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Catholic bishops to the left on health care. Really?

by Maureen Fiedler

NCR Today

That headline may surprise you, but according to Kevin Eckstrom, editor of Religion News Service, the *basic position* of the U.S. bishops' conference on health care, if you leave out the question of abortion -- a big asterisk -- is "to the left."

What Eckstrom means is this: They favor universal coverage as a human right and other basic reforms. He is quick to point out that some individual bishops have articulated views that sound more like standard Republican Party fare than the social justice teachings of the church. (I can't help wondering, does that make them "Cafeteria Bishops"?)

Want to know more? Kevin was the lead guest on my radio program "Interfaith Voices" this week, discussing the religious dimensions of our health care debate overall. Included were the views of mainline Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, conservative Evangelicals and Christian Scientists.

Eckstrom also talks about the reasons he believes President Obama is reaching out to religious leaders on this question.

To hear the full interview, go to: <http://www.interfaithradio.org/>

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