



We proclaim a crucified Christ

1 Cor 1.23

To the People, Religious and Clergy of the Diocese of Broken Bay

Wednesday 15 November 2017

Dear friends in Christ,

This morning the results of the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey were released, with 61.6 per cent of Australians who took part voting yes and 38.4 per cent voting no.

While I had hoped for a different outcome, I readily acknowledge the result of this survey and I respect the firm decision made by the Australian people. I also want to thank those who led the respective campaigns on both sides of the debate for the relatively civil way in which they conducted themselves.

I want to stress, once more, that I never considered this a 'referendum' on the worth or dignity of gay and lesbian people, which is beyond question. My concern has always been with the question of what constitutes marriage as a distinctive kind of relationship, and the unique roles of a husband and wife in a family.

The Catholic Church will continue to uphold our well-established teaching, received from the Lord himself (Mt 19.3-6), that the covenant of matrimony is between a woman and a man for life, which allows for the procreation and nurturing of children. Any changes to the civil law will not alter this key tenet of Christian belief.

It is important now that we look to the forthcoming vote in the Australian Parliament and seek to ensure that the proposed marriage amendment Bill not only respects the views of Australians on same-sex marriage, but also the proper freedoms of religion and conscience to be afforded each and every individual.

Please pray for our Parliamentarians, and speak with them about your thoughts in this regard, that they may act for the common good of all Australians.

Finally, I encourage you to keep our nation in prayer at this decisive moment, and especially pray for unity, healing and reconciliation in our families and communities.

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Bishop of Broken Bay