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STATEMENT

Archbishop John C. Wester on the Current New Mexico Legislation Regarding Abortion and Assisted Suicide

ALBUQUERQUE – Wednesday, March 3, 2021–IMMEDIATE RELEASE-- Archbishop John C. Wester's statement on the current New Mexico legislation regarding abortion and assisted suicide:

Bills that threaten vulnerable life are working their way through the legislature in New Mexico. On February 26, 2021, Governor Lujan Grisham signed into law a bill that repeals a 1969 ban on abortion in New Mexico, a ban that was suppressed under the 1973 *Roe v Wade* Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. If *Roe v Wade* is overturned, the legalization and regulation of abortion falls to each state. New Mexico is set to legalize abortions with very few restrictions. Particularly concerning is that this law also removes all conscience protections for medical providers and requirements that abortion be performed only by a doctor, both of which had been enforceable, even under *Roe v Wade*.

Also quickly working its way through our legislature is a bill, HB 47, legalizing assisted suicide. This assisted suicide bill is set to be the worst in the nation, making it a requirement that all patients in hospice care be offered assisted suicide as an option. This as we struggle to dissuade our young people from taking their lives when they are struggling with depression and despondency. With these bills, I wonder, what have we become?

Though we are saddened by the repeal of abortion restrictions and the possible legalization of assisted suicide, we do not lose hope. We continue work to promote just laws, but know that God's law transcends any human laws. God's law calls us all to recognize and protect the life and dignity of each and every human being, especially the most vulnerable. This includes unborn children and those at the end of life. We are promised that God's law will ultimately bring peace and new life, especially to those who are suffering.

The repeal of abortion restrictions and the potential legalization of assisted suicide are gravely disappointing but not defeating. Just as the disciples witnessed Jesus' death and resurrection, we understand disappointment. And we know that love wins. We work to protect vulnerable life, especially the unborn and those at the end of life, with the hope of changing hearts with love. Protecting the unborn, providing alternatives to abortion, and walking with those at the end of life require systemic changes that transcend political parties. We journey with women facing the wrenching decision of whether to have an abortion and with women who have had an abortion, making God's mercy known to them. We walk with families and individuals who are facing the end of life, providing them with hope and mercy, trusting that love wins.

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