

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

August 21, 2013 at 10:32am

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## Pope Francis Effect II?

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Distinctly Catholic

Good news from Ireland. The Coadjutor Archbishop of Armagh, +Eamon Martin, had spoken previously, and breezily, about denying communion to politicians who voted in favor of a relaxation of laws regarding abortion. Now, he has clarified that the altar rail should not be turned into a political battleground. To be clear, people who actively support laws that permit abortion should wrestle long and hard with their conscience before approaching the Sacrament. Then again, all of us should wrestle long and hard with our conscience before approaching the Sacrament. It is only the honesty that such wrestling entails that permits us to hear what really are the most beautiful words in the world: "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word, and my soul shall be healed." But, it is emphatically not the ordinary job of the minister to determine who should and should not present themselves. The narrow reading of Canon 915 supported by someone like Cardinal Burke had the danger of spreading beyond the U.S. The fact that Archbishop Martin has made clear that whatever one thinks of Canon 915, it is lousy theology for the minister to deny someone communion except in the most extraordinary circumstances, is a good sign, perhaps another sign of the Pope Francis effect.

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