

Abortion Aides Face Excommunication, Conn. Bishops Warn

Hartford, Conn. [RNS] — Connecticut's Roman Catholic bishops, in a 16-page statement slated for release Aug. 19, declared that all Catholics in the state, particularly physicians and nurses, taking part in abortions face excommunication from the Church.

Focusing more directly on so-called abortion clinics than on hospitals, the statement, entitled "Your Conscience and Abortion" indicated that general health personnel in hospitals would not be subject to excommunication if they were only indirectly participating in abortion procedures.

However, the statement said that excommunication penalty, set out in Catholic canon law,

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would be strictly applied to everyone from the women receiving abortions to the aides who wheel them into operating rooms in clinics devoted exclusively to abortions.

The statement, endorsed by Archbishop John F. Whealon of Hartford, Bishop Walter W. Curtis of Bridgeport, and Bishop Vincent J. Hines of Norwich, was due for release to the media at a news conference Aug. 19. But, according to Father Edmund Nadolny, director of communications for the Hartford archdiocese, it was released prematurely by a national wire service. He said the news conference would still be held in Hartford.

The anti-abortion statement by the three bishops is being distributed to Catholic parishes throughout Connecticut, as well as to medical, para-medical and nursing personnel and individuals interested in preserving the sanctity of life.

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