

Public Statement

In response to the guidance provided by the Msst Rev. Álvaro Corrada, SJ, as bishop of the Diocese of Tyler, Trinity Mother Frances Health System wishes to acknowledge the following:

In 2003, Trinity Mother Frances Health System, in good faith, relied upon a misinterpretation of church teaching and specifically pertinent elements of the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Services in the United States (ERDs). In subsequent years as the authentic teaching of the magisterium was clarified for the Health System, direct sterilizations decreased and have now ceased.

Trinity Mother Frances Health System regrets any confusion about Catholic teaching on this topic that might have resulted. Measures are in place to ensure going forward no direct sterilizations will occur.



Office of the Bishop

March 27, 2009

The public statement issued March 10, 2009, in the name of Trinity Mother Frances Health System by Sister Sally Marie Kiepora, provincial superior of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, was issued in response to the scandalous revelation last summer that Trinity Mother Frances Hospital had performed a large number of tubal ligations from 2000 to 2003. Since tubal ligations are a direct sterilization, they are in violation of a woman's sacred dignity as a human person and as such have always been contrary to the teaching of the church and are prohibited by the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services.

Trinity Mother Frances Health System officials state that they were in good faith in 2003 when they relied upon a "misinterpretation of church teaching." Thankfully this error has come to light and the direct sterilizations which began decreasing after 2003 have now ceased entirely and the protocols for the hospital have been revised to insure the respect for the sacred dignity of every woman.

As bishop of the Diocese of Tyler, I am relieved that Trinity Mother Frances Health System has joined CHRISTUS St. Michael's in correcting this grave error. I can now state that there are no longer any tubal ligations being performed in Catholic hospitals in the Diocese of Tyler.

I again reiterate my personal apology to all those harmed by the direct sterilizations for any failure in providing adequate oversight for the mission of Catholic health care in the Diocese of Tyler. I expect to eventually have in place a system which will help assure everyone that the Catholic hospitals in the Diocese of Tyler remain compliant with their protocols and that their protocols are never again at odds with the authentic church teaching about the dignity of the human person. I invite anyone who has concerns about this or any related matter to bring them to the attention of the promoter of justice, Father Gavin N. Vaverek, 903-266-2159.

Most Rev. Álvaro Corrada, SJ
Bishop of Tyler