

New leaders hope to revitalize annual March for Life

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By Ann Rodgers Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Jeannie French first joined the March for Life in Washington, D.C., as a 12-year-old with her parents in 1974, the year after the Supreme Court legalized abortion nationwide with *Roe v. Wade*. That decision turns 40 this week and Ms. French, 51, a secretary from Upper St. Clair, has marched against it nearly every year, through ice, snow and slush.

Though she once stood on the platform as a movement organizer, she felt like an outsider.

"I'm a Democrat. I really don't feel included in the whole series of Republicans standing on that platform every year," she said.

There are signs of change. Nellie Gray, who founded and led the March for Life, died in August at the age of 88. Leaders in the anti-abortion movement praise her sacrificial dedication to the march, and one Catholic bishop wants to see her made a saint. But -- off the record -- some say her slogans hurt their cause and alienated potential sympathizers.

New president Jeanne Monahan, 40, has revised the format and updated slogans. A Democrat will speak. But a big difference for 2013 was dictated by the Park Police. The march will be held Friday rather than on Tuesday's anniversary due to President Barack Obama's inaugural events.

The abortion rights movement has no similar anniversary rally. Sporadic mass marches are held in warmer weather. NARAL Pro-Choice America marked the 40th anniversary by decrying legislative efforts to regulate abortion providers, which have been successful in many states.

"Thankfully, the pro-choice-controlled Senate and President Barack Obama served as fire walls and blocked many [federal] anti-choice measures," it said.

The March for Life typically claims crowds of 100,000 to 300,000. More than 30,000 students are ticketed for sold-out pre-march Catholic youth rallies at the Verizon Center and the University of Maryland's Comcast Center.

About 6,000 people from southwestern Pennsylvania go each year, said Helen Cindrich, executive director of People Concerned for the Unborn Child. She had just spoken with a bus captain who was bringing dozens of first-time marchers.

"She wants the pro-life movement to be exciting. She wants the trip to inspire them to do more," she said.

"Exciting" has been a problem. Repetitive speeches by legislators droned on for two hours.

"It lasted too long. We have appointments with our senators and congressmen. We are so eager to get going," Ms. Cindrich said. "The rally has been talking to the choir. It needed a real shot in the arm."

Ms. French devoted her young adulthood to reaching more liberal and secular people for the cause. She founded the University of Pittsburgh Students for Life, joined Feminists for Life and in 1992 organized the National Women's Coalition for Life.

Her commitment was tested when she was pregnant with twins. Doctors urged her to abort the girl, who had severe spina bifida, to give the boy a better chance of survival. She refused.

Her daughter died one day after birth, and her donated organs saved two other infants.

"She was loved every minute she was here," Ms. French said.

Her son is 19 and a student at Carnegie Mellon University. "His life was no more or less valuable than hers. I will never save two people, but my daughter did," she said. After 19 years as a single working mother, she is returning to activism and hopes the march will become more effective.

"It's no longer an event for the public but for those who are committed to protecting human life. It's my day each year to reaffirm that this is a terrible wrong that I cannot ignore," she said. "The rally isn't about the message. The message is conveyed when women have ultrasounds. The way that I live my life is the message."

There is a quiet diversity within the march, she said, noting groups such as Feminists for Life and the Pro-Life Alliance of Gays and Lesbians.

In 2002 the march president, Gray, became upset that members of the Pro-Life Alliance of Gays and Lesbians were carrying a banner with their name and the slogan "Human rights start when human rights begin." Their name, she told Park Police, violated the single-issue policy of her march permit and she insisted they be arrested. PLAGAL, whose mission is to take the anti-abortion message to the gay rights movement, has marched since, but its leaders lament that they remained marginalized.

Even leaders in the conservative mainstream of the anti-abortion movement worried that Gray's slogans hampered their work. Her motto was "No exceptions, no compromise."

David O'Steen, executive director of the National Right to Life Committee, won't discuss differences he may have had with Gray. But mainstream anti-abortion lobbies only support laws with exceptions for rape and the life of the pregnant woman, he said. He doesn't believe that abortion is morally right in cases of rape, but that it's politically necessary to allow for it.

"You would certainly hope that the decision would be made for the life of the child and perhaps the child adopted. But I'm not aware of any legislation proposed at this time that would prohibit abortion in cases of rape," he said.

