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Archbishop Cordileone Decries "Manipulation" of Pope Francis' Words to Support Same-Sex Marriage

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In response to the Illinois legislature's approval of a measure legalizing same-sex marriage in that state, Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, chairman of the US bishops' Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, [called the move "a serious injustice."](#)

He also criticized those who used the words of Pope Francis in defending their support for the redefinition of marriage. Pointing to the Holy Father's opposition to same-sex marriage legislation in his home country of Argentina as archbishop of Buenos Aires, Cordileone said, "It is therefore disgraceful that some legislators would manipulate the words of Pope Francis to suggest that he would support marriage redefinition."

In the debate over the Illinois legislation, House Speaker Michael J. Madigan quoted Pope Francis' [interview with journalists](#) over the summer as he argued in support of same-sex marriage. [From the Chicago Sun-Times](#):

"My thoughts regarding this legislation were formulated before the quote I'm going to offer to all of us," Madigan told colleagues, as the packed House chamber fell silent. "And the quote that I offer is a quote from Pope Francis of the Roman Catholic Church, who is quoted as saying, 'If someone is gay, and he searches for the Lord, and he has good will, who am I to judge?'"

"Pope Francis has spoken, and he has articulated the basis of my thinking on this issue," said Madigan, who later acknowledged having personally lobbied between five and 10 House Democrats to support Harris' bill.

Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia, who reportedly was undecided on the bill for much of the summer, [also pointed to Pope Francis](#) in explaining her eventual support for marriage redefinition: "As a Catholic follower of Jesus and the pope, Pope Francis, I am clear that our Catholic religious doctrine has at its core love, compassion and justice for all people."

In [a recent column](#), Vatican observer Sandro Magister offered a detailed account of then-Cardinal Bergoglio's opposition to same-sex marriage as the issue was debated in Argentina:

It was 2010 when that law was approved in Argentina. Cardinal Bergoglio took a position against it in a form that he had studied thoroughly. Not with public declarations that would directly challenge the political powers, but with two internal letters to the

Church: the first to the nuns of four Carmelite monasteries of Buenos Aires, and the second to a leader of the Argentine Catholic laity.

The twofold move by Cardinal Bergoglio naturally had a substantial impact on the political terrain as well. But the explanation that was given to it was that the cardinal intended with the two letters not to "conduct politics" but simply "to recall the teaching of the Church to all those who proclaim themselves to be Catholic, asking them to act accordingly."

The then-archbishop of Buenos Aires was not in parliament, of course, when the law on gay marriage was approved. And yet the promoters of that law saw him as enemy number one, to be defeated at all costs, even by boycotting any sort of negotiation that would open the way to solutions acceptable to the Church.