



Courage & EnCourage  
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## ENCOURAGE SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Roman Catholic Diocese of Lansing Chapter

When: **Sunday April 19, 2015 from 2:30 to 4:00pm**

Where: **Holy Spirit Catholic Church  
9565 Musch Rd.  
Brighton, Michigan 48116**

Directions: US-23 to Silver Lake Rd. Exit (exit #55) West on Silver Lake Rd. to Whitmore Lake Rd. (a short distance). South on Whitmore Lake Rd. to Winans Lake Rd. (a three way stop). West on Winans Lake Rd. approximately one mile to Musch Rd. Turn left or West on Musch Rd. to Holy Spirit Catholic Church. We meet in the new school that connects to the church in the Conference/Lending Library Room. [Look for Encourage Meeting Signs.](#)

We pray that you have had and will continue to have a grace-filled Easter celebration!

You have no doubt noticed that same-sex attraction is constantly in the news in both local and national media. For example, our local newspaper, has one or two stories each week celebrating, encouraging, promoting same-sex unions and same-sex behavior. We do not believe this is coincidental. The effort to influence public conscience on this subject is in 'high' gear. It seems to us that the primary target is the Supreme Court and its pending consideration of "Gay Marriage". We have enclosed an article that we think is most relevant to this topic. The author, Katy Faust, writes from the perspective of being a child with 'gay' parents, and she is not alone. Many have written on this topic and from this perspective. Katy's article is particularly timely in that she addresses Supreme Court Justice Kennedy.

A book that comes to mind on this topic and was published several years ago in 2007 is *Out From Under: the Impact of Homosexual Parenting* by Dawn Stefanowicz. She wrote the book, she said, "to deliver an open, honest, and balanced account of what it was like growing up with a homosexual father...".

Another excellent resource on this topic is [www.crisismagazine.com](http://www.crisismagazine.com) This on-line publication frequently has articles on this and other topics affecting Catholic culture.

We again urge all of you to unite in prayer for our nation's Supreme Court. Pray that the Justices will decide that marriage is, indeed, a life-long covenant between one man and one woman and that no other arrangement can be identified as marriage.

**Please** also remember that we unite to pray each Thursday to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in reparation for our sins and the sins against human sexuality such as same-sex behavior and abortion. Reparation is making amends for the wrongs committed through our sinful condition. Additionally, we pray as intercessors for all our loved ones who will, like the prodigal, someday return home. We generally follow the model given to us by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in the booklet ***Holy Hour of Reparation*** published by CMJ Marian Publishers. If you would like a copy of the booklet, we have a small supply in our office or you can order one by calling the publisher at 1-888-636-6799. Another beautiful prayer is the ***Chaplet of the Precious Blood*** that is available upon request. This beautiful chaplet has been modified to address the specific concerns of Courage and EnCourage members. We have chosen to add this powerful prayer to our Holy Hour of Reparation. Please remember, "that the necessity of reparation is especially urgent today and must be evident to everyone who considers the present plight of the world, 'seated in wickedness'. The Sacred Heart of Jesus promised to St. Margaret Mary that He would reward abundantly with His graces all those who should render this honor to His Heart." (Pope Pius XI Encyclical *Miserentissimus*)

**Please note:** If you cannot attend the April 19th meeting, our next regular Diocesan EnCourage meeting is Sunday, May 17, 2015.

For more information regarding our meetings, or to talk about the issue of same-sex attraction in your lives or the lives of loved ones, call our Diocesan office at 517-342-2596 or email us at [courage@dioceseoflansing.org](mailto:courage@dioceseoflansing.org) We might also mention that the Diocese of Lansing supports this ministry even though more than half of our letters go well beyond our borders. Any financial help you can give us is greatly appreciated.

We look forward to meeting with you. Let us remember, however, to always respect the right of each to complete confidentiality.

Trusting in Jesus,



Bob and Susan Cavera

"Behold, I make all things new, says the Lord. Alleluia!" (cf. Rv 21:5)

February 27, 2015

# A Child of Gay Parents Writes to Justice Kennedy

Katy Faust

Dear Justice Kennedy,

June is nigh, and with it will come your ruling on the most contentious political issue of our time: marriage.

