

BONDINGS

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Theologian: Gay Priests Must Have Their “Stonewall Moment”

By Lisa Fullam

CommonwealMagazine.org
Decembner 15, 2016

The Congregation for the Clergy has released a new General Executive Decree called "The Gift of the Priestly Vocation," updating and summarizing the new work that's been done since the last *Ratio Fundamentalis* was amended in 1985. The new document bears the stamp of Francis in a good way:

The fundamental idea is that seminaries should form missionary disciples who are 'in love' with the Master, shepherds 'with the smell of the sheep,' who live in their midst to bring the mercy of God to them. Hence every priest should always feel that he is a disciple on a journey, constantly needing an integrated formation, understood as a continuous configuration to Christ.

There is also a moderating of the clerical triumphalism of John Paul II. The document cites *Pastores Dabo Vobis*: "the priest is placed not only in the Church but also in the forefront of the Church," then two paragraphs later warns against clericalism and the temptation to "lord it over" the flock.

So there's development here--except for the homophobia. The text quotes from the 2005 document concerning admission of gay men to seminary:

"The Church, while profoundly respecting the persons in question, cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practise homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture.' Such persons, in fact, find themselves in a situation that gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women. One must in no way overlook the negative consequences that can derive

from the ordination of persons with deep-seated homosexual tendencies" (199).

Tom Reese, SJ, was quick to respond: "The idea that gays cannot be good priests is stupid, demeaning, unjust, and contrary to the facts. I know many very good priests who are gay, and I suspect even more good priests I know are gay." This is admirably direct, to be sure. He concludes with a call for a "reputable survey" to determine more



clearly what percentage of priests are homosexually oriented.

I disagree.

It is true that estimates of the number of homosexually-oriented men among Catholic clergy range wildly, from about 15% (which seems low) to about 60%, (which seems high). This would make the percentage of gay priests anywhere from more than twice to nearly 10 times the proportion of gay men in the population generally.

But the central issue should not be how many such men serve as priests. The issue should be that what is said about

them is not true. And a survey won't correct a lie. What is needed is for gay priests to have a Stonewall moment. They need to speak up for themselves. Their colleagues, ordained and otherwise, need to stand with them. They need to come out of the closet, or nothing will change. That's why the Stonewall riots mattered:

Often referred to as the “Rosa Parks moment” in Gay history the Stonewall rebellion paved the way for future members of the community to not accept treatment as second-class citizens but rather to expect that the LGBT community be treated as equals in the eyes of both the government and society at large. Here are a few reasons why I think gay priests should have their own Stonewall moment:

1. **What is said about them is a slander.** The notion that being gay men "gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women" is not true. Men--gay or straight--who struggle with their own sexuality or with celibacy, sure, but that's not a matter of orientation. And what are the "negative consequences" we are warned of? Thinking that gay people are decent, hard-working, loving children of God like the rest of us? And that some are called to service in the Church, like the rest of us?

It is an act of thuggery to out people against their will; gay priests need to stand up for their own vocations and

those of other gay priests. How about a document that a bunch of gay priests sign on together? As Jesus' older contemporary Rabbi Hillel said: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?" (Ethics of the Fathers, 1:14)

2. **It's not only about you.** In addition to the priests, seminarians and seminary staff who need to navigate this teaching, there are also queer kids in the Church who hear how important the Church leadership thinks it is to keep folks like them out of leadership. They might even buy that line about "objectively disordered," and, unless they've read a fair amount of Thomas Aquinas, might think it means they're broken and unloveable, doomed to loneliness and despair. Even in these times of increased acceptance of gay people in our society, queer kids have an increased risk of being bullied, beaten up, thrown out of their homes, and even of attempting and completing suicide. Is that enough?

3. **Gay priests are invisible.** In our culture, people are generally assumed to be straight unless they are out. Unless gay priests come out, this question can still be regarded as a question about a shadowy minority we think we do not know. Strong allies like Reese can say all they want that they know good priests who are gay, but that still leaves gay priests faceless and nameless. What changed American attitudes about LGBTQ people wasn't theory; it was real, out, visible people like Ellen Degeneris, Jose Sarria, Harvey Milk, Michael Sam and Caitlyn Jenner, and many others who came out when it was risky or dangerous to do so. Faces and stories

(Continued on page 5)

Sr. Jeannine Spreads Message of LGBT Equality in Poland

By Francis DeBernardo

Bondings 2.0
NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com
January 17, 2017

While most people in the United States were enjoying turkey with all the trimmings last Thanksgiving Day, New Ways Ministry's co-founder, Sister Jeannine Gramick, was feasting instead on *pierogi* (dumplings), *golabki* (stuffed cabbage leaves), *kapusta* (sauerkraut), and *babka* (bread). Far from flouting custom, she was honoring tradition and her ancestral roots by spending Thanksgiving Day in Poland.

She was invited for a week-long speaking tour about Catholic LGBT issues, sponsored by the country's leading LGBT equality organization, "Campaign Against Homophobia," and its main Christian groups, "Faith and Rainbow" and "Tolerado." She gave three public presentations, 14 interviews with radio, TV, or print journalists, a retreat for LGBT Christians, and spoke personally with countless individual Poles, including the Secretary General of Poland's organization for nuns' communities.

Traveling to Poland's three leading cities--Warsaw, Krakow, and Gdansk--Sister Jeannine spread the message that she has been spreading for over 45 years: God has unconditional love for LGBT people and it is the church's job to make that love real by working for justice and equality.

In the homeland of Pope John Paul II, journalists naturally questioned Gramick about her opinions on both the former pope and his current successor. Initially, she said, she had great enthusiasm for John Paul when he was elected. She felt great pride because of her own

Polish heritage, but that quickly dissipated. While he called for justice in the secular arena, he was adamantly opposed to any discussion of injustice within the church's walls. Moreover, she disagreed with John Paul's views about sexuality, expressed in his talks on the "Theology of the Body," stating that his notions about gender complementarity made no sense at all to women.

Concerning Pope Francis, she is more optimistic. In an interview with *Queer.pl*, she said, "I think his emphasis is in the right place. He is emphasizing the heart, not the head. He speaks often about dialogue and getting to know LGBT people, even though he maintains that he will not change church teaching (on sexual ethics). I believe that it is most important to first talk with people and thus open people's hearts. Change (in sexual ethics) will come after there is a change of heart."

In an interview with *Kobieta.wp.pl*, Sister Jeannine described what motivated her to become involved in this ministry. She began her work in 1971 when she met a young gay man who had left the Catholic Church. After many discussions with him and his friends, she realized that Catholics needed to be educated about LGBT lives. She explained: "I wanted to give a voice to those in the Church who could not speak for themselves. I believe LGBT people, just as any of the faithful, should have their rightful place in this institution..."

"I've always been interested in those who are overlooked by society. If you read the Bible, you know that Jesus came to defend the out-

casts. Another issue for me is conscience. Sometimes your conscience guides you to differ with the church hierarchy...the only thing that should concern us is love and helping others."

