

Wednesday, February 1, 2012

Launched: *Catholic Bioethics for a New Millennium* by M. Rev. Bishop
Anthony Fisher, OP

Last night, the University of Notre Dame Australia welcomed to its Sydney Campus His Eminence Cardinal George Pell to launch *Catholic Bioethics for a New Millennium*, authored by Bishop Anthony Fisher and published by Cambridge University Press.

Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor of Notre Dame, Professor Hayden Ramsay, welcomed to the launch representatives of the Church, Parliament, Catholic and state hospitals, educational institutes, the law, Catholic and social services, the Knights of Malta and of the Order of Jerusalem and Notre Dame staff and students. Several members of the media were also in attendance. The event made available the first copies of the book in Australia.

Cardinal Pell praised Bishop Anthony's book for its coherent arguments. He said the book would go a long way in providing modern society with an explanation of the Catholic stance on bioethical issues.

"This book is a wonderful contribution in the struggle to recover Catholic conscience and authority," said Cardinal Pell.

"Bioethics is a vitally important area in which the tectonic plates that underlie our civilisation are rubbing up against one another."

His Eminence suggested advancement in medical technology has created new moral questions for our age, and demands fresh answers.

"The Bible is not enough. The Church from a very early age has...recognized we need an intellectual framework to explain to the people around us what we're doing. Bishop Anthony spells out the cases for the basics of our moral position," Cardinal Pell said.

"There are moral truths; there is such a thing as universal human dignity. He defends explicitly all innocent life. He speaks very usefully of the different levels of responsibility in this confused age of radically diminished culpability."

Cardinal Pell and Bishop Anthony both expressed their faith in healthcare as a science that has done much good and has the potential to do so much more in the future.

Bishop Anthony said he hoped his book would serve as a catalyst to discuss some of the most pressing issues of our age surrounding human life.

“The Church may not dictate to the state...but She must always be a voice for the voiceless, including the voiceless unborn and sick and dying. The Church proposes a wisdom received from God as well as from the best of human reason and which drives her faithful who are themselves leaders and voters, doctors and patients,” Bishop Anthony said.

“Dignity, life, are dimensions of real flesh and blood human beings; human beings who matter. Indeed, matter very much. That's what bioethics is about: to propose as our starting point that every human being should be revered, protected and assisted to flourish. It is not some rigid moral absolutism or abstract ancient formula, but about love for humanity, and about grace.”

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For further information please contact:

Communications Officer, **Elizabeth Fenech**

The University of Notre Dame Australia, Sydney Campus

T: 02 8204 4407

E: elizabeth.fenech@nd.edu.au

W: www.nd.edu.au/

PHOTO CAPTION: The Most Reverend Bishop Fisher, OP, autographed copies of his book for those who attended the launch.