

15 October 2004

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

The ballot for this November 2 election in Michigan includes a referendum for a constitutional amendment on marriage called Proposal 2. As your bishops, we invite you to support Proposal 2 which states "The union of one man and one woman in marriage shall be the only agreement recognized as a marriage or similar union for any purpose."

Some in our society are seeking to redefine marriage as the union of any two willing persons. But marriage is not just the union of any two willing partners. In religion, tradition, and law marriage has meant the union of man and woman. It has never included the civil bonding of a man with another man or a woman with another woman.

The attempt of some to redefine marriage is neither a matter of words nor civil rights. Marriage is a personal commitment between a man and a woman and the foundation of our society. The values of marriage, family, and children are at stake.

We must reaffirm marriage as the basic institution of all human society. We work diligently to protect all life from the moment of conception; hence we support the family which welcomes, loves and nurtures children. This is best done with marriage.

Defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman does not diminish others' rights. The Catholic Church teaches that unjust discrimination is morally wrong. The God of Nature and Revelation established marriage as a union only between a man and a woman.

The enclosed brochure, [*BETWEEN MAN and WOMAN: QUESTIONS and ANSWERS about Marriage and SAME SEX UNIONS*](#), offers a reflection rooted in faith and reason for your consideration.

We have an opportunity in November to ensure that the meaning of marriage is secured and preserved. We strongly encourage your "YES" vote on Proposal 2, the Marriage Protection Amendment.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

His Eminence Adam Cardinal Maida
Archbishop of Detroit
Apostolic Administrator of Grand Rapids

Most Reverend Carl F. Mengeling
Bishop of Lansing

Most Reverend Patrick R. Cooney
Bishop of Gaylord

Most Reverend James H. Garland
Bishop of Marquette

Most Reverend James A. Murray
Bishop of Kalamazoo

Reverend Thomas E. Sutton
Diocesan Administrator
Diocese of Saginaw