

Same-sex marriage: Letter of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, S.J. in June, 2010.

Dr. Justo Carbajales
Director of the Department of the Laity
Episcopal Conference of Argentina
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Dear Justo:

The Episcopal Commission for Laity of the CEA, in its capacity as citizens, took the initiative to hold a demonstration against the possible passage of the law regarding marriage for persons of the same-sex, reaffirming – at the same time -- the need that children to have the right to have a father and mother for their upbringing and education. By means of these lines I wish to lend my support to this expression of responsibility of the laity.

I know, because have expressed it to me, that it will not be an act against anyone, since we do not wish to judge those who think and feel differently. However, more than ever, facing the bicentennial and the certainty of building a nation that includes plurality and diversity of its citizens, we clearly hold that you cannot equate what is diverse; social coexistence requires the acceptance of differences.

It is not merely a matter of terminology or formal conventions of a private relationship, but a natural anthropological link. The essence of being human tends to the union of man and woman as reciprocal realization, attention and care, and as the natural way of procreation. This confers on marriage a social transcendence and public character. Marriage predates the state, is the base of the family, the cell of society, and predates any legislation and even the Church itself. Hence the adoption of the bill in question would signify a real and grave anthropological setback.

Marriage (composed of male and female) is not the same as the union of two persons of the same sex. To distinguish is not to discriminate but to respect; to differentiate, to discern, is to value with propriety, not to discriminate. At a time when we emphasize the richness of pluralism and cultural and social diversity, it turns out that a contradiction minimizes fundamental human differences. A father is not the same as a mother. We cannot teach future generations that it is the same thing to prepare yourself for living a family project that assumes the commitment to a stable relationship between man and woman, or to live with a person of the same sex.

Let us be careful that, in trying to assert and look out for a presumed right of adults, we do not leave aside the proprietary right of children (who should be the only privileged ones) to count on models of father and mother, to have a Dad and a Mom.

I charge you, for your part, both in language and in the heart, that there be no signs of aggression nor of violence toward any brother. Christians act as servants of the truth and not as their owners. I pray to the Lord that, with his gentleness, that meekness that he asks of all of us, will accompany you in your action.

I ask you, please, to pray and ask others to pray for me. May Jesus bless you and the Holy Virgin watch over you.

Fraternally,

Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, S.J.