

## What Would Bernardin Say?

Ken Briggs | Nov. 23, 2009 NCR Today

U.S. bishops are obviously on the offensive, in part to recoup losses in status from the sex abuse scandals, etc. The surge relies on one main weapon, the attack on abortion, and a secondary but significant drive against gay marriage. And they raise the attention-getting question: who is a Catholic? The limited focus risks making them seem narrow. As a means of regaining prestige, it has little likelihood of success. How different might their chances be if they stood behind the "consistent ethic" umbrella proposed by the late Cardinal Bernardin. How much more credibility would they gain by upholding other "pro life" causes such as erasing poverty? On the other hand, the cardinal's proposal was defeated by those who chose the narrower way.

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