When asked by *Queer.pl* about her impressions of LGBT issues in Poland, Sister Jeannine responded: "I'm very surprised, in a positive sense, about what I've seen and experienced in Poland. There is more talk about LGBT people than I had anticipated. I've seen great acceptance among Catholics, even among priests. They are beginning to



In Poland, Sr. Jeannine holds a sign which reads "I support LGBT people because we are all children of God."

understand that this is an important issue of human rights."

She noted that Catholic lay people in the U.S. and many other nations are much more supportive of LGBT people than the Catholic hierarchy. She felt that the "hierarchy of the Church is responsible for the administration of the community, but they should also feel a responsibility to listen to the people."

"The Campaign Against Homophobia" and "Faith and Rainbow," two organizations that sponsored Sr. Jeannine's speaking tour in Poland, launched a nationwide reconciliation campaign last September. "Let's Exchange a Sign of Peace" posted billboards all over Poland depicting a handshake in which one hand wore a rosary around the wrist and the other wore a rainbow bracelet. While Polish bishops decried the efforts, the Polish citizenry responded quite positively. Many prominent Catholics and several Catholic publications supported the effort.

Sister Jeannine's lecture series built on so much of the enormous work already done by these organizations and their supporters--efforts that Sister Jeannine feels will bring about many blessings. When asked about the situation in the U.S. in the future, she responded that the mission may become more difficult to accomplish in the new presidential administration, but like her friends in Poland, she is ready to keep on working. To *Weekend.gazeta.pl*, she said:

"Good work will go forward because the hearts and minds of people who support the LGBT community have been changed. These hearts and minds were opened and are no longer shut. We will not step back. It will be much harder. But we can handle it. We have to." ✚

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Bondings is a seasonal publication designed to keep our subscribers informed of issues that pertain to LGBT people and the Catholic Church.

Founded in 1977, New Ways Ministry is an educational and bridge-building ministry of reconciliation between the Catholic LGBT community and the institutional structures in the Roman Catholic Church.

New Ways Ministry seeks to eradicate prevalent myths and stereotypes about homosexuality and gender identity and supports civil rights for LGBT persons in society.

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Welcome Lesbian/Gay Couples in Parishes

By Francis DeBernardo
Bondings 2.0
NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com
December 7, 2016

Marriage equality for gay and lesbian couples became the law of the land in June 2015 when the U.S. Supreme Court declared freedom to choose whom to marry is a constitutional right. As a result, now all 50 states and the District of Columbia issue marriage licenses for civil weddings to same-gender couples.

This new legal and political reality does not apply to churches and other houses of worship. Each religious faith is still able to decide for itself who is eligible to marry whom, according to their own beliefs and teachings. So, while Catholic lesbian and gay people may decide to marry

civily, under current church policy, they will not be able to marry in a church ceremony.

As a result of the new civil framework for marriage, more and more such couples, and families headed by such couples, are becoming more visible in local communities, including faith communities and institutions. Catholic lesbian and gay couples and their children are starting to be a familiar sight in parishes and schools.

Are Catholics prepared to welcome such couples and families into their parishes, schools, and other religiously sponsored programs?

The following list of suggestions is intended to help such institutions and individuals offer a welcome, motivated by sincere Christian hospitality, to these couples and families so that they can participate fully in church life.

✂ **Cut out and share with parishioners, pastoral staff, and community leaders!**

New Ways Ministry’s Suggestions for Welcoming Lesbian and Gay Couples and Families Into Parish Life and Community

1. Make it known that all children will be baptized, not only those of heterosexually married couples.
2. Include lesbian and gay couples in all aspects of parish life: prayer and liturgy, educational programs, social events, and service opportunities.
3. Invite gay and lesbian couples to participate in marriage preparation and enhancement programs.
4. Open bereavement support groups to lesbian and gay people whose spouses have died.
5. Acknowledge and celebrate the love and commitment of lesbian and gay couples in the same ways that heterosexual couples are affirmed.
6. Educate one another about sexual orientation and the reality of lesbian and gay people.
7. Institute a non-discrimination policy for sexual orientation, gender identity, marital and relational status.
8. Welcome families headed by lesbian and gay couples to all family events that the parish sponsors.
9. Allow local Scouting programs to accept lesbian and gay mothers and fathers to be Scout leaders.
10. Make sure that everyone knows that the children of lesbian and gay couples are welcome in educational programs, parish schools, and all appropriate sacramental preparation programs.
11. Include discussion of lesbian and gay people in all parish programs concerned with diversity, multiculturalism, social justice, sexuality, and faith sharing.
12. Listen to, converse with, and be present to parishioners or community members who may disagree about welcoming lesbian and gay people and families. ✚

Malawi Bishops Lead March Against LGBT Rights

By Robert Shine
Bondings 2.0
NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com
February 4, 2017

Catholic bishops in Malawi joined other religious leaders last month in a protest march against LGBT rights, an issue on which the nation’s Catholic officials have already opined quite negatively.

The Citizens’ March for Life and Family was actually a series of smaller marches throughout the country, reported *The Tablet*. In addition to protesting homosexuality, these marches, which involved some 60 denominations and more than 50 Christian organizations, also included protests against expanded abortion rights.

Organizers said the Citizens’ March for Life and Family urged Malawians to oppose legalizing homosexuality, an act they referred to as “a direct attack” on family life. Catholics played a leading role in the March, which was sponsored in part by the (Catholic) Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM) and chaired by Martin Chipwanya, the National Secretary for the Catholic Commission for Justice, reported *Nyasa Times*.

Catholic church leaders were also active locally. According to *Malay Mail Online*, Fr. Francis Tambala told marchers in the major city of Blantyre, “We say no to gay and lesbian unions. (Lawmakers) must vote no to homosexuality as history will judge us harshly if we don’t stand against abortion and same-sex marriages.”

LGBT advocates have pushed back against the church-backed protests, questioning why religious leaders were focused on condemning LGBT people when real issues needed attention. Gift Trapence, an advocate who leads the Centre for Development of People, said such protests shifted the focus of “suffering Malawians away from real issues of power blackouts, crumbled economy and corruption.”

It is also noteworthy, too, that following the protests in December, a senior member of the Malawi Law Commission chided religious leaders behind the March, reported the *Maravi Post*. Mike Chinoko, the deputy chief law reform officer for the Commission, said, “What the men or women of God should know is that there is a big difference between the church and the state.”

Actions by Catholic officials come about nine months after Malawi’s bishops called for the government to begin enforcing the nation’s ban on homosexuality. In its pastoral letter for the Year of Mercy, “Mercy of God as a Path to Hope,” the ECM called for the government to begin enforcing the nation’s law against homosexuality and stop bowing down “to pressure from donor community, international bodies and local human rights campaigners.”

The bishops’ lengthy support for LGBT criminalization is well-documented and has been strongly condemned by LGBT advocates. Last year, Malawi’s bishops also made false claims about alleged foreign aid pressure during U.S. Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBT People Randy Berry’s visit to their nation. Berry categorically refuted their claims. Individual bishops from this African



Marchers in Malawi

country have made other troubling remarks about homosexuality, too.

