

You are correct, however, in believing that our personal moral decisions must be made on the basis of what we ourselves honestly believe is right. Whatever another may say or do, God holds us responsible for our moral actions, and that responsibility cannot be shifted to someone else. We must reach our decision and then trustingly be able to stand before God and say, "I may be wrong, but to the best of my ability, I sincerely believe this is what I should do."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, quoting St. John Henry Newman, calls one's conscience the "aboriginal (first) vicar of Christ," the voice of Christ before all others. Deep in a person's consciousness is a law he or she must obey, a voice calling him to love, to do good and avoid evil, says the catechism.

In 1968, in a commentary on the Second Vatican Council, the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now retired Pope Benedict XVI, wrote:

"Over the pope as the expression of the binding claim of ecclesiastical authority, there still stands one's own conscience, which must be obeyed before all else, even against the requirement of ecclesiastical authority. This emphasis on the individual, whose conscience confronts him with a supreme and ultimate tribunal, is one which in the last resort is beyond the claim even of the official Church."

**"Over the pope as the expression of the binding claim of ecclesiastical [church] authority, there still stands one's own conscience, which must be obeyed before all else, even against the requirement of ecclesiastical authority. This emphasis on the individual, whose conscience confronts him with a supreme and ultimate tribunal, is one which, in the last resort, is beyond the claim even of the official Church."**

*Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger / Pope Benedict XVI*

**"Every man has the duty, and the right, to seek the truth in religious matters, in order that he may with prudence form for himself right and true judgments of conscience. Through his conscience man sees and recognizes the demands of the divine law. He is bound to follow this conscience faithfully in all activity.... He must not be forced to act contrary to his conscience. Nor must he be prevented from acting according to his conscience, especially in religious matters."**

*Declaration on Religious Freedom, The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council*

**"Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, tells him inwardly at the right moment: do this, shun that. A man's conscience is his most secret core, and his sanctuary. There, he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths. For, man has in his heart a law. By conscience, in a wonderful way, that law is made known which is fulfilled in the love of God and of one's neighbor."**

*The Church In The Modern World, The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council*

**The teaching authority of the Church, the Magisterium, aids us in the formation of our conscience. Aiding, however, is not the same as deciding for us. The Church has never claimed to take the place of conscience.**

*Fr. John Catoir*

The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council note that it is precisely because human beings are “endowed with reason and free will” that they naturally seek what is true and good and also, then, have a “moral obligation” to search for the truth. This is especially the case in seeking religious truth. Moreover, the truth which they believe they have come to know binds them to that truth. Even if the “truth” they believe is not actually true, yet, because they believe it is true, they are bound to follow their conscience. As long as what they believe does not infringe upon the just rights of others, they cannot be coerced into giving up or changing what they believe.

**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**

Does freedom of conscience mean each person can do as he or she pleases? No, it does not. Freedom of conscience implies that an understanding of the law of God is written in the human heart. There is an objective law of love involved, and we have a duty to conform to this law as we understand it. However, a person’s conscience is their last best judgment on the action they are about to undertake, and the Church teaches that we have a duty to follow that judgment, even if we are in error.

The teaching authority of the Church, the Magisterium, aids us in the formation of our conscience. Aiding, however, is not the same as deciding for us. The Church has never claimed to take the place of conscience. By its teaching the Magisterium provides the safest norm of conduct for all and is binding on all members of the Church, but it does not cancel freedom of conscience. It distills the wisdom of scripture and tradition, presenting its conclusions, fully aware of the fact that a teaching cannot bind unless the conscience accepts it as binding.

**Fr. John Catoir**

As little as I meddle in the conscience of others, I am certain that my conscience belongs to me alone. It is the last thing a man can do for his salvation: to be at one with himself.

**St. Thomas Moore**

I do not condemn other men’s consciences. Their consciences must save them, and mine must save me.

**St. John Fisher**

Every judgment of conscience, be it right or wrong, be it about things evil in themselves or morally indifferent, is obligatory, in such wise that he who acts against his conscience always sins.

**St. Thomas Aquinas**

It is better to die in excommunication than to violate one’s conscience.

**St. Thomas Aquinas**

We follow Church leaders only to the extent that they themselves follow Christ.... Some situations oblige one to obey God and one’s own conscience rather than the leaders of the Church. [*“Peter and the apostles said (to the Sanhedrin): ‘We must obey God rather than men.’” Acts 5:29*] One may even be obliged to accept excommunication rather than to act against one’s own conscience.

**Cardinal Walter Kasper**

St. Thomas is so consistent in his respect for conscience that he maintains that it would be wrong for one to make an act of faith in Christ if, in one’s conscience, one is convinced that it is wrong to carry out such an act.

**St. John Paul II**

Precisely because we worship God fully and have faith in him, we have no right to claim that we must force others to believe in him and worship him.

**St. John Paul II**

Conscience is inviolable. No person is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his/her conscience, as the moral tradition of the Church attests.

**USCCB (U.S. Bishops)**

I shall drink – to the Pope, if you please – still, to Conscience first, and to the Pope afterwards.

**St. John Henry Newman**

If Newman places conscience above authority, he is not proclaiming anything new with respect to the constant teaching of the Church. The conscience, as Vatican Council II teaches, is man’s sanctuary and most sacred core where he finds himself alone with God, whose voice resounds within him.

**St. John Paul II**



**“When he comes, being the Spirit of Truth, he will guide you to all truth.”**

John 16:13