

BISHOPS AFFIRM TRADITION



Bill Donohue comments on the decisions reached by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) this week in Baltimore:

Those who have been pushing the bishops to abandon their opposition to the Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate, abortion and gay marriage lost big time this week. Yesterday, the bishops voted unanimously to continue their fight against the HHS mandate.

The bishops invoked the name of Pope Francis, sending a message to those who are trying to hijack the pope's words to pressure the bishops to abandon their cultural concerns. "Pope Francis has reminded us," they said, that "there is only one thing which the Church quite clearly demands: the freedom to proclaim the Gospel in its entirety, even when it runs counter to the world, even when it goes against the tide."

By electing Archbishop Joseph Kurtz as president, and Cardinal Daniel DiNardo as vice president, the bishops affirmed their commitment to religious liberty, the life of the unborn, and marriage equity.

Archbishop Kurtz took to the streets of Louisville last year protesting the HHS mandate; Cardinal DiNardo, as chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, wrote letters to the U.S. senators expressing the bishops' opposition to the mandate.

On abortion, Kurtz said yesterday that "the deliberate

destruction of unborn children at their most vulnerable stage is a travesty." In June, when Texas Sen. Wendy Davis filibustered a pro-life bill, DiNardo called on Gov. Rick Perry to call for a special session to revive the bill.

Archbishop Kurtz, previous chairman of the USCCB's Ad Hoc Committee on the Defense of Marriage, set the agenda for the bishops in opposing gay marriage. In June, Cardinal DiNardo called the Supreme Court's ruling allowing gay marriage a "grave injustice."

Kudos to the USCCB for affirming tradition and holding the line.