

USCCB RULES ON TITLE VII

In October, three committees of the USCCB issued a strong statement on three cases before the U.S. Supreme Court on the rights of homosexual and transgender persons. The bishops made the case that the 1964 Civil Rights Act does not apply.

There are two cases that involve the rights of gay employees, and one that involves the workplace rights of a transgender person. While they are not identical, there is one common factor that unites them: the rights being claimed under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act are nowhere found in that law. This provision makes discrimination based on sex—being a man or a woman—illegal. It says nothing about sexual orientation, never mind so-called gender identity, the claim that the sexes are interchangeable.

The bishops concentrated their remarks on the meaning of “sex” as defined by the Civil Rights Act. “‘Sex’ should not be redefined to include sexual inclinations or conduct, nor to promulgate the view that sexual identity is solely a social construct rather than a natural or biological fact.”

The bishops did not duck the religious liberty implications of these cases. “Redefining ‘sex’ in law would not only be an interpretive leap away from the language and intent of Title VII, it would attempt to redefine a fundamental element of humanity that is the basis of the family, and would threaten religious liberty.”

Kudos to the bishops for making such a convincing argument.