

Defending Human Dignity

Catholic Answers to Gender, Abortion, and Relativism

Informal essays on everything from freedom of speech
and religion, to gender ideology, sex, abortion
and everything in between.

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Introduction

I can hear the lamenting cry of the mourning dove coming through the air vent in the ceiling. It's probably perched on the duct jutting out of the roof. What is it decrying today? Another day with its ups and downs? Don't we all have them?

Another day, another controversy

4:37am

I wake up before dawn breaks. The birds are already singing outside in anticipation of the sun rising; I suppose they have a sixth sense alerting them to the first rays of our luminous celestial body working its way above the horizon. I've heard someone, somewhere, expound on the birds' reason for filling the air with their concerted harmonies; they would be raising their voices in glory to God, first thing in the morning! What a beautiful thought. God's creation chanting the service of morning prayers at daybreak. Waking up to an intonation of lauds by an avian choir each morning fills me with wonder.

5:00am

I get out of bed. Six hours of sleep will have to suffice for today. I'd much rather get up, go downstairs and work on my computer than try to stay asleep.

I am a high school teacher. Nowadays, the computer reigns in the classroom. All of my courses are technologically prepared. Another day of braving hordes of teenagers interested in only one thing: their cell phones. It's like an extension of their hands, the way they're attached to them.

Why the government didn't ban phones outright from entering school property is beyond

comprehension. At long last, this year, in my province, phones are banned from the classroom, albeit not from the school. At least it's a start. I am a product of the generation when cell phones didn't even exist !! Somehow, we all survived the '80's and '90s without lugging around a third appendage. When I cross the main corridor of the school at lunchtime, I see dozens of youth sitting next to each other on the bleachers, each texting their friend instead of engaging in a face-to-face conversation. How can they learn social skills?

The worst part is social media! This is about all they follow: Tik Tok here, Instagram there, Facebook in between, a dash of X added as seasoning, a lot of YouTube thrown into the mix, and, of course, the neverending online video games that comprises at least half their waking hours. My perseverance in teaching adolescents is a testament to my commitment to our common future; these students are our next doctors and lawyers, nurses and teachers, plumbers and electricians and, hopefully, mothers and fathers.

But, then again, maybe not. A sizable portion of students nowadays are sexually active, taking contraceptives and advocating abortion rights. Nobody wants to get married anymore, let alone raise a family. They all want to have sex, with no strings attached. I have heard 15-year old students affirm, in the classroom, for all to hear, that they will do what they want, when they want and with whom they want (I am omitting the vulgar obscenities with which they expressed themselves). It is not uncommon to hear snippets of conversations between female students, explaining to others their use of an intrauterine device (IUD). At least some of the contracepting students didn't want to go as far as abortion, according to what I could hear from my desk eight feet away, while others were quite vocal about their own rights trumping those of the child within the womb. This was in Religion class no less, in response to the Catholic Church's moral

doctrine concerning sexuality. Most students in catholic schools are baptized Catholics, who, for the most part, ignore catholic teaching and doctrine (for example, some of them do not know what the Eucharist is, saying that they had eaten the funny tasting bread once at their first communion, but nobody told them what it was and they haven't had it since).

This entire contraception mentality has pervaded young minds for the past six decades.

Recreational sex versus procreative sex. Women's lib. Equality. Freedom. My body, my choice. Free love. The whole nine yards. Try expressing your traditional views on love, sex, marriage and babies nowadays, and watch the reactions your position ignites on the opposing side. No respectful debate, no freedom of expression, no "I disagree with your views but I respect your right to express them". According to one pro-choice teacher in New York, the pro-lifers, who were merely preparing pro-life signs, were the ones "inciting violence" against the pro-choicers. The teacher in question hurled invectives at the protesting pro-life students and destroyed their pro-life signs, demonstrating her desire that they do not express their opinions on abortion¹. The fact that this educator was relieved of her duties by the college gives me hope that some institutions still believe in upholding the first amendment in the United States' constitution², which guarantees freedom of expression.