In an essay he lambasted some politicians for questioning the need for rape exceptions.

Media bias "together with a sequence of most unfortunate statements by candidates created a perfect storm that played into ... the pro-abortion narrative in this election," he wrote. "The pro-life movement and pro-life candidates cannot ever let this happen again."

Gray, he said, wasn't focused on legislation.

"Our approach is to work to pass legislation that is possible now," he said. "Nellie's role was to draw attention to the issue in the broadest sense. Her organization was making a statement about abortion and unborn children."

She was an accidental activist. Born in Texas, Gray graduated from high school at 15, enlisting in the Women's Army Corps for World War II. She became an attorney, earned a master's degree in economics and worked for the U.S. State Department and the Department of Labor.

She had just retired when the Knights of Columbus asked her to use her contacts to enlist influential politicians to lead a protest rally on the first anniversary of Roe v. Wade. After many turned her down, she volunteered to do it herself. She never received a salary for 38 years of organizing.

Bishop Michael Pfeifer of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, Texas, never met Gray, but learned from her obituary that she was born in his diocese. After researching her life he was so impressed that he's trying to spur interest in canonizing her.

"Latent in her personality was a strong desire to do something good. She wasn't especially equipped or trained in her religion, but she was at the doorway at a unique moment. When no one else would, she walked through," he said.

She will be commemorated at the rally and her "no exceptions" slogan will be heard then, Ms. Monahan said. Apart from that, it won't be promoted. The official theme is "Pro-life: The Human Rights Issue of Today."

"We haven't changed our mission or what we stand for at all. You will see different emphases on different things," she said. "Some messages will be nuanced in a more powerful way."

She pared the rally to an hour, reducing legislators' speeches from dozens to four. A Democrat, U.S. Rep. Dan Lipinski of Illinois, will be among them, via video.

The new emphasis is on personal testimony, including women who have had abortions and a man who will speak of having been conceived in rape.

With funding from the Knights of Columbus, Ms. Monahan now heads a paid staff. She hopes to expand the group's work beyond one annual event.

As a start, March for Life is co-sponsoring a seminar for attorneys and law students at a Capitol Hill hotel Thursday. It's also organizing a postcard campaign for contacting legislators.

"We aren't endorsing specific bills. We are just asking them to vote pro-life," she said.

Ms. Monahan came to the March for Life from the Family Research Council. That group may be best known for opposition to gay marriage, but her work focused on abortion and euthanasia. Prior to that she worked for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Her credentials are conservative, but she expressed interest in broadening the march's base.

"I'm actually an independent voter. I would love to have whoever is truly pro-life out there with us," she said.

She sidestepped a question on welcoming groups such as the Pro-life Alliance of Gays and Lesbians, saying this year she wants to stress disability rights and the pressure to abort after a prenatal diagnosis of disability.

"It's not that we set out to be more politically correct, we are just trying to address the most critical issues that are relevant to us," she said.

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Argentine Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio is elected pope

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By Ann Rodgers Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

VATICAN CITY -- Before a crowd that had cheered, cried and roared as white smoke poured from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel, the first pope from the Western Hemisphere took the name of the world's most beloved saint Wednesday night as Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Argentina became Pope Francis.

"Holy smoke!" the Rev. Michael Sedor, a newly ordained Pittsburgh priest, shouted as the white clouds billowed in the dark square, where thousands had shivered in the cold rain all day. Soon after France's Cardinal Jean Louis Tauran announced his name, the crowd began chanting "Francesco! Francesco!"

Inside, Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York would reveal later, the new pope had asked Vatican personnel still waiting to greet him if he could do that later so the crowd wouldn't have to wait in the cold any longer.

Pope Francis, 76, is the first of that name and the first Jesuit to be elected leader of the Roman Catholic Church.

In Buenos Aires, he is famous for having given up the archbishop's mansion for a humble apartment and riding the bus to work. Though many people expressed surprise at his election, many unofficial accounts say that Cardinal Bergoglio had been the runner-up to German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in the 2005 conclave.

Speaking in clear Italian, Pope Francis soon brought the crowd to laughter with a joke about the cardinals having gone almost to the ends of the earth to find a bishop for Rome. But when the new pope asked the faithful to pray for him, as a benediction for him before he gave them his blessing, the crowd of at least 100,000 became instantly silent.

