

Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D.
Statement on the Implementation Process of the Repeal of 'Don't Ask Don't Tell'
Legislation
20.V.11



In light of the continued discussion surrounding the repeal of the legislation popularly called “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” it is opportune to reiterate clearly for the faithful served by this Archdiocese, the only one charged with the pastoral care of Catholics in the military, the Veterans’ Medical Centers, and at the service of the Federal Government outside of the boundaries of the United States, some principles concerning marriage and chastity. It is prudent to remind everyone involved of these unchanging realities:

The Church is unwavering in her commitment to the pastoral care of all persons in need, regardless of sexual inclination or anything else. All people in need are served by Catholic Chaplains with zeal and passion for bringing the reality of the Risen Lord to all. Whether “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” persists or not is immaterial to that bedrock principle. The faithful of the Archdiocese for the Military Services must never forget that those with a homosexual inclination must be treated with the respect worthy of their human dignity. (Cf. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* nos. 2358-9)

Likewise the Church is unbending in her commitment to the notion that the reality of marriage consists only of the union of one man and one woman. In their Pastoral Letter “Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan” the Bishops of the United States remind us that:

Marriage is a natural institution established by God the Creator. It is a permanent, faithful, fruitful partnership between one man and one woman, established by their free mutual consent. It has two purposes: the good of the spouses, called the unitive purpose, and the procreation and education of children.

Federal law (1 U.S.C. § 7) restates that definition. It is not the place of any Governmental authority to undermine that legal obligation. This principle is not in tension with our commitment to the pastoral care of all persons. As you know well, the

Catholic Faith teaches clearly the biblical principle that all persons, regardless of their sexual orientation, are called to chastity inside and outside the bonds of marriage.

It is the obligation and right of Religious Leaders both to continue to proclaim clearly the Word of God, reading the signs of the times (*Gaudium et Spes*). There is no question that the First Amendment guarantee of the “Free Exercise of Religion” will forever ensure that no restrictions or limitations be placed on the role and teaching ability of a Catholic chaplain in the pulpit, the classroom, the barracks, or the office.

Furthermore, it is likewise abhorrent to contemplate that any chaplain will ever be compelled to perform a religious ceremony contrary to the dictates of his/her faith. This Archdiocese remains resolved in the belief that no Catholic Chaplain will ever be compelled to condone- even silently – homosexual behavior..

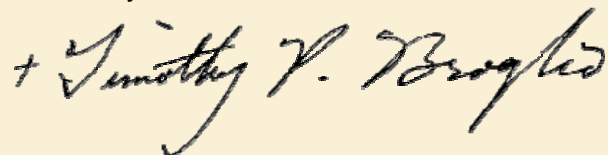
The Bishops’ pastoral also teaches that the legal recognition of same-gender unions:

Poses a multifaceted threat to the very fabric of society, striking at the source from which society and culture come and which they are meant to serve. Such recognition affects all people, married and non-married: not only at the fundamental levels of the good of the spouses, the good of the children, the intrinsic dignity of every human person, and the common good, but also at the levels of education, cultural imagination and influence, and religious freedom.”

The occasion is propitious to commend all Chaplains for their pastoral work. The challenges are manifold and the human needs persist. Together we are committed to persevering in our efforts to preach and teach according to our mission.

I want to assure all of the 1.5 million Catholic faithful served by this Archdiocese of my prayerful concern at this difficult time. When we speak about human rights, it must not be forgotten that all share in those rights. Those who seek to redefine the community of life between a man and a woman, that is marriage, must not diminish the rights of others or their ability to live according to the dictates of their conscience.

Cordially in the Risen Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "+ Timothy P. Broglio". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

+Timothy P. Broglio
Archbishop for the Military Services USA