

CATHOLIC MESSAGE ON WORLD AIDS DAY

On December 1, World AIDS Day, we issued a statement noting that it is important to remember these few relevant facts:

- No private institution on earth provides more HIV/AIDS services than the Catholic Church. Indeed, it accounts for more than a quarter of all the services worldwide.
- In the United States, Catholic diocesan agencies play a major role tending to those with AIDS. In 1989, for example, the Archdiocese of New York established the first AIDS nursing home in New York City (this was the same year that homosexual activists stormed St. Patrick's Cathedral during Mass).
- In Africa, where AIDS has taken a heavy toll, the efforts of the Catholic Church counseling sexual restraint has yielded impressive results.

During his trip last year to Benin, Africa, Pope Benedict XVI spoke to this issue with his customary authority. He said that AIDS "clearly calls for a medical and pharmaceutical response." However, the Holy Father hastened to add that "Above all, it is an ethical problem. The change of behaviour that it requires—for example, sexual abstinence, rejection of sexual promiscuity, fidelity within marriage—ultimately involves the question of integral development, which demands a global approach and a global response from the Church."

In other words, AIDS will not be resolved by science, technology and morally neutral sex education programs.

For the most part, AIDS is caused by behaviors that violate the natural law. Its resolution, therefore, lay in observing the cardinal virtue of temperance, not in the promiscuous distribution of condoms.