



# NEWS

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## **Faith Leaders Affirm the Inherent Beauty and Dignity of Being Created Male or Female**

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WASHINGTON—Following the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) General Assembly in November 2017, a group of ecumenical and interfaith partners gathered with bishops of the Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage to discuss gender ideology. As a result of this discussion, faith leaders today issued an open letter entitled “Created Male and Female”.

Archbishop Charles Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. of Philadelphia, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, Bishop James Conley of Lincoln, chairman of the Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, chairman of the Committee for Religious Liberty, and Bishop Joseph C. Bambera of Scranton, chairman of the Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs signed the letter.

“We hope this letter communicates to the public our shared understanding of the goodness of the creation of humanity as male or female and underscores our commitment to service of this truth with both clarity and compassion,” said Bishop Conley.

The religious leaders stressed the importance of acknowledging the reality of sexual identity, noting, “Children especially are harmed when they are told that they can ‘change’ their sex or, further, given hormones that will affect their development and possibly render them infertile as adults. Parents deserve better guidance on these important decisions, and we urge our medical institutions to honor the basic medical principle of ‘first, do no harm.’”

The leaders close with a hope: “We hope for renewed appreciation of the beauty of sexual difference in our culture and for authentic support of those who experience conflict with their God-given sexual identity.”

The letter is available at: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/promotion-and-defense-of-marriage/created-male-and-female.cfm> and follows three previous open letters: “The Protection of Marriage: A Shared Commitment,” issued December 6, 2010, “Marriage and Religious Freedom: Fundamental Goods That Stand or Fall Together,” issued January 12, 2012, and “The Defense of Marriage and the Right of Religious Freedom: Reaffirming a Shared Witness,” issued on April 23, 2015, which are available at [www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/promotion-and-defense-of-marriage/ecumenical-and-interreligious-activities.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/promotion-and-defense-of-marriage/ecumenical-and-interreligious-activities.cfm).

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