



Washington Insider



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The traditionally busy start of a new Congress—the 115th in our nation’s history—was compounded by the inauguration of the forty-fifth President and Vice President of the United States on January 20. Regardless of one’s political persuasion, observing the ceremonial and peaceful transfer of power with the inauguration of a new Administration is a very moving experience.

For pro-life Americans, however, there is new enthusiasm, or at least cautious optimism, with the incoming Trump administration after eight years of a President who was a strident supporter of abortion. Before his election, Donald Trump assured pro-life Americans that he and Mike Pence would be “advocates for the unborn and their mothers every day [they] are in the White House,” making several promises to implement pro-life policies.¹ These promises include nominating pro-life justices to the Supreme Court, signing legislation to ban late-term abortions, defunding Planned Parenthood, and making the Hyde amendment (prohibiting taxpayer funding of abortion) permanent law.

The new pro-life enthusiasm was evident one week after the inauguration when hundreds of thousands of Americans came to the annual March for Life in Washington and were greeted by Vice President Pence, the highest-level elected official to ever address the march in person.

The Vice President reminded the crowd that

more than 240 years ago, our founders wrote words that have echoed through the ages. They declared these truths to be self-evident that we are, all of us, endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights, and that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Forty-four years ago, our Supreme Court turned away from the first of these timeless ideals. But today,

1. Donald Trump, Letter to Pro-life Leaders, September 2016, available at <https://www.sba-list.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Trump-Letter-on-ProLife-Coalition.pdf>.

three generations hence, because of all of you, and the many thousands that stand with us in marches like this all across the nation, life is winning again in America. . . . And today is a celebration of that progress that we have made in this cause. You know I've long believed that a society can be judged by how we care for its most vulnerable, the aged, the infirm, the disabled and the unborn. We have come to an historic moment in the cause for life. And we must meet this moment with respect and compassion for every American.

The Vice President concluded his remarks by telling the crowd to “be assured, that along with you, we will not grow weary, we will not rest until we restore a culture of life in America for ourselves and our posterity.”² Hearing such words from the Vice President of the United States at the March for Life is refreshing and hopeful for the pro-life cause.

Mexico City Policy

On January 23, his first full weekday in office, President Trump started to fulfill his promises by signing an executive memorandum restoring the Mexico City policy.³ First announced at the United Nation's 1984 Conference on Population in Mexico City, this policy requires foreign nongovernmental organizations receiving US aid to refrain from performing or actively promoting abortion as a method of family planning in developing nations. Past versions of the Mexico City policy applied only to foreign NGOs that receive US *family planning* funds. President Trump's executive order, however, expands the policy beyond family planning programs to “global health assistance furnished by all departments or agencies.”

Furthermore, it calls for full enforcement of the Kemp–Kasten amendment on coercive abortion and sterilization programs. This policy, first enacted in 1985, provides that “none of the funds available in this Act . . . may be made available to any organization or program which, as determined by the President of the United States, supports or participates in the management of a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization.”⁴ Since its enactment, all presidents, except Presidents Clinton and Obama, have invoked Kemp–Kasten to deny funding to the United Nations Population Fund because of its involvement in population control initiatives that include forced abortions and sterilizations in China and perhaps other nations.

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued a statement saying, “We applaud President Trump's action today to restore the Mexico City Policy, which withholds taxpayer funds from foreign nongovernmental organizations that promote or perform abortions overseas (often in violation of the host country's own laws). This is a welcome step toward restoring and enforcing important federal policies that respect the most fundamental human right—the right to life—as well as the

2. Mike Pence, Transcript of Speech to March for Life, *Life Site News*, January 27, 2017, <https://www.lifesitenews.com/>.

3. Donald Trump, “Presidential Memorandum regarding Mexico City Policy,” January 23, 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/>.

