

NYC Archdiocese & Contraception

Michael Sean Winters | May. 28, 2013 | Distinctly Catholic

You can almost hear the anti-clericals panting, ready to hurl the epithet "hypocrite" at New York's Cardinal Timothy Dolan after [The New York Times reported](#) [1] that the archdiocese of New York already covers contraception in some of its insurance policies. The epithet is misplaced.

In the first instance, just because in a prior situation a person felt he had to give way does not mean he has to keep giving way. There is a point at which an incident becomes a second incident and pretty soon becomes a pattern that alerts us to a moral danger that did not seem so obvious at first.

In the second instance, there is an obvious difference between making an arrangement with a group of workers and a mandate from government.

That said, I think the fact that the New York archdiocese has indeed been covering contraception previously does expose one part of the argument the USCCB has been making; namely, that compliance with the mandate constitutes material cooperation with an intrinsic evil and, therefore, can never be permitted. As I have noted before, the legal argument, based on the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, has a decent shot at winning, but in case it does not win, the bishops need to stop making the moral argument that they cannot comply with the mandate because it constitutes material cooperation with evil. I will have more on this issue later in the week.

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Links:

[1] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/27/nyregion/new-york-archdiocese-reluctantly-paying-for-birth-control.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1&hp&hp