

Illinois Bishop Plans Exorcism Ritual to Protest Gay Marriage

A Catholic bishop in Illinois said on Thursday he was planning prayers of “supplication and exorcism” to protest the state governor’s plan to sign same-sex marriage into law.

Next week, Illinois will become the 16th U.S. state to extend marriage rights to gay couples, following Hawaii, whose governor signed it into law on Wednesday. The Illinois law will take effect on June 1 next year.

Bishop Thomas John Paprocki of Springfield, the state’s capital, said that those who contract civil same-sex marriages are culpable of “serious sin.” He planned the service to coincide with the signing of the legislation by Gov. Pat Quinn on Wednesday.

Without naming names, Paprocki criticized Catholic politicians for their support of the measure.

“It is scandalous that so many Catholic politicians are responsible for enabling the passage of this legislation and even twisting the words of the pope to rationalize their actions despite the clear teaching of the church,” said Paprocki in a statement.

Both Quinn and powerful Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan are Catholic Democrats. Speaking in support of the legislation in Springfield last week, Madigan quoted **Pope Francis**, who asked, “Who am I to judge?” regarding **gay clergy**.

Quinn had no immediate comment on the planned exorcism, which will be held at Springfield’s Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

Paprocki made news before the 2012 presidential election by warning his flock in a letter of the “intrinsic evils” of the Democratic platform’s support of abortion and **same-sex marriage**, and that to vote for someone who promotes such actions is to risk your soul.

A Quinnipiac University poll in March 2013 found that 54 percent of U.S. Catholic voters support same-sex marriage, compared with 47 percent of all voters.

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