



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON

THE CATHOLIC CENTER

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

27 June 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As people of faith, we always turn to scripture and the Church's ancient tradition for our understanding of God's will for his people and how we are to live in response to his infinite love. Yesterday's Supreme Court ruling concerning marriage between people of the same sex in no way changes how the church defines, teaches and celebrates the sacrament of marriage. The sacrament of marriage is that covenant in which a man and woman through their freely exchanged consent offer themselves to each other in love, a love which is to be procreative, and which reflects something of God's infinite love for his people. God's love for his people is frequently expressed in the scriptures using marital imagery, the New Testament even refers to Christ as the bridegroom of the Church.

Those who fought for same-sex marriage were able to frame the argument in terms of equality, dignity and human rights. As Catholics, we will have to continue to teach and strive to convince people of the sacred bond of this sacrament and its divinely instituted purpose, an argument that is not being received by many today.

Let us pray for the grace to live faithful marriages, to teach the boundless love of God which is not exclusive of anyone but is expressed through God's own plan for marriage and for our lives which we discover in the scriptures and in the tradition of our faith handed down through the centuries. The witness of faithful husbands and wives in loving families is the best way we have to celebrate the authentic meaning of marriage. A court ruling does not change our ability to live what we profess.

We should not engage in hateful speech nor reject those people whose expression and understanding is different from our own. Recent popes have insisted that love and truth cannot be opposed to each other. Let us continue to teach the truth in charity and point the way to the bridegroom whose love is expressed in the sacrifice of the cross and his triumph over evil and death.

Peace and all good,

Most Reverend John Stowe, OFM Conv.

Bishop of Lexington