Megan Donley of Point Breeze, who is studying canon law in Rome, was overjoyed.

"It's a great day for the church," she said. "I know nothing about him except that he chose a wonderful name. And I was so moved when he said that in a minute he would give us a benediction, but that our prayers coming up to him were a benediction for him."

Earlier in the day, when the crowd was waiting for smoke, a seagull had brought great laughter to the square when it perched atop the famous chimney. Given St. Francis' well-known love for birds -- to whom he sometimes preached -- some Italians in the square asked after the new pope appeared if the seagull was a portent.

It may not have been, but a cold rain that had made the crowd miserable all day stopped shortly after the white smoke rose from the chimney at the Sistine Chapel.

Father Sedor, who is finishing his studies in Rome, was moved by the pope's choice for a name.

"St. Francis was really a man of such humility and poverty," Father Sedor said. "So in taking the name Francis I think he's speaking against the excesses that we have in life that distract us from God. We cling too closely to money and fame and pride, all those things that Francis gave up. I think Pope Francis is trying to remind us of what's important."

There have been a number of saints with the name Francis, but the first and the only one whose name requires no further identification was Francis of Assisi. Cardinal Dolan confirmed that the new pope took his name to honor that Francis, not the Jesuit missionary St. Francis Xavier.

Though modern people sometimes think of Francis primarily as a lover of animals, he was first and foremost a great evangelist who brought renewal to a medieval church that had lost touch with the common people and become corrupt and uninspiring. He was a wealthy young man who gave up all of his possessions in a desire to completely follow Jesus. He lived as a beggar, using the great communication methods of his day as he sang and told stories in public squares.

Pope Francis quickly showed a style in keeping with his namesake, Cardinal Dolan said, when he refused a seat on a raised dais and stood to meet the cardinals as they pledged their obedience.

Later, although a papal motorcade was waiting for him, he boarded the last of the mini-buses to the residence where the cardinals stayed during the conclave, and remarked that he would have to settle up the bill at the residence for priests that he had occupied before the conclave started on Tuesday.

"He has already won our hearts," Cardinal Dolan said.

At a dinner with all the cardinals shortly after his election, he toasted them with the quip, "May God forgive you."

"It brought down the house," Cardinal Dolan said.

According to Cardinal Donald Wuerl of Washington, D.C., a former Pittsburgh bishop, the cardinals chose Cardinal Bergoglio "because every one of us is called to a relationship with God and we were looking for someone whose life says that."

Cardinal Wuerl has worked with him on committees at two synods, but also spent a lot of time asking other cardinals about him during the pre-conclave meetings. In those meetings he impressed many of them with a brief address on the need for the church to stay focused on its spiritual message.

"And he always, always, has a preferential option for the poor. He doesn't speak very long before he gets to that," Cardinal Wuerl said.

"He is by all accounts a very gentle but firm, a very loving but fearless, a very pastoral and caring person, ideal for the challenges of today."

When they worked together on committees "you don't have to try to figure out where he stands. When you are having a conversation about issues he just lets you know that 'This is what I think on this point' or 'I think we see things differently.' But done with great gentility," Cardinal Wuerl said.

Under Pope Francis, "I think we are going to see a call to gospel simplicity. I think we are going to see a call to faithfulness to the rigorous demands of the gospel," he said, noting that many of the church's messages about sexual morality and the value of human life are counter-cultural and unpopular.

"St. Francis of Assisi is the saint who tried to live literally the demands of the gospel ... with complete and total trust in God. I think that is what Pope Francis will call us to do."

Pope Francis has a great missionary sensibility, said the Rev. Andrew Small, national director of the Pontifical Mission Societies of the United States.

"We have the evangelical pope that everybody has been calling for," he said.

Father Small met with Cardinal Bergoglio in 2010 and was struck by his humility. "He was careful, respectful, almost bordering on apologetic," he said.

Argentina's bishops are men of different outlooks, he said, and they elected him as their president. "He is a symbol of unity, which is what we need now," he said.

The successful campaign for same-sex marriage in Argentina had an edge to it that was clearly intended to break the influence of the church, Father Small said.

Cardinal Bergoglio firmly defended church teaching that marriage is intended to be between a man and a woman, but did it in a way that didn't alienate people, he said.

