



## Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City Prayer and Action Network

**AFFORDABLE CARE:** The Catholic tradition affirms that health care is a basic right flowing from the sanctity and dignity of human life. Millions of Americans continue to go without health care coverage in our nation. Over 48 million people lack health insurance. As provisions of the Affordable Care Act are implemented the uninsured rate has dropped some. The provision to expand Medicaid in the Affordable Care Act is expected to have the one of largest impacts on reducing the number of insured along with the creation of the health insurance exchanges. Although the law mandated that states expand their Medicaid coverage to most people living at or below 138 percent of the federal poverty level, the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in June 2012 removed the mandated expansion and gave states the option of expanding eligibility for their Medicaid programs.

Catholic teaching supports adequate and affordable health care for all, because health care is a basic human right. Health care policy must protect human life and dignity, not threaten them, especially for the most voiceless and vulnerable. Health care laws must respect the consciences of providers, taxpayers, and others, not violate them. Coverage should be truly universal and should not be denied to those in need because of their condition, age, where they come from or when they arrive here. Providing affordable and accessible health care that clearly reflects these fundamental principles is a public good and moral imperative.

**What can you do?** Contact Gov. Herbert and ask him to support Medicaid Expansion for Utahns living up to 138% above the federal poverty line. Call 801-538-1000 or email at [http://governor.utah.gov/goca/form\\_comment.html](http://governor.utah.gov/goca/form_comment.html)

Contact your federal representative and senators and ask them to end the government shut down and pass a clean continuing resolution that does not include any policy riders. Congress needs to stop playing political games on the backs of the poor. The government shutdown is causing very real harm to the most vulnerable in our country, including women, infants and children who have lost access to WIC programs, the poor around the globe as the Millennium Challenge Corporation goes dark, and workers who have lost the benefits of OSHA and NLRB oversight. Proposals to open some government agencies, such as those that manage national parks and monuments, do nothing to alleviate the suffering being inflicted on the working poor. The credibility of any country is determined by how it treats the most vulnerable. Congress is causing great damage to any credibility the U.S. may have as a moral authority in the world.

Also urge them to pass the Health Care Conscience Rights Act (H.R. 940. S. 1204) to address concerns regarding the Health and Human Services mandate for contraception coverage in any health plans offered under the ACA. Contact information for Utah's congressmen is available at <http://governor.utah.gov/goca/representatives.html>.

**PRAYER:** As part of Respect Life month, please pray the following intercessions for life:

For Pope Francis, Bishop John, and all the priests in our diocese; that Christ will defend them from all evil as they continue to boldly witness to the Gospel of Life;

That our President, members of Congress and all political leaders recognize the sacredness of human life and defend the lives of all who are vulnerable from conception to natural death;

For an end to all laws that permit the taking of human life, including the use of the death penalty;

For all whose hearts ache from the loss of a child by abortion: that God will heal them with the balm of his mercy;

That the elderly may cherish each moment of their lives and, in their sunset years, experience the love and attention they need;

For every young child: that we will guard their innocence and cherish them as a sign of God's infinite love for us;

For those who are homeless, addicted, imprisoned or in the grip of sin: that, following Christ's example, we may seek them out and show them the love God has for them;

For those struggling with incurable diseases: that each day might bring a new revelation of God's love for them;

For medical researchers and scientists: that the work they do may ever be guided by God;

For teachers in medical and nursing schools: that their love for life and healing might inspire students;

For expectant mothers: for the gifts of patience and endurance and joyful hope:

We pray to the Lord: Lord hear our prayer.