Malawi’s bishops have significant influence in the country, despite Catholics composing just 20% of the population. Catholic leaders played a key role in the country’s 1992 transition to democracy and have been described by some as the conscience of their nation. In a nation where LGBT people remain illegal and marginalized, the bishops should be using their moral authority to foster greater respect and equality for all persons. ✚

Four Years Later, What to Make of Pope Francis and LGBT Issues?

By Robert Shine

Bondings 2.0

NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com

March 13, 2017

Today is the fourth anniversary of Pope Francis' election, a moment for taking stock of what he has accomplished, is doing, and hopes to achieve in his remaining years. Francis' record on gender and sexuality issues is mixed, but his larger efforts to help the church more fully receive Vatican II and to reform the Curia may be better places for LGBT Catholics and their allies to focus.

Jesuit Fr. Thomas Reese, writing in the *National Catholic Reporter*, outlined what he sees as five of the pope's great achievements. To progressives who are critical of the pontiff, Reese said Francis' record is "revolutionary" and should be celebrated. Whether one agrees with that assessment or not, Reese's points are worth highlighting with an eye on LGBT issues:

"First, the pope has called for a new way of evangelizing. He tells us that the first words of evangelization must be about the compassion and mercy of God, rather than a list of dogmas and rules that must be accepted. . . He does not obsess over rules and regulations. He is more interested in orthopraxis (how we live the faith) than orthodoxy (how we explain the faith)."

This new way of evangelizing has prioritized human beings as subjects before God, not categories or objects. In a 2016 interview, expounding on his famous "Who am I to judge?" remark, Francis spoke about gay people with a welcoming tone and without any mention of condemnatory sexual ethics. This approach seems to have worked, at least initially. The pope received a "Person of the Year" award from not only *Time*, but from *The Advocate*, and various celebrities like Edie Windsor, Antonio Banderas, and Elton John have applauded him for his focus on mercy, not law.

Reviews of Pope Francis in the church have likewise been fairly positive. Some 50 LGBT Catholics and their families on pilgrimage with New Ways Ministry received VIP seating during a papal audience, a deeply healing and hopeful moment for many pilgrims and others. Francis met personally with a transgender man, Diego Neria Lejarraga, who had been excluded from his parish in Spain. Speaking about the meeting in a later interview, the pope described Neria Lejarraga as "he who was she who is he" and used male pronouns. If human encounters lead to hearts broken open, as Sr. Simone Campbell told a Vatican gathering last week, then such interpersonal acts cannot be undervalued.

Reese's second point is that the pope "is allowing open discussion and debate in the church. . . It is impossible to exaggerate how extraordinary this is." For context, he explained:

"Only during Vatican II was such a debate possible. . . During the last two papacies, dissent was roundly condemned and suppressed. The theologies of John Paul II and Benedict XVI could not be questioned. . . Under Francis, synodal participants were encouraged by the pope to speak their minds boldly and not worry about disagreeing with him. The result is a freer exchange of views, pub-



Pope Francis

lic disagreements, and even outright criticism of the pope by some conservative cardinals. All of this would never have been allowed under earlier popes."

This new openness includes an end to investigations against and silencing of theologians, which Reese said "is extremely important if theology is to develop and deal with contemporary issues in a way that is understandable by people of the 21st century." But what has not entered the conversation, either generally or at the Synod on the Family, are the voices of LGBT people and their families who must inform theology and ministry by speaking about their lives and realities.

Welcoming disagreement, and even playing with his own ideas in public, is a sign of health in the papacy. But it has led to consternation from many parts of the church. Precisely what Francis means in an interview or off-the-cuff remark is not always clear. This phenomenon has created problems, like misreporting that he had compared transgender people to nuclear weapons or speculation with little factual basis. Perhaps most notable was the mix up about Pope Francis alleged meeting with right-wing icon Kim Davis during his visit to the United States.

Politically, Pope Francis has had less tolerance for diversity of opinion. He has

repeated denunciations against marriage equality (e.g., in Slovakia, Slovenia, Philippines), even saying there was a "world war to destroy marriage." Moreover, he has remained silent about efforts to criminalize and discriminate against LGBT people, even as Catholics ask him to speak in defense of human rights. His decision to be involved in the marriage debate but not the issue of criminalization shows poor prioritization for a pope who promotes human rights.

for LGBT advocates based on ambiguous language about gender identity. Failure to clarify in this encyclical and in other remarks what he means by "ideological colonization" or unspecified critiques of gender theory have given LGBT-negative bishops leeway to be condemnatory.

Finally, Reese wrote that Francis "has moved to reform the governance structures of the church." Reese evaluated this work as slow but in progress. These efforts have included appointing more pastorally-oriented bishops who are less interested in sexual issues, whom he described as not crusaders but "humble and trusting sowers of truth."

And he received Bishop Jacques Gaillot who, in 1995, was removed from office for blessing the union of a same-gender couple.

So what happens now? I offer three brief points of my own for how we can understand and evaluate Pope Francis today.

First, when evaluating anything Pope Francis says or does, his commitment to enfleshing Vatican II must be kept in mind. This effort is his fundamental project, one which was set aside by his two predecessors, but one which will be explosive long term if it continues.

Second, Francis possesses a basic understanding that LGBT people are marginalized, and acknowledged the need for pastoral accompaniment of LGBT people as "what Jesus would do." Yayo Grassi, a gay former student of the pope who has remained friends with Francis, said at a New Ways Ministry event last fall that Francis has said to him explicitly, "There is no place for homophobia" in ministry. These are building blocks from which greater inclusion and justice can arise.

Third, Pope Francis will likely not move beyond his limitations as an older cleric raised in a traditional Argentinian culture when it comes to questions of gender and sexuality. This reality means we cannot hesitate to get on with our own work. Change in the church comes from below. Australian Catholics seized on the pope's call for the church to apologize to LGBT people by holding a liturgy for such an apology. As I have written previously, we must do likewise in using the room Francis has created to work for equality where, when, and how we are able.

As we evaluate Pope Francis today and going forward, we must not miss the forest for the trees. This papacy has been about God's expansive mercy, and Francis has involved himself in the causes of many vulnerable peoples. He is witnessing to the Gospel in bold and beautiful ways, even if imperfectly. ✚

LGBT Issues Prominent at U.S. Catholic Higher Ed Conference

By Robert Shine

Bondings 2.0

NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com

February 4, 2017

LGBT inclusion was a central theme at the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities' (ACCU) annual meeting this year. Entitled "Inclusion on Campus: Exploring Diversity as an Expression of God's Grandeur," the meeting explored several issues, including race, immigration status, and gender.

Dr. Julie Hanlon Rubio, an ethicist at St. Louis University, led a workshop on "Serving the LGBTQ Community." According to the *National Catholic Reporter*, Hanlon is concerned that Catholic higher education did not offer appropriate support following last year's massacre at an LGBT nightclub in Orlando in which 49 people were killed.

