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Media Release

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For Immediate Release

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Catholic support of marriage referendum is simply predictable; is not “electioneering”

The Facts:

- The Church does not play partisan politics. The Church does not support individual candidates or parties. This does not mean that when important issues (often very emotional issues) arise, the Church will remain quiet while the truths of the dignity of the human person and of Christ are being threatened. The Church and her members have a moral responsibility to engage the culture and political world in which we live.
- The Wisconsin Democracy Campaign has complained to the Elections Board over the appropriateness of a brochure the Diocese of Madison created for and distributed directly to its parishioners.
- Relevant to this complaint, there are state reporting requirements.
- **There is an important exception to these requirements.** These requirements **do not apply** when the Church communicates only with her members.

(In a Catholic setting, an item included in a diocesan or parish mailing that goes only to Catholics would be exempt, as should be materials distributed at Catholic activities in Catholic venues)

Bishop Morlino stated the following regarding this recent complaint:

“Saint John the Baptist laid down his life to protect the marriage bond. Throughout the history of the Catholic Church the Popes, the successors of Saint Peter, have similarly defended the marriage bond specifically, even up to the present in the case of Pope Benedict XVI. It is my responsibility and obligation to maintain that communion. When, in parish settings or other Catholic contexts, I insist upon the truth of what reason and faith teach us about marriage, I am maintaining that communion. To claim that I must pay a fee and report to the state about my teaching activities in Catholic venues blatantly violates the rights of myself and my sister and brother Catholics to the free exercise of religion.

To have my teaching about marriage in Catholic venues called “electioneering”, so as to seek the imposition of penalties from the state, seems an attempt to intimidate the Catholic Church as we

try to teach the truth in an admittedly volatile atmosphere. Such persecution would surely be inappropriate.

I wish only to protect the truth about marriage and to proclaim that there is no right to redefine marriage. I stand against denying anyone's basic human rights, and as we move ahead in the future, I will do everything to support authentic human rights for all people. The right to redefine marriage is not one of those authentic human rights. I pray that the Lord will give our citizenry wisdom to act prudently and truthfully with regard to the marriage referendum."

Bishop Morlino will be available at 12:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct 19th, at the Bishop O'Connor Pastoral Center for questions in "Press Conference" format. Please contact Brent King at bking@straphael.org if you plan on attending.

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