



Office of the Bishop

Statement of Bishop Oscar Cantú regarding Pope Francis' remarks on same-sex civil unions

Thursday, October 22, 2020

Pope Francis was recently quoted in a documentary saying that he supported civil union laws for same-sex couples. Pope Francis was not and is not changing the Catholic Church's teaching that marriage, as willed by God and revealed in Sacred Scripture and the Tradition of the Church, is between one man and one woman. Pope Francis has often defended this basic teaching and practice of the Church on marriage.

Likewise, the Catholic Church teaches and upholds the irrevocable dignity of every human person, including those who identify as homosexual and those who choose to live in a union with their same-sex partner. In the interview in question, Pope Francis seemed to be offering a pastoral response to the reality of same-sex couples living without legal protections and often subject to violations of their human dignity and even violence.

The context of the Holy Father's statement matters: it was not a formal setting, with the explicit intention of teaching doctrine, such as an encyclical. Rather, as he often does, he seemed to have been commenting on pastoral ways to honor the dignity of persons who identify as homosexual and as well as to honor the directive of the Catechism of the Catholic Church which states that persons with homosexual tendencies 'must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity' (CCC 2358).