"The church lost the battle, but it didn't lose its credibility," Father Small said. "I think what he teaches us is that when you become removed from the people, the church loses its soul. What they've done here is they've voted for the soul to be put back into the church, which is the people of God."

When Pope Francis emerged on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, Father Small believed he was wearing his own, simple cross.

"There were no jewels. It was a simple, silver cross. I would be surprised if the trappings of a medieval court are ever seen again. He wouldn't know himself in them."

Among the Pittsburghers who have met Pope Francis is Rabbi Alvin Berkun, rabbi emeritus of Tree of Life Congregation in Squirrel Hill, a longtime Jewish representative in dialogues with the Vatican. A number of years ago that dialogue group met in Buenos Aires.

While many Latin American bishops have never adapted to the post-Vatican II understanding that Jews are the "elder brothers" of Christians, "the new pope is the exception to that rule," Rabbi Berkun said. "He has had excellent relationships with the Argentine Jewish community throughout his tenure."

His cathedral, Rabbi Berkun said, is home to the only Holocaust memorial in Buenos Aires. Under his leadership, the Catholic and Jewish communities worked together to help people who were in dire straits during a severe economic crisis in Argentina.

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests expressed cautious hope for the new pontificate, saying that Cardinal Bergoglio had handled a case in his archdiocese well. They

noted that he is from a religious order, and said that religious orders have a worse track record than bishops on responding to complaints of sex abuse.

"We're struck by how this new pope, coming from a religious order, has both an enormous opportunity and duty to help prevent heinous assaults against kids by this crucial and relatively secretive segment of the Catholic clergy," said David Clohessy, the executive director of SNAP.

"We are grateful he doesn't work in the Vatican and isn't a member of the Curia.

"We hope that will give him the courage to shake things up and put the prevention of abuse and cover up first on his priority list."

On his first day as pope he intends to go visit Benedict XVI, emeritus pope, and also pray before the icon of Mary Help of the People of Rome, showing his devotion to the new diocese that entitles him to the office of pope.

As the cardinals returned from the conclave, Cardinal Dolan said, "There is a sense of relief on all of us and a sense of peace and serenity. ... Jesus is taking care of his church."

At the end of their dinner together, "Pope Francis said to us tonight, 'I'm going to sleep well. And something tells me you will, too.' "

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Read more: <http://www.post-gazette.com/news/world/2013/03/14/Argentine-Cardinal-Jorge-Bergoglio-is-elected-pope/stories/201303140322000000#ixzz2qtuNE0Cq>

Christians' views vary on gay marriage

High court expected to decide this week on same-sex issues

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By Ann Rodgers Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Sam Rohrer leads a statewide network of 2,000 conservative Protestant pastors opposed to same-sex civil marriages. But if the U.S. Supreme Court broadens access to such marriage this week, the Pennsylvania Pastors Network won't advise anyone to shun gay or lesbian couples who move in next door.

"They should respond in love and treat them as they would any other person. That would be Christ's example," said the former state representative from Berks County, adding that it doesn't mean "endorsing the condition."

Most opposition to same-sex civil marriage comes from theologically conservative Christians, while more liberal denominations support it. Many theological conservatives support a status other than marriage to provide benefits to same-sex couples, though leaders on both sides say the opportunity for such compromise has passed.

The leaders and pastors interviewed for this story hold a wide range of views, but all said they would welcome a same-sex couple as neighbors.

Archbishop Robert Duncan of the Anglican Church in North America and the Anglican Diocese of Pittsburgh led a split with the Episcopal Church, triggered partly by acceptance of a partnered gay bishop. He argues that same-sex marriage isn't a matter of equal rights but of preserving heterosexual marriage as the foundation of human society. He could reluctantly accept civil unions.

"While we would say that this won't have a good result for the nation ... this is not a theocracy. The nation has a freedom to define what equal rights look like. It doesn't have the right to redefine an institution," he said.

Evan Wolfson, a Squirrel Hill native who founded Freedom to Marry, believes same-sex marriage will strengthen society.

"It does not change the meaning of marriage. It simply allows same-sex couples to marry the person they love, to establish and protect a family, and to make a lifetime commitment in the same way that other couples are able to," he said.

Civil unions and domestic partnerships "are no substitute for the full measure of respect, clarity, security and responsibilities of marriage," he said. They "do not fully protect families in real situations, especially in emergency situations."

