

## **New Jersey Catholic Conference**

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### **April 5, 2007 Statement by Patrick R. Brannigan, Executive Director of the New Jersey Catholic Conference at the State House Press Conference Convened by the Coalition Against Bigotry and Hatred**

I come here today to this press conference convened by the Coalition Against Bigotry and Hatred because of the Catholic belief in the fundamental dignity possessed by each person.

We believe all people are created in the image and likeness of God and thus possess an innate human dignity that must be acknowledged and respected.

This obligation to respect others requires us to stand up and not to allow people to be treated as objects of scorn, disrespect or hatred because of their ethnic, cultural, or religious heritage or their sexual inclination.

It is deplorable when people are the object of violence in speech or in action because of their heritage or sexual inclination.

Sometimes scorn, disrespect and the lack of civility are masked under the face of humor. We find it unacceptable when the public airwaves are misused in the name of humor.