4. Pub. L. 109-102, 119 Stat. 2172, 2175 (2005).

long-standing, bipartisan consensus against forcing Americans to participate in the violent act of abortion.”⁵

No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act

On January 24, the day after President Trump reinstated the Mexico City Policy, the US House of Representatives passed the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act (H.R. 7) with a bipartisan vote of 238 to 183. The House bill, introduced by Congressmen Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Dan Lipinski (D-IL), will make the protections of the Hyde amendment and other current abortion funding prohibitions part of permanent law to be enforced government-wide. It even ensures that the Affordable Care Act does not force taxpayers to fund abortion. The bill will also protect American health care consumers by requiring that ACA health insurance plans on the exchanges be transparent and disclose abortion coverage and abortion premiums. Although Congress is working to repeal all or parts of the ACA, the law may still be in effect for a number of years, making these transparency requirements necessary.

The Senate version of the bill (S. 184) was introduced on January 20 by Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS). The Senate has not yet scheduled a vote and will pose a more difficult challenge, given that sixty votes will be needed to overcome a likely filibuster. A more likely path to getting this bill enacted will be to attach it to a “must pass” appropriation bill.

Passing the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act has grown more critical in recent years as the abortion industry and its acolytes in Congress have escalated their attacks on the Hyde amendment. In their campaign to force all taxpayers to fund abortions, contrary to long-standing and overwhelming public opposition to it, the so-called pro-choice movement has laid bare its extremism and its dishonesty. Arguably the most offensive voice in the recent presidential campaign was that of Catholics for Choice. This pro-abortion group placed deceptive full-page ads in multiple cities last September calling for taxpayer-funded abortions in the name of the Catholic faith, saying that “public funding for abortion is a Catholic social justice value.”⁶

In response, Cardinal Dolan said in a statement that “as the U.S. Catholic bishops have stated for many years, the use of the name ‘Catholic’ as a platform to promote the taking of innocent human life is offensive not only to Catholics, but to all who expect honesty and forthrightness in public discourse.”⁷

Taxpayer Funding for Planned Parenthood

Another promise to the pro-life movement made by candidate Donald Trump was to defund Planned Parenthood “as long as they continue to perform abortions” and

5. US Conference of Catholic Bishops, “USCCB Pro Life Chairman Applauds Reestablishment of Mexico City Policy,” news release, January 23, 2017, <http://www.usccb.org/>.

6. Catholics for Choice, “New Campaign: Catholics Support Abortion in Good Faith,” news release, September 12, 2017, <http://www.catholicsforchoice.org/>.

7. US Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Cardinal Dolan, Bishops’ Pro-life Chairman, on Deceptive ‘Catholics for Choice’ Ad Campaign,” news release, September 14, 2016, <http://usccb.org/>.

to reallocate “their funding to community health centers that provide comprehensive health care for women.”⁸ Planned Parenthood operates our nation’s largest abortion network and receives roughly \$500 million taxpayer dollars per year.

One of the ways in which the president can fulfill this promise is to work with Congress to pass the Defund Planned Parenthood Act of 2017 and then sign it into law. Representative Diane Black (R-TN) introduced the Defund Planned Parenthood Act (H.R. 354) on January 6, and Senator Joni Ernst (R-IA) introduced its Senate companion bill (S. 241) on January 30. The act “prohibits, for a one-year period, the availability of federal funds for any purpose to Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc., or any of its affiliates or clinics, unless they certify that the affiliates and clinics will not perform, and will not provide any funds to any other entity that performs, an abortion during such period. This restriction does not apply in cases of rape or incest or where a physical condition endangers a woman’s life unless an abortion is performed.”⁹ The bill also requires the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Agriculture to “seek repayment of federal assistance received by Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc., or any affiliate or clinic, if it violates the terms of the certification required” by the act.¹⁰ Furthermore, the bill provides an additional \$225 million in funding for community health centers for the one-year duration of the act.

