

Briefly noted

News in the [July 1, 2008](#) issue

A California constitutional amendment to limit marriage to “a man and a woman” has been approved for the November 4 general election, just weeks after the state Supreme Court permitted same-sex marriages. California secretary of state Debra Bowen on June 2 certified that supporters had submitted enough signatures for the measure to qualify for the ballot. If approved by a majority of voters, the state initiative would trump the May 15 Supreme Court ruling. Early polls differed on whether voters would defeat the measure. Meanwhile, the state’s high court rejected appeals to reconsider its ruling or to delay implementation. Licenses and rites for same-sex couples were permitted to begin June 17, as scheduled.

Pope Benedict XVI has approved a rare public exhibition of the Shroud of Turin, a linen cloth that many believe was used for Jesus’ burial. The shroud will go on display in 2010 for the first time in a decade. Venerated since at least the 14th century as the burial shroud of Jesus, the 14.5-foot-long cloth shows front and back images of a bearded man with apparent wounds on his wrists, feet and side. The authenticity of the shroud seemed to have been discredited when Vatican-approved tests in 1988 at three separate laboratories determined its date of origin as between 1261 and 1390. The Catholic Church has no official position on the object’s authenticity, but endorses it as an aid to devotion.