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### **On the Eve of Pope Francis Visit, NETWORK Responds to President Trump's Budget**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice expressed profound disappointment with President Donald Trump's federal budget proposal.

"Pope Francis has been abundantly clear that trickle-down economics results in an economy of exclusion and is not supported by the Gospel" said **Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, Executive Director of NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice**. "In his budget, President Trump doubles down on this tried-and-failed policy that leaves out the vast majority of people in our nation and preferences the wealthiest. This is contrary to our Gospel values."

During his campaign, President Trump promised he would save Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security without any cuts. What President Trump's budget delivers, however, is harmful reductions in federal support for not only Medicaid and Social Security Disability Insurance, but also the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. These programs directly aid families and individuals and work to mend the gaps in our nation.

NETWORK Lobby opposes the over \$3 billion funds in the President's budget allocated to expand a mass deportation force and to pay for a border wall. We stand with Pope Francis in saying we must build bridges, not walls. Sister Simone said, "I look with anticipation towards President Trump and Pope Francis's meeting tomorrow. **I pray the President is moved by Pope Francis's humility, solidarity with refugees and immigrants, and care for creation.**"

Instead of spending billions to tear families apart and terrorize communities, the federal budget must invest in true human security. The support and will of our elected officials is needed now to expand access to healthcare, housing, and family-friendly workplace policies for all in our nation. Funding for the 2020 Census, also, is in dire need of support to ensure a fair, equitable count.

As NETWORK Lobby has stated time and time again, the federal budget is a moral document that proclaims the priorities of our nation. This was an opportunity for President Trump to demonstrate his commitment to truly making conditions better for all in our nation and meet his campaign promises. Instead, it expresses an egregious disregard for human dignity and reveals major disinvestment in the common good.

We continue to stand with those on the economic margins, and call for a faithful budget that prioritizes human needs programs, ensures funding to care for vulnerable members of our society, restores economic opportunity, and invests in communities.

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*NETWORK – advocates for justice inspired by Catholic sisters – educates, organizes, and lobbies for economic and social transformation. NETWORK has a more than 40-year track record of lobbying for critical federal programs that support those at the margins and prioritize the common good.*