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STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO U.S. SUPREME COURT MARRIAGE DECISION

The Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops stands deeply saddened and concerned by the United States Supreme Court's decision in the case of *Obergefell v. Hodges*, ruling against defining marriage as between one man and one woman. Such a definition has always been and will remain the belief of Catholic Christians, as supported by Sacred Scripture, natural law, and two thousand years of Christian tradition. Redefining marriage through a narrow majority of a court will present ramifications for families both for the present and the future.

We stand with and affirm our brother bishops of the United States who form the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, as we recognize the need to increase our efforts to strengthen marriage and families while promoting and defending the unique meaning of marriage as being between one man and one woman for life.

While we resolutely stand by this belief, we are called to uphold the dignity of all, even in the face of disagreement. All are loved by God and are called to respect all people. Disrespect and hatred must never be condoned.

This decision indeed marks an historic moment within our nation. The Church will not cease in proclaiming the good news regarding the unique reality of marriage that can only exist between man and woman. Catholic Christians are called in an incredibly important manner to re-affirm and uphold the Sacrament of Matrimony and the sanctity of family life.

July 2, 2015