

VATICAN ISSUES PRO-MARRIAGE STATEMENT

On July 31, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a statement that addresses the question of same-sex marriage. In one sense, what the Vatican did was nothing new. Yet no one would know this judging from the reaction of its critics.

For two thousand years, the Catholic Church has maintained that marriage is an institution reserved only for men and women. Indeed, there is no world religion—in either Eastern or Western civilization—that sanctions marriage between people of the same sex. So why did the Vatican feel impelled to act? Precisely because of an aggressive gay-rights movement that seeks to normalize homosexual unions. What the Vatican did, in essence, was to issue a reality check to Catholics.

The media were quick to spin this as “an anti-gay campaign.” So much so that Cardinal Francis George issued a strong statement ripping the *Chicago Sun-Times* for branding it that way. William Donohue followed through with a letter to the *Chicago Tribune* defending Cardinal George's statement. “No wonder Cardinal Francis George was upset that the recent Vatican statement on same-sex marriage was characterized as being ‘against gays.’ Not only is the document profoundly pro-marriage, it explicitly says homosexuals ‘must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity.’”

Donohue appeared on MSNBC on this subject as well. “If marriage is special the way we've traditionally understood it,” he said, “then all alternative lifestyles must be resisted.” Donohue was most angry at the way the media made the Vatican statement look negative.

“Moral conscience requires that, in every occasion,” the

document says, "Christians give witness to the whole moral truth, which is contradicted both by approval of homosexual acts and unjust discrimination against homosexual persons." In short, the Catholic Church opposes attempts to deprive heterosexual marriage of its privileged status, as well as gay bashing.

In our statement to the press, we said, "The Catholic League is particularly delighted that this strong statement in favor of marriage, as it has been traditionally understood all over the world and throughout all of time, comes in the wake of the sex abuse scandal in the Church. It sends an unmistakable message that just because a tiny few in the priesthood have embarrassed the Church by having sex—mostly with men!—this does not mean that the Church will silence its voice on matters sexual."

We concluded by saying, "The Vatican's statement is particularly aimed at Catholic politicians. We hope they get the message." But from the news story that appears below, it is obvious some did not.