Congress found a way to pass a similar defunding bill last year by including it in a budget reconciliation bill that also repealed major portions of the ACA, but then-President Obama vetoed the bill. Budget reconciliation bills are generally limited to spending and revenue legislation and are not subject to a filibuster in the Senate. This means that the Senate can pass a reconciliation bill with fifty-one votes instead of sixty. House Speaker Paul Ryan has said publicly that Congress will again seek to defund Planned Parenthood through a reconciliation bill in 2017.¹¹

In addition to the fact that Planned Parenthood operates the largest abortion network in our nation, recent revelations that it is trafficking in aborted fetal organs provides another compelling reason to deny the organization taxpayer funding. These revelations prompted the House of Representatives in October 2015 to establish the Select Investigative Panel on Infant Lives, chaired by Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), “to gather information and get the facts about medical practices of abortion service providers and the business practices of the procurement organizations who sell baby body parts.”¹²

On January 4, 2017, the panel released its Final Report, concluding its yearlong investigation of fetal tissue procurement companies and abortion businesses like

8. Trump, Letter to Pro-life Leaders.

9. Defund Planned Parenthood Act, H.R. 354, 115th Cong. (2017), summary.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Paul Ryan, “House Speaker Weekly Briefing,” C-SPAN, January 5, 2017, 00:11:18.

12. House Committee on Energy and Commerce, “Select Investigative Panel,” accessed March 15, 2017, <https://energycommerce.house.gov/select-investigative-panel>.

Planned Parenthood.¹³ Over the course of its investigation, the panel made fifteen criminal and regulatory referrals, which included letters to the US Department of Justice, HHS, state attorneys general in Texas, New Mexico, Florida, and Arkansas, and district attorneys in California.

According to the news release at the time of its publication, the “report details many of the disturbing practices the Panel uncovered in the abortion industry with the selling of fetal tissue along with information regarding [the Panel’s] public hearings, subpoenas, criminal and regulatory referrals. Also included is the listing of recommendations for improving access to appropriate scientific models, including human fetal tissue when warranted, in order to promote the advancement of science and the development of novel therapies.”¹⁴

On December 13, 2016, following a separate investigation, Chairman Charles Grassley (R-IA) released the Senate Judiciary Committee’s Majority Staff Report on human fetal tissue research, and referred several Planned Parenthood affiliates and fetal tissue procurement organizations to the FBI and Department of Justice for investigation and potential prosecution.¹⁵ According to a press release from Chairman Grassley, the

referral follows the completion of a Senate Judiciary Committee majority staff analysis of more than 20,000 pages of documents provided voluntarily by the organizations and companies involved. While the impetus for the investigation was the release of a series of videos regarding transfers of fetal tissue by the Center for Medical Progress, the committee’s analysis and findings are based strictly on the documents obtained independently from tissue procurement companies and Planned Parenthood. . . . The full report details the long history of the controversy surrounding human fetal tissue research and the bipartisan legislative approach taken to resolve the issue at the time, as well as the subsequent lack of enforcement.¹⁶

Conscience Protection Act

In my Autumn 2016 column, I mentioned several disturbing violations of federal conscience laws on abortion in California and Washington State and the failure of the Obama administration to fully enforce these laws. Violations are also occurring in New York State, where the Department of Financial Services is forcing health care entities to cover abortions in health plans. The department is mandating that all health insurers operating in New York require small-group employers, including faith-based nonprofits and Christian businesses, to cover elective abortions with no exemptions whatever. Like the California abortion mandate, even churches and

13. House Select Panel, *Final Report*, December 30, 2016, <https://energycommerce.house.gov/>.

14. House Committee on Energy and Commerce, “The Select Investigative Panel Releases Final Report,” news release, January 4, 2017, <https://energycommerce.house.gov/>.

15. Senate Judiciary, *Human Fetal Tissue Research: Context and Controversy*, December 2016, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/>.

16. Chuck Grassley, “Grassley Refers Planned Parenthood, Fetal Tissue Procurement Organizations to FBI, Justice Dept. for Investigation,” news release, December 13, 2016, <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/>.

religious organizations could be required to cover some abortions in violation of their beliefs. A lawsuit against these mandates was filed last year by churches and others.

These ongoing violations and the likelihood that such violations will increase underscore the critical importance of enacting the Conscience Protection Act of 2017. The CPA was introduced in the House of Representatives by Reps. Diane Black (R-TN) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE) on January 24, 2017 (H.R. 644) and in the Senate by Senator James Lankford (R-OK) on February 3 (S. 301). An identical bill, the Conscience Protection Act of 2016, passed the House on July 13, 2016 on a bipartisan vote of 245 to 182 but was not voted on by the Senate.

