

BULLETIN -- JULY 11-12

The dust is settling over the Supreme Court's redefinition of marriage on June 26. New forms have been printed for all the county clerks in the country, and business goes on as usual. What made me disgusted more than anything else was the blathering of one politician after another, liberal, conservative, Democrat, Republican, stepping forward and saying, "Well, harrumph, I have *always* believed in the equality of all people, and *always* thought that this kind of discrimination was wrong." NO, YOU DIDN'T, YOU LIAR! Don't tell me that ten or twenty years ago, you were already championing the right of two people of the same sex to "marry" each other. Even the President of the United States spoke up several years ago and said that his belief was that marriage was a union of one man and one woman, blessed by God. Now we find out that his beliefs "evolved," when it was politically expedient for them to do so, from the revelation of God to the split-decision invention of the Supreme Court. I'm not singling the President out. As I said, many of his fellow politicians of every stripe were just as fickle, wishy-washy, and see-which-way-the-wind-blows as he has been on this issue. But it irritates me no end that they pretend to have believed in all this since they learned how to talk, and really look down their noses at anyone so benighted as not to have seen the obvious from their first moments on earth. To all those spineless fence-sitters, I address the now-famous question, "What exactly DID you know, and when did you know it?" But based on experience, I don't expect to get an honest answer. Not even close. They have surrendered the leadership for which we elected them to those who have been actively promoting their own self-interests.

A person who might have been considered a virtuous champion of marriage and family life just 30 years ago can now be derided and scorned (and maybe even prosecuted and convicted) as a retrograde bigot for faithfully proclaiming the very same ideas. What an accomplishment! I have to give credit to the same-sex-union lobby. They took an idea so wild, so far out, that not even THEY would have believed it possible as little as 30 years ago. They cleverly and relentlessly practiced pressure tactics. They gained the eager cooperation of the media and the academic elites. And they convinced a majority of the American people, a majority of federal judges, and a paper-thin majority of the Supreme Court that something which CERTAINLY was not in the mind of ANY of the Founding Fathers who formulated either the Constitution OR the Fourteenth Amendment was so blatantly obvious that it should have been part of human life on earth from the beginning.

The only problem with that is that the Supreme Court ruling does not address human life on earth from the beginning. The Bible does that. The Book of Genesis does that. And as it is with the gift of human life itself, we have to go back to our beginnings to see how **God** made it, not how we want it. The Book of Genesis is only three chapters old when Paradise turns into Death Valley, all because of human beings thinking they can improve on the Creator's work.

Now that we've departed from both human tradition and legal precedent, we're waiting to see how many twists and turns we'll continue to take in our big spiral flush down the tunnel of luv. If two Muslim families come to the county clerk seeking a marriage license for their underage son and daughter whose marriage they are arranging, can the boy and girl be denied a license just because they're only 10 years of age (or

younger)? If a brother and a sister wish to marry, can they be denied? If young Oedipus wishes to marry his mother, what county clerk wants to risk a lawsuit and national notoriety by turning them down? Already in Brazil, a local judge has ruled that more than two people can be legally married to each other, since there can be no limit to the meaning of the word. And, of course, when that happens, the word “marriage,” or any other word, has lost all its meaning. We shall see what truly unimaginable nonsense Justice Anthony Kennedy and his cohorts have foisted on us. It will begin playing out sooner than you think.

The power of words. Very honestly, I had little trouble from the standpoint of civil law of justifying the idea of a civil union of two friends (no matter what their gender) as a domestic partnership. Such a structure would have allowed for all sorts of economic and personal benefits. The state could, as with any business partnership or marriage as formerly constituted, get involved as needed to provide for the dissolution of the partnership and the proper division of goods and assets. One of the rash judgments people, and perhaps especially believers, are prone to make is to assume that a same-sex union is primarily about the bedroom. It might be. On the other hand, it is quite possible that two friends are quite content just to get along virtuously, share a home and common interests together, and seal that friendship with certain public benefits, primarily allowing each other to be considered “next of kin” for all the purposes the law allows. It’s really only been in the last three decades or so that it has been automatically assumed that two people of the same gender must be having wild orgies if they have the same address. Sharing the same address was actually quite common years ago. Of course, it also depended on how people “presented” themselves in public.

At any rate, civil unions were not satisfactory to most of the same-sex-union lobby. It had to be “marriage,” because it had to be the complete equivalent of what their parents presumably had. For some, it also had to fly in the face of anything the Church stands for. So I would propose that we in the Church should take up the good old word which the Baltimore Catechism always applied to the sacred union of one man and one woman: ***matrimony***. That way, we could get out of the marriage “business” altogether, and never be able to be accused of being discriminatory. A man and a woman wishing to make the vows of matrimony with each other could do so regardless of whether they were planning to visit the county clerk for a license or not. It would simply be a matter of the free exercise of religion. The priest or deacon would have no legal role as far as the state is concerned. One group this would really facilitate things for would be the undocumented aliens, who at present have difficulty getting marriage licenses in some places because of their immigration status. The Church could celebrate matrimony with them as we do baptism, Eucharist, and the other sacraments, with no obligation of reporting to the state. None of this was our doing, after all. It was the government that changed the meaning of words, not the Church.

St. Anne’s Novena begins this next Saturday, July 18, at 7 p.m., and continues on each evening until Sunday, July 26. Devotions are each evening at 7 p.m. except for the two Sundays, when devotions will be at 5 p.m. Confessions are scheduled one half-hour prior to each service. Mass will be celebrated at 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, with the Novena prayers and devotions following. On Saturday and Sunday, the devotions will

conclude with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Our resident scholar, **Father Joseph Kiragu**, will be preaching the bulk of the Novena devotions in this, our **75th Annual St. Anne's Novena**. (The St. Anne's Novena in our parish began in 1941 as the clouds of war were gathering, just months before Pearl Harbor.) Father Joseph will be treating us to some perspectives from the universal Church on marriage and family life. How appropriate for a devotion honoring St. Anne, and how timely, considering the upcoming Synod on the Family this fall! All are welcome, and we hope you will consider joining the St. Anne's Society in this 75th year. God bless you!

Fr. Den

Thought for the week: If you believe in keeping your faith private, then what you're keeping isn't faith.