

office of the Bishop - p.o. box 610 - crookston, minnesota 56716
tel: (218) 281-4533 fax: (218) 281-3328

Jason Adkins - Minnesota Catholic Conference
475 University Ave W
Saint Paul, MN 55103-1959

September 17, 2012

Dear Jason,

Peace be with you. As there are just two months left before the November election, the Catholic Bishops of Minnesota want to encourage all Catholics of Minnesota to be sure to vote "Yes" to pass the Minnesota Marriage Protection Amendment and to do all you can in these last two months to encourage others to do the same. And so, as your Bishop, I write you today to offer this encouragement to all Christ's faithful of the Diocese of Crookston.

The amendment asks voters to affirm the historic definition of marriage and put it into our State's constitution where it will be safe from politicians, activists, and state court judges who seek to change it. Statutes can be struck down or changed at any time, but if the amendment passes, politicians or activists who seek to redefine marriage for everyone will first have to get the permission of voters to do so.

Minnesota needs a marriage amendment. Politicians and activists are working right now in Minnesota to redefine the institution of marriage from a bond that unites a man and a woman and any children born from their union into another that merely licenses the romantic preferences of adults. They have promised to change the one understanding of marriage that applies to all Minnesotans at the earliest possible opportunity. In fact, a lawsuit is currently pending in Hennepin County, and legislators who have introduced legislation to redefine or eliminate marriage altogether have promised to do so again next year.

What Pope Benedict XVI called "the powerful political and cultural currents seeking to alter the legal definition of marriage" have already succeeded in Iowa, Massachusetts, New York, and Canada, among other places. If those same activists were to succeed in Minnesota, it would likely have enormous consequences for everyone because marriage between a man and a woman is the basic building block of society.

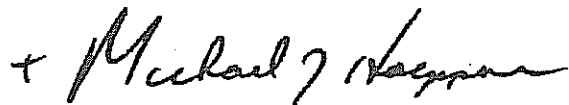
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Marriage is the only institution that unites the legal, biological, and social aspects of parenthood—put simply, it unites children with their moms and dads. No other human relationship possesses these attributes, no matter how loving or committed, and society has a compelling interest in promoting and protecting this unique relationship that is unlike any other.

We Catholics are not alone in our efforts to encourage passage of this amendment. We have been encouraged by tens of thousands of Minnesotans of various backgrounds and faiths who have come together to form Minnesota for Marriage (minnesotaformarriage.com), which is the official campaign created to promote passage of the marriage amendment. Minnesota for Marriage needs you now. Minnesotans for Marriage needs your help to get the message out that the marriage amendment is a vote for the beautiful gift of marriage that God has given all of us; it is not against anyone. We must ensure that Minnesotans know what is at stake and have the correct information about why they should vote “Yes” for the marriage amendment. (Remember that if you leave the ballot box blank, it counts as a “No” vote.)

Many of you contributed to the collection taken up in this diocese to raise funds to support efforts to pass the amendment. Thank you. As the election draws near, I ask that if you are able to contribute financially at this time that you do so. \$250, \$100, \$50, or even \$10 will help us get the message out. You can make a donation online at minnesotaformarriage.com/donate. No amount is too small. Most importantly, I ask for your prayers. Pray for our State, that we may forge a culture here, strong in marriage and family life. Marriage needs to be strengthened, not redefined. Vote “Yes” and encourage others to do so. Please do all you can to defend marriage at this historic moment in our State’s history.

Sincerely, in the name of the Lord Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Hoepfner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Rev. Michael J. Hoepfner
Bishop of Crookston

*Contributions and aggregate contributions exceeding \$100 in a calendar year must be reported to the State and will become a matter of public record.