This week the Supreme Court is expected to rule on a ban on same-sex marriage in California and the federal Defense of Marriage Act, which, passed in 1996, says marriage is only between "one man and one woman," denying federal benefits to same-sex couples. The court decision may affect only California and federal programs but theoretically could require or ban gay marriage nationwide.

Prior to 2003, when the Massachusetts high court was the first to rule same-sex civil marriage a matter of equal rights, there was little consensus among gay activists over its importance.

"There was a whole mentality 20 years ago where gay people would say, 'Oh, we don't want to be married. It's an institution that's falling apart. We're fine with civil unions,'" said the Rev. Renee Waun, pastor of East Suburban Unitarian Universalist Church in Murrysville. She became

an advocate for gay rights a few years after her 1981 ordination as a United Methodist minister, when she was often called to visit dying AIDS patients in Shadyside Hospital.

The AIDS crisis led to the marriage movement, said the Rev. Janet Edwards, a Presbyterian Church (USA) minister from Squirrel Hill. Gay people realized the danger of not having health insurance or federal survivor benefits and were inspired by men who faithfully cared for their stricken partners.

"They embraced many within the community who were involved in long-term, deeply committed, loving, supportive relationships, which they began to recognize was marriage," said Rev. Edwards, who endured a church trial in 2008 for conducting a marriage of two women. She was acquitted on the grounds that she couldn't have done so since marriage is only between a man and a woman.

Rev. Edwards said that in an era when Christians lament the failure of heterosexuals to marry, same-sex couples are their allies.

"It's a gift from the LGBT community to the whole, which is to get all of us thinking about the value of marriage," she said.

Different interpretations

Most opposition to same-sex civil marriage is rooted in religious conviction. A recent Pew poll found that 73 percent of those who believe that gay sex is sinful oppose it, while 84 percent of those who say it's not a sin support it.

Leviticus 20:13 says, "If a man has sexual relations with a man ... both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death."

That Bible verse isn't what led Wesley Hill, assistant professor of biblical studies at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, to conclude that his gay sexual orientation requires him to be celibate. The first two chapters of Genesis, which "presents male and female as the partners of one another" and Jesus' affirmation of that in Matthew 19, are far more important to him.

Mr. Hill, 32, grew up in a Baptist family where homosexuality was unacceptable, but he knew that other traditions found it compatible with Christianity. He studied all sides, he said.

"I found myself convinced of the more traditional reading of scripture, that marriage between one man and one woman was the only context for sexual expression in a Christian setting, and that if I intended to remain a traditional orthodox Christian, I needed to be celibate."

He believes people are born with same-sex orientation as a result of the fall -- humanity's original rebellion against God -- which brought imperfections to the world. He hasn't settled his view of same-sex civil marriage.

"There is wide agreement in traditional Christian churches on what scripture says but a wide range of views on how you translate that into a secular society where there are people who are not Christians and there are gay people who want to get married," he said.

Some theologians say the biblical condemnations concern pagan rituals, not committed relationships. More liberal theologians argue that there was no biblical standard for marriage, citing patriarchs with multiple wives. Theological conservatives say those are a record of sin, not an endorsement of polygamy or adultery.

The Rev. Dave Thompson of Tacoma, Wash., is an evangelical gay man who consults with conservative congregations torn over how to respond to gays and lesbians. He believes that God created humans heterosexual, but after the fall, some people inherited same-sex attraction. He says this is as morally neutral as blindness, and that a faithful same-sex relationship is the closest that gays and lesbians can come to the biblical standard of marriage.

Despite Jesus' condemnation of remarriage after divorce, most "evangelical churches welcome and embrace those individuals whose circumstances are unchangeable," he said. "We don't recommend celibacy because we know it won't work. We need to embrace gay individuals in the same circumstances and say as God did in Genesis that 'It is not good that man should be alone.'"

Archbishop Duncan isn't convinced that same-sex attraction is inborn. If it is, he said, it's a temptation that Christians are called to resist.

"People have inclinations for all kinds of things, but we don't celebrate addiction. We don't celebrate things that result from our fallenness," he said.

"In the cases where he meets people with moral problems and blesses and heals them, Jesus says 'Go and sin no more.' I've got to try to love the way he loves."

New majority

John Green, director of the Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron, has been surveying gay marriage since 2003, when 32 percent of Americans favored legalization.

