

13th Sunday of Ordinary Time
June 28, 2015
“Daughter, your faith has saved you.”

[Cleric Richard], my brothers and sisters in Christ. Today, what I am going to say may shock some of you and some of you may even want to tune out. I ask you, please, listen with an open mind and heart to the whole message, and then make your judgements.

Sometimes world events cannot be ignored, so today I say to you, I will never perform a same-gender wedding. The reasons I say this may surprise you however. First off, I say this as a Caucasian, heterosexual, ordained U.S. Army veteran happily married to my best friend and the step-father of two sons and two daughters, one of whom happens to be a homosexual man, whom I love with all of my heart and soul. This is the core reason I say this.

I say this also with the full knowledge that after 10:02 AM June 26, 2015, this statement places me in direct conflict with the Constitution of the United States, which breaks my heart as one who once took an oath to “preserve, protect and defend” that same document. I say this with the full knowledge that my saying this could jeopardize the tax-exempt status of this parish. I say this with the full knowledge that one day this stance could land me with a fine, a lawsuit or even jail time, as is the case in Canada, Sweden and other countries. I also say this with the full knowledge that I do so out of unconditional love.

A priest spends years and years of preparation to give his life, heart and soul to Christ and His Church. He also gives this much time to learn the truth so that he can teach it, bring others to the truth and bring souls to Christ- the great physician and healer. Mostly though, he does this out of love. An unconditional love for God and an unconditional love for each and every one of you and all of those with whom he comes into contact.

My brothers and sisters, it is out of this exact same unconditional love that I can never perform a same-gender marriage ceremony. As a father who wants his son to have love, peace and happiness, I cannot perpetuate the lie that has been creeping into society's consciousness over the course of the last 50 years or so... that human sexuality can be divorced from procreation.

I say this as a man who married a woman who was beyond her medical capacity to bear any more children. This does not mean that within our love for each other that we are EXCLUDING the possibility of a miracle of conception. On the contrary, at times, we have prayed for this gift. This is an essential part to the marital union, this openness to cooperation with God in His creation of new human life. However, over the last 50 years or so, this idea, so integral to the concept of marriage from antiquity to the mid- 20th Century, has been divorced from the common consciousness, and as such has brought us to where we are today. Once the concept of children being an essential part to marriage leaves, this opens the door not only to Friday's Supreme Court decision, but to other human relationships that have no bearing on procreation,

but merely sexual preferences. In the end, we may say that it doesn't matter... that people can and will do what they want with whom they want. This point I agree with... but we cannot perpetuate the lie that this is a 'marriage.'

It is a lie because it promises something that can never be. A union between 2 people of the same gender, or multiple partners of the same or varying genders, or whatever permutation one can conceive, can never have even the potential of the fulfillment of a marriage of a man and a woman who love each other deeply and are at least OPEN to God's gift of a new life.

This being said, I know myriads of times that marriages have been bad... terrible... horrendous failures. I have sat on a matrimonial board and read heart wrenching stories of lives torn asunder within a bad marriage. I have counseled many people who found themselves in a horrible marriage. However, what I know is that even the worst marriage between a man and a woman at least *had* the *potential* to be perfect... but one or both of the spouses were lacking in their commitment to God and to each other, which in the end is what made it imperfect. Any marriage that does not consist of one man and one woman does not even have the potential of perfection, and that is where the lie is.

Brothers and sisters, I have taken the extraordinary step of writing this homily out word for word, which as most of you know, I don't ever do. As a father, I want my son to know the truth and make his own decisions from there. Truly, this is

written with him in mind out of nothing but the deepest, truest love a father can have for his son. But this is also written for everyone with that same love.

As a father I want him to have love... with whomever he finds it. Indeed, I want him to have a committed relationship, if he chooses, with whomever he finds it. I want him to have each and every single good thing that he possibly can. I know that the vast majority of the time same-gender attraction is not a choice, but is something that a person experiences from the earliest days of their conscious life. However, I do not ever want him to believe that calling that relationship a marriage will ever exist with exactly the same joy, hope, expectation, happiness, shared pain, tears and sleepless nights when one or the other needs taken care of as it does in a marriage between a man and a woman. It can come close, to be sure, but can never have the potential to be the fullness of a true marriage. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, within the complementarity of the genders there is a very real completion of the other that is physically reflected in the conjugal act. Within this is reflected a mutual total self-giving and trust that is and must be there if both husband and wife are open to the possibility of creation of new life. But also, related to this, it is no secret that men and women are different. Physically, psychologically, hormonally different. It is in this difference where the complementarity resides. One provides what the other can't... both in the relationship and in the rearing of a family. Secondly, a marriage is, really, not about the conjugal act itself, but the day-by-day renewal of the commitment to be together, open to the possibility of new life. I say that to everyone here as well.

It is a truth we may not want to hear, especially in the politically correct and “equality” driven era we are currently in, but it is the truth.

Indeed God loves all of His children... equally. He wants his children to be happy, healthy and holy. He wants all of us to come to Him no matter our flaws... our failings... our imperfections. Indeed, as we heard in today’s Gospel, He wants to heal us of all of our flaws, failings and imperfections, as He did with the daughter of the synagogue official who had died as well as with the woman with the hemorrhages. Also, he does not want us living... or perpetuating... a lie. I promise you, within this Sacrament of the Word of God preached and heard, I will NEVER lie to you. That is why you heard these words today. That is why I was ordained. That is why I am your Pastor. That is why, in the end, I will never perform a same-gender wedding, because I cannot lie to those whom I love.

“Daughter, your faith has saved you.”

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**