

From: Olmsted, Thomas J.
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2009 1:01 PM
To: president@nd.edu
Subject: Saddened by your tragic decision

Dear Fr. Jenkins,

I am saddened and heavy of heart about your decision to invite President Obama to speak at Notre Dame University and even to receive an honorary degree.

It is a public act of disobedience to the Bishops of the United States. Our USCCB June 2004 Statement "Catholics in Political Life" states: **"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."** No one could not know of the public stands and actions of the president on key issues opposed to the most vulnerable human beings.

John Paul II said, **"Above all, the common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights – for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture – is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition for all other personal rights, is not defended with the maximum determination."**

I pray that you come to see the grave mistake of your decision, and the way that it undercuts the Church's proclamation of the Gospel of Life in our day.

Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted
Diocese of Phoenix