For the first time, his poll for the Pew Research Center this month found a majority -- 51 percent -- saying it should be legal. The shift has been smaller among theologically conservative Protestants, with 22 percent of white evangelicals and 32 percent of black Protestants supporting same-sex civil marriage. Despite opposition from their bishops, Catholics are among Americans most supportive of legal same-sex marriage, with 61 percent in favor.

Mr. Green attributes that figure to less active Catholics who outnumber frequent Mass-goers. Hispanics, who account for nearly a third of Catholics and tend to favor legalizing gay marriage, also made an impact.

He speculates that Hispanic support comes from roots in nations where civil marriage and church marriage are separate, and couples marry at city hall before any church ceremony. They may see no conflict between civil and church marriage, he said.

Some evangelical leaders now acknowledge that people with an exclusively same-sex orientation can't change it, said Rev. Thompson, a member of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Now 38, he spent 15 years trying to change his orientation. Exodus International, which sponsored his support group, renounced such therapy last year and closed its doors last week.

Evangelical support for legal agreements, such as civil unions, that grant rights and responsibilities similar to marriage, was at 49 percent in the Pew survey. Overall, 67 percent of the public approved of such unions.

In 1997, the Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco, led by an archbishop who later served doctrinal guardian for Pope Benedict XVI, reached an accord with the city over same-sex health benefits. Employees could designate beneficiaries in their household, such as adult siblings or friends, whether or not the relationship was sexual.

But the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops now opposes federal efforts to "incrementally erode marriage, including attempts to expand spousal benefits ... to persons of the same sex or other unmarried persons."

Mr. Rohrer, the former state legislator, is as opposed to alternative legal arrangements as to same-sex marriage.

"Government's interest is to not recognize any other substitute and thereby weaken the family, which weakens society, which weakens the nation."

Rev. Waun said, "People are treating this as a religious issue when it's a constitutional issue. We're talking about equality before the law. The church can decide what it wants to do. It doesn't have to perform gay weddings."

Clergy often refuse to officiate. Many rabbis won't marry a Jew to a non-Jew, for instance.

"The First Amendment ensures that no house of worship or clergy will ever be forced to marry anyone they do not want to, including same-sex couples," Mr. Wolfson said.

Other impacts on marriage

James Skillen is the retired president of The Center for Public Justice, the evangelical social justice lobby.

He believes that if the Supreme Court rules that same-sex marriage is a civil right, anti-discrimination statutes are likely to be amended. He cited Catholic social service agencies that ended adoptions because their state required them to consider same-sex adoptive parents.

"I'm against the whole idea of assuming that America should be a Christian culture," he said. "But the reality is that what people of faith will be allowed to do publicly will become narrower and narrower."

Mr. Skillen has long been on record in cautious support of a domestic partnership that would allow the designation of benefits to household members whether or not the relationship was sexual. But he is deeply concerned about same-sex marriage.

"Government doesn't create marriage and government doesn't define marriage," he said. It provided benefits only to strengthen society and protect children, he said.

He believes that developments since 1970, including test-tube babies and surrogate mothers, have weakened those protections and turned children into commodities. He expects same-sex civil marriage to further that trend. He said the battle against gay marriage was lost long ago when society failed to ask how the pregnancy industry redefined marriage and family.

"I think we will have a society in which marriage will mean less and less socially and morally," he said. "Government will become increasingly responsible for the unwanted children and for those turned back because the people changed their mind. They will pay a fine, but they won't have the police on their doorstep to make sure children are taken care of."

If same-sex marriage is ruled a civil right, "Then why shouldn't any combination of persons, whether same sex or opposite sex, be able to claim a right to call their relationship marriage? To insist on legalizing marriage only for twosomes would be ... arbitrary," he said.

No matter what the court rules, same-sex couples live openly now. When they move in next door, said Bishop David Zubik of the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh, they should be welcomed. Those who fear it sets a bad example for children, he said, "Any time that I act uncharitable toward someone, I'm setting a bad example. ... Sometimes people have a difference of opinion. But I think that can lead to a very fruitful discussion. It doesn't mean that people have to surrender their beliefs."

Read more: <http://www.post-gazette.com/local/region/2013/06/23/Christians-views-vary-on-gay-marriage/stories/2013062302380000000#ixzz2qttnGzBL>