



DIocese of STOCKTON

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September 13, 2005

Most Reverend John T. Steinbock  
Diocese of Fresno  
1550 N. Fresno Street  
Fresno, CA 93703

Dear Bishop Steinbock:

Recently a group of interested physicians from Modesto approached me about forming a Central California Guild of the Catholic Medical Association (CMA). I have given them my enthusiastic support. They are planning an inaugural conference in Modesto May 5-7, 2006. The National CMA Board is having their 2006 Spring meeting in Modesto to coincide with the event.

Currently there are only 52 members of the CMA scattered throughout California. One-quarter are from the Central Valley. There are four existing guilds (Los Angeles, Van Nuys, Fullerton and San Francisco). None are active. They hope to include physicians in your diocese and are open to letting the home of the Central Valley Guild relocate as interest dictates.

As you know, the Guild can serve as an important vehicle for the spiritual and doctrinal formation of Catholic health professionals. It is vital we support them now, as we will need their support in the many battles ahead.

Presently, we have a number of nationally known speakers who are committed to attend (Bishop Vasa, the CMA Episcopal Advisor; Father Robert Spitzer, President of Gonzaga University; Father Germain Kopazynski, formerly of the National Catholic Bioethics Center; Wesley Smith and others). I have asked them to invite Bishop Thomas Curry to speak on conscience clauses and religious liberty.

We will open the Conference with celebration of the Mass on May 5<sup>th</sup>. As the Guild will include members from the Central Valley, I would like to invite you to join me in opening the Conference and concelebrating the Mass.

Fraternally yours in Christ,

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Most Reverend Stephen E. Blaire  
Roman Catholic Bishop of Stockton

SEB:dt

cc: ✓ Paul Braaton, M.D.