

An Open Letter to the Catholic Community in Behalf of Ron Paul

by [Thomas E. Woods, Jr.](#)

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In the tradition of Walter Block's [Open Letter to the Jewish Community in Behalf of Ron Paul](#) and Laurence Vance's [Open Letter to the Protestant Community in Behalf of Ron Paul](#), I'd like to say a few words to my fellow Catholics.

Never in my life have I felt as strongly about a presidential candidate – or about any politician, for that matter – as I do about Dr. Ron Paul, Republican congressman from Texas. I've gone from being someone so disgusted with politics that I can't bear to read about it to being a political junkie, avidly following the activities and successes of this great man.

As an American historian, I am not aware of any congressman in American history whose voting record is so stellar, and so consistently in accord with the Constitution.

Beyond that, Ron Paul is not a panderer. He'll speak to an interest group and tell them to their faces that he has opposed and will continue to oppose funding their pet projects. Lobbyists know they're wasting their money if they try to wine and dine him. He recently spoke before the national convention of an organization aimed at protecting the interests of a particular ethnic group, and began by saying: "Somebody asked me whether I had a special speech for your group, and I said, no, it's the same speech I give everywhere."

Already by 1981, Ron Paul had earned the highest rating ever given by the National Taxpayers Union, received the highest rating from the Council for a Competitive Economy, and won the Liberty Award from the American Economic Council for being "America's outstanding defender of economic and personal freedom."

Dr. Paul, who entered Congress in 1976 and returned to his medical practice in 1984, picked up where he left off when he returned to Congress in the 1996 election. I do not expect to see his like again.

He is also a good and decent man, who really is what he appears to be when you hear him speak. As a physician at an inner-city hospital, Ron Paul provided medical care to anyone who needed it, regardless of ability to pay. He never accepted money from Medicare or Medicaid, preferring to provide free care instead. That's what people in a free society are supposed to do: be responsible for themselves, and then lend their assistance to those who are vulnerable and alone.

Ron Paul is a candidate who doesn't insult his listeners' intelligence, who answers the questions he is asked, and who doesn't simply say whatever his audience wants to hear. And unlike other major names in the race, Ron Paul doesn't have to run away from his record, which reveals an unswerving commitment to peace, freedom, and prosperity that is second to none in all of American history.

Although I would have supported Ron Paul back before I converted to Catholicism, I think Catholics will like what they see when they examine his record. Over at [Defend Life](#), Ron Paul comes out

[decisively on top](#) in a study of the candidates' positions on the issues according to the guidelines recently established by the United States bishops. (If anything, I think this study *understates* Paul's compatibility with Catholic teaching.)

On education and home schooling, Ron Paul is the clear winner. Fred Thompson, John McCain, and Duncan Hunter all voted for the execrable No Child Left Behind Act, and Governors Mike Huckabee and Mitt Romney have both come out in favor of it. Ron Paul – as did the Republican Party itself not so long ago – opposes any federal role in education, which is the responsibility of parents and local communities.

In other words, Ron Paul believes in a little something called subsidiarity, which happens to be a central principle of Catholic social thought. Subsidiarity holds that all social functions should be carried out by the most local unit possible, as opposed to the dehumanizing alternative whereby distant bureaucratic structures are routinely and unthinkingly entrusted with more and more responsibilities for human well-being.

On home schooling, Ron Paul has proposed legislation giving tax credits worth thousands of dollars to reimburse the educational expenses of home-schooling parents, as well as those of parents who send their children to other kinds of schools. What presidential candidate speaks like this?

Parental control of child rearing, especially education, is one of the bulwarks of liberty. No nation can remain free when the state has greater influence over the knowledge and values transmitted to children than the family. By moving to restore the primacy of parents to education, the Family Education Freedom Act will not only improve America's education, it will restore a parent's right to choose how best to educate one's own child, a fundamental freedom that has been eroded by the increase in federal education expenditures and the corresponding decrease in the ability of parents to provide for their children's education out of their own pockets.

When it comes to abortion, Ron Paul – an obstetrician/gynecologist who has delivered over 4,000 babies – has been a consistent opponent of *Roe v. Wade*, which he rightly considers unconstitutional. But he has no interest in the failed strategy of the past 35 years whereby we sit and wait for a remedy in the form of good Supreme Court justices. His HR 300 would strip the federal courts of jurisdiction over abortion, as per Article III, Section 2 of the Constitution. That would overturn *Roe* by a simple congressional majority.

