



Office of the Bishop

This letter is to be read at all Masses in the Diocese of Lincoln at which the faithful are present the weekend of January 28-29, 2012. The reading is obligatory and is not to be a substitute for the homily, but is to be read as a part of parish announcements.
+Fabian W. Bruskewitz, Bishop of Lincoln, January 26, 2012.

To the Clergy, Religious, and Faithful Laity of the Diocese of Lincoln:

Beloved in Christ,

The Catholic Bishops of the United States, led by Cardinal-designate Timothy Dolan, the President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, are joining together to call the attention of all Catholics in our country to a serious attack upon our faith, upon our consciences, and upon our cherished freedom of religion. I am happy to join my voice and efforts to these Successors of the Apostles and to protest most strongly against a mandate, not even a duly passed law, issued by the Obama Administration that requires all Catholics in the United States to violate their consciences and support abortion, abortion-causing drugs, contraception and sterilization.

As you know, the buying of health insurance by every citizen of the USA is now compulsory by federal law. The same law gives to the Cabinet Secretary of Health and Human Services the authority over all health insurance. The present Secretary, Kathleen Sebelius, a bitter fallen-away Catholic, now requires that all insurance, even when issued privately, must carry coverage for evil and grave sin. This means that all of our Catholic schools, hospitals, social service agencies, and the like will be forced to participate in evil. The Catholic Church has pleaded with President Obama to rescind this edict, but all pleas have been met with scorn and have fallen on deaf ears. This mandate is accompanied by new attacks by the federal government on Catholic Relief Services and on the Bishops' work in immigration and refugee settlement services.

Secretary Sebelius, in an act of mockery, said that those who might qualify for a conscientious exemption (almost no one), have one year to comply, but during that year they must "refer" people to the insurance that covers wicked deeds. We cannot and will not comply with this unjust decree. Like the martyrs of old, we must be prepared to accept suffering which could include heavy fines and imprisonment. Our American religious liberty is in grave jeopardy.

All Catholics are asked to pray and do penance that this matter may be resolved. All should contact their elected representatives to protest this outrage and to insist on the passage of the "Respect for Conscience" act which is now before Congress.

With my blessing and prayers for all of you and your loves ones, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,

The Most Reverend Fabian W. Bruskewitz
Bishop of Lincoln

Diocese of Lincoln • Post Office Box 80328 • Lincoln, Nebraska 68501-0328
Telephone: (402) 488-0921 • FAX: (402) 488-3569