



AMERICAN NATIONAL
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Presiding Bishop's Statement on the Passage of Gay Marriage in the State of New York

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

The American National Catholic Church is delighted by the passage of gay marriage in New York State. We applaud Governor Cuomo and the state's legislators for their courage and conviction in passing this vital legislation that takes our country another step toward full acceptance of its gay and lesbian citizens. New York now joins five other states and the District of Columbia where gay and lesbian couples can legally marry.

For too long, religion has been mistakenly used as a means to legitimize condemnation of the gay community most often through a faulty reading of select biblical passages. A careful study of Sacred Scripture does not support this view.

The seven major biblical references concerning homosexuality must be interpreted within the historical context in which they were written. Contemporary biblical exegesis instructs that what heretofore had been understood as a condemnation of homosexuality was, in fact, condemnations of male rape, men engaging in pagan orgies, pedophilia, and bestiality.

Since biblical authors were unaware of a homosexual orientation, they could not conceive of loving and committed same-sex relationships. Furthermore, in the Gospel we find a definition of marriage and family relations based on the full humanity of each partner lived in mutual care and respect for one another.

Like the historical struggle for racial and gender equity, the full acceptance of gay and lesbians is an "idea whose time as come." In civil society we are witnessing a progressive understanding of marriage inclusive of gay and lesbian committed relationships. While some warn that same-sex marriage will undermine traditional marriage and injure children, we know differently.

The real threat to conventional marriage and childrearing is a national divorce rate of 50% and the fact that 25% of single-parent children live in poverty.

We welcome gay and lesbian New Yorkers to find in the American National Catholic Church a welcoming home and a contemporary expression of the Catholic tradition. Our clergy in New Jersey and Connecticut, and soon in New York City, are eager to assist in witnessing your love and celebrating your marriage. For further information on these communities, please refer to our website (Ministries > Parishes).

As we celebrate Gay Pride month, we are overjoyed by the extension of marriage rights for our gay brothers and sisters and commit ourselves to the full inclusion of gays and lesbians in America.

With prayerful best wishes and intentions for you, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Most Reverend George R. Lucey, FCM". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Most Reverend George R. Lucey, FCM
Presiding Bishop

www.theANCC.org