I write because I am one of many children with gay parents who believe we should protect marriage. I believe you were right when, during the Proposition 8 deliberations, you said “the voice of those children [of same-sex parents] is important.” I’d like to explain why I think redefining marriage would actually serve to strip these children of their most fundamental rights.

It’s very difficult to speak about this subject, because I love my mom. Most of us children with gay parents do. We also love their partner(s). You don’t hear much from us because, as far as the media are concerned, it’s impossible that we could both love our gay parent(s) and oppose gay marriage. Many are of the opinion I should not exist. But I do, and I’m not the only one.

This debate, at its core, is about one thing.

It’s about children.

The definition of marriage should have nothing to do with lessening emotional suffering within the homosexual community. If the Supreme Court were able to make rulings to affect feelings, racism would have ended fifty years ago. Nor is this issue primarily about the florist, the baker, or the candlestick-maker, though the very real impact on those private citizens is well-publicized. The Supreme Court has no business involving itself in romance or interpersonal relationships. I hope very much that your ruling in June will be devoid of any such consideration.

## **Government Should Promote the Well-being of Children**

Children are the reason government has any stake in this discussion at all. Congress was spot on in 1996 when it passed the Defense of Marriage Act, stating:

At bottom, civil society has an interest in maintaining and protecting the institution of heterosexual marriage because it has a deep and abiding interest in encouraging responsible procreation and child-rearing. Simply put, government has an interest in marriage because it has an interest in children.

There is no difference between the value and worth of heterosexual and homosexual persons. We all deserve equal protection and opportunity in academe, housing, employment, and medical care, because we are all humans created in the image of God.

However, when it comes to procreation and child-rearing, same-sex couples and opposite-sex couples are wholly unequal and should be treated differently for the sake of the children.

When two adults who cannot procreate want to raise children together, where do those babies come from? Each child is conceived by a mother and a father to whom that child has a natural right. When a child is placed in a same-sex-headed household, she will miss out on at least one critical parental relationship and a vital dual-gender influence. The nature of the adults' union guarantees this. Whether by adoption, divorce, or third-party reproduction, the adults in this scenario satisfy their heart's desires, while the child bears the most significant cost: missing out on one or more of her biological parents.

Making policy that intentionally deprives children of their fundamental rights is something that we should not endorse, incentivize, or promote.

### **The Voices of the Children**

When you emphasized how important the voices of children with gay parents are, you probably anticipated a different response. You might have expected that the children of same-sex unions would have nothing but glowing things to say about how their family is "just like everyone else's." Perhaps you expected them to tell you that the only scar on their otherwise idyllic life is that their two moms or two dads could not be legally married. If the children of these unions were all happy and well-adjusted, it would make it easier for you to deliver the feel-good ruling that would be so popular.

I identify with the instinct of those children to be protective of their gay parent. In fact, I've done it myself. I remember how many times I repeated my speech: "I'm so happy that my parents got divorced so that I could know all of you wonderful women." I quaffed the praise and savored the accolades. The women in my mother's circle swooned at my maturity, my worldliness. I said it over and over, and with every refrain my performance improved. It was what all the adults in my life wanted to hear. I could have been the public service announcement for gay parenting.

I cringe when I think of it now, because it was a lie. My parents' divorce has been the most traumatic event in my thirty-eight years of life. While I did love my mother's partner and friends, I would have traded every one of them to have my mom and my dad loving me under the same roof. This should come as no surprise to anyone who is willing to remove the politically correct lens that we all seem to have over our eyes.

Kids want their mother and father to love them, and to love each other. I have no bitterness toward either of my parents. On the contrary, I am grateful for a close relationship with them both and for the role they play in my children's lives. But loving my parents and looking critically at the impact of family breakdown are not mutually exclusive.

Now that I am a parent, I see clearly the beautiful differences my husband and I bring to our family. I see the wholeness and health that my children receive because they have both of their parents living with and loving them. I see how important the role of their father is and how irreplaceable I am as their mother. We play complementary roles in their lives, and neither of us is disposable. In fact, we are both critical. It's almost as if Mother Nature got this whole reproduction thing exactly right.

### **The Missing Parent**

I am not saying that being same-sex attracted makes one incapable of parenting. My mother was an exceptional parent, and much of what I do well as a mother is a reflection of how she loved and nurtured me. This is about the *missing* parent.