Even though I'm Canadian, I follow closely what happens in America, since Canada is an ally, as well as a follower of all things American. Our head of state delivers the same rhetoric as many of our southern neighbors of defending a woman's "right to choose". Choose what? Killing a defenseless child? Right up to the moment of birth? Without limits? Across the board?

Mind-boggling !! Oops ! Excuse me, I forgot: it's not acceptable to use the word "kill"; it's

¹ National Catholic Register, Joe Bukuras/CNA/Education, May 23, 2023 (ncregister.com), (<https://www.ncregister.com/cna/new-york-professor-vandalizes-student-pro-life-display-and-chases-journalist-with-machete>)

² whitehouse.gov (The First Amendment provides that Congress make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting its free exercise. It protects freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and the right to petition the Government for a redress of grievances).

much too negative and violent sounding, not to mention judgemental, for describing an action that is, after all, legal !! I think the popular euphemism of the moment is “exercising one’s reproductive health care choice”. This sanitized version of “killing” is much more palatable. No feeling of guilt is involved when one is exercising one’s health care choice. Why can’t people just call a spade a spade?

My students are naturally interested in all matters controversial. For example, they unanimously chose the subject of abortion for debate class. Of course, they were all on the pro-choice side, so I opted to be a “student” at the event to show them the protocol of presenting one’s position and the art of debating. And, yes, I chose to represent the pro-life side. Fatal mistake on my part. It wasn’t long before I got called to the administration office to give an account of my actions. It took forty-five minutes of my time to justify myself.

Apparently, the pupils should have been prepared weeks in advance, with the help of psychologists to guide the entire event. Did these students have a psychologist explain to them the ins and outs of sexual matters and the emotional and psychological effects of being sexually active, with all possible consequences, when they decided to embark on their sexual forays? I think not. From what I have heard over the years, most girls are given the go-ahead for the contraception pill by their own mothers who don’t want them getting pregnant. I’ve heard many stories of mothers saying “here”, while dropping the circular contraceptive pill box in their daughter’s hand as soon as the girl started looking at boys. The girl’s response was a smiling “thanks mom”. That’s it, that’s all !! This is nothing new. When I was in high school, back in the eighties, a bunch of us would listen to other girls boasting about their mom or dad wanting to be informed when they decided to have sex with their boyfriend in order to go to the doctor and

obtain a prescription for the pill. The nubile females would then smile at us, with a self-satisfied expression on their faces, while the rest of us looked on, without saying a word.

As I was saying, the subject of abortion was chosen by my students for the debate, which is understandable, given that the very themes of some of the books they are given to read in class deal with sexual matters, in one form or another. Furthermore, these are the same teenagers who are already sexually active and using contraception. If they are deemed old enough to be having sex and using contraception, are they not old enough to be informed about exactly what abortion is?

As for the topic of abortion itself, irregardless of the students' current sexual behavior, I did not have the presence of mind to voice the following in my defense: if the subject is so taboo, then it must mean that there is something wrong that needs to be hidden, otherwise, why be so hush-hush about it if it were such a good thing? The pro-choice side is therefore implicitly admitting that there is indeed something wrong about abortion. Why not let the students find out absolutely everything there is to know about abortion (just like any other subject) and let them make their own decision about the rightness or wrongness of it ?

Anyway, will I be without a job soon? How far will this go? All because I afforded my students, and myself, the right to express our opinions freely, in the context of a public forum such as a debate. I wonder if I would have had this pushback if I had advocated the pro-choice side? If not, what total hypocrisy. I probably would have been commended on my teaching technique. All it takes is for the pro-choice side to kick up a fuss, thus causing problems for the pro-life side. Of course, after this hullabaloo, it goes without saying that I will not be accepting this topic

choice (or any other “hot-button” issue) in the future for the debate unit. We’ll have to content ourselves with discussing such topics as which animal makes a better pet: a cat or a dog? Or is this also too controversial? Will I have to defend myself against cat lovers/dog lovers everywhere ?

