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## Church in the 21st Century Event

**9/20/07--"CATHOLIC FAITH AND COOPERATION IN A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY" WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE LAW SCHOOL ON OCTOBER 11.**

9/20/07--What should individuals and institutions do when conscience clashes with the requirements of the law? This question will be addressed next Thursday, October 11, by an interdisciplinary group of scholars who will participate in a panel discussion at Boston College Law School entitled "Catholic Faith and Cooperation in a Pluralistic Society: Navigating Conflicts Between Conscience and the Requirements of the Law."

Panelists include: Edward A. Hartnett, Richard J. Hughes Professor for Constitutional and Public Law and Service, Seton Hall University School of Law; M. Cathleen Kaveny, John P. Murphy Professor of Law and Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame Law School; Rev. James F. Keenan, S.J., Professor of Theology, Boston College, and Very Rev. Russell E. Smith, Senior Director, Ethics, Catholic Health Association.

Discussion will focus on the ways in which the principle of cooperation, drawn from the tradition of Catholic moral theology, can help us to think through the issues that face individuals and institutions striving to serve the public good in a complex world where law and policy are sometimes in conflict with deeply held moral principles. What, for example, should a morally conscientious judge do when the law as the judge interprets it is unjust and the action that the law requires of the judge in a given case is in conflict with the judge's conscientious convictions? What should religiously affiliated social service agencies with moral objections to contraception do when state law mandates that employers include insurance coverage for contraceptives? How should religiously affiliated hospitals respond to laws that require the provision of services that conflict with the hospitals' moral commitments? In the face of a law that prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the placement of children for adoption, can an institution like Catholic Charities cooperate in the placement of children with same-sex couples without violating the church's teaching against legal recognition of same-sex unions? The principle of cooperation provides a framework for thinking about issues like these where the claims of conscience intersect with the demands of public service in a morally complex pluralistic society.

This event is being jointly sponsored by the Law School and the Church in the 21st Century Center, and will take place in East Wing room 120, from 4:00-6:00 pm.