

Statement of Cardinal Edwin O'Brien on the Maryland Senate's Vote to Redefine Marriage

Upon returning from Rome this evening, Cardinal Edwin F. O'Brien, Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, issued the following statement on the Maryland Senate's vote to redefine marriage in Maryland.

"Though not a surprise, today's vote to redefine marriage in the State of Maryland by some members of the State Senate, is no less troubling for it places Maryland one step closer to the dismantling of the most fundamental social institution in all of society.

"The Catholic Church, like others throughout western civilization for thousands of years, has regarded marriage for its unique gifts rooted in nature, and respected that only God alone-not the Church and not government-bestows the true meaning upon this relationship that He created.

"Now, Maryland's politicians unconscionably have chosen political expediency over the good of society-the fundamental charge of their office-by daring to redefine this sacred union between one man and one woman. Their action poses a grave threat to the future stability of the nuclear family and the society it anchors. The Archdiocese will continue to advocate for the preservation of both and will eagerly and zealously engage its 500,000 members in overturning this radical legislation, and will join with the hundreds of thousands of others in this Archdiocese and throughout Maryland in aggressively protecting the God-given institution of marriage.

As our nation celebrates the principled and faith-inspired leadership of our Founding Fathers, I echo the following prayer issued by our first Catholic bishop, John Carroll, in 1791":

We pray, Thee O Almighty and Eternal God! Who through Jesus Christ hast revealed Thy glory to all nations, to preserve the works of Thy mercy, that Thy Church, being

spread through the whole world, may continue with unchanging faith in the confession of Thy Name.

We pray Thee, who alone art good and holy, to endow with heavenly knowledge, sincere zeal, and sanctity of life, our chief bishop, Pope N., the Vicar of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the government of his Church; our own bishop, N., all other bishops, prelates, and pastors of the Church; and especially those who are appointed to exercise amongst us the functions of the holy ministry, and conduct Thy people into the ways of salvation.

We pray Thee O God of might, wisdom, and justice! Through whom authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgment decreed, assist with Thy Holy Spirit of counsel and fortitude the President of these United States, that his administration may be conducted in righteousness, and be eminently useful to Thy people over whom he presides; by encouraging due respect for virtue and religion; by a faithful execution of the laws in justice and mercy; and by restraining vice and immorality. Let the light of Thy divine wisdom direct the deliberations of Congress, and shine forth in all the proceedings and laws framed for our rule and government, so that they may tend to the preservation of peace, the promotion of national happiness, the increase of industry, sobriety, and useful knowledge; and may perpetuate to us the blessing of equal liberty.

We pray for his excellency, the governor of this state, for the members of the assembly, for all judges, magistrates, and other officers who are appointed to guard our political welfare, that they may be enabled, by Thy powerful protection, to discharge the duties of their respective stations with honesty and ability.

We recommend likewise, to Thy unbounded mercy, all our brethren and fellow citizens throughout the United States, that they may be blessed in the knowledge and sanctified in the observance of Thy most holy law; that they may be preserved in union, and in that peace which the world cannot give; and after enjoying the blessings of this life, be admitted to those which are eternal.

Finally, we pray to Thee, O Lord of mercy, to remember the souls of Thy servants departed who are gone before us with the sign of faith and repose in the sleep of peace; the souls of our parents, relatives, and friends; of those who, when living,

were members of this congregation, and particularly of such as are lately deceased; of all benefactors who, by their donations or legacies to this Church, witnessed their zeal for the decency of divine worship and proved their claim to our grateful and charitable remembrance.

To these, O Lord, and to all that rest in Christ, grant, we beseech Thee, a place of refreshment, light, and everlasting peace, through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior. Amen.