



DIOCESE OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

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Letter to the Editor

DATE: June 26, 2013

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Response to Supreme Court Decision on the Definition of Marriage Act (DOMA)

We are disappointed with the Supreme Court's ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). Marriage is a natural institution that pre-dates government and is not a creation of government open to redefinition. While the respect for the principles of federalism is appreciated, natural law is not subject to a majority vote. It is regrettable that the Court did not take the opportunity to uphold the reality of marriage bestowed upon us from the beginning by the Creator.

Marriage is the only institution that brings a man and a woman together for life. It gives children the best chance of being raised by their own father and mother together. Not every married couple has children, but every child has a mom and a dad.

As we celebrate the birth of our great nation next week, let us reflect on the premise predicated by our forefathers that what God has given us can never be justly denied by any man or government. We have been given life with a purpose and that life begins, by design, with the irreplaceable union of a man and a woman. Fathers and mothers are not interchangeable. All citizens of good will lift your voices in affirming marriage between one man and one woman for life.

We will continue to support efforts throughout the country and in Florida to protect traditional marriage in state constitutions.

Most Rev. Felipe J. Estévez

Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of St. Augustine

*The Diocese of St. Augustine encompasses 17 counties of Northeast and North Central Florida and serves about 181,000 registered Catholics and the general community.