



Filipino archbishop bars pro-abortion pols from Communion

Manila, Jul. 14, 2008 (CWNNews.com)

Manila, Jul. 14 (CWNNews.com) - In a debate reminiscent of recent disputes among American bishops, Church leaders in the Philippines have taken up the question of whether pro-abortion politicians should be barred from the Eucharist-- with one archbishop answering with an emphatic Yes.

Archbishop Jesus Armamento Dosado of Ozamis has announced that politicians who support legal abortion will not be allowed to receive Communion.

"The practice of indiscriminately presenting oneself to receive Holy Communion merely as a consequence of being present at Mass is an abuse that must be corrected," wrote Archbishop Dosado in a pastoral letter released on July 13. He said that Catholic politicians who vote or campaign for legal abortion should be denied Holy Communion "until they bring to an end the objective situation of sin."

"This decision, properly speaking, is not a sanction or a penalty," the archbishop said. "Nor is the minister of the Holy Communion passing judgment on the person's subjective guilt, but rather is reacting to the person's public unworthiness to receive Holy Communion due to an objective situation of sin."

Another ranking Filipino prelate, Archbishop Oscar Cruz of Linguyen-Dagupan, said that the ban on Communion for pro-abortion politicians-- which now covers only the Ozamis archdiocese-- could be extended throughout the country. The issue could be brought before the bishops' conference for consideration of a nationwide policy if conditions warrant, Archbishop Cruz told a broadcast audience on Radio Veritas. "It has not yet reached that level," he said.

The speaker of the Filipino parliament, Prospero Nograles, disagreed with Archbishop Dosado's pastoral letter. While saying that he personally opposes abortion, Nograles said that Church leaders should "respect separation of church and state."

But Archbishop Cruz supported his fellow prelate, saying that denial of the Eucharist is an appropriate ecclesiastical sanction. He told Radio Veritas, the bishops' broadcast outlet: "If a priest or bishop does not punish a public sinner, it is the priest or bishop who is wrong."

© Copyright 2008 Domus Enterprises. All rights reserved.