Rubio said, "[W]e can't quite find the words. . . We have to find the theological resources that give us the ground

to stand on so that we can appropriately claim the ground that is out there." *NCR* reported further:

"Rubio advocated for calling students and others by the names that they wish to be called. Educators ought to be, she said, 'less worried about the trouble we might get in by inclusion and more worried about the suffering they are experiencing.' . . .

"Rubio walked participants through a timeline of Catholic thinking on topics like what it means to be made in the image of God while offering theological tools for discussing gender and offering hospitality in the context of diversity and inclusion. Urging her listeners to be sensitive to the experiences of their LGBTQ students, Rubio stressed the importance of listening.

"In a question-and-answer period following the session, conference members discussed how to minister effectively when students may want advocacy, the status of conversations with bishops

about LGBTQ concerns, and even the potential need for a 'safe space' for theologians who grapple with these topics."

Beyond gender and sexuality, the meeting dealt with other areas in Catholic higher education where diversity and inclusion could improve. These issues have taken on a new urgency given the first two weeks of the new U.S. presidential administration.

Fr. Bryan Massingale, a theologian at Fordham University, New York, said this was a "moment of stark clarity" calling on Catholic colleges and universities to offer a "powerful, robust vision" that understands "the urgency in which your students are feeling this moment in history." He said further, "We need to both respond to and interrogate in light of our commitment to God" this new reality.

Indeed, just as ACCU members gathered for the meeting, the president was issuing an executive banning citizens from seven predominantly Muslim nations from entering the U.S. ACCU's

statement in strong opposition to this ban affirmed, "The commitment of our institutions to creating inclusive, welcoming campus environments that embrace people of all faiths and cultures."

It is heartening to see that this commitment to inclusion and diversity is focusing on matters of gender and sexual identities, which are so present in students' lives and about which institutions can offer key supports. Many Catholic colleges and universities in the U.S. are already offering LGBTQ supports and even coursework.

Hopefully, with ACCU's forward-looking leadership, the meeting this year will encourage schools to either step up or start altogether their inclusion of LGBTQ people on campuses. To read the organization's list of "Ten Ways to Be More Inclusive," go to: www.accunet.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=4006 ✚

BOOK REVIEW

Why Being in Love Leads Us to Seek Justice and Equality

By Robert Shine
The National Catholic Reporter
March 1, 2017

Being in love and being loved by someone are the heights of human experience, unleashing the erotic part of us in a most profound and powerful way. Love is the crucial good most of us seek, the fire that fuels us, and the God whom many of us worship. We believe in love.

Why, then, do most of us so desperately seek to restrain and restrict love? And what would happen if we stopped policing intimacy through civil laws and cultural taboos, enforcing them as if they are a set of Love Laws? What if we just let love run wild through our lives? These questions drive David A.J. Richards’ book, *Why Love Leads to Justice* (Cambridge University Press, 270 pages, \$30.99) . Curious as to why society’s greatest visionaries and most ground-breaking artists often love through boundary-breaking relationships, Richards offers an interdisciplinary exploration about erotic power and ethical resistance to patriarchy.

Patriarchy is fundamental to injustice because, in Richards’ words, it “destroys the search for real relationships with other persons, as the individuals they are,” and it demands exacting violence against any resisters. It afflicts all people through attendant oppressions, such as homophobia and racism, and it brutalizes the powerless and the privileged alike. Patriarchy is “a threat to love itself.”

But in the very love threatened, we find the roots of resistance because “breaking the Love Laws can have an

emancipatory ethical significance, empowering ethical voices of resistance.” By loving across boundaries, by being beloved and experiencing the power that erotic intimacy has, by knowing love’s disarming vulnerability and unknowable mystery, we are led to true freedom.

The book unravels as a narrative of narratives. Richards intertwines the stories of four gay British artists in the 20th century. He details how the loving relationship of composer Benjamin Britten and singer Peter Pears helped their art to flourish, and how novelist Christopher Isherwood and influential poet W.H. Auden found their creative voices through gay relationships.

Richards also writes about two gay black men in the United States. Bayard Rustin, the too-long-forgotten organizer behind the 1963 March on Washington, rooted himself in nonviolent pacifism because he came to know intimate love despite being persecuted. And Richards reflects powerfully on writer James Baldwin, whose treatment of gay love in the 1950s was precedent-setting and who found his voice by being deeply loved by a white man.

There are problems, however, about whose narratives are told and how they are told. Female protagonists, like Eleanor Roosevelt and novelist Marian Evans, whose pen-name was George Eliot, appear only in peripheral chapters. Richards acknowledges the focus on gay men, but his reasoning about patriarchy being more permissive of lesbian relationships is not compelling enough to warrant this narrow focus. Tighter editing could have eliminated some sections that read as tangential or repetitive when narratives are told. But *Why Love Leads to Jus-*

tice can, and hopefully will, lead to further reflections that include voices largely absent in Richards’ work. He primarily reflects in this work on the Love Laws that police relationships across racial and gender boundaries.

I would excitedly welcome reflections from Richards and from other voices about how loving across boundaries such as economic class, migration status, religious belief, and more has freed people from patriarchal constraints to be creative and to speak with ethically resisting voices.

I have witnessed firsthand this phenomenon in Catholics whose intimate love breaks the Catholic church’s own Love Laws. I have met many faithful people who are in queer relationships or second marriages, who practice contraception or accompany a partner transitioning genders, who say they have experienced God’s love more robustly through boundary-breaking intimacy.

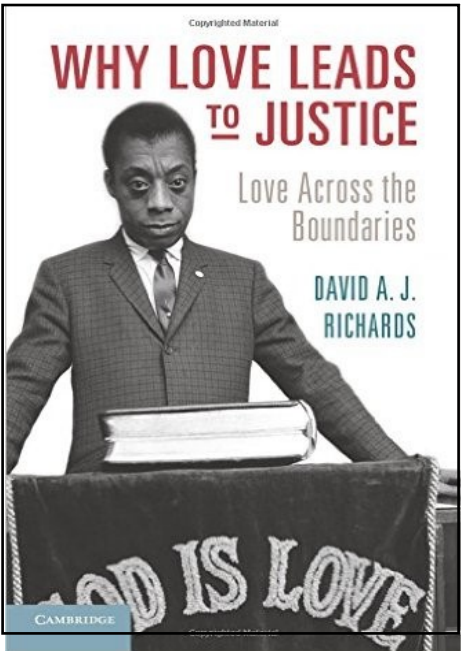
Through love, these Catholics find a voice to defy the ecclesial patriarchy that bans the ordination of women, condemns same-gender love, and leaves open the wounds of clergy sexual abuse. Too many church leaders cause harm because Catholic programs of formation have stifled education about the erotic.

Outside the church, love propels justice today through the queer voices leading Black Lives Matter, the interfaith couples rejecting Islamophobia, and many others who love across boundaries as they struggle for justice.

Reading *Why Love Leads to Justice* deeply affirmed my belief in love, specifically the radical power of the erotic. Richards’ subjects force us to confront the ways we enforce Love Laws today. Their stories compel us to ask ourselves whether we are truly resisting patriarchy. And, if we aren’t, whether this is due to our failure to let love run wildly through our lives.

