

D I O C E S E
of NEW ULM

Office of the Bishop

Jason Adkins
Minnesota Catholic Conference
475 University Ave W Ste A
Saint Paul, MN 55103-1968

September 18, 2012

Dear Jason,

This November 6, Minnesotans will be voting on the Minnesota Marriage Protection Amendment to the state constitution. The amendment states: "Only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in Minnesota." Along with all of the other bishops in Minnesota, I encourage you to vote "Yes" to pass the Minnesota Marriage Protection Amendment.

Marriage is not something that we can define. Marriage is something received by the human race when God created us in his image: male and female. Marriage is the union of male and female. We are asked by God to accept his gift to us, and through acceptance of this gift, to bring new human life into the world. In the beginning, "God blessed them [male and female] and said to them: 'Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it'" (Gen 1:28).

Reflecting upon man and woman, we can see in the male body and the female body that there is, among other things, a nuptial or marriage meaning. The male body and female body are complementary to one another and are capable of expressing marital love through the sexual union.

In marriage, it is through the act of sexual union that they speak the language of marital love to one another through their bodies. Each says to the other through the sexual union of their bodies: "I make a total gift of myself to you that includes the possibility of the conception of a child."

No other manner of sexual expression is capable of speaking language identical to this language. This is the important point. Sexual difference is essential, not incidental, to the definition of marriage.

Marriage, then, is the foundation of the family. Through a sexual embrace that is fruitful, a wife becomes a mother and a husband becomes a father. The family is enlarged by the birth of a child, and the mother and the father bear the responsibility of raising their child.

Since they love one another, the mother and father should also love their child, who is a living reflection of their love. Thus, the formation of their family is based on the enduring love of the mother and the father for one another, and for their children. It is the family, founded on the marital love of a man and a woman, that contributes to the building up of society in love.

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This is the vision of marriage and family life that is presented to us through our Catholic faith and the use of our reason.

There are those who do not share this vision of marriage and who are working to redefine the definition of marriage to the union of two persons who desire to be married, regardless of their gender. These might be people who have same-sex attraction.

We are called to offer to those with same-sex attraction the authentic definition of marriage with love and respect, and only after much prayer. After ten years of ministering as a chaplain to many men and women with same-sex attraction, I have learned from them that same-sex marriage is not the answer to their longings.

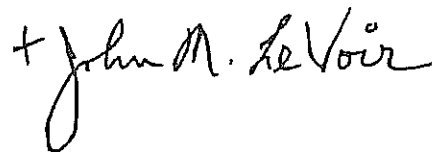
Catholics are not alone in the effort to encourage passage of the Minnesota Marriage Protection Amendment. We have been encouraged by tens of thousands of Minnesotans of various backgrounds and faiths who have come together to form Minnesota for Marriage (minnesotaformarriage.com), which is the official campaign created to promote passage of the marriage amendment.

Now, Minnesota for Marriage needs your help to get the message out that the marriage amendment is a vote for the gift of marriage that God has given to the human race. We must ensure that Minnesotans know the correct definition of marriage and encourage them to vote "Yes" for the marriage amendment. (Remember that if you leave the ballot box blank, it counts as a "No" vote.)

Can I count on your support with a donation of \$250, \$100, \$50, \$10, or whatever is possible for you? You can use the self-addressed envelope included in this mailing. Please make your checks payable to Minnesota for Marriage. Or, you can make a donation online at minnesotaformarriage.com/donate. No amount is too small. I am grateful for your support.

I now ask for your prayers for the people of Minnesota, that we may defend, promote, and strengthen a culture of marriage and family life, based on the authentic definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Please join me in voting "Yes" for the Minnesota Marriage Protection Amendment. May God abundantly bless you!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. LeVoir". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

The Most Reverend John M. LeVoir
Bishop of New Ulm

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