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STATEMENT ON GESTATIONAL SURROGACY

The Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops (LCCB) seeks to articulate the Catholic Church’s teaching on the issue of surrogacy in light of legislation proposed during last year’s legislative session as well as what is before the Louisiana Legislature presently. The Church is clear and consistent in her teaching that surrogacy, in any form, is to be opposed as an immoral means to create a family. The desire to have a child is both natural and good. We recognize that issues of infertility can be incredibly sensitive and personal. While acknowledging this reality, it is important to realize that pursuing all means in the effort to create a child presents moral and ethical concerns and that a child is truly a gift to be given as opposed to a right to attain.

Surrogacy arrangements commercialize and objectify women relegating them to a utilitarian purpose. The Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith spoke to this point in *Donum Vitae* as it stated that surrogacy is contrary to the dignity of persons. Surrogacy diminishes the dignity of women in that it grossly focuses on what women can produce as opposed to the entire worth and being of who women have been created to be. In addition, surrogacy fails to acknowledge the uniqueness of the mother-child relationship to the detriment of women from a physical, psychological, and spiritual level.

Surrogacy arrangements re-define and re-conceptualize what a traditional family is to the detriment of this sacred unit. The Catechism of the Catholic Church expresses this in clear terms, “Techniques that involve the disassociation of husband and wife, by intrusion of a person other than the couple are gravely immoral” (CCC #2376). Surrogacy involves the inclusion of at least one other individual in the creation of a family beyond the married couple. Such arrangements therefore betray the spouses’ right to become father and mother only through each other, and infringe upon the child’s right to be born of a father and mother known to him and bound to each other by marriage.

Finally, surrogacy agreements pose threats to the protection of life at the earliest stages. Given that in vitro fertilization is used to produce the embryos that are implanted into a surrogate, concerns arise as to the production of additional unused embryos which include what may be done to such lives, and whether they will be rightly honored as human beings or tragically destroyed.

LCCB makes clear the position of the Catholic Church that surrogacy should and must be opposed in any form.

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