

**STATEMENT OF THE CALIFORNIA CATHOLIC BISHOPS IN SUPPORT OF
PROPOSITION 73: PARENTAL NOTIFICATION PRIOR TO
TERMINATION OF MINOR'S PREGNANCY**

September 1, 2005

The California Catholic Conference of Bishops supports Proposition 73, *Termination of Minor's Pregnancy, Waiting Period and Parental Notification, Initiative Constitutional Amendment*, which will appear on the November 2005 ballot. The proposed law, which has been called the *Parents Right to Know* by its sponsors, would require notification of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a minor 48 hours before she obtains an abortion, unless a judge determines that such notification places the minor in danger.

The initiative states: "The People of California have a special and compelling interest in and responsibility for protecting the health and well-being of children, ensuring that parents are properly informed of potential health-related risks to their children, and promoting parent-child communication and parental responsibility." We concur fully in the guarantee of these fundamental parental rights.

We hold that both the young woman's welfare and society's common good are best served when family communication is promoted in public policy. A minor faced with a serious emotional, psychological and medical decision needs her parents—their love, their wisdom, their counsel. In addition, society's common good is enhanced when family integrity is honored and parental responsibility is respected.

Our *Catholic Catechism* teaches that the family is the "privileged community" wherein children are meant to grow in wisdom, stature and grace. We are also counseled to work with public authorities to ensure that the family's prerogatives are not usurped.¹

We are convinced that "the Church must be committed to the task of educating and supporting...people involved in law-making, government and the administration of justice, so that legislation will always reflect those principles and moral values which...advance the common good."²

We strongly encourage Catholics in our state to offer their full support in promoting Proposition 73 as good public policy, and in exercising their citizenship in voting for it in November.

¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2206-2209.

² "The Church in America," No. 19, quoting Synod for America, proposition 72, included in the Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities, 2001