Yes, love is patient, and love is kind. But if it is not also radically free and resisting injustice, is it really love at all?

Robert Shine is Social Media Coordinator at New Ways Ministry and studies at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry.



LGBT-friendly Catholic Colleges and Universities

Below is a list of known LGBT-friendly Catholic colleges and universities, that is, those Catholic institutions that have some type of gay/ LGBT student group, support group, ally group, etc. If you are aware of such a college that is known as welcoming to LGBT people, please let us know.



Alabama <i>Mobile:</i> Spring Hill College	Iowa <i>Davenport:</i> St. Ambrose University <i>Dubuque:</i> Loras College, Clarke University	Nebraska <i>Omaha:</i> Creighton University	<i>Philadelphia:</i> Chestnut Hill College, LaSalle University, St. Joseph’s University
California <i>Belmont:</i> Notre Dame de Namur University <i>Goleta:</i> St. Mark’s University <i>Los Angeles:</i> Loyola Marymount University, Mount Saint Mary’s College <i>Moraga:</i> St. Mary’s College <i>Oakland:</i> Holy Names University <i>Ranchos Palos Verde:</i> Marymount College <i>San Diego:</i> University of San Diego <i>San Francisco:</i> University of San Francisco <i>Santa Clara:</i> Santa Clara University	Kentucky <i>Louisville:</i> Spalding University, Bellarmine University	New Hampshire <i>Manchester:</i> St. Anselm College <i>Nashua:</i> Rivier College	<i>Pittsburgh:</i> Carlow University, Duquesne University <i>Radnor:</i> Cabrini College <i>Reading:</i> Alvernia University <i>Scranton:</i> Marywood University <i>Villanova:</i> Villanova University
Colorado <i>Denver:</i> Regis University	Louisiana <i>New Orleans:</i> Loyola University	New Jersey <i>Caldwell:</i> Caldwell College <i>Jersey City:</i> St. Peter’s College <i>South Orange:</i> Seton Hall	Rhode Island <i>Newport:</i> Salve Regina University <i>Providence:</i> Providence College
Connecticut <i>Fairfield:</i> Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University <i>New Haven:</i> Albertus Magnus College <i>West Hartford:</i> Saint Joseph College	Maryland <i>Baltimore:</i> Notre Dame of Maryland University, Loyola University of Maryland	New York <i>Albany:</i> College of Saint Rose <i>Brooklyn and Patchogue:</i> St. Joseph College <i>Bronx:</i> Fordham University, Manhattan College <i>Buffalo:</i> Canisius College <i>Loudonville:</i> Siena College <i>New Rochelle:</i> College of New Rochelle, Iona College <i>Poughkeepsie:</i> Marist College <i>Rochester:</i> St. John Fisher College <i>St. Bonaventure:</i> St. Bonaventure University <i>Sparkill:</i> St. Thomas Aquinas College <i>Syracuse:</i> LeMoyne College <i>Queens:</i> St. John’s University	Texas <i>Austin:</i> Saint Edward’s University <i>San Antonio:</i> University of the Incarnate Word, Our Lady of the Lake University
District of Columbia Georgetown University, Trinity University	Massachusetts <i>Boston:</i> Emmanuel College, Chestnut Hill: Boston College <i>Chicopee:</i> Elms College <i>Easton:</i> Stonehill College <i>North Andover:</i> Merrimack College <i>Weston:</i> Regis College <i>Worcester:</i> Assumption College, College of the Holy Cross	Ohio <i>Cincinnati:</i> Xavier University <i>Cleveland Heights:</i> John Carroll University <i>Dayton:</i> University of Dayton <i>Pepper Pike:</i> Ursuline College <i>South Euclid:</i> Notre Dame College <i>Sylvania:</i> Lourdes College	Vermont <i>Colchester:</i> Saint Michael’s College
Florida <i>Miami Gardens:</i> St. Thomas University <i>Miami Shores:</i> Barry University	Michigan <i>Detroit:</i> University of Detroit Mercy <i>Grand Rapids:</i> Aquinas College	Oregon <i>Marylhurst:</i> Marylhurst University <i>Portland:</i> University of Portland	Washington <i>Lacey:</i> St. Martin’s College <i>Seattle:</i> Seattle University <i>Spokane:</i> Gonzaga University
Hawaii <i>Honolulu:</i> Chaminade University	Minnesota <i>Collegeville:</i> St. John’s University <i>Duluth:</i> College of St. Scholastica <i>Minneapolis:</i> College of St. Catherine <i>St. Joseph:</i> College of Saint Benedict <i>St. Paul:</i> St. Thomas University <i>Winona:</i> St. Mary’s University of Minnesota	Pennsylvania <i>Cresson:</i> Mount Aloysius College <i>Dallas:</i> Misericordia University <i>Erie:</i> Mercyhurst College <i>Greensburg:</i> Seton Hill University	West Virginia <i>Wheeling:</i> Wheeling Jesuit University
Illinois <i>Chicago:</i> DePaul University, Loyola University, St. Xavier University <i>Joliet:</i> University of St. Francis <i>River Forest:</i> Dominican University in Illinois <i>Romeoville:</i> Lewis University	Missouri <i>Kansas City:</i> Avila University, Rockhurst University <i>St. Louis:</i> Fontbonne University, St. Louis University		Wisconsin <i>De Pere:</i> St. Norbert College <i>Madison:</i> Edgewood College <i>Milwaukee:</i> Alverno College, Cardinal Stritch University, Marquette University
Indiana <i>Notre Dame:</i> Holy Cross College, St. Mary’s College, Univ. of Notre Dame	Montana <i>Helena:</i> Carroll College		Canada <i>Toronto:</i> Regis College

Did the Vatican ban gay priests or not?

By Francis DeBernardo
The National Catholic Reporter
December 27, 2016

Since the publication of the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy's "The Gift of the Priestly Vocation" a few weeks ago, most commentators have noted that the document reaffirms a 2005 ban on the ordination of gay men. Yet Fr. Louis Cameli, a priest in Chicago, wrote an article in *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper, on Dec. 18 in which he says the Vatican document does not issue a blanket ban on gay men being ordained.

In his article, Cameli says he believes that the text's language is nuanced and needs interpretation. I believe the problem with the Vatican document is that the language is not nuanced, but sloppy, and thus, dangerous. The problem is not one of subtlety: The authors use terms that are incorrect or that have vague definitions.

For Cameli, the key language from the 2005 document, which is quoted in this latest text, reads:

"The Church, while profoundly respecting the persons in question [persons with homosexual tendencies], cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture.' Such persons find themselves in a situation that gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women. One must in no way overlook the negative consequences that can derive from the ordination of deep-seated homosexual tendencies."

Cameli argues that of the three criteria mentioned — practicing homosexuality, possessing deep-seated homosexual tendencies, supporting "gay culture" — the first and third are clear-cut, with the second one needing some deeper interpretation.

As for the first, Cameli notes that since celibacy is required of priests, sexual activity is not permitted. But the text does not speak of sexual activity but of men who "practice homosexuality."

