



# Department of Communication

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## *Archdiocese of San Antonio*

### **Official Statement**

**February 12, 2008**

*Archbishop José H. Gomez, with the support of Bishop Patrick J. Zurek and Bishop Thomas J. Flanagan (retired) issued a statement in response to the appearance of Senator Hillary Clinton at St. Mary's University.*

### **Statement concerning the appearance of Senator Hillary Clinton at St. Mary's University.**

I was surprised to learn of Senator Hillary Clinton's appearance at St. Mary's University. I was neither advised nor consulted by the university before the decision was made to have Senator Clinton speak at the university. Catholic institutions are obliged to teach and promote Catholic values in all instances. This is especially important when people look to our Catholic universities and colleges to provide leadership and clarity to the often complicated and conflicting political discourse.

It is clear that the records of Senator Clinton and some of the other candidates for president on important life issues are not consistent with the teaching of the Catholic Church.

It is not my intention to tell people for whom to vote. However, I encourage Catholics to understand the teachings of the Church on the broad spectrum of public issues that are of great concern today. I urge the faculty and the ministry staff at St. Mary's University to continue to carry out their responsibility to educate their students in their political duty in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

The Catholic bishops of the United States, in their 2004 document "Catholics in Political Life", affirmed that when dealing with political candidates and public office holders, "The Catholic community and Catholic institutions should not honor those who act in defiance of our fundamental moral principles. They should not be given awards, honors or platforms which would suggest support for their actions."

In a statement distributed by St. Mary's University, they wrote, "As a Catholic tax-exempt university, St. Mary's does not endorse political candidates or their positions on issues and acknowledges the fundamental differences between those of the presidential candidates and the Catholic Church."

Our Catholic institutions must promote the clear understanding of our deep moral convictions on an issue like abortion, an act that the Church calls "an unspeakable crime" and a non-negotiable issue.

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