



## Guest column: Marriage is and can only be the union of one man and one woman

Guest writer By Guest writer

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**By Rebecca Mastee**

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit has issued a ruling that will allow the state to appeal the decision of a federal district judge to redefine marriage. Last week, U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman overturned the will of 2.7 million Michigan voters who went to the statewide ballot in 2004 to protect marriage between one man and one woman.

Immediately following the judge's decision, the Catholic bishops in Michigan said the ruling "advances a misunderstanding of marriage, and mistakenly proposes that marriage is an emotional arrangement that can simply be redefined to accommodate the dictates of culture and the wants of adults."

The bishops went on to state clearly that the Church would be supporting legal efforts to defend marriage and the state's Constitutional amendment. We are appreciative of the attorney general's office for upholding its constitutional duty. Attorneys general in other states, regrettably, have pursued a different path, choosing not to enforce state laws with which they personally disagree.

Consider the consequences for a democratic state, should its chief attorney personally decide which laws he or she will choose to defend. Pressure that is now being applied by elected officials and advocacy groups for the state to abandon its defense is irresponsible.

The state defending marriage does not demean the dignity of the persons who seek its redefinition. As the bishops wrote after Judge Friedman's ruling, "it is necessary to state clearly that persons with same-sex attraction should not be judged, but rather accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity."

Defending marriage does recognize the biological realities of male and female and the complementarity they each bring to marriage, which turns the conversation to children. Every child has the right to both a mother and a father, and each child does have lineage to both. Not all children are able to be raised in this environment, which is why single mothers and fathers deserve constant support and encouragement.



Advocates of marriage redefinition have lost sight of the fact that marriage is more than just an institution for the fulfillment of adults. The drive to redefine marriage also ignores that additional parameters of natural marriage may be at stake. Should marriage be redefined, do three (or four, or five) people who love each other and want to marry have a discrimination suit on their hands? If the "anti-discrimination" train of thought that has been applied to marriage redefinition is followed, perhaps the next chapter of the marriage "equality" story is not far behind.

Religion did not create marriage, neither did the government, nor did an appointed judge or an elected official. Those who seek to redefine marriage appear to claim a right to which they have no authority. Marriage is and can only be the union of one man and one woman. As the bishops wrote last week, "nature, the very essence of humanity as understood through historical experience and reason, is the arbiter of marriage, and we uphold this truth for the sake of the common good."

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