

Magnificat Stands with USCCB

“Cardinal-designate Timothy Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), sharply criticized the decision of the Obama administration in which it “ordered almost every employer and insurer in the country to provide sterilization and contraceptives, including some abortion-inducing drugs, in their health plans.” He made the statement in a web video posted at <http://bcove.me/ob5itz9v>.

“Never before has the federal government forced individuals and organizations to go out into the marketplace and buy a product that violates their conscience. This shouldn’t happen in a land where free exercise of religion ranks first in the Bill of Rights,” Cardinal-designate Dolan said.

“He urges Catholics and the public at large to speak out in protest. “Let your elected leaders know that you want religious liberty and rights of conscience restored and that you want the administration’s contraceptive mandate rescinded,” he said.

What would Mary do if she were living in the USA today in response to the new government mandate referenced above? In fact, Mary and Saint Joseph had to protect their Son’s life in the womb against the mandate of Herod to slaughter the innocents. The flight into Egypt, in obedience to the message of an angel, would have been a time of intense intercessory prayer and sacrifice. The holy couple must have prayed continuously for those children who were being killed by Herod. The cries of the mothers and fathers whose children were slaughtered would have resonated loudly in the attuned hearts and minds of Mary and Joseph. God placed His Son, the Incarnate Word, in the custody of Joseph and Mary who provided refuge against Herod’s mandate. In our day, I believe God is placing custody of life in the hands of present day Mary’s and Joseph’s whose hearts are in a posture of prayer and whose faith compels them to enter the public square in defense of the moral teachings of the Church.

Human authorities have frequently clashed with Christians precisely because they adhere to an authority higher than that of any civil government, especially in matters of conscience. St. Paul reminds us that we need to obey legitimate governing authority. But from the earliest days of Christianity down to our present age, Christians have often been forced to make a decision. The Romans told the early Christians to offer sacrifice to the gods in order to be law-abiding citizens. King Henry VIII told Thomas More and the whole of England that they had to be obedient first to the king, and then to the Pope. In modern-day China, Catholics are told that they must worship at state-run churches with state-appointed bishops. There are countless other instances in history of Christians being challenged by the civil authorities about their faith, realizing that in matters of conscience, they had to echo the refrain of St. Thomas More: I am the king’s good servant, but God’s first.

Please use this link to the [USCCB article](#) in full and respond.

Patroness of America, Mary, the Immaculate Conception, pray for us. Amen.