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Group questions O'Malley's profile credentials

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In Boston, a Catholic health care organization, Caritas Christi, has formed an alliance with a non-Catholic organization. The joint venture has been criticized by some pro-life activists because the non-Catholic partner will perform abortions. Indeed, the critics also have placed Cardinal Sean O'Malley in their sights because he has not scotched the deal.

"Cardinal O'Malley came to Boston with a reputation for being pro-life," C.J. Doyle of the Catholic Action League told me. "But, some of his actions are difficult to reconcile with that. It is hard to put a charitable interpretation on it."

In fact, the issues are somewhat complicated and the cardinal has asked the National Catholic Bioethics Center to evaluate the venture to ensure that the Catholic entity is in no way participating in the referral of clients for abortion services nor profiting from the provision of those services. In a statement released last week, the cardinal re-affirmed his commitment, and that of Caritas Christi, to abide by the ethical directives of the Bishops' Conference.

The *Boston Globe's* Michael Paulson interviewed a group of moral theologians on the issues involved in delivering health care in a society whose legal and moral framework often differs from that of the Church. The survey makes for fascinating reading.

Of course, you don't need an expert to tell you that concerns about Cardinal O'Malley's commitment to the church's teachings are misplaced, especially when it comes to abortion. He is among the most forceful advocates of the pro-life cause in the hierarchy today. And, as for following the teaching of the church, even when it is complicated, O'Malley never deviates from his episcopal motto: *Quod Cumque Dixerit Facite*. Do Whatever He Tells You. I can understand why the Catholic Action League is concerned about

abortion, but I cannot understand why they are all in a lather about their cardinal.

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