



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM
DE LEGUM TEXTIBUS

Vatican City, 15 November 2017

Prot. N. 15986/2017

Your Excellency,

I write to respond to your letter of 28 June last, in which you asked for the opinion of this Pontifical Council regarding the admission of two non-Catholics as witnesses to baptism and the annotation of persons of the same sex and the so-called “transgender persons” as parents in the baptismal register.

After a careful consideration of the aforementioned matter, I am pleased to offer you the following indications.

Can. 874 §2 *CIC* establishes that a baptized non-Catholic may be admitted as witness to baptism only together with a Catholic sponsor. In this sense, our Pontifical Council considers that, given the particular role of the sponsor, two baptized non-Catholics may be admitted as witnesses to baptism only when there is a Catholic sponsor.

In the current Code, there is no specific law regarding the annotation of same sex couples or “transgender persons” as parents in the baptismal register. The term “parents” used by can. 877 *CIC* refers clearly to the father and the mother, man and woman created by God who are united in the sacrament of marriage (cf. can. 1055 §1 *CIC*) or to such a couple who adopted a child.

According to the disposition of can. 877 *CIC*, the parish priest must record in the baptismal register the name of the natural or adoptive father and mother (man and woman) or that of the unmarried mother (woman), as well as that of the father (man) if his paternity is proven by a public document.

The annotation of same sex partners or “transgender persons” as parents would be contrary to the aforementioned canon and the teaching of Our Lord and of the Church on marriage as desired by God to be a union between a man and a woman. If one of the partners is the child’s natural father or mother, he or she must be mentioned in the register; the other partner cannot be annotated.

Given the above indications, we do not consider it possible to annotate in the baptismal register two mothers or two fathers or a “transgender father” whose real nature is a woman or a “transgender mother” whose real nature is a man.

We hope that the above will be useful to you. Be assured of our own prayers and best fraternal wishes in your ministry.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

✠ Francesco Card. Coccopalmerio
President

✠ Juan Ignacio Arrieta
Secretary