

Cardinal calls Mexican court decision on marriage ‘aberrant judgment’

MEXICO CITY - Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera of Mexico City denounced a recent Mexican Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of a same-sex marriage law in the nation’s capital as an “aberrant judgment.”

The church “cannot stop calling evil, ‘evil,’ ” he said in a statement read after his Aug. 8 homily in the city’s Metropolitan Cathedral.

“The absurd approval of this law that can be legal, but never moral, allows us to be conscious of the unequal value of family ... and is an opportunity to continue raising our prayers to God for our leaders,” he said.

“Even though we are called to be respectful of the civil laws, we have a moral duty to not make vain God’s commandments and avoid falling into permissiveness that damages the fundamental principles of our faith and the precious value of family,” the cardinal said the statement, which was read by two congregants.

Other Catholic leaders outside of Mexico City also criticized the ruling.

“We strongly condemn the approval of civil weddings between men and women of the same gender, and we make a call to faithful Catholics so that ... what’s civil doesn’t dominate what’s moral,” Father Raul Villegas, spokesman for the Archdiocese of Leon, said Aug. 5 in comments to the newspaper A.M. Leon.

The court ruled 8-2 against a constitutional challenge launched by the attorney

general's office. Some of the judges supporting the law said states were free to write their own marriage rules - a similar reasoning they used to uphold a 2007 law decriminalizing abortion in Mexico City. Other judges spoke of promoting equality and said the constitution did not specifically define family.

The court clarified a jurisdictional question surrounding the law Aug. 10, declaring that all of Mexico's 31 states must accept the legality of same-sex marriages registered in Mexico City. Debate on the constitutionality of same-sex couples adopting children was to continue Aug. 12.

The National Pro-Life Committee - known locally as Pro-Vida - held a small protest outside the court in anticipation of the deliberations.

"The fear is that this court decision is going to impact all of the country," Pro-Vida director Jorge Serrano Limon said Aug. 8.

David Razu, sponsor of the same-sex marriage bill, told Catholic News Service that Mexico City is generally more left-leaning in social matters than the rest of the country and that other states would follow suit over the coming decade.

Polls taken in Mexico City at the time of the bill's approval in December showed the public split 50-50 on gay marriages and generally not in favor of same-sex couples adopting children. Razu accused detractors of the same-sex marriage law of focusing their protests on discomfort with the adoption issue.

The Mexico City government said Aug. 3 that 320 marriage licenses had been issued to same-sex couples.