The CPA would make more effective and permanent the protections of the Hyde–Weldon conscience amendment, approved by Congress as an appropriations rider every year since 2004. It would also ensure that victims of discrimination under that policy, and under the Church amendment of 1973, have a right of action to protect their rights in court.

The Senate continues to be a challenge to getting the CPA enacted as a stand-alone bill in 2017. However, there is greater hope of enacting the CPA this year by attaching it to must-pass appropriations legislation. In previous years, opposition to the legislation by President Obama, including a threat to veto the bill, made the path to success—even by attaching it to a must-pass appropriations bill—nearly impossible. This year, having a president who supports such legislation may prove to be the deciding factor in getting the CPA across the finish line.

In the meantime, the Trump administration, unlike its predecessor, is expected to take steps to enforce the Hyde–Weldon amendment and other federal conscience protections. However, having an administration that supports and enforces existing conscience protections does not diminish the need to enact the CPA. Putting conscience protections into permanent law and providing a private right of action when the laws are violated is critically important so that their ongoing enforcement does not rely on who sits in the Oval Office.

Assisted Suicide

Sadly, 2016 saw doctor-assisted suicide legalized in Colorado and Washington, DC, bringing to six the number of jurisdictions that have formally adopted the lethal practice.¹⁷ The voters of Colorado overwhelmingly approved (65 to 35 percent) a ballot measure on November 8. Compassion and Choices, whose headquarters is in Colorado, spent almost \$5 million to promote the measure, while opponents of assisted suicide were only able to raise about \$2.5 million.

On November 15, 2016, the city council of Washington, DC, approved (11 to 2) a bill to legalize doctor-assisted suicide in our nation’s capital. The mayor of DC, Muriel Bowser, signed the bill (act 21-577) on December 19, and the act was transmitted to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate on January 6, 2017.

17. The other jurisdictions with legalized assisted suicide are Oregon, Washington State, California, and Vermont. Additionally, Montana’s highest court suggested that doctor-prescribed suicide for terminally ill patients is not always against public policy.

The US Constitution gives Congress ultimate control over the laws of the District of Columbia. Once Congress receives a law from the DC government it has thirty legislative days to pass a resolution of disapproval. If the resolution fails to advance, as it did in this case, there are other actions Congress can take to block the law, such as attaching a rider to an appropriations bill that funds the District. There is some hope for success with this appropriations path, but a significant effort to educate Congress on this issue is needed. The assisted suicide issue has not been considered by Congress since 1999,¹⁸ so many members are not very familiar with the issue.

New State Legislation and Litigation

In 2017, new bills to legalize doctor-prescribed suicide have been introduced in twenty-three states.¹⁹ In addition, New Jersey's bill carries over from 2016. As of early April, bills have been defeated in at least twelve states, but a handful of other states are still facing serious threats, including New York, Maine, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and possibly Hawaii.

American Medical Association

At its June 2016 meeting, the American Medical Association's House of Delegates adopted a resolution to consider changing the AMA's decades-long position against doctor-assisted suicide to one of "neutrality." The AMA's Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs is studying this proposed change and will provide a recommendation to the House of Delegates at a future House of Delegates meeting. Opposition to assisted suicide by national and state medical associations has been crucial to preserving laws against the practice. It is widely thought that the retreat from opposition to neutrality by state medical associations in Oregon, Vermont, California, and Colorado was a key factor in the legalization of assisted suicide in those states. Therefore, it is critically important that physicians, in particular, urge the AMA to maintain its policy against assisted suicide. Similarly, physicians are particularly important voices in urging state medical association to maintain, or in some cases adopt, policies against legalization of assisted suicide.

Title X Family Planning Program

On September 2, 2016, HHS issued a notice of proposed rule-making regarding the Title X program. The proposed rule is designed to prevent states from redirecting Title X funds away from Planned Parenthood. The Title X program is a family planning program run by the Office of Population Affairs at HHS. First authorized in 1970 to reduce population growth by providing family planning to low income women, the program has not been reauthorized since 1985. However, it has continued to receive funding through the annual Labor-HHS appropriations bill. For fiscal year 2016, \$286 million was appropriated.

