

WHO SPEAKS FOR CATHOLICS?

*Below is the text of our ad that ran in the October 23,
2000 New York Times:*

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Every four years, a radical fringe group called Catholics Speak Out runs a full-page ad in the *New York Times*. It claims to represent Catholic voters and legitimate Catholic teaching. As a matter of fact, Catholics Speak Out represents a small and insignificant band of Catholic dissenters.

Indeed, they even draw on those who share their views and are not Catholic to help pay the cost of the ad.

This presidential year these dissenters seek to define an alleged Catholic diversity by boasting that it is legitimate Catholic teaching to be either pro-life or pro-abortion. It is not. Just as there are not diverse Catholic teachings on genocide or racial discrimination, there is no legitimate diversity in Catholic teaching on abortion. All three are social evils.

These dissenters are following a politicized agenda. They demand a moratorium on the death penalty, oppose school vouchers for parents, promote new gay rights legislation and speak in terms of "the Earth" as if it were some sort of deity. Yet they proclaim an alleged Catholic pluralism on the most fundamental issue of all—the sacredness of innocent human life.

It is one thing to hold diverse political views as a private citizen, quite another to sell them as representing authentic Catholic teaching. It is time to end this false advertising. Those who want to know Catholic teaching on any subject can access a copy of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It is the definitive work of the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, not a paid ad from political propagandists.