

**Statement on the Supreme Court Decisions on Marriage**  
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I am troubled deeply by the United States Supreme Court decisions on the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and Proposition 8. They represent another failure of our country's leaders to affirm the authentic definition of marriage as the faithful and permanent union of one man and one woman, who are open to the gift of children.

Nature and God could not make clearer the authentic definition of marriage. The language of marriage is written in the bodies of male and female. Marriage is a union not only of spirit, but also of body. Internal, spiritual love between two persons is not enough for a marriage to take place. That love must be expressed through the bodies of the couple, specifically through the sexual union. In that way, marriage becomes a total self gift of husband and wife, both the spirit and the body (the whole person) of each is given to the other.

That is why marriage vows are exchanged. The vows express the internal intentions of the souls of the couple. But then to complete the marriage, the vows are confirmed and made complete through the union of the two bodies in the sexual embrace. So, sexual difference is essential for a marriage to take place between two people. Only male and female are fully capable of becoming one in and through their bodily sexual union.

It is also clear that children should be raised within the family with a mother and a father. This year on Fathers' Day, President Obama said as much, even though he is for same-sex unions. He said: "But no matter how advanced we get, there will never be a substitute for the love and support and, most importantly, the presence of a parent in a child's life. And in many ways, that's uniquely true for fathers." If it is uniquely true for fathers, it is also uniquely true for mothers. Shouldn't we, then, try to make sure, as much as is possible, that each child have a mother and a father, for whose love, support, and presence there can be no substitute?

In this time of confusion about the authentic definition of marriage, let us educate ourselves about the beauty and dignity of marriage. Let us support marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Let us encourage Christian married couples to be good examples of happy and holy marriages. Finally, let us pray more ardently than ever that people begin to see more clearly that marriage can only be between a man and a woman. Pray especially to the model of all families, the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.