



IGREJA EPISCOPAL ANGLICANA DO BRASIL

Dom Maurício José Araújo de Andrade

Bispo Primaz

Committed to Human Dignity

“... and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” Micah 6. 8.

We received with serenity the recent unanimous decision of the Supreme Court on the legal recognition of same-sex people's unions. This approval represents an important advance in our society in the effort to overcome all forms of improvement in the concept of equality and citizenship in a society marked by its plurality, but also by deep inequalities and discrimination;

Our approval is based on a solid tradition of defending the separation of church and state (and between religions and state) which does not mean exactly the subjection of one to the other, or the substitution of one for another, but the required institutional and legal autonomy to freedom of expression and pluralism. Therefore, the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil (IEAB) feels perfectly free to express its position on the matter because its practice recommends it to do so and also because it believes the state must be continuously monitored in its decisions in any sphere of power, endorsing or questioning its actions.

The Supreme Court's decision poses serious challenges to all Christian of all churches because it requires openness to recognize that homoaffective relationships are part of the way of being of the society and of the human nature. From now on, the rights of this group became as equal as everyone else's. We recognize that there is still much left to be done on this matter, pastoral and socially, of affirming the dignity and rights of all human beings. We know that a long, deep discussion on this regard is to happen in Brazilian's society and the IEAB is not free from participating in it with deep seriousness and commitment to understanding the implications of Jesus Christ's gospel in our time and place.

We recognize that this decision is an answer to the prayer we always do in our Morning/Evening Prayer rites: “O Lord our Governor (...) We commend this nation to thy merciful care. (...) Grant to all in authority, wisdom and strength to know and to do thy will. Fill them with the love of truth and righteousness.” (Book of Common Prayer, p. 38). Therefore, we affirm our pastoral commitment to these people. We believe that the promise stated in the Baptism rite “You are sealed as Christ’s own for ever” (Book of Common Prayer, p. 169) rests upon us all and, therefore, it is not up to us to decide who belongs to God.

In this moment of changes, we reaffirm our commitment to being a church that *Welcomes and Serves* recognizing the 'sensus fidelium' stated in the last CONFELIDER: To defend Human

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EQS 309/310 Brasília-DF
CEP. 70.359-970 Fone. 55.61.3443.4305 Cel. 55.61. 815.58822
e-mail: mandrade@ieab.org.br SITE: www.ieab.org.br



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Rights and the Right to full Citizenship. We understand that this commitment is a result of the vows we do at the Altar, during our confirmation: “You will strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.” (Book of Common Prayer, p. 179).

We praise God for these achievements, trusting that they are part of the gradual and subtle inspiration of the Holy Spirit in transforming our society. We call all Anglicans to welcome every person who seeks us, to pray for them and to accompany them pastorally, in the understanding that the Church is a building under construction and its entire membership is only known by Christ Himself, the Lord of the Church.

Trusting in the inclusive love of Jesus Christ our Lord, King and supreme Judge of the living and the dead,

The Most Revd. Maurício Andrade.

Primate /Archbishop of the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil

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