

## The Church of ?All or Nothing?

John McCarthy | Jun. 13, 2013 NCR Today

The Catholic Church is the largest, non-governmental humanitarian organization in the world. I'd venture to say that this is the greatest, most visible work of the Church and should be a source of great pride (despite pride being a sin) for all Catholics. Every single day we live out the corporal works of mercy: we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the sick, and ransom the captive.

The work of the Catholic Church is the difference between life and death for millions around the world. Yet some people would rather limit this work in order to create a smaller more ?pure? church.

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) is the arm of the Church that carries out much of this work?making it one of the main targets for conservative Catholic organizations.

Faith in Public Life has recently released a telling report, which can be found [here](#) [1], that shows these attacks as part of a larger trend in the Church. Groups such as the American Life League, Life Matters TV, Catholic Advocate, and Defenders of the Faith want to kill the CCHD because by working with outside, non-Catholic groups we are diluting the Church.

Faith in Public Life cites one example a Catholic Organization who was punished for working with an outside group: *?The Land Stewardship Project, a Minnesota non-profit that for five consecutive years received church funds, abruptly lost a \$48,000 CCHD grant to help immigrant farmers in 2012 because of an association with the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and TakeAction Minnesota. Those two groups work on diverse social justice issues supported by Catholic teaching, but did not endorse the Minnesota bishops' efforts to fight same-sex marriage. The stewardship project does not work on marriage issues and never took a position on the state's 2012 marriage ballot initiative.?*

Now I'm not saying that the Church should fund anti-Catholic organizations. However, we must realize that few (if any) organization has the bandwidth to advocate for every Catholic issue.

Seldom do we hear outcry that pro-life or pro-traditional-marriage organizations need to work more with those on society's margins. Yet, social justice organizations are consistently criticized for not doing enough to fight abortion or marriage equality. Double standards such as this only hurt the church as a whole.

In short we have got to stop being a Church of ?All or Nothing? and become one where all are welcome to work in the areas that God calls them to work. If someone has gifts to work in marriage?so be it! If someone has gifts to work with the dying or infirmed?God bless them! Maybe they're best working with immigrants who are trying to assimilate into a new culture?we need them too!

Let's stop attacking the CCHD because of their strategic partners and instead remember the incredible work they are doing. Their ministry in no way detracts from the Catholic teaching, but rather enhances it by joining the Word with work.

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**Links:**

[1] <http://www.faithinpubliclife.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/FPL-CCHD-report.pdf>