What does it mean to "practice homosexuality"? Obviously, the Vatican and Cameli are using this term to mean sexual activity. They do not realize that "homosexuality" refers to many more characteristics than sexual activity. "Homosexuality" also refers to one's sexual orientation, regardless of whether one acts sexually. Sexuality, whether



heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual, refers to a variety of factors in a person: emotions, desires, fantasies, interactions, as well as physical actions. Being homosexual also involves a large number of social stigmas and pressures to be overcome.

So, when is a person considered to be "practicing" homosexuality? The Vatican document takes this broad term and gives it a narrow definition of referring to sexual activity.

As for supporting "gay culture," Cameli interprets this phrase to mean "an environment and a movement that advocates moral stances at variance with Church teaching." But this definition is not explicit in the document and does not conform to the way that ordinary people understand "supporting 'gay culture.'" The mere fact that the Vatican document puts "gay culture" in quotation marks indicates their negative evaluation of the concept.

In fact, gay culture has a lot in common with church teaching: the values of being true to oneself, of being courageous, of listening to the voice of God within a person, of loving and living as a full human being, and many more as-

pects. In such instances, church leaders should definitely want priests to support gay culture.

The question of what "support" of gay culture entails is also problematic. When a pastoral minister reaches out to a gay person, is that support of gay culture? When a person supports the equality of an LGBT person before the law, is

that grounds to deny a person admission to seminary? If a person speaks out against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth being bullied, would that prevent this person from being ordained?

The Vatican's imprecise use of language in this document is as dangerous and harmful as the imprecision of the term "objective disorder" to refer to homosexual orientation. More and more bishops are requesting such language be retired by the church because it is misleading and causes negative effects. Yet, we see that style continues in this latest document.

As for the second criteria, Cameli acknowledges that the Vatican's phrase "deep-seated homosexual tendencies" is vague, but he offers four examples of men to whom it might apply:

- Men who consider "being gay" the central factor of their identity;
- Men who are obsessed or preoccupied with their homosexual identity;
- Men whose sexuality creates "a blockage in one's relational capacities," meaning that they can't relate to women well or that they relate to men too erotically;
- Men who have a pervasive "sense of inevitability about acting on homosexual inclinations."

I would agree with Cameli that such men would not be suitable candidates for the priesthood. However, I do not see how the term "deep-seated homosexual

tendencies" can be interpreted to apply to the types of men that Cameli suggests it does. To most people, "deep-seated homosexual tendencies" would mean the presence of a homosexual orientation, plain and simple. It does not refer to problems with one's sexuality.

The cause for the mental and emotional reactions Cameli describes is not "deep-seated homosexual tendencies." Instead, such behavior reflects certain men's lack of maturity in integrating their sexuality into their personality. These problems can exist in heterosexual priests, as well as homosexual priests. They are not the exclusive province of homosexuality.

This lack of precision in language raises a question: Why doesn't the Vatican use the term "homosexual orientation"? Why doesn't the Vatican state its concern with men whose sexuality is not maturely integrated into their personality, regardless of their orientation? That would have made this document so much clearer.

If the Vatican did not want to ban gay men from the priesthood, why didn't they say so in clearer terms? What gay man reading this document will think that the Vatican welcomes him?

Instead, the Vatican used specifically vague and misleading language that is not understood by the rest of the world. That is the main fault with this document.

Cameli blames the media for too blunt an interpretation of this document. I disagree. The blame lies with Vatican officials who continue to use antiquated, uninformed language. They should know better. For more than 40 years, bishops, theologians, pastoral ministers and laypeople have been calling for church officials to use more accurate language about homosexuality.

If church leaders continue to use inaccurate language about homosexuality, the only thing that one can surmise from such behavior is that they do not understand the subject they are discussing or that they are content with promoting a negative evaluation of LGBT people. Neither alternative is responsible. ✦

Francis DeBernardo is executive director of New Ways Ministry, which describes its mission as "building bridges between the LGBT community and the Catholic church." This article first appeared on New Ways Ministry's Bondings 2.0 blog.

Safe Space for LGBTI Pupils In Scotland's Catholic High Schools

The Herald
Glasgow, Scotland
January 26, 2017

All Catholic high schools in Scotland will have a "safe space" for LGBTI pupils, MSPs [Members of Scottish Parliament] have heard.

Holyrood's Equalities and Human Rights Committee convener Christina McKelvie said they heard some pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex (LGBTI) had taken their own lives after being bullied.

She added the students had raised particular concerns about Catholic schools and she felt personal and social education (PSE) classes were critical to helping pupils.

She said: "A lot of young people have told me some horrendous stories about how PSE is used, especially going down a moralistic route as well, where a lot of young people feel really backed into a corner where they thought their thoughts and feelings were not being respected."

Ms McKelvie said she had heard teachers are "not equipped" to deal with LGBTI issues or misogyny "because either it's dealt with as a moralistic issue or it's something that they don't believe in."

She added: "What we are looking for is if there's a belief issue there, what we want is for teachers to be able to handle that, and if they can't, for whatever reason, they're equipped to signpost those kids to the right places for those kids to get that support."

"We're hearing of young people who go down the route of self-harm, attempt

and, in some cases, actually commit suicide.

"There doesn't seem to be a recognition at all that there's an issue about LGBTI young people and how they should be supported through school."

Some schools, including Catholic schools, were "brilliant" on PSE and LGBTI pupils, but in other places the classes were "disturbing".

She added: "The young people we spoke to did raise some issues about Catholic schools."

"We would like to get some insight into that whether there is a recognition of these issues especially about LGBTI young people and what the Catholic Education Service are doing to address that without making young people feel as if they are committing a sin."

Barbara Coupar, director of the Scottish Catholic Education Service, said Catholic schools "propose the gospel, not impose the gospel" and had taken on broad guidelines against hate crime.

She added many teachers did not feel equipped to become counsellors for pupils regardless of the problem, so schools were making sure teachers and students know where the pupils can go for help inside and outside the school.

She said: "That's why we're going down this avenue of ensuring that within all of our Catholic secondary schools that they would be able to go to someone, a trusted adult, a safe space within the school, where there would be someone who would have had that opportunity to be trained, for want of a better word, in order to be able to meet the needs of the young people in their care." ✦

Priests Need a Stonewall Moment

(Continued from page 1)
change opinions in a way that nothing else can.

4. **"Fear is useless: what is needed is trust."** One fear is that if gay priests come out, they will be dismissed, transferred, tossed out of their communities, or even defrocked. It is also the case that there is a drastic shortage of priests in the Church at present, so this seems unlikely, at least if lots of gay priests come out. With any luck, their straight brothers would stand with them. If they do not, were they really their brothers in the first place? Myself, I have little sympathy for those who fear defrocking as a dire punishment--what does that say about all the other non-ordained ministers in the Church? Yes--coming out makes gay priests vulnerable. Aren't we about to celebrate the birth of God into the human community in the most vulnerable possible form? So, like the angel said, "Fear not." And gay priests should know: your friends, your allies, your colleagues, your parishioners, your families, we've all got your backs.

