

CATHOLICS FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY

GOD IS LOVE

Maine Marriage Initiative: What the Bishop Said in Our Parish Bulletins

Negative Impacts on Parental Rights

Legalizing same-sex marriage can negatively impact the values that our children are taught in public school. In 2005, a Lexington, Massachusetts couple – David and Tonia Parker – discovered a book that their son was given in his kindergarten class entitled —Who’s in a Family? The book, in the author’s own words, was intended to “*get the subject [of same-sex parent households] out into the minds and the awareness of children before they are old enough to have been convinced that there’s another way of looking at life.*” The Parkers objected to the fact that the school system was teaching their son different values from their own. After an exchange of letters and emails, the couple was told by the principal that —she had checked with administrators and that no parental notification is required to discuss homosexual families/issues. The principal added, “Faculty can discuss homosexual families and homosexual issues with your son.” That spring, the Parkers sent a letter to the school specifically stating that they did not authorize any teaching of same-sex marriage or sexual orientation to their son. The response from the school was that discussion of same-sex couples was not an issue in which parental notification was required, even though Massachusetts law indicates otherwise. David Parker was ultimately arrested for trespassing at a meeting that was intended to produce an agreement with the school system. Parker filed a lawsuit, claiming his civil rights had been violated. After immense pressure brought by activist groups, the suit was ultimately dismissed by a federal judge. The dismissal of Parker’s lawsuit was subsequently upheld by the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. The United States Supreme Court refused to hear the case, and the litigation has now concluded. Therefore, notwithstanding clear Massachusetts law, activists for same-sex “marriage” have effectively made an end-run around parental rights in that state regarding the role of public schools in teaching children – children as young as five – about same-sex —marriage. You can expect similar things to occur in Maine if the definition of marriage is changed.

Catholics for Marriage Equality: What We Know

Catholic Values/ Parental Rights: Marriage equality does not contradict the core values we teach our children as Catholic Christians.

- “Who’s In a Family” is about many different kinds of families: adoptive, bi-racial, immigrant, grandparent-headed. Used in schools since 1999, it is not about marriage equality. “Marriage” is not part of Maine’s state-mandated learning results nor does “marriage equality” insert it into the curriculum of any school.
- The nine “values” central to our faith, and to all loving relationships, are the *Fruits of the Spirit* set forth in Paul’s letter to the Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- These values are as compatible with support of marriage for same-sex couples as they are for our support of marriage between a man and a woman.
- The public school version of these values includes respect for diversity of beliefs, opinions, and family circumstances.
- Good teachers do not belittle the parents loved by any child: straight, gay or lesbian. Neither should we as Christians.

For more information, please see our web site: www.religiouscoalition.org

