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**** Expert Sources - Roman Catholics and the Pope's Visit ****

Experts Available on the Reaction of Catholic Democrats to Pope Benedict XVI's visit to New York and Washington

Prominent Catholics to Speak About Strong Relationship Between Democratic Party Values and Catholic Social Justice Teachings

WHAT:

Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Washington, D.C. and New York this week will shine the spotlight on the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. Taking place during a presidential election year, the Papal visit has been carefully planned by the Vatican to avoid sending partisan messages and instead is focusing on larger issues such as the dignity of human life amidst war, environmental danger, and widespread suffering from poverty and disease around the world. At the same time, Republicans prominent in the campaign of Senator John McCain have organized the "National Catholic Prayer Breakfast" in a way that exploits the Pope's visit for political purposes. Prominent Catholic Democrats will be available to speak to the media about these two events, and why the divisive agenda of the ideological right comes at the expense of both the country and the Church at a time when both face daunting challenges.

Catholics have been turning out in unprecedented numbers to vote for both Senators Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, outpolling Republican Catholics 2:1 in the primaries. With a broad background in the Church, theology and politics, representatives from Catholic Democrats are available to speak to the media about the Pope's visit and the intersection of faith and American political life.

WHO:

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Adjunct Professor, Georgetown University

Lisa Sowle Cahill, J. Donald Monan, S. J. Professor, Boston College

William D'Antonio, Professor *Emeritus*, University of Connecticut, and Fellow, Life Cycle institute, Catholic University of America

David O'Brien, Loyola Professor of Roman Catholic Studies, Emeritus, College of the Holy Cross, Center for Religion, Ethics and Culture

Bill Roth, Communications Director, Catholic Democrats

Steven A. Krueger, Leadership Team, Press Secretary, Catholic Democrats

Dr. Patrick Whelan, Co-founder and President, Catholic Democrats

To schedule an interview, please contact Steve Krueger at krueger@catholicdemocrats.org or by phone at (781) 577-0320 or Bill Roth at roth@catholicdemocrats.org or by phone at (408) 221-1847.

Expert Source Bios

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend most recently authored, "Failing America's Faithful, How Today Churches are Mixing God and Politics and Losing their Way," and is the former Lt. Governor of Maryland and a former Board Member of the National Catholic Reporter.

Lisa Sowle Cahill (Ph.D. University of Chicago) is a past president of the Catholic Theological Society of America (1992-93), and the Society of Christian Ethics (1997-98). Her primary areas of research include fundamental theology and ethics; feminist theology and ethics; ethics of sex and gender; bioethics; global health access; and just war theory and pacifism. She has been a member of the Catholic Health Association Theology and Ethics Advisory Committee, the National Advisory Board for Ethics in Reproduction, and the March of Dimes National Bioethics Committee. She is currently a member of the Catholic Peacebuilding Network, and Catholic Relief Services. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and has served on the editorial boards of numerous scholarly journals.

William D'Antonio is a past Chief Executive Officer of the American Sociological Association. His primary areas of research include family and religion, social, moral and religious beliefs and attitudes of Catholics, and the implications of the religious affiliation of members Congress. He is the co-author of eight books and co-editor of four. His most recent co-authored books include *American Catholics Today: New Realities of Their Faith and Their Church*, and *Voices of the Faithful*, a study of a Catholic Lay Social Movement striving to help change the Church. He is co-author of seven other books, and co-editor of four. He has an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from St. Michael's College in Vermont, and was a Fulbright Senior Fellow in Italy in 2004.

David O'Brien is the founding director of the College's Center for Religion, Ethics and Culture. Dr. O'Brien is past president of the American Catholic Historical Association, and has served on the Board of the National Catholic Reporter and on a number of Catholic organizations concerned with social ministry. Dr. O'Brien is the author of several books, including *The Renewal of American Catholicism*; *Public Catholicism: The American Church and Public Life, 1789-1989*; *Isaac Hecker an American Catholic*; and *From the Heart of the American Church: Catholic Higher Education and American Culture*. He writes regularly for the National Catholic Reporter, Commonweal and America magazine, as well as the Boston Globe. Dr. O'Brien is a member of St. Mary's Parish in Jefferson, Massachusetts.

Bill Roth is National Communications Director for Catholic Democrats, as well as Chair of Catholic Democrats of California. A long time political activist, he was one of the innovators in using e-mail and the web to organize campaigns. His campaign involvement include Sen. Tom Harkin's presidential bid in 1992, Kathleen Brown for Governor in California, and Mike Honda for Congress. In addition to numerous local races and Measures in the Silicon Valley area, he was also San Jose city lead with Dean For America during the 2004 election cycle. He is also the general manager of a division at a Silicon Valley high-tech firm.

Steve Krueger is a grass roots activist and commentator on issues emerging from the clergy sexual abuse crisis and other issues within the Catholic Church. Mr. Krueger was the founding Executive Director of Voice of the Faithful, a grassroots lay organization that formed in response to the clergy sexual abuse crisis.. He has been a primary spokesperson and commentator to local, national, and international media on issues confronting the Catholic Church and served on the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council during the tenure of Bernard Cardinal Law. He played a pivotal role in passing legislation in Massachusetts in 2006 that conditionally repealed the criminal statute of limitations for crimes of sexual abuse to children and minors. He worships at the Church of Saint Ignatius of Loyola in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts.

Patrick Whelan, MD PhD, is a co-founder and president of the Catholic Democrats. He has written widely on the medical issues that dominate the interface between Catholicism and American political life, and contributed to faith-based efforts to bring an end to the tragic war in Iraq. Dr. Whelan is a founding member of the Dominican Lay Scholars Community in Boston, is the co-director of Massachusetts Pax Christi, and has been active in parish life in many capacities. He is a member of the pediatrics faculty at Harvard Medical School.

About Catholic Democrats

Catholic Democrats is an association of state based groups offering a Catholic voice within the Democratic Party, and standing up for Catholic office holders who are attacked because of their faith. The Catholic Democrats are advancing the rich tradition of Catholic Social Teaching in the public square for the common good. For more information about Catholic Democrats please go to www.catholicdemocrats.org.

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