Then we could see who is sincere on the issue, and who is just exploiting it for votes. Few in either party really want to see the abortion status quo overturned, since it means they can't scare their supporters into sending them as much money anymore.

Upon the Pope's death in 2005, Ron Paul [paid tribute](#) to John Paul's consistent defense of life. On another occasion, he offered an additional tribute, of the sort few politicians would utter:

To the secularists, this was John Paul II's unforgivable sin – he placed service to God above service to the state. Most politicians view the state, not God, as the supreme ruler on earth. They simply cannot abide a theology that does not comport with their vision of unlimited state power. This is precisely why both conservatives and liberals savaged John Paul II when his theological pronouncements did not fit their goals. But perhaps their goals simply were not godly.

Speaking of John Paul II, it is important to remember that that pope was a strong opponent of the U.S. government's attack on Iraq, sending his personal representative, Cardinal Pio Laghi, to Washington shortly before the commencement of hostilities in order to insist to the president that such a war would be unjust. The Pope's first comments after the war broke out were these: "When war, as in these days in Iraq, threatens the fate of humanity, it is ever more urgent to proclaim, with a strong and decisive voice, that only peace is the road to follow to construct a more just and united society."

Before his election as Pope Benedict XVI, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was asked if a U.S. government attack on Iraq would be just. "Certainly not," came the reply. He predicted that "the damage would be greater than the values one wishes to save."

After the war ended, Ratzinger said: "It was right to resist the war and its threats of destruction.... It should never be the responsibility of just one nation to make decisions for the world." "There were not sufficient reasons to unleash a war against Iraq," he elsewhere observed. "To say nothing of the fact that, given the new weapons that make possible destructions that go beyond the combatant groups, today we should be asking ourselves if it is still licit to admit the very existence of a 'just war.'"

Hundreds of thousands lost their lives in this obviously avoidable war, a war that was based on falsehoods that we would have laughed at if they'd been uttered by Leonid Brezhnev. But since they came from the White House we cheer as for a football team, and duck the appalling material and moral consequences. A country that (by regional standards) once had an excellent health care system, opportunities for women, liberal gun and alcohol laws, and – yes – lots of immigrants, was turned into a disease-ridden basket case, filled with dead, wounded, and malnourished children, for no good reason.

That's just wrong, and it isn't "liberal" to say so.

Likewise, Ratzinger/Benedict is not a "liberal" for opposing the war. He is a moral conservative, but a man whose conservatism is more mature than the sloganeering jingoism of so much of what passes for conservatism in today's America. Ron Paul is an equally sober and serious statesman, and for that reason was one of very few Republicans with the courage and the foresight to oppose this economic and moral fiasco from the very start.

It is especially satisfying to learn that in the second quarter of 2007, Ron Paul received more donations from active duty and retired military personnel than any other Republican candidate. By the third quarter, he was receiving more than *any other presidential candidate*, Democrat or Republican. Want to support the troops? Then support Ron Paul.

My main argument to you, though, is not a specifically Catholic one. It's one that should resonate with anybody who values honesty, integrity, and decency. Ron Paul is a good man who believes in justice and the Constitution, and who cannot be bought. His ten terms in Congress have proven that again and again.

And that is why the media fears him. Unlike the rest of them, Ron Paul is *unowned*.

Now every establishment hack out there wants you to vote for one of the business-as-usual candidates. Are you really so happy with the establishment that its endorsement or cajoling means anything to you? If anything, it should make us all the more interested in Ron Paul – the one candidate the establishment fears, since they know their game is up if he should win.

Far from being in the unhappy position of a candidate whose children won't even speak to him, Ron Paul is fortunate to have family members all over the campaign trail on his behalf. He has been married to the same woman for 50 years, and has been blessed with five children and eighteen grandchildren. There are some family values.

Just think: for once, you don't have to choose the lesser among evils. You can finally vote *for* someone. You can not only be happy, but actually honored, to cast your vote for Ron Paul.

But don't just vote for him. Find out about him, and get out there and spread the word.

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