



ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA
Ιερα Αρχιεπισκοπή Αυστραλίας

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[translation from the original Greek]

To the Reverend Clergy
and the honorable Administrative Committees
of the Parish-Communities
of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia

ENCYCLICAL

Dearly beloved,

We are writing this urgent Encyclical to assist you in perceiving how it would be possible for us, as Orthodox Christians, to deal with the Bill before Parliament which has been proposed by various political parties, in relation to marriage between two people (men or women) of the same gender.

In most countries of western Europe, as well as in the United States of America, this new type of Marriage has been voted for, or is about to be voted upon, and is considered a democratic right of every citizen.

As this matter has also recently begun to occupy Australian Parliaments, Members of Parliament and Senators will be called upon in the coming weeks to cast a 'conscience vote' freely and independently of their political party, either for or against the proposed legislation. In light of this, the canonical Orthodox Bishops of the Episcopal Assembly of Oceania wasted no time in sending a written statement to the political authorities, expressing our clear disagreement with the proposal. And our Orthodox view is contrary, not because we have hostile feelings towards our fellow citizens who think or decide differently, but because the proposed alteration to the traditional form of marriage (between a man and a woman) is diametrically against the sacredness of marriage and of the family, as taught by the Christian faith and Greek Orthodox Tradition.

Therefore a sacred duty of every responsible member of our Church (whether male or female), is to request that his or her local Member of Parliament vote in Parliament against the Marriage Amendment Bill.

No one should be indifferent to this issue, as there is a danger that we will be overwhelmed by the well-organized 'same sex marriage' lobby.

As a result you are strongly encouraged to write immediately to your local Member of Parliament either directly or through the online facility provided by our Archdiocese (**marriage.greekorthodox.org.au**).

In the hope that no one will show indifference, I thank you for your collaboration in this matter, and wish all of you the abundance of God's blessing.

Sydney, 28th May, 2012

With fervent prayers to the Lord



Archbishop STYLIANOS

Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in Australia

PS – *This Encyclical is to be read at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, 17th June, 2012.*