



## **Archdiocese of Cincinnati**

100 East Eighth Street • Cincinnati, OH 45202

### **CONTACT:**

Dan Andriacco  
Director, Office of Communications  
513/421-3131 At Home: 513/471-5977  
FAX: 513/421-6225

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## **ARCHBISHOP'S STATEMENT ON 'BODIES' EXHIBITION**

The Most Rev. Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Archbishop of Cincinnati, issued the following statement in response to inquiries about his thoughts regarding "Bodies . . . the Exhibition," which will be presented in Cincinnati starting February 1:

"Catholic moral thought does not regard body and soul as entirely separate. Rather, it recognizes that human beings are embodied spirits. That means the body is more than just a container for the soul. The Church's concern for the dignity of the human person extends, therefore, to the body even after the soul is no longer present.

"The Church has consistently maintained that dead bodies need to be treated in a way that recognizes the dignity of the human person. Within this framework, the use of bodies for scientific research and educational purposes has long been viewed as permissible provided that the consent of the deceased or the deceased's family has been obtained. The public exhibition of plasticized bodies, unclaimed, unreverenced, and unidentified, is a different matter entirely. It is unseemly and inappropriate.

"Whatever the merits of 'Bodies' as an educational exhibit, and however well intentioned the exhibit's creators might be, it seems to me that the use of human bodies in this way fails to respect the persons involved. Therefore I do not believe that this exhibit is an appropriate destination for field trips by our Catholic schools. If parents, as the primary educators of their children, believe that it has educational value, they should be the ones to take their children to see it."

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati is the 26<sup>th</sup> largest Catholic diocese in the country, with almost 500,000 Catholics, and has the eighth largest network of Catholic schools in terms of enrollment. The 19-county territory includes 221 parishes and 117 Catholic primary and secondary schools.