Another controversy which will undoubtedly rear its ugly head to torment me at some future point is the Transgender Movement that is being spearheaded in our schools. This movement has been aggressively pursued in the past few years (around the time that the COVID pandemic cohorts in schools ended). I survived the past thirty-six months in Education basically by cowardice, avoidance and retreat strategies.

Yes, I admit it. I did not have the courage to stand my ground and refuse to cave to the edict of using preferred pronouns. I feel so very ashamed of myself for letting my fear of reprisals and unwanted publicity influence my decision to comply with the mandate of not “misgendering” transgender students and colleagues. I actually addressed some of my biologically female peers as “mister” and used masculine pronouns for my poor overwhelmed female students struggling with this issue. Doing so went against my core beliefs; I felt compelled to do so by the school’s mandate and by fears of losing my job.

Fear of the possibility of being arrested (like were some devoted, informed parents in Canada) loomed large before me and I capitulated. Having to live with one’s own lack of courage is quite humiliating, let me assure you. At one point, I had to sit through a two-hour presentation of a transgender educator informing us, the “ignorant teachers”, of the correct terminology to use when speaking to/about transgender persons. Included in the oral presentation were the definitions of the endless different genders and self-identifications that anyone can adopt on any

given day, as well as what our reaction should be when we make the “mistake” of misgendering someone and how to react when being called out on said mistake.

It’s hard to believe, let alone understand, the school board’s decision to include such a presentation at school, during a professional pedagogical formation. Shouldn’t teachers receive formations on improving teaching techniques and on addressing students’ working habits? Or workshops on math, science and literacy courses? I was sitting in the midst of seventy other teachers, listening to their murmurs of assent at each pronouncement of the orator. Everyone around me seemed to be in full agreement with this presentation. Then, to add to this already unusual display, we were all told how we were expected to act going forward. Within weeks, I was called out by a colleague for labeling a female student as “she”. I had unknowingly “misgendered” the youth and was peremptorily told to address the student as “he”, with an actual index finger pointed at me. I was so taken aback, I literally retreated a few feet, in shock, at the vehemence of the upbraiding. Even the sweet child looked ill at ease and told me not to worry about it, that she didn’t mind and had not decided yet which gender she wanted to be. I deduced from this tidbit that the adults were the ones enforcing the gendering mandate in the school, not the students.

I did venture, two or three times, to address this issue with the higher echelon, only to be cut off each time by the administration, being told that “we won’t talk about this”, or “they are confused and searching their identity/trying to find themselves”, effectively shutting me up. I quickly realized that I had absolutely no allies in this particular school and was surrounded by sycophants who were kowtowing to the prevailing mentality of our culture regarding everything

associated with the LGBTQ2SI+/Transgender agenda. And, by the way, this is a (so-called) catholic school, which “proudly” displays the rainbow flag side by side with the huge crucifix in their lobby, along with a second rainbow flag flying high on the staff on their front lawn (going against the diocese’s request to not do this).

I later opted for the easy way out and left the school at the end of the year, refusing their offer of a guaranteed position for the new school year. I went elsewhere the following autumn. What did I find there? A bit of the same, though not quite as bold and in-your-face. As far as I can see, the entire school system is more or less following the transgender agenda as well as the contraception/abortion mentality that is ruining society as a whole. Our (so-called) Catholic school board uses deviant theology, such as flaunting our Lord and Savior’s very own words of “love one another” as their motto to justify their affirmation and promotion of all the LGBTQ+ issues (not to mention the other false “realities” of our society, such as abortion). They naturally always omit the rest of Jesus’s words in His exhortation of loving one another: “*..as I have loved you*” (*John 13:34-35*). We are supposed to love each other as Christ loved us: in truth. He did say “*I am the way, the truth and the life*” (*John 14:6*), hence that is how we must love each other. Not by agreeing with lies, but by proclaiming, lovingly, the truth. Perverting scripture to justify aberrations is common in many spheres of society, including many politicians who will cite chapter and verse of the bible and somehow use the biblical citations to give grounds for such actions as “transgender care” and “reproductive health care” (aka abortion). One only needs to have listened to such eminent persons as the 46th U.S. President Joe Biden and former U.S. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, both self-described devout, practicing Catholics, making links between their faith and their unashamed support and push for abortion and transgender