5. **"We are open in my religious community."** Great. Re-read the above. What made Stonewall was coming OUT of the inn, not staying inside hiding.

I'm sympathetic to people who feel uncomfortable talking publicly about their own sexuality. It's especially fraught, perhaps, when one is a celibate religious leader, and simply wants to get on with the business of building the

Kingdom of God, and doesn't want to become the topic of conversation. But unless gay priests decide that it's time for their Stonewall moment, Church leaders--some of them closeted, sometimes self-loathing, homosexually-oriented men themselves--will continue to utter the slander that affects not just ordained gay men and seminarians, but every LGBTQ person in the Church.

It's just not healthy in the closet, not for gay priests, nor for the Church leaders who enforce their silence. Reese concludes mournfully:

"I sometimes think that it would be good for the church if 1,000 priests came out of the closet on the same Sunday and simply said, 'We're here!' I don't think the church is ready for that yet, but someday it should be."

When would be the right time to speak against injustice, bigotry, and hate? I'm with Hillel and the Apostle Paul on this one, when he said to the Corinthians:

"We appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For God says: 'In an acceptable time I heard you, and on the day of salvation I helped you.' Behold, now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Yes, now is a very acceptable time. ✦

Lisa Fullam is professor of moral theology at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley.

Rejection of LGBT Club at Catholic High School Ignites Backlash

By **Kristen Taketa**
St. Louis Post-Dispatch
 February 15, 2017

The leader of an independent Roman Catholic high school fueled widespread confusion Tuesday after he said the Archdiocese of St. Louis had directed his school to bar students from establishing a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender recognition club, unless the club included conversion therapy.

The archdiocese flatly denies that it requires conversion therapy of any such organization. Nerinx Hall Catholic High School President John Gabriel, who wrote that claim in a letter to an alumna, later said he had used the term in error.

Students at the all-girls school in Webster Groves recently asked school leadership to start a gay-straight alliance club. They did not receive permission to do so.

When alumna Jill Allen heard about this, she questioned Gabriel. In response, he wrote back that the archdiocese — which does not directly operate or provide funds to Nerinx Hall — has requested that no Catholic school allow such a club unless it followed “a carefully charted course of action that includes conversion therapy.”

Conversion therapy is the practice of trying to change someone’s sexual orientation or gender identity through psychological or other kinds of interventions. It is extremely controversial and has been denounced by human rights groups and medical associations for its idea that homosexuality is a disorder and an expression of moral weakness.

When asked for comment Tuesday, Gabriel sent a reporter a list of Nerinx Hall’s initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion, which include training for teachers on ministry to LGBT individuals and diversity forums for students.

Later, he said in an email that he had “made a mistake” when he said the archdiocese required conversion therapy of such clubs.

“We will speak with the Archdiocese about moving forward in our at-

tempts to serve our students,” he said in the email.

In February of last year, the archdiocese published a document called “Hope and Holiness” outlining guidance for ministry to LGBT people.

In one section, the document says that Catholic schools should not establish a LGBT support club without consulting the archdiocese. Archdiocese spokesman Gabe Jones said that meant that a club must conform to the Catholic church’s teachings on homosexuality, which include that marriage is defined as being between a man and a woman and that acting upon homosexual inclinations is sinful.

Even though schools such as Nerinx Hall are not operated by the archdiocese, all Catholic institutions must conform to the archdiocese’s rules when anything related to Catholic teaching is involved, Jones said.

“Being the archdiocese, the archbishop has pastoral responsibility for every Catholic in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. And so that applies to everyone

who goes to a Catholic church, any parishioner, and these students who attend Catholic schools,” Jones said. “When it comes to Catholic teaching, the archdiocese is the arbiter of what is Catholic and what is not.”

“Hope and Holiness” does not mention whether such LGBT clubs should be formed or not. It says that although these groups can provide emotional support to individuals, there is also a “danger” in such groups’ encouraging the labeling of sexuality and gender identity. It also says that “adolescents are apt to suffer in a particular way

from labeling themselves as gay.”

The Catholic Church has said it is inclusive of LGBT people but has been criticized by those people for staunchly opposing same-sex marriage. The Catholic Church has no official position on conversion therapy.

Gabriel said in his letter to Allen that Nerinx Hall still acknowledged Pope Francis’ call for inclusion of LGBT people but that the school could better min-



Sr. Jeannine Responds to Nerinx Hall Decision

Sister Jeannine Gramick, New Ways Ministry’s co-founder and lifelong Catholic advocate for LGBT people commented on the decision about and LGBT club made by the president of Nerinx Hall, a school that is sponsored by her religious community:

“As a Sister of Loretto, I am embarrassed and ashamed by the stance taken by Mr. John Gabriel. Such a posture does not reflect the Loretto values of inclusion, diversity, and care for all. The students and alumnae of Nerinx deserve leadership that displays these Gospel-based values.”

Quoted from *Bondings 2.0*, February 16, 2017
 NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com

One-on-One Pastoral Care Model Is Not Sufficient for LGBT Youth

By **Francis DeBernardo**
Bondings 2.0
 NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com
 February 28, 2017

An editorial in the St. Louis archdiocesan newspaper has commented on the controversy which erupted two weeks ago at Nerinx Hall H.S., a Catholic school, when the Nerinx president turned down a request from students to establish a gay-straight alliance (GSA). The editorial’s headline, “One-on-one pastoral care suggested for adolescents with same-sex attraction,” summarizes its main point, and it also shows the main problem with policies which deny students the opportunity to have a GSA in Catholic schools. While some, and perhaps many, LGBT youth need one-on-one pastoral care, such a model should not be the only one offered to them. The problem is that if this is the only assistance provided, the method itself sends a message: your sexual orientation is a private matter

which you should only talk about in secret and confidential meetings with authority figures. When this type of pastoral care is the *only* kind offered, it can foster, even if unintentionally, feelings of shame, fear, and alienation.

A more public model, such as a GSA, helps students to recognize that they are not alone, that they have peers with whom they can discuss these issues, that the topic itself is not a taboo. Moreover, such groups provide social experiences for youths who are at risk of feeling isolated and alone. GSAs help not only LGBT youth, but heterosexual and cisgender students who may have a close friend or family member who is LGBT.

At the heart of the controversy at Nerinx Hall was the application of a set of guidelines for working with LGBT youth, entitled “Hope and Holiness: Pastoral Care for Those With Same-Sex Attraction,” that the Archdiocese of St. Louis had developed. Again, the title belies a negative assumption about LGB

youth by referring to them as having “same-sex attraction.” Fr. James Martin, SJ, noted the problem of such terminology in the talk he gave upon receiving New Ways Ministry’s Bridge Building Award. He said:

“... [R]espect means calling a group what it asks to be called. . . .

