SC to tackle same-sex marriage

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The Supreme Court (SC) is finally set on conducting oral arguments over the petition seeking to allow same-sex marriage.

SC Clerk of Court Edgar Aricheta has issued an advisory that the oral arguments for the petition – filed two years ago — will be held on Tuesday afternoon.

The petition was filed by on May 18, 2015 by lawyer Jesus Nicardo Falcis III who sought to declare as unconstitutional prohibitions against same-sex marriage.

The petitioners-in-intervention in the case are LGBTS Christian Church Inc., Reverend Crescencio "Ceejay" Agbayani Jr., Marlon Felipe and Maria Arlyn "Sugar" Ibanez, while, lawyer Fernando Perito is the intervenor.

Aricheta has already listed down the ground rules which the parties in the petition should observe during the oral arguments.

Among the rules laid down, the parties will be given 20 minutes to argue their case before the SC en banc, after which, the magistrates will have the "privilege to ask any question on any relevant matter or require submission of any document necessary for an enlightened resolution of this case."

In his petition, Falcis sought to declare as unconstitutional provisions of the Family Code which limits marriage between a man and woman as well as declares lesbianism or homosexuality as grounds for annulment and legal separation.

Falcis also asked the SC to prohibit the Civil Registrar-General from enforcing the provisions in the processing of applications for and in issuing marriage licenses against homosexual couples.