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**CARDINAL EGAN URGES “SAME SEX MARRIAGE” LEGISLATION BE REJECTED**

*Following is a May 11, 2007 statement by Cardinal Egan in response to the legislation recently proposed by Governor Spitzer in support of so-called "same-sex marriage."*

Throughout history and across all cultures, the family has been the foundation of civilization. The family unit - mother, father and children - has had, therefore, a special place in society, a place that has been recognized, promoted and protected by all rational and moral governments. Marriage, the commitment made between a man and a woman, can be properly seen as essential to the common good by providing the basis and framework for mothers and fathers to begin and to raise families, and thereby contribute to the stability and flourishing of society.

Legislation recently proposed by Governor Eliot Spitzer, seeking to legalize so-called "same-sex marriage," would be greatly detrimental to the family and, therefore, to society as a whole. It deserves to be rejected, as would any similar proposal that seeks to redefine marriage or introduce a supposedly equivalent term such as "civil unions."

Many of those who favor redefining marriage to include same-sex unions frame the issue as one of civil rights. Nothing could be further from the truth. Because the first and most fundamental role of government is to protect society, the state has a duty and an obligation to reject that which would weaken it. Of course, individuals of homosexual inclination must be treated with the utmost of justice; and this is a truth to be sustained by all reasonable persons. Marriage is more than just a personal expression of love between a man and a woman. It is rather their coming together in a relationship to ensure the continuance of society for generations to come. It must, therefore, be defended at every turn.