



OFFICE of the ARCHBISHOP

## Archdiocese of Louisville

212 EAST COLLEGE STREET • P.O. BOX 1073 • LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY 40201-1073  
(502) 585-3291 • FAX (502) 585-2466

May 23, 2012

Dear Father:

As you know on Monday, 12 lawsuits were filed on behalf of 43 other dioceses, Catholic schools and universities, Catholic health systems, and Catholic charitable organizations. The Archdiocese of Louisville is not a party to these lawsuits. In the event that you receive inquiries about the purpose of the lawsuits or our participation in them, here are some thoughts.

These lawsuits have been filed to challenge an unprecedented attack by the federal government on one of America's most cherished freedoms: the freedom to practice one's religion without government interference. It is not about whether people have access to certain services; it is about whether the government may force religious institutions and individuals to facilitate and fund services that violate their religious beliefs. I am attaching a copy of an article by Cardinal Wuerl in the *Washington Post* that explains well the heart of this matter.

The lawsuits are being filed now because the mandate was made final on February 15, 2012, so it is the law right now, and it will go into effect soon (August 1, 2012, for some and August 1, 2013, for others). Other avenues to correct the problem without litigation—through the White House and Congress—have been pursued and have not succeeded. Litigation takes time, so waiting until just before the deadline is not practical.

I applaud and support this effort. There is no need, however, for every single diocese or other Catholic organization to sue in order for the rights of all to be protected. The various plaintiffs reflect a broad cross-section of Catholic institutions, and together they represent the wide variety of issues, impacts, economic consequences, and divergent facts that exist among Catholic organizations nationwide. I am confident in the strength of this effort as it is.

Please know of my prayers for you.

Fraternally yours in Our Lord,

Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz, D.D.  
Archbishop of Louisville

Enclosure