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STATEMENT ON THE PENDING EXECUTION OF CHRISTOPHER SEPULVADO

Nearly a year ago we, the Catholic Bishops of the State of Louisiana, stood in strong opposition to the scheduled execution of Christopher Sepulvado. Today we restate our opposition as Christopher's execution date of February 5th approaches. This position is based on consistent Church teaching which is rooted in affirming life, and therefore responding to any assault on human life, including that of state-sanctioned killing.

Our opposition is to the unnecessary taking of human life. Even if we are the victim of a grave injustice, we humans do not have the right to take the life of another human being. Our opposition to the execution last year was not based on it being scheduled on Ash Wednesday, just as our opposition now does not hinge upon whether or not a particular execution protocol is used.

We reiterate that Christopher's actions which led to the taking of the life of Wesley Mercer were evil, heinous and tragic. However, taking Christopher's life will neither enact justice as it will fail to bring Wesley back to life, nor will it provide true healing, reconciliation, or peace to those involved. We continue to pray for family members and others impacted by this crime. Finally, we ask Gov. Bobby Jindal, along with the Department of Corrections, to halt the execution of Christopher Sepulvado so that injustice and killing are not further perpetuated.