“rights”. And, of course, Canada’s Catholic Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, has always been right up there, spouting the same narrative. President Biden even went so far as to make the sign of the cross at a pro-abortion rally in Florida, in April 2024³, for which he was criticized, given the Church’s unequivocal stance on abortion.

All of these agendas, by the way, are being entrenched in schools, without parental knowledge; children can be as transgender as they want at school and parents have no clue. I have seen this phenomenon with my own eyes. This is going on right now in elementary and secondary schools all over the country. School authorities do not have to inform parents/legal guardians of such a momentous event in the child’s life. We, the teachers, were all told to not disclose a student’s “preferred pronoun” to parents, lest they suffer abuse at home because of their decision to self-identify/self-define. We were told to address the students by their biological pronouns when communicating with parents, but to address them by their chosen names and pronouns in the school environment (this smacks of multiple personality syndrome, not to mention blatant hypocrisy and lying by omission). Another warning we received collectively, during a personnel meeting, was to accept male students using female bathrooms, and vice-versa, without question. We were bluntly told that if we had a problem with this, we needed to undergo formations in order to correct our wrong thinking. We were supposedly the ones who were putting up obstacles to inclusivity, and we were told that it would not be tolerated.

Just to put some of this in context, there was recently a Bill up for debate in California that would have enshrined into law the mandate for parents to affirm their child’s gender choice under penalty of being charged with child abuse: “*Under California’s Assembly Bill 957 ... a*

³ <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/biden-makes-sign-of-the-cross-during-pro-abortion-speech-in-florida>

*parent could lose custody for not ‘affirming’ or agreeing to a child’s claim about gender identity... This bill makes law that failure to affirm your child’s identity is child abuse.”*⁴ If something like this can happen to parents, imagine what can be done to anyone else who is responsible for children (i.e. teachers). Fortunately, *“California Gov. Gavin Newsom vetoed a state measure on Friday (Sept. 29th, 2023) that would have required parents to “affirm gender transitions” for their children or risk losing custody.”*⁵ This being said, in July 2024, Gov. Newsom signed a Bill into law *“banning schools from implementing policies that require parents be notified if their child requests to be identified as a different gender.”*⁶ This particular mandate was the last straw for billionaire Elon Musk, who pulled out his companies (i.e. SpaceX) from California, in protest of the rigid anti-parental rights that Gov. Newsom is implementing.⁷ It is to be hoped that eventually, mothers and fathers will have their parental rights reinstated in order to raise their children without impediments.

The same mindset of hiding essential information from parents is already in place for prescription medications; apparently, from what I’ve learned, in some provinces in Canada, a child as young as fourteen years of age can contact a doctor for any prescription he/she wants to have, without parental knowledge and/or parental consent. This can be done with the help of school authorities, who tell the child that their parents need not know. I have actually seen this happen and was quite surprised. When I ventured to ask a question, I was told that legally, this could indeed be done.

⁴ californiaglobe.com June 17, 2023

(<https://californiaglobe.com/articles/under-new-california-bill-parents-would-be-charged-with-child-abuse-for-not-affirming-transgenderism/>)

⁵ <https://www.dailysignal.com/2023/09/25/newsom-vetoes-bill-requiring-california-parents-affirm-kids-gender-transitions>

⁶ <https://www.dailysignal.com/2024/07/18/california-bans-policies-requiring-parents-be-notified-of-childs-pronoun-changes>

⁷ <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/elon-musk-to-move-companies-out-of-california-over-transgender-law-6121784>

