

What Marriage Is

Some suggested discussion points for meeting with MPs

1. Marriage between a man and a woman is not a religious construct, but a natural institution found across all cultures and religions. Marriage is a unique kind of sexually complementary union with a natural orientation to life.
2. Marriage attaches men and women to each other in a faithful, life-long partnership and enables the children who will be conceived and born through their union to know the secure, stable love and attachment of both their father and their mother. Marriage enables children to receive the distinctive benefits of fathering and mothering to the fullest extent possible.
3. Marriage between a man and a woman links generations together and provides biological connectivity that is essential for children to know who they are and where they have come from — to know, experience and preserve their biological and cultural heritage.
4. Married couples who are unable to have children, for reasons of age or infertility, are still truly married because their sexual relationship is naturally designed to create life. The essential behavioural conditions of conjugal union are fulfilled, even if they cannot produce children at a particular point in time.
5. Marriage is the outward recognition of the reality that children produced in sexual intercourse need to be cared for. Just as their creation properly requires the cooperation of a man and a woman, marriage ensures the continued support and commitment necessary for raising their children and the mutual benefits of life-long fidelity for the couple themselves.
6. Keeping marriage between a man and a woman is not a matter of unjust discrimination against same-sex couples, as the welfare of persons in these relationships is already recognised and provided for by existing laws on domestic partnerships.
7. It is not unjust to recognise that marriage is different from all other kinds of sexual and romantic relationships. Justice, in fact, requires us to recognise the unique nature of marriage, being a permanent, faithful and exclusive relationship of a man and a woman with a natural orientation to life.
8. If marriage is separated from its public purpose of the having and nurturing of children, the essential meaning of marriage will be changed for everyone. Marriage will no longer retain a connection to its public purpose, but will be instrumentalised to its private purposes of expressing sentimentality.