

Blessing of a Civil Union

On June 1, 2011, Civil Union legislation approved by the State of Illinois went into effect. The Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act extends to same-sex couples the same rights and obligations of civil marriage enjoyed by heterosexual couples. At the same time, the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago authorized clergy in the diocese to conduct and bless civil unions in the church.

Bishop Jeff Lee offered these words in support of church-blessed civil unions: "...the faithful, loving, and lifelong union of two persons of the same sex is capable of signifying the never failing love of God in Christ for the church and the world. Such unions can be sources and signs of grace, both for the couple and for the wider community. It is appropriate therefore that they be surrounded by the prayer of the Christian community. A further conviction is that just as Holy Matrimony is a vocation leading a man and a woman to practice disciplines of holiness, so should the gift of a similar, publicly committed discipline be available to gay and lesbian members of the church. Both marriage and faithful unions can be schools of holiness, ways of ordering our lives so that we might learn to be more faithful servants of Christ."

If you are a gay or lesbian couple seeking a civil union in the church, we invite you to contact the clergy of St. Mark's to talk about your plans. All couples, whether seeking Holy Matrimony or Holy Union, are expected to meet with a priest in the months leading up to the marriage/union for pre-marital counseling and to schedule and plan the service.

Please contact St. Mark's office at 630-858-1020 or frontdesk@stmarksglenellyn.org to make an appointment with one of our clergy or to get additional information.