18. Pain Relief Promotion Act, H.R. 2260, 106th Congress (1999).

19. Those states are Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

In recent years, some states receiving Title X grants have directed their funding to county health departments, community health centers, and other clinics, and thus away from Planned Parenthood. On December 14, 2016, HHS approved the new regulation, which went into effect on January 18, 2017.

Under the Congressional Review Act, Congress has sixty days to overrule a new regulation through a joint resolution of disapproval. The House resolution (H.J. Res. 43) was introduced by Rep. Diane Black (R-TN) and was approved by the House on February 16 on a vote of 230 to 188. The Senate resolution (S.J. Res. 13) was introduced by Senator Joni Ernst (R-IA) and was approved by the Senate on March 30 on a vote of 51 to 50, with Vice President Mike Pence casting the tie-breaking vote. The measure now goes to President Trump, who is expected to sign the measure into law.

Developments in Ethically Problematic Biomedical Research

Last August, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced a proposal to lift its September 2015 moratorium on taxpayer funding of human–animal chimera research. While not all human–animal chimera research is ethically problematic, the NIH proposal would fund research that poses numerous and serious ethical problems, primary among them the creation and manipulation of new beings whose very existence blurs the line between human beings and animals.²⁰

As of this writing, the NIH has yet to finalize its proposal, and there is some optimism that under the Trump administration the proposal will be rejected. Nonetheless, such ethically problematic human–animal chimera research is moving forward with private funding.

On January 26, 2017, a *New York Times* article reported on two published studies revealing that “for the first time, biologists have succeeded in growing human stem cells in pig embryos, shifting from science fiction to the realm of the possible the idea of developing human organs in animals for later transplant.”²¹ In one of the experiments, researchers at the University of Tokyo used a gene editing technique known as CRISPR-Cas9 to “turn off” the genes in mice embryos that would normally produce the pancreas. These mice embryos (which were at the blastocyst or implantation stage of development) were then injected with rat stem cells containing an intact pancreas gene. They were then implanted and reportedly developed normally, except that each mouse had a rat pancreas.

The second experiment, conducted by a team at the Salk Institute in California, involved injecting human stem cells into pig embryos, also most likely at the blastocyst stage, to see if any human cells would survive. The pig embryos were gestated for four weeks, then extracted and examined for evidence of human stem cells. Some of the embryos were found to contain human cells that were beginning

20. See my Autumn 2016 column.

21. Nicholas Wade, “New Prospects for Growing Human Replacement Organs in Animals,” *New York Times*, January 26, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/>.

to specialize and turn into tissue precursors. The extent to which human cells were found in the brain or reproductive organs is unclear.

The two experiments together, the researchers claim, establish the possibility of growing replacement human organs in animals. The researchers acknowledged, however, that getting human organs to grow in pigs will probably prove much more difficult than getting rat organs to grow in mice.

Although the human–pig chimera experiment used induced pluripotent stem cells, not human embryonic stem cells, the experiment was ethically problematic because it introduced human stem cells into very early animal embryos, at a stage when it is very difficult to know the extent to which the human cells will contribute to the final organism.

Another troubling development in biomedical research was announced on February 14, 2017, when the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine issued a 261-page report concluding that scientists should be permitted to do human germ-line editing, that is, genetically modifying human embryos destined for implantation in the womb, in the hope that they are free of genetic diseases.²²

As is often the case with scientific discoveries, gene editing technology can be used in ways that are ethical or unethical. Gene editing tools like CRISPR-Cas9 are being used in ethical ways to treat *born* patients.²³ But human germ-line editing, as the National Academies of Science now supports it, poses serious ethical problems. For example, genetically modifying human embryos would affect not only the manipulated human being but also multiple generations of offspring in unknown and potentially harmful ways. Furthermore, allowing the genetic manipulation of human embryos opens the door to its use for genetic enhancement, such as attempts to improve a person’s intelligence or strength. The National Academies’ report admitted as much by saying that “regulatory agencies should not *at this time* authorize clinical trials of somatic or germ-line genome editing for purposes other than treatment or prevention of disease or disability.”²⁴

