

# HHS MANDATE QUESTIONED

On New Year's Eve, just hours before the Health and Human Services mandate went into effect, forcing Catholic entities to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception and sterilization in their health plans, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor halted the edict until the Obama administration responded to her order.

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, is seeking to have the Supreme Court agree to hear a case involving Catholic non-profits; it has already agreed to hear two cases brought by for-profit Christian organizations.

A few weeks earlier, a federal district court judge ruled that Catholic non-profits in the New York area had religious liberty rights that Obamacare was trespassing on, and could not therefore proceed.

Catholics are looking to the Supreme Court to resolve this issue once and for all. Approximately 90 lawsuits have been brought over this matter. At stake is the right of Catholic-run institutions not to pay for services it deems immoral. Other religions are watching carefully as the final outcome has bearing on their constitutional rights as well. We are cautiously optimistic.