

An Open Letter
to The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
from Catholic Families and Friends Of Gays and Lesbians

**The U.S. bishops congratulated President-elect Barack Obama,
the first African-American elected President of the United States saying:**

*"Our country is confronting many uncertainties.
We pray that you will use the powers of your office to meet them with a special concern
to defend the most vulnerable among us and heal the divisions in our country and our world.
We stand ready to work with you in defense and support of the life and dignity
of every human person."*

The majority of Catholic laity throughout our Country certainly join you in support of the President-elect and your willingness to work with him "in defense and support of the life and dignity of every human person". However, as the governing body of the Catholic Church in America, you now seem determined to deprive millions of our citizens of their civil rights.

We are now aware that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has given \$200,000 in support of California ballot initiative, Proposition 8, to remove existing legal rights of gays and lesbians to marry by amending the state Constitution. The Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal organization, was one of the largest institutional donors to the campaign to amend the Constitution having contributed \$1.4 million. These donations have materially subsidized an effort to promote fear and distortion of the facts in an attack on "the life and dignity" of a marginalized minority. Your sponsorship action not only contradicts the spirit of your words to President-elect Obama but also ignores the spirit of the Church teaching regarding those with deep-seated homosexual tendencies who "do not choose their homosexual condition; for most of them it is a trial. They must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided." (2358 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*) Clergy who are following their conscience and are brave enough to express their belief in the civil rights of homosexuals live under a constant cloud of retribution.

Now is the time for you, our Church's hierarchy in America, to recognize that your actions and the actions of other religious groups to deny the civil rights of a minority is the problem, not part of the solution. As men of faith, please listen to your conscience and reach out to support the life and dignity of every human person.

**EQUAL RIGHTS OF MINORITIES
SHOULD NEVER BE VOTED AGAINST BY A MAJORITY!**

Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill.

Brenda and Jack Geishecker, Needham, MA

Regina Abdella, Pat Ahern, Artemae Anderson, Richard Bannister, Margaret Barney, Consiglia and Dominic Barrasso, James Bedore, Brian Bohrer, Marianne Bosch, Edward G. McMahon and Wade Briggs, Mary T. Brown, Michael F. Chamness, Alicia Colleran, Dan Conley, Margot Conley, Eileen and John Coyne, Daniel Cronin, Maureen and John Daher, Bill Davis, Laurie Davis, Dorothy and Douglas Donahue, Janice B. and Richard G. Enos, Martha E. Fay, M.P.H., Kathy Fiske, Chris Francis, Laurie A. Garner, Leah Gassett, Norman Gassett, Patricia Gassett, Drew Geishecker, Monica and Ken Golomski, Mary Ellen and David Gordon, Ellen Hage, Carol and Ginny Hamel, Kathryn Hannon, Kerry J. Hanratty, Chigusa Hayashi, Rosemary Hobson, Sheri Hosek, Anne and David Jarvis, Jane Johnson, Jim and Cindy Kavanaugh, Noreen and David Kavanaugh, Brian Kavanaugh, Michael Kavanaugh, Daniel Kavanaugh, Nancy Kehoe, Tom and Betty Kehoe, Margaret Kilduff, Penelope Kirk, Steven Klarer, Adam & Zeny Kline-Magos, John and Loretta Larkey, Nancy Leoncini, Mary Ellen & Casey Lopata, Mary B. Lyman, Eleanor MacLellan, John Marshall, Cathy and Joe Mayall, Dr. Theodore F. Mayer, M. Patricia McNulty, Darryl and Georgette Murphy, Jennifer Murphy, Keith and Elizabeth Murphy, Janet O'Leary, Brianne O'Leary, Kathleen and Jorge Ordenez, Zepora Ostroy, Laura Packer, Linda Papargiris, Kathy and Peter Peterson, Dave and Jean Phalen, D. Joy Porsley, Susan J Regan, Peggy Rose, Nidia and Jorge Schuhmacher, Dr. Dorothy Scotten, Brian McNeill and Steve Sexton, Manuela B. Sherman, Sandra J. Slaga, Roslin P. Moore and Michael J. St.Clair, Joe Stefaniak, Kira Stefaniak,, Mike Stefaniak, Pat Stefaniak, Tim Stefaniak, Mary Jane Sullivan, William Pitt and Aline Sullivan, Marie Sweeney and Fred Taylor, Mary Villano, Dennis Villano, Donna and Bill Vello, DR Von Bargaen, Julia Coyne and Matt Von Wahlde, Lee Williams, Kristin Yardley (as of 12/29/08)

You can add your name to this letter by emailing Brenda Geishecker at krewgle@gamil.com