

# Schweiker to Be Pro-Life Advocate

By William F. Willoughby  
Religion Today

Washington, D.C. — The anti-abortion forces are as happy these days with the new secretary of Health and Human Service (HHS) as if they had finally gotten together enough of the political paraphernalia to get a Human Life Amendment to the Constitution passed and ratified.

"Let's hear it for Schweiker!" the conservative national Catholic newspaper *The Wanderer* proclaimed in a headline. And while there was not an awful lot of space given to the story, even by the National Catholic News Service, what Schweiker said about the funding of abortion through HHS is really significant news.



That's just like one of those feisty little Schwenkfelders, though. That's the religion Richard Schweiker belongs to — he and about 2,249 other Americans in five congregations within a 50-mile radius of Philadelphia. And you've got to do some stretching to get his denomination to number that many. But he's wielding tremendous power.

The former senator from Pennsylvania, you might remember, was Ronald Reagan's running mate during the 1976 campaign, but alas, Gerald Ford won the nomination and Schweiker went down with Reagan. As it turned out, it was Carter's year.

There had been a big outburst against Schweiker at this time, because on some things he was very liberal. But there were plenty of other things about which one would say he was quite conservative.

My estimation of him is that he has always been his own man and when you are your own man, you call the shots as you see them. It is not always wise to place a conservative or a liberal tag on such a person. I know that if someone seriously tried to do that to me I'd tell him to take his labels somewhere else. You're just not thinking well if you're totally liberal or if you're totally conservative.

Anyway, what has electrified the anti-abortionist forces are his words about not only that subject, but other pro-family questions. Soon after he was sworn into his new, important post, he affirmed that "the government should not be in the business of sex education." That, he said, is the province of the parents.

"I don't think it's the Fed's role to do it, and I don't think that it's the states' role unless the local school agency does it with the express approval of the parent," he said.

Schweiker, then, assuming that he makes good his pre- and post-appointment pronouncements on those matters, will be taking bureaucrats out of the bedroom and out of the abortion clinics as well.

It isn't a step backward, as liberals will be prone to say. Instead, it is a step toward getting us back on track where we belong. A country cannot remain healthy when it has such libertarian attitudes toward abortion, sex education and pre-marital sex as have been abetted and even encouraged by federal and state policies.

Some who were skeptical of Schweiker when he made his remarks before appointment, now are delighted: "He's for real! He really means it!"

They should have known that, though. When he was the Republican senator from Pennsylvania, he was sponsor of a constitutional amendment to outlaw abortion except in some very extenuating circumstances. That hasn't always been the most popular or politically-sanguine thing to do.

And it seems as if it is a most unlikely forum from which to advocate such legislation, given the libertarian tendencies of the department since it was established several years ago, but Schweiker vows that he will, as secretary of Health and Human Services, do just that.

It is important to keep in mind that his department includes the Federal Office for Family Planning, with a budget of \$162 million. With that, it helps finance 5,100 family planning clinics around the United States — offering family planning information and contraceptive services.

With the unmarried teenagers no longer eligible in the future, even that modest budget might receive some cutting. And the lines might become shorter. And maybe some kids will think twice before they get thrown into family planning before they planned to have a family.

Back in the 1976 election Schweiker might have been the necessary boon to Reagan to win the nomination, had not the dyed-in-the-wool conservatives read him out of the conservative camp. Schweiker is — and was then — conservative to a point where it counts for most conservatives — things that touch on sexual morality, on fortifying the family, and especially opposing abortion. To conservatives, Schweiker will prove to be one of the most vital Cabinet members in the new administration.

They should have chosen the Reagan-Schweiker ticket back in 1976. After all, Schweiker probably singlehandedly could have delivered the entire Schwenkfelder voting bloc — all 750 or so of them — for the GOP. That's power!

## PAPER DRIVE

Boy Scout Troop 231 at St. Ambrose Parish will sponsor a paper drive from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, March 28 in

the parking lot. Donors are asked to bring papers "bagged or bundled." If a pick-up is desired, the parish asks donors to call the rectory, 288-5000.

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## History of Liturgy Slated at Geneva

Geneva — Father David Fedor, associate pastor at St. Stephen's, will give a two-part presentation on the history of the liturgy from early Christian times to the present at 7:30 p.m. on the Wednesdays, March 18 and April 1.

The program will focus on the reforms in the liturgy before the Council of Trent, the Council of Trent and its effects, and the Second

Vatican Council and its reforms.

Father Fedor holds graduate degrees in music and liturgy from the University of Notre Dame, and is widely known as a speaker on the subject of liturgy. He is slated to address the National Association of Pastoral Musicians annual convention in April.

The liturgy presentations are open to the public.

## CYO to Host Tournament

The Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) will host the 25th annual Cheerleaders' Tournament at St. John Fisher College on Saturday, March 21.

More than 500 participants from 50 diocesan parishes and community centers will at-

tend. The day-long competition is open to junior varsity and varsity squads and teams are required to demonstrate five cheers. Other tournament events include a cheerleading skills clinic and a pep rally for the fifth and sixth grade level.

This year, an individual cheerleader competition has been added for senior high school cheerleaders only. They will be required to demonstrate specific skills and perform a cheer of their choice.

### Deadline

The deadline for submitting news to the *Courier-Journal* is non on Thursday preceding the following Wednesday's publication.

## Fisher President At Equity Dinner

Father Patrick O'Connor Braden, CSB, the recently installed president of St. John Fisher College, will be the principal speaker at the 46th annual St. Patrick's night dinner-dance of the Knights of Equity and the Daughters of Erin.

The evening begins at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 17, at the Americana Downtown, 70 State St.

The Irish organizations initiate or sponsor various activities including school scholarships, the promotion of Irish history and charitable contribution.

Officers of the knights are Thomas R. Coughlin, George F. Fay, Arthur P. Farren, James F. McCormick, Kenneth T. Power, William J.

### LENTEN SERIES

Msgr. William Shannon is discussing "Conversion" in a series of lectures sponsored by the Thomas Merton Society of Nazareth College. The remaining lectures will be held in Conference Room 1 in the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse, at 7:30 p.m., Tuesdays, March 17, 24 and 31.

Scahill, Daniel V. Ryan, Christopher Delanty, Martin Scahill, Dennis O'Reilly, George W. Moore and John E. Kirk.

## REAL TO REEL A CATHOLIC TV MAGAZINE

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