



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP  
1011 FIRST AVENUE  
NEW YORK, NY 10022

## DECREE

The intimate partnership of life and love that constitutes the married state was established by God and endowed by Him with its own proper nature and laws. According to Divine law, the nature of marriage is defined as a covenant between one man and one woman by which they establish a partnership of the whole life, which is ordered to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children. Jesus Christ affirmed the privileged place of marriage in human and Christian society by raising this union to the dignity of a Sacrament when entered into by two baptized persons. Consequently, the Church has the authority and the serious obligation to affirm the authentic teaching on marriage, and to preserve and foster the supremely sacred value of the married state.

For millennia, civil authority recognized the true nature of marriage. The marital union between one man and one woman was universally accepted by civil law as a constitutive element of human society, which is vital to the human family and to the continuation of human race. In a reversal of this tradition, the New York State Legislature recently enacted a law that recognizes same-sex unions as marriages in the State of New York. This law is irreconcilable with the nature and the definition of marriage as established by Divine law.

Recognizing my responsibility as Diocesan Bishop to guide the Faithful by clearly teaching the truths of the Faith with charity and without compromise, I hereby decree the following diocesan policy regarding same-sex civil marriages. This policy is to be followed by all persons whose activities are subject to my moral authority as Archbishop of New York. It is intended to provide instruction for the activities of these persons and for the use of the property and facilities of the Church and Catholic-affiliated entities within the canonical boundaries of this Archdiocese.

Accordingly, it is the policy of the Archdiocese of New York that:

1. No member of the clergy (priest or deacon) incardinated or assisting in the Archdiocese of New York, or any person while acting as an employee of the Church, may participate in the civil solemnization or celebration of a

same-sex marriage, which includes but is not limited to providing services, accommodations, advantages, facilities, goods or privileges for such events. Ecclesiastical solemnization or celebration of same-sex marriages is expressly forbidden by Canon law.

2. No Catholic facility or property, including but not limited to parishes, missions, chapels, meeting halls, Catholic educational, health, or charitable institutions or benevolent orders, or any place dedicated, consecrated, or used for Catholic worship may be used for the solemnization or consecration of same-sex marriages.
3. No items dedicated, consecrated, or used for the celebration of Catholic liturgy or sacred worship, including but not limited to sacred vessels, vestments, liturgical books or other items may be used for the civil solemnization or celebration of a same-sex marriage.
4. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in the imposition of canonical sanctions.

The terms of this policy shall take effect within the canonical boundaries of the Archdiocese of New York as of the date of this Decree.



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Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan  
Archbishop of New York

Given at New York, New York this  
18<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2011



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Chancellor

(Seal)

