

Bishop Tobin, Meet Cardinal Levada

Michael Sean Winters | Apr. 12, 2011 Distinctly Catholic

Bishop Thomas Tobin of Providence, Rhode Island, often makes a hash of things when he enters into public debates. But, [in an interview with a local paper](#) [1], he allows that the Church would not object to conferring some of the benefits we normally associate with marriage to gay couples, provided marriage itself is left out of the equation. This stance merely recapitulates the position articulated more than a decade ago by then-Archbishop, now Cardinal, William Levada when he negotiated the issue of same-sex partner benefits with the San Francisco city government.

More important than any of the details - although details are important - it is encouraging to see Tobin recognize that confrontation is not always the best policy and that the teachings of the Church admit of a certain suppleness in their application. Culture wars are to be avoided whenever possible. It will be curious to see how some of the fire-breathers on the right respond to Tobin.

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[1] <http://www.golocalprov.com/news/bishop-tobin-interview/>