

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

March 22, 2013 at 10:34am

Archbishop Cordileone: traditional marriage advocates not 'next class of bigots'

by Brian Roewe

NCR Today

With the Supreme Court set to begin oral arguments Tuesday on same-sex marriage, *USA Today* profiled six of the leading figures opposing its legalization.

Among them is San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, a central voice in the debate and chair of the U.S. bishops' conference subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage.

In the article, published Thursday, Cordileone defends against the portrayal of traditional marriage advocates "as the next class of bigots."

"Those who believe what every human society since the beginning of the human race has believed about marriage, and is clearly the case from nature itself, will be regarded, and treated, as the next class of bigots," he told *USA Today*. "That's untrue, and it's not kind, and it doesn't seem to lead to a 'live and let live' pluralism."

The archbishop expressed his enthusiasm for teaching "the truths of our faith and the truths of the natural moral law," even when doing so presents challenges, such as the case in San Francisco, a focal point for gay and lesbian rights advocacy in the U.S. He acknowledged he has gay friends and said those relationships remain strong despite his stances on marriage.

Cordileone will be among the speakers at the March for Marriage in Washington, also on Tuesday. Organized by the National Organization for Marriage, the march encourages attendees to "show your American spirit" by men wearing blue, women wearing red, and children wearing white.

Whichever way the Supreme Court's ruling turns in the *Hollingsworth v. Perry* case (the constitutionality of California's Proposition 8), Cordileone told *USA Today* he anticipates, like *Roe v. Wade*, the debate won't end.

"A ruling that tries to import same-sex marriage into our Constitution is not going to end the marriage debate, but intensify it. We will have a bitterly polarized country divided on the marriage issue for years if not generations to come," he said.

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