

Same-sex Marriage: The Letter from Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, S.J. to the Carmelite Nuns of Buenos Aires

Buenos Aires, June 22, 2010

Dear Sisters:

I write these lines to each of you who are in the four monasteries of Buenos Aires. The Argentine people will face, in the coming weeks, a situation whose outcome may gravely injure the family. This refers to the project of the law regarding marriage of persons of the same sex. What is at stake here is the identity and survival of the family: father, mother and children. At stake are the lives of so many children who will be discriminated against in advance, depriving them of the human maturation that God wanted to be given with a father and a mother. At stake is the outright rejection of the law of God, engraved also in our hearts.

I remember a quote from St. Therese when talking about her childhood illness. She says that the envy of the Devil wanted deprive her family of the entrance to the Carmel of her older sister. **Here also is the envy of the Devil**, by which sin entered into the world, which cunningly seeks to destroy the image of God: man and woman receive the mandate to grow, multiply and subdue the earth. Do not be naive: it is not a simple political struggle; it is the destructive attempt toward God's plan. It is not a mere legislative project (this is only the instrument) but a **"movement" of the father of lies** that seeks to confuse and deceive the children of God. Jesus tells us that to defend ourselves against this lying accuser, he will send us the Spirit of Truth.

Today the country, in this situation, needs the special assistance of the Holy Spirit to that he may put the light of Truth in the midst of the darkness of error; it needs this Advocate to defend us from the spell of so many sophistries with which this legal project seeks to be justified, and which confuses and deceives even people of good will.

For this I turn to you and ask for prayer and sacrifice, the two invincible weapons that St. Theresa claimed to have. Cry out to the Lord to send His Spirit to the Senators who have to give their vote. May they not be moved by error or by situations of opportunity, but according to the natural law and the law that God points out to them. Pray for them, for their families that the Lord may visit, strengthen, and console them. Pray for them to do the greater good for the country.

The bill will be treated in the Senate after July 13. Let us look to St. Joseph, to Mary, and to their Child; and let us ask them fervently to defend the Argentina family at this moment. Let us remember what God himself said to his people in a time of great anguish: "this war is not yours but God's." May they help, defend and accompany us in this war of **God**.

Thank you for what you will do in this fight for the country. And, please, I ask you also to pray for me. May Jesus bless you and the Holy Virgin care for you.

Affectionately,

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, S.J. [Now Pope Francis]