



*Orthodox Church in America*  
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

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St. David of Thessalonica  
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To all Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest:

As many of you are aware, on Friday, June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court of the United States of America issued a 5-4 decision to overturn all bans of same-sex marriage by states, and affirmed this union as being a constitutional right. In effect, the court has ruled that same-sex marriages can be legally performed by all states in our country.

As your bishop — and from the perspective of the Church — nothing has changed. Even though same-sex marriage is “legal,” no blessings will be given to any priests to conduct same sex-marriages in our parishes. Those who are in same-sex marriages conducted by their respective states who are unrepentant will not be communed.

I would encourage our clergy and faithful to re-read the “Synodal Affirmation on the Mystery of Marriage,” issued by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America exactly two years ago, on June 26, 2013, which may be accessed at <http://oca.org/holy-synod/statements/holy-synod/synodal-affirmation-of-the-mystery-of-marriage>. Likewise, I would urge our clergy and faithful to re-read the 2013 Statement from the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA, “On Marriage,” which may be accessed at <http://assemblyofbishops.org/about/documents/2013-assembly-statement-on-marriage-and-sexuality>.

There is much more I would like to say on this issue, but it seemed good to at least release this brief statement at this time. Meanwhile, I urge our Midwest Diocesan clergy to read and/or distribute the Synodal Affirmation and Assembly Statement in their parishes.

Your servant in Christ,

Paul  
Bishop of Chicago and the Midwest