

Texas bishops raise concerns about state pro-life group

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Austin, Texas, Mar 1, 2018 / 07:00 pm (CNA).- The Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops has suggested churches in Texas sever ties with pro-life group Texas Right to Life, encouraging Catholic to volunteer with other pro-life groups in the state.

The TCCB's advisory was read after Masses and printed in church bulletins in the Diocese of Fort Worth last Sunday. Texas Right to Life is the state affiliate of National Right to Life.

The TCCB urged in a parish advisory notice that Catholics not be involved with Texas Right to Life's activities and that parishes not allow the organization to use their sites for events.

The TCCB cited Texas Right to Life's opposition to incremental pro-life reforms, such as laws that restrict certain types of abortion rather than outlaw the act entirely, and mentioned "conflicts on end-of-life reform" and issues with the organization's voter guide among their concerns about the organization.

"The bishops have been compelled to publicly correct Texas Right to Life's misstatements on end-of-life care and advance directives," the bishops stated.

“Texas Right to Life implied that the legislation the bishops were supporting allowed euthanasia and death panels rather than the reality that the legislation reflected the long-standing Church teaching requiring a balance of patient autonomy and the physician conscience protection.”

The TCCB claimed that Texas Right to Life’s voter guide excluded pro-life members of the Texas legislature, and “was not based on a fair analysis of a legislator’s work.”

“Unfortunately, a number of legislators who have consistently voted for pro-life and end of life legislation have been opposed by Texas Right to Life,” said the bishops.

The TCCB encouraged people to volunteer their time with other pro-life organizations as well as Church-sponsored pro-life ministries.

On its website, Texas Right to Life issued a statement defending themselves from the TCCB’s claims, saying they were “disappointed but not surprised.” Texas Right to Life stated that the bishops were being “uncharitable” in their description of the group, and that they had in fact worked hard to secure wins in the legislature.

“Uncharitable mischaracterizations of our political and policy goals serve only to dissolve the spirit of collaboration that yielded recent legislative victories to protect the most vulnerable in our state—victories that were hard-fought against the leadership of the Texas House,” they said.

Texas Right to Life also defended their voter’s guide, saying that they were seeking to endorse candidates who would commit to new legislative leadership in the state.

Joe Pojman of the Texas Alliance for Life in Austin told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram that “some of [Texas Right to Life’s] goals are not well-founded in law.”

The group has come under criticism from others who claim that even pro-life legislators face reprisal from Texas Right to Life if they vote contrary to the group’s recommendations.

Republican Kyleen Wright, president of Texans for Life, told the Star-Telegram, “I thought our pro-life lawmakers would need protection from abortion-minded people. But no — we have to protect them from Texas Right to Life saying they’re not pro-life enough.”

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