

**STATEMENT OF ARCHBISHOP BLASE J. CUPICH**  
**ARCHBISHOP OF CHICAGO**  
**June 28, 2015**

This week the Supreme Court of the United States issued two rulings with particular meaning for the Catholic Church.

In the first, the Court preserved subsidies for the 6.4 million low-income Americans who depend on them to purchase health insurance under the Affordable Care Act. We have issues with provisions of that legislation and will continue to advocate to preserve our religious freedom. However, we understand that for millions of individuals and families, most of them the working poor, this decision preserves access to health care and the promise it offers of a healthier, longer life.

In the second decision, the United States Supreme Court has ruled that two persons of the same sex have a constitutional right to marry each other. In doing so, the Court has re-defined civil marriage. The proposed reason for the ruling is the protection of equal rights for all citizens, including those who identify themselves as gay. The rapid social changes signaled by the Court ruling call us to mature and serene reflections as we move forward together. In that process, the Catholic Church will stand ready to offer a wisdom rooted in faith and a wide range of human experience.

It is important to note that the Catholic Church has an abiding concern for the dignity of gay persons. In fact, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says: "They must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided." (n. 2358). This respect must be real, not rhetorical, and ever reflective of the Church's commitment to accompanying all people. For this reason, the Church must extend support to all families, no matter their circumstances, recognizing that we are all relatives, journeying through life under the careful watch of a loving God.

It is also important to stress that the Supreme Court's redefinition of civil marriage has no bearing on the Catholic Sacrament of Matrimony, in which the marriage of man and woman is a sign of the union of Christ and the Church. In upholding our traditional concept of marriage, we are called to support those who have entered into this sacred and loving bond with God and each other.

This will be especially important for the members of our own Church as we walk together, respectful not only of the political demands of equality, but above all else, guided by the higher claims of divine revelation. Our aim in all of this will be to hold fast to an authentic understanding of marriage which has been written in the human heart, consolidated in history, and confirmed by the Word of God.

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