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NEWS RELEASE

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Statement of Archdiocese of Washington on Georgetown University

Recently it was reported that the Lecture Fund – a student-run organization at Georgetown University – had invited the president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America and Planned Parenthood Action Fund to speak at the university. The university insists that this is a matter of student autonomy and free speech, although the same student organization is selective in what it accepts for discussion and whom they invite.

In any case, this is not our issue here. What we lament and find sadly lacking in this choice by the student group is any reflection of what should be an environment of morality, ethics and human decency that one expects on a campus that asserts its Jesuit and Catholic history and identity.

One would prefer to see some recognition by this student group of the lives and ministry, focus and values of people like Blessed Óscar Romero, Blessed Teresa of Calcutta and Pope Francis in place of that group's seemingly constant preoccupation with sexual activity, contraception and abortion. The Archdiocese of Washington is always open and ready to dialogue with the students, faculty and administration of the University on issues of such significance.

The apparent unawareness of those pushing the violence of abortion and the denigration of human dignity that there are other human values and issues being challenged in the world lends credence to the perception of the "ivory tower" life of some on campus. This unfortunately does not speak well for the future. One would hope to see this generation of Georgetown graduates have a far less self-absorbed attitude when facing neighbors and those in need, especially the most vulnerable among us.

Perhaps those so interested in learning more about the killing of unborn babies and disrespect for the dignity of all human life might take a look at the recent *America* magazine issue that speaks at length about the extent of violence and persecution the people of faith around the world suffer. It would be beneficial for these Georgetown University students to learn more about these serious problems in the world.

The contribution to a better world today can take inspiration from the Gospel and its proponents such as Pope Francis and from the Jubilee Year of Mercy rather than from the organized efforts to facilitate the violent destruction of unborn children.

The Jesuit community on campus clearly has its work cut out for it and a long way to go as it tries to instill at Georgetown some of the values of Pope Francis. Until then it is hard wholeheartedly to share in the cry, "Go Hoyas!"

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