I find myself having to constantly weigh my words and not ruffle any feathers, if I want to lead a quiet life without being labeled a bigot, a homophobe, a transphobe, a hate-speech advocate, or any other negative and false slur meant to bully me into silence. And, in addition to bearing this in the workplace, I have to live with this enforced silence within my very own extended family circle. As soon as I start to say something that doesn't mesh with their way of thinking, be it religion, abortion, sexuality or homosexuality, I am met with a barrage of either loud dissenting arguments (being shouted down) or smirking ridicule ("you don't really believe that, do you?" is one common question I get asked, accompanied by a pitying, smiling face). I have since taken the decision to try to be completely silent at family gatherings and content myself with presenting a smiling demeanor. Actually being able to accomplish this feat of the will is another matter.

Don't get me wrong; I love people. Yes, there are gay persons in my familial entourage, in my workplace and in my friendships, and I love them all. I will accept, for example, an invitation to a gay person's birthday party, no problem. However, I will not accept an invitation to a gay wedding, for the simple reason that, however much I may like or love the gay person, I cannot be a part of an action that goes against what I sincerely believe to be the objective truth about what marriage is, and has always been, since the dawn of man. This belief is rooted in my firmly-held religious convictions. Contrary to what most people think, it is possible to love someone without loving what they do, say or represent: love the sinner, not the sin. (Oops ! I did it again. I used an unpopular word: "sin". More fodder for the politically correct language police. I wish George Carlin were still with us. He would have had a field day with this whole euphemistic and inclusive language garbage that is being shoved down our throats every day).

Here's another thing I've noticed: the "live and let live" catchphrase of yore is long gone. What is being forced upon society today is "affirm the way I live, or else I will brand you a bigot and a hater". This is pure intimidation tactics and discrimination in reverse. Why do they want our approval and affirmation so much anyway? Is it to justify their actions, which they must know deep down is, dare I say it, a sin? Do they not know that every single human being is called to holiness? The homosexual person, as well as the heterosexual person, is called to a well-ordered and integral sexual life, which is one man and one woman, joined in holy matrimony, with the express purpose of procreation. Gays, as well as straights, (and every one in between), are supposed to live a chaste life, however challenging that may be for some people. End of story.

So, how does a traditional, reasonable, fifty-something catholic woman, who believes in objective truth, find her place in a world that seems to be hell-bent on irrational, subjective relativity? A subjective relativity which was so eloquently described by one of the greatest minds of the twentieth century, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (*aka* Pope Benedict XVI), back in 2005, in his homily at the conclave before the election of the new pope, following Pope John Paul II's death: *"How many winds of doctrine have we known in recent decades, how many ideological currents, how many ways of thinking...The small boat of the thought of many Christians has often been tossed about by these waves - flung from one extreme to another: from Marxism to liberalism, even to libertinism; from collectivism to radical individualism; from atheism to a vague religious mysticism; from agnosticism to syncretism and so forth...Every day new sects spring up, and what St Paul says about human deception and the trickery that strives to entice people into error comes true...We are building a dictatorship of relativism that does not*

*recognize anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires"*⁸

This statement, along with the multitude of information I have gathered on all the important issues of our day, has set me on the path of writing all of my opinions and musings on paper. Maybe someone, somewhere, will be interested in reading the stance of a regular lay-woman, trying to live her life in conformity with Nature's (Natural) Law, otherwise known as God's Law, based on Faith, Science and Reason, the very basis of Catholicism.

I therefore offer herewith, with love in my heart for everyone, and in all humility, a compilation of opinion essays on all of the subjects that are uppermost in the minds of our modern-day society at large. I feel an inner drive to write the following pages in defense of Truth and Reason, which, I hope, any reasonable, truth-seeking person, regardless of their faith/belief system and personal philosophy, can respect and ponder on, without resorting to bullying tactics to shut me down and rob me of my freedom of expression.

⁸ National Catholic Reporter, John Allen Jr. September 16, 2010 (<https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/benedict-battles-dictatorship-relativism>)