Talk to any child with gay parents, especially those old enough to reflect on their experiences. If you ask a child raised by a lesbian couple if they love their two moms, you'll probably get a resounding "yes!" Ask about their father, and you are in for either painful silence, a confession of gut-wrenching longing, or the recognition that they have a father that they wish they could see more often. The one thing that you will not hear is indifference.

What is your experience with children who have divorced parents, or are the offspring of third-party reproduction, or the victims of abandonment? Do they not care about their missing parent? Do those children claim to have never had a sleepless night wondering why their parents left, what they look like, or if they love their child? Of course not. We are made to know, and be known by, both of our parents. When one is absent, that absence leaves a lifelong gaping wound.

The opposition will clamor on about studies where the researchers concluded that children in same-sex households allegedly fared "even better!" than those from intact biological homes. Leave aside the methodological problems (<http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2014/07/13451/>) with such studies and just think for a moment.

If it is undisputed social science that children suffer greatly when they are abandoned by their biological parents, when their parents divorce, when one parent dies, or when they are donor-conceived, then how can it be possible that they are miraculously turning out "even better!" when raised in same-sex-headed households? Every child raised by "two moms" or "two dads" came to that household via one of those four traumatic methods. Does being raised under the rainbow miraculously wipe away all the negative effects and pain surrounding the loss and daily deprivation of one or both parents? The more likely explanation is that researchers are feeling the same pressure as the rest of us feel to prove that they love their gay friends.

### **Children Have the Right to Be Loved by Their Mother and Father**

Like most Americans, I am for adults having the freedom to live as they please. I unequivocally oppose criminalizing gay relationships. But defining marriage correctly criminalizes nothing. And the government's interest in marriage is about the children that only male-female relationships can produce. Redefining marriage redefines parenthood. It moves us well beyond our "live and let live" philosophy into the land where our society promotes a family structure where children will *always* suffer loss. It will be our policy, stamped and sealed by the most powerful of governmental institutions, that these children will have their right to be known and loved by their mother and/or father stripped from them in every instance. In same-sex-headed households, the *desires* of the adults trump the *rights* of the child.

Have we really arrived at a time when we are considering institutionalizing the stripping of a child's natural right to a mother and a father in order to validate the emotions of adults?

Justice Kennedy, I have long admired your consistency when ruling on the well-being of children, and I implore you to stay the course. I truly believe you are invested in the equal protection of all citizens, and it is your sworn duty to uphold that protection for the most vulnerable among us. The bonds with one's natural parents deserve to be protected. Do not fall prey to the false narrative that adult feelings should trump children's rights. The onus must be on adults to conform to the needs of children, not the other way around.

This is not about being *against* anyone. This is about what I am for. I am *for* children! I want all children to have the love of their mother and their father. Being for children also makes me *for* LGBT youth. They deserve all the physical, social, and emotional benefits of being raised by

their mother and father as well. But I fear that, in the case before you, we are at the mercy of loud, organized, well-funded adults who have nearly everyone in this country running scared.

Six adult children of gay parents are willing to stand against the bluster of the gay lobby and submit amicus briefs for your consideration in this case. I ask that you please read them. We are just the tip of the iceberg of children currently being raised in gay households. When they come of age, many will wonder why the separation from one parent who desperately mattered to them was celebrated as a “triumph of civil rights,” and they will turn to this generation for an answer.

What should we tell them?

Taken from: Crisis Magazine ~

<http://www.crisismagazine.com/2015/child-gay-parents-writes-justice-kennedy>

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Tagged as [DOMA](#), [Justice Anthony Kennedy](#), [Same-sex "Marriage"](#), [same-sex parenting](#), [U.S. Supreme Court](#)



**By [Katy Faust](#)** Katy Faust serves on the Academic and Testimonial Councils of the International Children's Rights Institute and writes at [asktheBigot.com](#). She is the mother of four, the youngest of whom was adopted from China.

## **Dear Gay Community: Your Kids Are Hurting**

I loved my mom's partner, but another mom could never have replaced the father I lost.

By [Heather Barwick](#)

March 17, 2015

Gay community, I am your daughter. My mom raised me with her same-sex partner back in the '80s and '90s. She and my dad were married for a little while. She knew she was gay before they got married, but things were different back then. That's how I got here. It was complicated as you can imagine. She left him when I was two or three because she wanted a chance to be happy with someone she really loved: a woman.

