



*Speaking the truth in love*

*Eph 4:15*

**16 November 2017**

Dear Friends,

I am sure you are all very disappointed with the result of the Same-Sex Marriage plebiscite as I am. The Archdiocese has been directly engaged with the Coalition for Marriage, along with around 100 other church, faith and traditional marriage groups as part of the No campaign.

The overall result for Australia was 61.6% supporting the Yes vote and 38.4% supporting the No vote with a participation of nearly 80%. In NSW the vote was better with 57.8% for Yes and 42.2% for No. Of the 17 electorates and 4.8 million Australians who supported the No vote, 12 of those electorates were located in the Greater Sydney area.

We should all take some encouragement from the better result in NSW.

God never loses any battles and even though overall the result is less than that for which we had hoped, we have fought hard on an issue of great importance for all Australians and their families, not just Christians.

Many of you have been very directly engaged in the campaign. I am personally aware of committed individuals who have been extremely generous with their time and money. Many people courageously spoke up for traditional marriage in difficult circumstances. Others have worked very long hours and given up their weekends. I am deeply grateful for your outstanding contributions and hard work over many months. May God bless you for them!

There is no doubt that had we all not been as engaged as we were in supporting traditional marriage the result would have been significantly worse.

Let us continue to defend the freedoms we have enjoyed in this country, including religious liberty and freedoms of speech and conscience. And let us fight for the right of parents to have a say in their children's education and not be subjected to programs that undermine our Christian teachings and values concerning the human person and how they are called to live.

The upcoming season of Christmas gives us great hope as we reflect on our loving God who gave himself to us and who never abandons His people. Please keep our political representatives in your prayers at this time that they may show true leadership in protecting our rights and freedoms. God Bless You All!

+ *Anthony Fisher*