



**We Stand in Solidarity to Defend Marriage
and the Family and Society Founded Upon Them**

We stand together as Christians in defense of marriage and the family and society founded upon them. While we come from a variety of communities and hold differing faith perspectives, we are united in our common faith in Jesus Christ.

We acknowledge that differences exist between us on important matters of religious doctrine and practice. But, on the matter of marriage, we stand in solidarity. As a nation, we have lost our moral compass. As a result, we are losing true freedom. We affirm together that there is a moral basis to a free society. Though we live in a secular society, together we reject relativism and secularism.

We affirm that marriage and family have been inscribed by the Divine Architect into the order of creation. Marriage is ontologically between one man and one woman, ordered toward the union of the spouses, open to children and formative of family. Family is the first vital cell of society; the first church, first school, first hospital, first economy, first government and first mediating institution of our social order. The future of a free and healthy society passes through marriage and the family.

Marriage as existing solely between one man and one woman was not an idea manufactured by the Christian Church. It precedes Christianity. Though affirmed, fulfilled, and elevated by Christian teaching, the truth that marriage can exist only between one man and one woman is not based on religion or revelation alone, but on the Natural Moral Law, written on the human heart and discernible through the exercise of reason.

This claim of the existence of such a Natural Moral Law is the ground upon which every great civilization has been built. It is the source of every authentic human and civil rights movement. This Natural Moral Law gives us the norms we need to build truly human and humane societies and govern ourselves. It should also inform our positive law or we will become lawless and devolve into anarchy.

Marriage is the preeminent and the most fundamental of all human social institutions. Civil institutions do not create marriage nor can they manufacture a right to marry for those who are incapable of marriage. In the words of the first book of the Bible, we read: "it is not good for man to be alone." (Genesis 2:18) Society begins with marriage and the family.

Like many other concerned Americans, we await the opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States on two cases which open up the possibility that the institution of marriage will be further

undermined by a judicial opinion. We pledge to stand together to defend marriage as what it is, a bond between one man and one woman, intended for life, and open to the gift of children.

The institutions of civil government should defend marriage and not seek to undermine it. Government has long regulated marriage for the true common good. Examples, such as the age of consent, demonstrate such a proper regulation to ensure the free and voluntary basis of the marriage bond. Redefining the very institution of marriage is improper and outside the authority of the State. The Supreme Court has no authority to redefine marriage.

If the Supreme Court becomes the tool by which marriage is redefined in the positive law of this nation, the precedent established will leave no room for any limitation on what can constitute such a redefined notion of marriage. Conferring a moral and legal equivalency to same-sex couples by legislative or judicial fiat also sends the message that children do not need a mother and a father. It undermines their fundamental rights and threatens their security, stability, and future.

As Christian citizens united together, we will not stand by while the destruction of the institution of marriage unfolds in this nation we love. The Sacred Scriptures and unbroken teaching of the Church confirm that marriage is between one man and one woman. We stand together in solidarity to defend marriage and the family and society founded upon them. The effort to redefine marriage threatens the proper mediating role of the Church in society.

Experience and history have shown us that if the government redefines marriage to grant a legal equivalency to same-sex couples, that same government will then enforce such an action with the police power of the State. This will bring about an inevitable collision with religious freedom and conscience rights. We cannot and will not allow this to occur on our watch. Religious freedom is the first freedom in the American experiment for good reason.

Finally, the Supreme Court has no authority to redefine marriage and thereby weaken both the family and society. Unlike the Legislative Branch that has the power of the purse and the Executive Branch which has the figurative power of the sword, the Judicial Branch has neither. It must depend upon the Executive Branch for the enforcement of its decisions.

As the Supreme Court acknowledged in the 1992 decision of *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, its power rests solely upon the legitimacy of its decisions in the eyes of the people. If the Supreme Court were to issue a decision that redefined marriage or provided a precedent on which to build an argument to redefine marriage, the Supreme Court will thereby undermine its legitimacy. The Court will significantly decrease its credibility and impair the role it has assumed for itself as a moral authority. It will be acting beyond its proper constitutional role and contrary to the Natural Moral Law which transcends religions, culture, and time.

As Christians united together in defense of marriage, we pray that this will not happen. But, make no mistake about our resolve. While there are many things we can endure, redefining marriage is so fundamental to the natural order and the true common good that this is the line we must draw and one we cannot and will not cross.

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