

# ACOUSTIC DOORWAYS music series

Friday, February 10, 7:30 pm

## Bossamba Jazz

Brazilian and  
American  
music  
for dancing with  
Sonny Daye



and Perley Rousseau  
St. Patrick's Church, Ravenna



presented by  
and Brian Melick

Subscription tickets to 3 concerts:  
Adults, \$15; Children and Seniors, \$9.

Single tickets available at the Library and at the door:  
Adults, \$8, Children and Seniors, \$5.

756-2053/ [www.rcscommunitylibrary.org](http://www.rcscommunitylibrary.org)

Concert made possible by local businesses and individual sponsors!

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January 31, 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I write concerning a serious matter that negatively impacts the Church in the United States directly, and that strikes at the fundamental right to religious liberty for all citizens of any faith. The federal government, which is designed to be "of, by, and for the people," has just dealt a heavy blow to almost a quarter of those people—the Catholic population—and to the millions more who are served by the Catholic Church.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced recently that almost all employers, including Catholic employers, will be forced to offer their employees' health coverage that includes sterilization, abortion-inducing drugs, and contraception. Almost all health insurers will be forced to include those "services" in the health policies they write. And almost all individuals will be forced to buy that coverage as a part of their policies.

In so ruling, the Administration has cast aside the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, denying to Catholics and others our Nation's first and most fundamental freedom, that of religious liberty. As a result, unless the rule is overturned, the institutions of the Catholic Church such as schools, colleges, hospitals nursing homes and catholic charities agencies, will be compelled either to violate their moral consciences, or to drop health coverage for their employees (and suffer the penalties for doing so). The government's sole concession was to give our institutions one year to comply.

People of faith cannot be made second class citizens nor can the First Amendment to our Constitution be thrashed to suit the fads and fashions of the moment. We are already joined by our brothers and sisters of all faiths and many others of good will in this important effort to regain our religious freedom which has been such an important part of our nation's greatness.

As Cardinal designate Timothy Dolan, the Archbishop of New York, in response to this ruling, stated: "The Catholic Church defends religious liberty, including freedom of conscience, for everyone. The Amish do not carry health insurance. The government respects their principles. Christian Scientists want to heal by prayer alone, and the new health-care reform law respects that. Quakers and others object to killing even in wartime, and the government respects that principle for conscientious objectors. By its decision the government has failed to show the same respect for the consciences of Catholics and others who object to treating pregnancy as a disease."

In light of this government intrusion on religious freedom during the forthcoming Lenten Season, I would ask of you two things. First, as a community of faith we commit ourselves to prayer and fasting that wisdom and justice may prevail, and religious liberty may be restored. Without God, we can do nothing; with God, nothing is impossible. Second, I would also recommend visiting [www.usccb.org/conscience](http://www.usccb.org/conscience), to learn more about this severe assault on religious liberty, and how to contact Congress in support of legislation that would reverse the government's decision.

With gratitude for your attention to this matter, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Howard J. Hubbard  
Bishop of Albany