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**STATEMENT
On the Seal of Confession
By Archbishop John C. Wester**

ALBUQUERQUE – Wednesday, March 21, 2018—IMMEDIATE RELEASE— A recent news story from Erie, Pennsylvania raised questions about the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance|Confession) and the seal of the confessional. There is much we do not know about the reported incident, but what we do know is the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the obligation of absolute secrecy imposed upon the priest is sacred and absolute.

I wish to assure all the faithful in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe that Canon 983.1 of the *1983 Code of Canon Law* is scrupulously observed by all of our priests and bishops. Canon 983.1 states, “The sacramental seal is inviolable; therefore, it is absolutely forbidden for a confessor to betray, in any way, a penitent in words or in any manner and for any reason.”

It is my hope as many Catholics as possible will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation before Easter, availing themselves of this precious gift of Christ to the Church.---END