



St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center

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MEDIA STATEMENT

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St. Joseph's Resolved in Saving Mother's Life, Confident Following Bishop's Announcement

World-renowned hospital will remain faithful to its 115 year tradition of care

Phoenix, AZ – December 21, 2010 – The leadership of St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix is saddened today following Bishop Thomas Olmsted's announcement that he has revoked his endorsement of the hospital as "Catholic." At his direction, the hospital will remove the Blessed Sacrament from the chapel and will no longer celebrate Mass there.

"Though we are deeply disappointed, we will be steadfast in fulfilling our mission," said Linda Hunt, President of St. Joseph's. "St. Joseph's hospital will remain faithful to our mission of care, as we have for the last 115 years. Our caregivers deliver extraordinary medical care and share an unmatched commitment to the wellbeing of the communities they serve. Nothing has or will change in that regard."

Hunt emphasized that the hospital will not change its name or its mission, which were both established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1895. "St. Joseph's will continue through our words and deeds to carry out the healing ministry of Jesus," Hunt said. "Our operations, policies, and procedures will not change."

The announcement by Bishop Olmsted follows months of complex talks between the Phoenix Diocese, the hospital, and the hospital's parent company, Catholic Healthcare West. At issue is the life-saving care delivered to a pregnant patient in November 2009 at St. Joseph's. In that case, a decision was made to terminate an 11-week pregnancy in order to save the mother's life.

"Consistent with our values of dignity and justice, if we are presented with a situation in which a pregnancy threatens a woman's life, our first priority is to save both patients. If that is not possible we will always save the life we can save, and that is what we did in this case," said Hunt. "We continue to stand by the decision, which was made in collaboration with the patient, her family, her caregivers, and our Ethics Committee. Morally, ethically, and legally we simply cannot stand by and let someone die whose life we might be able to save."

About St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center

Located in the heart of Phoenix, Arizona, St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center is a 697-bed, not-for-profit hospital that provides a wide range of health, social and support services with special advocacy for the poor and underserved. St. Joseph's is a nationally recognized center for quality tertiary care, medical education and research. It includes the internationally renowned Barrow Neurological Institute, the Heart & Lung Institute, St. Joseph's Children's Health Center, and a Level I Trauma Center verified by the American College of Surgeons. U.S. News & World Report routinely ranks St. Joseph's among the best hospitals in the United States for neurology and neurosurgery.