



ARIZONA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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Arizona Catholic Conference Bishops' Statement on Religious Liberty Decision by the Supreme Court

June 4, 2018

The Bishops of the Arizona Catholic Conference stand in solidarity with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) regarding today's U.S. Supreme Court ruling on religious liberty.

Our country was founded by people who had tremendous respect and compassion for those seeking to live a life free of religious persecution from their government. Accordingly, we have long understood the importance of religious liberty in our society and that these rights are not something confined to places of worship.

The Catholic Church supports the human dignity of people of all faiths, and even those of no faith, while firmly opposing any forms of unjust discrimination. We consider ourselves blessed to live in a country that values such freedoms and respect for all people.

Thankfully, the reality remains that America has the ability to serve every person while making room for valid conscientious objection for the purposes of religious freedom.

Accordingly, we join USCCB in applauding today's ruling in the *Masterpiece Cakeshop* case as a positive step forward in recognizing these inalienable rights.

USCCB Chairmen Applaud Supreme Court's Respect for Religious Liberty in *Masterpiece Cakeshop* Decision

June 4, 2018

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Supreme Court decided the case of *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*. The case involves a Christian baker named Jack Phillips who declined in 2012 to create a custom wedding cake for a same-sex ceremony. State officials sought to compel Phillips to create such cakes under Colorado's public accommodations law. The Supreme Court ruled 7-2 in favor of Phillips under the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Chairman of the Committee for Religious Liberty, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., of Philadelphia, Chairman of the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, and Bishop James D. Conley of Lincoln, Chairman of the Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), issued the following joint statement:

“Today’s decision confirms that people of faith should not suffer discrimination on account of their deeply held religious beliefs, but instead should be respected by government officials. This extends to creative professionals, such as Jack Phillips, who seek to serve the Lord in every aspect of their daily lives. In a pluralistic society like ours, true tolerance allows people with different viewpoints to be free to live out their beliefs, even if those beliefs are unpopular with the government.”

The USCCB filed an *amicus curiae* brief supporting Masterpiece Cakeshop, which can be found here: <http://www.usccb.org/about/general-counsel/amicus-briefs/upload/16-111-tsac-USCCB.pdf>.



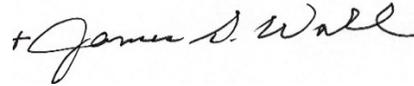
Most Rev. Edward J. Weisenburger
Bishop of Tucson



Most Rev. Thomas J. Olmsted
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Most Rev. Eduardo A. Nevares
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Most Rev. James S. Wall
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