



NEW YORK STATE CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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Same-Sex ‘Marriage’: The Catholic Position

*Adapted from a 2008 statement of the New York State Bishops,
available in full at www.nyscatholic.org*

Recently, New York Governor David Paterson directed all state agencies to recognize “same-sex marriages” performed in another state or country as valid marriages. Given the Governor’s unilateral directive, it is appropriate to outline briefly why the Catholic Church believes “same-sex marriage to be wrong, not only for religious reasons, but for society in general:

- Marriage is a mutual personal gift that serves the man and woman in many ways, allowing them to grow in love and, through that love, to bring forth children. Just as importantly, this union also serves the larger society by providing a stable family structure for the rearing of children. That is why civil society through the ages has recognized its duty to foster and respect marriage between a man and a woman. From the religious perspective, the joining of man and woman in the bond of marriage is a constant and visible reminder of God’s goodness and the beauty of the Divine plan for humankind.
- Encouraging marriage between a man and a woman serves the state’s interests, as well-reared children who live with their mother and father are much more likely to grow to be good citizens, thereby, creating wealth, stability and security for the members of the society. There is no such state interest in recognizing “same-sex marriage.”
- Recognizing same sex unions will only serve to devalue marriage even more than what has already occurred in recent years, furthering a societal disconnect between procreation and marriage while promoting the notion that a nontraditional family structure serves a child as well as a traditional one.
- Our firm beliefs about marriage and against the governor’s proposal must not be falsely portrayed as in any way a condemnation of homosexual people or an attack on their human dignity. Our Church teaches that we must treat homosexual men and women with dignity and love, as we would all God’s children. Where unjust discrimination occurs, the state can address issues of benefits without compromising marriage.

Action Steps

Join the Catholic Advocacy Network at www.nyscatholic.org. There, you can easily:

- Contact Governor David Paterson and tell him you oppose recognition of foreign and out-of-state “same-sex marriages.”
- Urge your Senator and Assembly Member to support traditional marriage.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper supporting traditional marriage.