Thankfully, in 2015, US Representative Robert Aderholt (R-AL) had the foresight to pursue congressional action to put the brakes on the genetic engineering of human embryos. As a result of his leadership, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for 2016 includes an amendment that prevents the Food and Drug Administration from considering or approving protocols involving the creation of heritable genetic modifications in human embryos.²⁵

22. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, *Human Genome Editing: Science, Ethics, and Governance* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2017), <http://nationalacademies.org/>.

23. See Antonio Regalado, “Two Infants Treated with Universal Immune Cells Have Their Cancer Vanish,” *MIT Technology Review*, January 25, 2017, <https://www.technologyreview.com/>.

24. National Academies, *Human Genome Editing*, recommendation 6-1, emphasis added.

25. Consolidated Appropriations Act 2016, Pub. L. 114-113, 129 Stat. 2242, 2283 (2015), sec. 749: “None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to notify a spon-

As David Prentice and Michael Burgess pointed out in a *Dallas News* editorial,

If there are concerns and debates about genetically modified foods and fish, surely we need considered discussions about genetically modified humans. The [Aderholt amendment] suspends genetic experiments only with human embryos; in no way does it hinder genetic therapies or trials for born individuals, allowing this type of research to continue unabated.

We must be cautious not to paint all gene editing as bad. We must thoughtfully weigh the applications, the potential benefits as well as the negatives, considering how this might be applied and who might be the research subjects. It is critical that Congress hears from issue experts and stakeholders when forming policy. As Congress prepares to consider policy about human genetics and the future of the human race, we're all stakeholders.²⁶

Finishing Up with Inspiration

In *Evangelium vitae*, Pope St. John Paul II calls us to celebrate the Gospel of Life. To do so, he says,

we need first of all to foster, in ourselves and in others, a contemplative outlook. Such an outlook arises from faith in the God of life, who has created every individual as a 'wonder' (cf. Ps 139:14). It is the outlook of those who see life in its deeper meaning, who grasp its utter gratuitousness, its beauty and its invitation to freedom and responsibility. It is the outlook of those who do not presume to take possession of reality but instead accept it as a gift, discovering in all things the reflection of the Creator and seeing in every person his living image (cf. Gen 1:27; Ps 8:5). This outlook does not give in to discouragement when confronted by those who are sick, suffering, outcast or at death's door. Instead, in all these situations it feels challenged to find meaning, and precisely in these circumstances it is open to perceiving in the face of every person a call to encounter, dialogue and solidarity.

It is time for all of us to adopt this outlook, and with deep religious awe to rediscover the ability to revere and honour every person, as Paul VI invited us to do in one of his first Christmas messages. Inspired by this contemplative outlook, the new people of the redeemed cannot but respond with songs of joy, praise and thanksgiving for the priceless gift of life, for the mystery of every individual's call to share through Christ in the life of grace and in an existence of unending communion with God our Creator and Father.²⁷

C. S. Lewis provides a beautiful source of contemplation on the sanctity of *all* human life in "Weight of Glory," a sermon he delivered toward the end of World War II:

sor or otherwise acknowledge receipt of a submission for an exemption for investigational use of a drug or biological product . . . in research in which a human embryo is intentionally created or modified to include a heritable genetic modification. Any such submission shall be deemed to have not been received by the Secretary, and the exemption may not go into effect."

26. Michael Burgess and David Prentice, "Let Congress Know to Take It Slow on Human Gene Editing," *Dallas News*, December 28, 2016, <http://www.dallasnews.com/>.

27. John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae* (March 25, 1995), n. 83.

It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or the other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all of our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no *ordinary* people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendours. . . . Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses.²⁸

28. C.S. Lewis, “The Weight of Glory” (Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, June 8, 1942), original emphasis, available at <http://www.verber.com/mark/xian/weight-of-glory.pdf>.

