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OF SEATTLE

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**For Immediate Release**

**June 27, 2013**

## **Court decision raises concerns about the central role of marriage**

(SEATTLE) Seattle Archbishop J. Peter Sartain and Auxiliary Bishop Eusebio Elizondo today expressed concern about The U.S. Supreme Court decision June 26 striking down part of the Defense of Marriage Act and refusing to rule on the merits of a challenge to California's Proposition 8.

The court's decision, they said, has consequences for religious freedom, the role of marriage in society and the well-being of children.

"Liberty and justice depend upon laws at every level of government that recognize and respect the truth, including the truth about marriage," Archbishop Sartain and Bishop Elizondo said. "And the truth about marriage is that it is the unique and irreplaceable union between one man and one woman."

Marriage, they said, plays a foundational role in promoting the good of society.

"This decision has long-term significance for all people, most especially children," the bishops said. "The future well-being of our society will depend in great measure on the well-being of marriage. It is disappointing that the court has weighed in on this important public debate apparently without reference to the far-reaching consequences their decision will have.

"Children — those who have been born and those yet to be born — depend on society to support and uphold the truth of marriage, as our nation has done since its inception. And the foundational truth about marriage is that it is the only institution that unites mothers and fathers to any children that result from their union. Children need both. Mothers and fathers

bestow unique blessings on children, and marriage makes this blessing the rule in society rather than the exception.”

Archbishop Sartain and Bishop Elizondo said they and the bishops of the United States would recommit themselves to teaching the truth about marriage and preparing pastoral responses to the many unknown consequences of the court’s decision and the decision by some states to redefine marriage. “As Cardinal Timothy Dolan and Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone have said, ‘Now is the time to strengthen marriage, not redefine it.’”

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