

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

Komen for the Cure

At their meeting on January 20, 2011, the Bishops of Ohio discussed their respective positions on the participation of parishes and schools in the fundraising activities of Komen for the Cure.

The Bishops expressed strong, united support for research aimed at defeating breast cancer. However, some Catholic parishes and schools have inquired about lending institutional support to the fundraising efforts of Komen for the Cure. They raised concern about Komen's association with Planned Parenthood.

In the Diocese of Cleveland and the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, diocesan officials met with local Komen affiliates. They researched whether contributions made to Komen for the Cure are put to uses that are consistent with church teaching. Officials in the Archdiocese consulted with the National Catholic Bioethics Center. They reported that at present, Komen for the Cure, nationally and locally, does not provide funds to Planned Parenthood and does not fund embryonic stem cell research.

However, Komen affiliates have made financial contributions to Planned Parenthood in the past. In addition, literature provided by Komen indicates that the national Komen for the Cure would not rule out supporting research that destroys human embryos in the battle against breast cancer. Local Komen dollars can reach the national level. In Cincinnati, for example 75 cents of each dollar are spent on local projects, while 25 cents go to the national level.

The Ohio Bishops reaffirmed the Church's commitment to human life and health, and to the dignity of the human person at all stages of development. They expressed a common desire to avoid even indirect support for research involving human embryos.

The Ohio Bishops agreed to direct Catholic parishes and schools away from fundraising for Komen for the Cure and toward activities and organizations that are fully consistent with Catholic moral teaching. Bishop Blair (Toledo) and other Ohio Bishops added that individual Catholics who want to contribute to Komen for the Cure locally can continue to do so on the basis of Komen's assurance that no local funds go to Planned Parenthood or to research involving embryonic stem cells.

Compiled July 20, 2011