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Statement on the Role of Faith in Discussion of Healthcare
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As Americans we find ourselves engaged in an ongoing discussion concerning public policy regarding health care. Many people seem to be asking: As follower of Jesus Christ how can a person best be a faith filled citizen? As Bishop of the Diocese of Tyler I wish to remind the faithful, and indeed all people of good will, of some basic principles. These principles should be kept in mind in discussing and formulating policy which potentially affects the health and well being of so many people.

- 1) The sacred dignity of every human person deserves to be protected and safe guarded.
- 2) Some human actions, like abortion, are intrinsically evil, that is they are always wrong and contrary to the sacred dignity of the human person. Such actions are contrary to proper healthcare which seeks to never harm a person. Abortion and other intrinsically evil actions cannot by policy or discussion be made acceptable or good.
- 3) In the eyes of the Church, politics is a realm that has its own proper autonomy. Government officials have a responsibility to promote the common good and to defend the rights of all, particularly the weak and the marginalized.
- 4) As Pope John Paul II stated “The Church proposes the truth; never imposes it.” Therefore, it is proper for people to inform themselves of the issues and to form their conscience in accord with the truth. People have not only a right, but a duty to participate in the public discussion whether they agree or disagree with policies that are proposed or implemented by the Federal, State or Local government.
- 5) The government does not have to provide health insurance for illegal immigrants. Nevertheless, if anyone in our nations gets sick, it is our moral obligation to help with adequate care. The government does have a responsibility for the common good which would include care for all sick persons in the country, to safeguard the health and security of our nation.

In exercising my responsibility as a successor to the Apostles, I offer these few points as a witness to Love in Truth. I encourage all Christians to pray for our government leaders that they may be open to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. May God bless us and may God bless America.