



Announcement for All Masses - October 26 – 27

Proposal One - Ballot initiative to amend the NY State Constitution

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ:

As you may know, on the back of this year's general election ballot, you are asked to vote regarding a proposed amendment to the New York State Constitution.

Known as "Proposal One," if approved, this amendment would make it illegal under the New York State Constitution for any institution, public or private, to discriminate against an individual based upon such person's so-called "gender identity" or "gender expression."

The creation of a new constitutional right based upon gender identity and expression would have far-reaching negative implications for Catholic parishes, schools and health care facilities, as well as for secular institutions such as local and youth sports teams, gyms and restaurants.

The amendment contains broad and vague language that is supposed to prevent discrimination based upon "reproductive healthcare and autonomy." These terms could be read by courts to require Catholic health care facilities to perform abortions because the refusal to do so could be construed as a form of illegal discrimination against a person's "reproductive autonomy."

The religious liberty of the Church is, therefore, directly threatened, as this proposal could be used to force Catholic institutions to employ persons, or to engage in practices, that are manifestly contrary to the Church's teachings. Failure to adhere to these practices will expose our parishes, schools and hospitals to lawsuits for unconstitutional discrimination.

I ask you to visit the diocesan website, drvc.org, to read Bishop Barres' letter on Proposal One and to view a short video of his recent remarks on the matter.

In union with all the bishops of New York, Bishop Barres asks that all of us inform our consciences on this issue. Proposal One is a threat to our religious liberty and should be voted down in this year's election.