



# St Rita Dallas Physicians Guild

A Chartered Guild of the Catholic Medical Association

June 2012

## Upcoming events

- No monthly meeting this July (as our normal date falls on July 4<sup>th</sup>)
- Fortnight for Freedom Mass, June 30<sup>th</sup>
- White Mass on Oct 3
- Upcoming meeting schedule can be found [here](#)

## Links

[St Rita Dallas CMA Guild](#)

[National CMA website](#)

[UTSW St Basil Society](#)

[USCCB website](#)

[National Catholic Bioethics Center](#)

## In the News

[Prayer for the Protection of Religious Liberty](#)

*The USCCB publishes prayer card, prayers, and reflections on religious liberty.*

[For Greater Glory playing in Dallas theaters now](#)

*Starring Eduardo Verastegui, this movie describes the fight for religious freedom in Mexico. For Dallas movie times, click [here](#)*

[Video on Obamacare](#)

*The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) creates video illustrating the pitfalls of the HHS mandate. The ADF is an*

## Ethical Implications of the HHS Contraception Mandate

At our last meeting, Dr. Maria Gove discussed the HHS mandate and its relation to our faith and practice of medicine. She defined the HHS mandate and found 4 problem areas with the mandate: scientific, political, ethical, and financial/ nonreligious.

The scientific concern is that the mandate states that "preventative services that have strong scientific evidence of their health benefits must be covered." This treats pregnancy as a disease treating it like a disease that should be avoided. But is a pregnancy a "disease" such as a vaccine-preventable disease such as chickenpox? It is also defined not to cover abortifacient drugs, but does not consider certain contraceptive medications (or devices) as abortifacients.

The second area is the political dealing with religious freedom. The mandate forces Catholic healthcare entities (such as Catholic Universities and Hospitals) to practice against their own consciences to be compliant with the Affordable Care Act. The majority of Catholic institutions do not qualify for the religious exemption from the mandate due to the narrow criteria.

The third problem area is the ethical. As the Bishops have described in their released statement "[Our First Most Cherished Liberty](#)," there has been a shift in our country in that freedom of religion has been implicated to mean "Freedom to Worship" and not "Freedom of Conscience." The government stance on this issue has great implications on individual conscience, autonomy, and provides a slippery slope toward government coercion (as predicted by Pope Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae*).

The fourth area of concern is the financial. The HHS mandate is defined to provide "free" contraception, but in fact can this truly be free? How can the government ensure that "costs for providing contraception" not be passed to the individual consumer? And in many ways those who could be individual objectors (even if nonreligious) are not allowed a way to be exempt from financially contributing to the mandate.

But could the mandate have implications for the individual physician? Dr. Gove contends that it would. If a physician owns his/her practice, there would conscience conflicts in providing healthcare benefits to employees. Individual "in network" doctors could be pressured into writing for contraception by health insurance networks. Individual doctors who work in referral based systems (i.e.. HMO, Tricare, Kaiser, VA) will have more pressure to refer for contraception.

Dr. Gove's powerpoint presentation can be found on [our website](#).

organization that legally defends religious freedom and the culture of life.

## Contact Us

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The national Catholic Medical Association has released many [official statements on the HHS mandate](#).

## CMA Guild to help sponsor Dallas' Fortnight for Freedom Mass



The Fortnight for Freedom has begun! The Dallas St Rita's Physician Guild will participate in a Diocesan Mass highlighting the Bishop's Fortnight for Freedom initiative. There will be a Mass at St. Rita's on June 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM celebrated by Monsignor Robert Coerver (our chaplain). Our guild will have a table at the event. After the Mass there will be a reception and an educational presentation by Frank Valenzuela of the St. Thomas Moore society (the Dallas Catholic Lawyer's Guild

For more information from the Diocesan website, click [here](#)

Daily reflections of the Fortnight for Freedom can be found [here](#)

## Save the date: White Mass on October 3



The diocesan White Mass is the annual featured event for Catholic physicians, and this year we are celebrating on Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>, the feast month for St. Luke the physician. Bishop Seitz is scheduled to celebrate Mass with us with reception to follow after the Mass. Further details of our event will be forthcoming in future newsletters. So please save the date.

In other news for our Guild:

- Membership Renewal for the Dallas Physician Guild is to begin by October
- Registration has begun for the National Catholic Medical Association conference in St. Paul, MN for Sept 27-29. Details can be found on the [CMA website](#)

### **A Physician's Prayer**

***Thank you Lord for the privilege of being a doctor - for letting me serve as your instrument in ministering to the sick and afflicted.***

***May I always treat with reverence the human life which You have brought into being.***

***Keep me constantly alert to see that the sacred right to live is never violated for even the least individual.***

***Deepen my love for people so that I will always give of myself gladly and generously to those stricken with illness and suffering.***

***Help me to listen patiently, diagnose carefully, prescribe conscientiously and follow through faithfully.***

***Teach me to blend gentleness with skill to be a doctor with a heart as well as a head.***