

DIOCESE OF ORANGE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DIOCESE OF ORANGE URGES GOVERNOR TO VETO GENDER-NEUTRAL MARRIAGE BILL AND CENSURES TWO STATE LEGISLATORS

ORANGE, Calif., (Sep. 8, 2005) - The Most Reverend Tod D. Brown, Bishop of the Orange, CA, Diocese, urged California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to follow through on his pledge to veto the "Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act (AB849) passed by the State Assembly on September 6, 2005. The Governor's office in Sacramento announced earlier today that he would veto the bill because the people already expressed their will in approving Proposition 22 in 2000.

Bishop Brown stated that this legislation is contrary to the Catholic Church's teaching that marriage is a covenant between a man and a woman because it redefines marriage as a personal relation arising out of a civil contract between two persons.

"I respectfully request Governor Schwarzenegger to veto this bill because it violates Catholic teaching," said Bishop Brown. "I know that people of good will of other churches and faiths share our understanding of marriage."

As a member of the California Catholic Conference, Bishop Brown also asked that every Catholic in Orange County join Catholics throughout the State and telephone the Governor's office (916-445-2841) to request that he follow through on his veto pledge. If Governor Schwarzenegger does not veto AB849, it will automatically become law on October 9, 2005.

Two California State legislators for Orange County, Assemblyman Tom Umberg and Senator Joe Dunn, came under severe criticism from Bishop Brown for their support of AB849. "As their bishop, I am greatly disappointed that our Catholic legislators defied our Church's teaching and also because they did not support the will of the people in upholding Proposition 22," said Bishop Brown. "In 2000 69% of the people of Orange County voted in favor of Proposition 22 (only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized), I would think that these legislators would honor and respect the will of the people!"

“Marriage is not just any relationship between human beings,” said Bishop Brown. “We believe as Catholics that marriage was established by the Creator for a man and woman with its own nature, essential properties and purpose.”

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