



# ONE MAN, ONE WOMAN, FOR LIFE

## Lead Messages on Marriage Redefinition



For more resources, please visit [www.marriageuniqueforareason.org](http://www.marriageuniqueforareason.org)

### **The Supreme Court**

The Supreme Court ruled on June 26, 2015 that the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment requires states to issue marriage licenses to two persons of the same sex and recognize same sex “marriages” that were contracted in another state. “Mandating marriage redefinition across the country is a tragic error that harms the common good and most vulnerable among us, especially children” (Archbishop Kurtz).

### **Definitions Matter**

Marriage is and can only be the union of one man and one woman. It is the only institution that unites a man and a woman with each other and with any child who comes from their union. Only a man and a woman can become husband and wife, father and mother, together.

### **Sexual Difference**

Sexual difference, male and female, is essential for marriage and children. Our bodies matter—we don’t just *have* a body but *are* a body. Without this basis, there is no limit to what “marriage” can mean.

### **Marriage is natural**

Marriage is a natural institution that predates government. Every human society has acknowledged that the sexual union of man and woman matters because it creates the next generation. While Jesus elevates Christian marriage to a sacrament, the complementarity of the sexes and the natural meaning of marriage can be known through reason without appealing to Scripture.

### **Children**

Every child has a mother and a father and deserves to be loved and raised by them. While some circumstances may prevent this, marriage is the primary way society protects this right of children.

### **Mothers and fathers matter**

Only a man can be a father; only a woman can be a mother. Both are irreplaceable. A child should not be deliberately deprived of either one.

### **Single Parents**

Single parents and others often make great sacrifices to raise children. They deserve our respect and support. The key point is not to *deliberately or intentionally* deprive children of their mother or father or ignore their rights.

### **Adoptive Families**

If circumstances preclude a child’s staying with his or her natural parents, the optimal alternative is for a married man and woman to become for that child a father and a mother united in an exclusively faithful commitment for life.

### **Dignity of the Human Person**

All persons have inviolable dignity and deserve love and respect. Redefining marriage furthers no one’s rights, least of all those of children.

### **Equality and Rights**

Affirming the true definition of marriage denies no one their basic rights. Rather, it affirms the equal dignity of women and men and safeguards the rights of children.

### **Discrimination**

Unjust discrimination is always wrong. Treating different things differently is not unjust discrimination. Protecting marriage is a matter of justice.

### **Same-Sex Attraction and the Church**

The experience of same-sex attraction is a reality that calls for compassion, sensitivity, pastoral care and attention. Support groups, such as Courage and Encourage, are an important part of the Church’s pastoral ministries. (See USCCB, *Ministry to Persons with a Homosexual Inclination* [2006]: p. 22.)

### **Religious Freedom**

Redefining marriage in the law changes thousands of laws at once. It sets the Church’s teaching and witness about marriage in opposition to the law. It will cause innumerable conflicts between the state and religious institutions and individuals. There are, in fact, already numerous examples of this.

### **Ongoing work**

The USCCB seeks to strengthen, promote and defend marriage through its initiatives *For Your Marriage* ([foryourmarriage.org](http://foryourmarriage.org)), *Por Tu Matrimonio* ([portumatrimonio.org](http://portumatrimonio.org)) and *Marriage: Unique for a Reason* ([marriageuniqueforareason.org](http://marriageuniqueforareason.org)). Please visit, explore and share these sites.