Catholic Church punishes hospital for performing a life saving abortion

By Stan Friedland

The recent decision by the Arizona Catholic Diocese to strip one of the most respected hospitals in the state of its Catholic affiliation because it performed an abortion on a patient in order to save her life is totally inhumane, immoral and most "unChristian"!

St. Joseph's Hospital, founded 115 years ago by an order of Catholic nuns, enjoys a sterling reputation as one of the best hospitals in the State of Arizona. According to its medical records, an unidentified female patient, in her 20's, who had a history of abnormally high blood pressure, developed severe pulmonary hypertension to such an extent that it impacted her lungs and heart to a life-threatening degree. She and her family consulted with her medical team which brought its recommendation of an abortion to the hospital's ethics committee. Together, they all recommended an immediate abortion to save this patient's life, which then was performed.

Despite its full knowledge of these facts, the Arizona Catholic Diocese immediately stripped this hospital of its Catholic affiliation and excommunicated Sister Margaret McBride, a highly regarded nurse with an outstanding record.

At a time when Catholics the world over celebrate the birth of Christ, the question that cries out to be asked is, "What would Jesus, himself, have decided in this situation?"

Any reading of Jesus' life and preachings, be it religious or historical, would most certainly confirm his strong approval of the actions taken by the hospital, especially after its responsible deliberations, to save this young lady's life. There is also the likelihood that he would be enraged by the actions of the Church hierarchy, taken in his name, no less, that were so cruel, wanton and uncaring. The sad conclusion to be drawn from this sorry episode is that those who run this Diocese, masquerading as conduits of Christianity, are really more interested in protecting their own officiousness than they are in protecting the humanity and welfare of their flock.