

## CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

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June 12, 2011

Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan  
President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops  
Office of the Archbishop, Archdiocese of New York  
1011 First Ave  
New York, NY 10022

Dear Archbishop Dolan,

At the Business Meeting of the sixty-sixth annual convention of the Catholic Theological Society of America on June 10, 2011, the attending members of the Society passed the following resolution that was proposed by our former president, Michael J. Buckley, S.J.:

The Catholic Theological Society of America regrets deeply that the provisions established by the American Bishops in the document *Doctrinal Responsibilities: Procedures for Promoting Cooperation and Resolving Disputes between Bishops and Theologians* were ignored in passing judgment on *Quest for the Living God* by Professor Elizabeth A. Johnson, C.S.J. These provisions came from the CTSA and from the Canon Law Society of America. After six years of deliberation, debate, and consensus, they were submitted to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and obtained its review and concurrence. Then they were presented to the entire body of American Bishops at the regular meeting of the Conference and approved overwhelmingly for use in the United States. They were not imposed upon any diocese as an obligation of law but presented as careful provisions and directions in order to avoid precisely the situation in which we find ourselves.

In light of this, the CTSA recommends to the American Bishops that they establish a committee that would evaluate the procedures of the Committee on Doctrine that led to their statement.

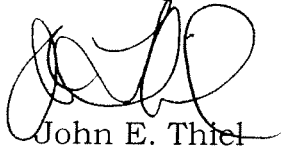
The Business Meeting of the CTSA is open to all members attending the convention. The resolution passed by a vote of 147 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions. I would interpret this vote, Archbishop Dolan, not only as a strong statement of support for our colleague, Professor Elizabeth Johnson, but

also as a judgment that something was very much amiss in the procedures of the USCCB Committee on Doctrine that led to the publication of its Statement.

Please be assured, Your Excellency, that neither this resolution and its recommendation nor the Response of the Board of Directors of the CTSA to the Committee on Doctrine's Statement published on our website in any way challenge the charismatic authority of the magisterium. Nevertheless, the Society is most concerned about this situation and the procedures which led to it.

On behalf of the CTSA, I pray for God's grace and blessings on all your important work for the American Catholic Church.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John E. Thiel', written over a printed name.

John E. Thiel

President

Catholic Theological Society of America