My dad wasn't a great guy, and after she left him he didn't bother coming around anymore.

Do you remember that book, "Heather Has Two Mommies"? That was my life. My mom, her partner, and I lived in a cozy little house in the 'burbs of a very liberal and open-minded area. Her partner treated me as if I was her own daughter. Along with my mom's partner, I also inherited her tight-knit community of gay and lesbian friends. Or maybe they inherited me?

Either way, I still feel like gay people are *my* people. I've learned so much from you. You taught me how to be brave, especially when it is hard. You taught me empathy. You taught me how to listen. And how to dance. You taught me not be afraid of things that are different. And you taught me how to stand up for myself, even if that means I stand alone.

I'm writing to you because I'm letting myself out of the closet: I don't support gay marriage. But it might not be for the reasons that you think.

## **Children Need a Mother and Father**

It's not because you're gay. I love you, so much. It's because of the nature of the same-sex relationship itself.

It's only now, as I watch my children loving and being loved by their father each day, that I can see the beauty and wisdom in traditional marriage and parenting.

Growing up, and even into my 20s, I supported and advocated for gay marriage. It's only with some time and distance from my childhood that I'm able to reflect on my experiences and recognize the long-term consequences that same-sex parenting had on me. And it's only now, as I watch my children loving and being loved by their father each day, that I can see the beauty and wisdom in traditional marriage and parenting.

Same-sex marriage and parenting withholds either a mother or father from a child while telling him or her that it doesn't matter. That it's all the same. But it's not. A lot of us, a lot of your kids, are hurting. My father's absence created a huge hole in me, and I ached every day for a dad. I loved my mom's partner, but another mom could never have replaced the father I lost.

I grew up surrounded by women who said they didn't need or want a man. Yet, as a little girl, I so desperately wanted a daddy. It is a strange and confusing thing to walk around with this deep-down unquenchable ache for a father, for a man, in a community that says that men are unnecessary. There were times I felt so angry with my dad for not being there for me, and then times I felt angry with myself for even wanting a father to begin with. There are parts of me that still grieve over that loss today.

I'm not saying that you can't be good parents. You can. I had one of the best. I'm also not saying that being raised by straight parents means everything will turn out okay. We know there are so many different ways that the family unit can break down and cause kids to suffer: divorce, abandonment, infidelity, abuse, death, etc. But by and large, the best and most successful family structure is one in which kids are being raised by both their mother and father.

## **Why Can't Gay People's Kids Be Honest?**

Gay marriage doesn't just redefine marriage, but also parenting. It promotes and normalizes a family structure that necessarily denies us something precious and foundational. It denies us something we need and long for, while at the same time tells us that we don't need what we naturally crave. That we will be okay. But we're not. We're hurting.

If anyone can talk about hard things, it's us.

Kids of divorced parents are allowed to say, "Hey, mom and dad, I love you, but the divorce crushed me and has been so hard. It shattered my trust and made me feel like it was my fault. It is so hard living in two different houses." Kids of adoption are allowed to say, "Hey, adoptive parents, I love you. But this is really hard for me. I suffer because my relationship with my first parents was broken. I'm confused and I miss them even though I've never met them."

But children of same-sex parents haven't been given the same voice. It's not just me. There are so many of us. Many of us are too scared to speak up and tell you about our hurt and pain, because for whatever reason it feels like you're not listening. That you don't want to hear. If we say we are hurting because we were raised by same-sex parents, we are either ignored or labeled a hater.

This isn't about hate at all. I know you understand the pain of a label that doesn't fit and the pain of a label that is used to malign or silence you. And I know that you really *have* been hated and that you really *have* been hurt. I was there, at the marches, when they held up signs that said, "God hates fags" and "AIDS cures homosexuality." I cried and turned hot with anger right there in the street with you. But that's not me. That's not us.

I know this is a hard conversation. But we need to talk about it. If anyone can talk about hard things, it's us. You taught me that.

Heather Barwick was raised by her mother and her mother's same-sex partner. She is a former gay-marriage advocate turned children's rights activist. She is a wife and mother of four rambunctious kids. Taken from: <http://thefederalist.com/2015/03/17/dear-gay-community-your-kids-are-hurting/>