“Names are important. Thus, church leaders are invited to be attentive to how they name the L.G.B.T. community and lay to rest phrases like ‘afflicted with same-sex attraction,’ which no L.G.B.T. person I know uses, and even ‘homosexual person,’ which seems overly clinical to many. I’m not prescribing what names to use, though ‘gay and lesbian,’ ‘L.G.B.T.’ and ‘L.G.B.T.Q.’ are the most common. I’m saying that people have a right to name themselves. Using those names is part of respect. And if Pope Francis can use the word gay, so can the rest of the church.”

In the editorial, an archdiocesan official defended the guidelines document, saying that the goal is to help youth:

“Kurt Nelson, superintendent of Catholic education for the archdiocese, said the very idea that students requested a club signals that they ‘want more help and support.’

While it may be true that the students want help and support, the fact that they requested a club indicates that the kind of help and support they want is peer socialization, not one-to-one counseling. If they wanted the latter, that is what they would have requested.

The editorial continued:

“But Nelson also said that ‘just because you don’t have a club doesn’t mean you’re not providing help and support to kids.’ However, many factors need to be considered, such as the adults who will lead the group, as well as providing content that doesn’t contradict

ister to LGBT students in ways other than a club. He wrote: “Nerinx Hall believes that we can best minister to our LGBT students through our Loretto charism and the Loretto school values of faith, community, justice, and respect.” The school was founded by the Sisters of Loretto in 1924.

Gabriel’s letter has generated a firestorm online among Nerinx Hall alumnae. A Facebook group of more than 600 people has already formed in the past day about the issue. Alumnae say this isn’t the first time students have tried and failed to form a LGBT club at Nerinx Hall.

For 2001 alumna Beth Schumacher, the letter portrayed a different school than the one she attended 16 years ago. She remembered Nerinx Hall as a progressive and “extremely open-minded” school.

“There are a lot of alumnae out there who are really, really disappointed both with the decision and with the direction it might be going in right now,” Schumacher said. “There are young people at risk. If someone is asking for a club of that nature, then there are definitely individuals who can use that level of support.”

Allen, a 2001 graduate, wrote in a statement being circulated among alumnae that she was “deeply saddened” by Gabriel’s letter.

“I feel that this response doesn’t reflect my experience of Nerinx,” she wrote. “I don’t believe denying this student-led initiative is empowering for students or represents Loretto values of promoting justice and equal rights.”

Nerinx Hall currently enrolls 595 students from 72 ZIP codes. The school prides itself on its high college matriculation rates and students’ high college standardized test scores. Tuition is \$13,600 a year.

The school says it has three main goals: that every student “know herself and her world,” receive a “loving community of faith” and “deliberate Christian action.” ✦

Church teaching, thus posing the threat of creating a public scandal.”

When a church official speaks of LGBT issues and uses phrases like “doesn’t contradict Church teaching” and “creating a public scandal,” I always assume that they are discussing issues of sexual ethics. Of course, not providing sensitive pastoral care to LGBT people or actively discriminating against them both also contradict Church teaching, but I don’t think that these are what Nelson had in mind. I may be wrong, but I’ve never heard an official use those terms in the ways I described.

If I am correct, then the big problem here is that the archdiocesan officials are only looking at LGBT issues as relating to sex. They are avoiding things like stigma, oppression, alienation, repression, family difficulties, mental illness, self-loathing—all of which are frequently experienced by youth who have no support for their LGBT identity. And these are all things which a GSA would help to mitigate.

The editorial noted correctly:

“The one-on-one approach also provides students an experience of accompaniment in many individual aspects of their lives, beyond the issue of sexual orientation.”

Yes, one-on-one is a much-needed form of ministry with LGBT people, especially youth. But social opportunities, community-building, group prayer, and mutual peer support are also very needed. GSAs can help provide that kind of ministry. And their model of openness, honesty, trust, courage, and pride which they inspire are things that one-on-one ministry simply cannot provide. ✦

New Ways Ministry’s blog
Bondings 2.0

*The best way to keep up on the latest
 Catholic LGBT news and opinions!*

Updated daily
 Share your ideas with others!

NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com



PARISHES

Alabama
Decatur: Annunciation of the Lord
Montgomery: St. Bede

Arizona
Chandler: St. Andrew
Glendale: St. Thomas More
Mesa: St. Bridget
Phoenix: St. Matthew
Scottsdale: St. Patrick
Tucson: St. Cyril of Alexandria,
 Ss. Peter and Paul, St. Pius X,
 Our Mother of Sorrows, St. Odilia

California
Berkeley: Holy Spirit Parish
Burney: St Francis of Assisi
Carlsbad: St. Patrick
Claremont: Our Lady of Assumption
El Cajon: St. Luke
Encino: Our Lady of Grace
Escondido: St. Timothy
Fremont: St. Joseph-Mission San Jose
Goleta: St. Mark Univ. Parish
Hawthorne: St. Joseph (Spanish)
Hayward: All Saints
LaPuente: St. Martha
Lemon Grove: St. John of the Cross
Long Beach: St. Matthew
Los Angeles: Blessed Sacrament,
 Christ the King, Mother of Good
 Counsel, St. Camillus Center-LA
 USC Medical Center (Spanish),
 St. Agatha, St. Paul the Apostle
North Hollywood: St. Jane Frances de
 Chantal, St. Patrick
Oakland: Our Lady of Lourdes
Oceanside: St. Thomas More
Orange: Holy Family Cathedral
Pasadena: Assumption of the B.V.M.
Ross: St. Anselm
Sacramento: St. Francis of Assisi
San Carlos: St. Charles
San Diego: Ascension, St. Jude Shrine,
 Catholic Community of UC,San
 Diego
San Francisco: Most Holy Redeemer,
 Old St. Mary Cathedral, St. Agnes,
 St. Dominic, St. Teresa of Avila
San Jose: St. Julie Billiart,
 St. Martin of Tours (Emmaus
 Community)
San Luis Obispo: Mission San Luis
San Raphael: Church of San Raphael &
 Mission San Raphael Arcangel
Santa Barbara: OL of Guadalupe
Santa Cruz: Holy Cross
Santa Monica: St. Monica
Simi Valley: St. Rose of Lima
Spring Valley: Santa Sophia
Stanford: Catholic Community at Stan-
 ford University
South Pasadena: Holy Family
Valinda: St. Martha
Vernon: Holy Angels Catholic Church
 of the Deaf
Walnut Creek: St. John Vianney
West Hollywood: St. Ambrose,
 St. Victor
Whittier: St. Mary of the Assumption

Colorado
Arvada: Spirit of Christ
Avon: St. Edward
Colorado Springs: Sacred Heart
Denver: St. Dominic, Christ the King,
 Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Lafayette: Immaculate Conception
Littleton: Light of the World,
 St Frances Cabrini

Connecticut
Hartford: St. Patrick-St. Anthony

Gay-friendly Catholic Parishes & Communities

Below is a list of known gay-friendly Catholic parishes and intentional Eucharistic communities. Thank you for helping us add to this growing list! If you are aware of a parish or community that welcomes LGBT Catholics, please let us know. Tell us if this welcome is because of a support program, spirituality group, mission statement, participation in LGBT community events, or involvement with parents. Parishes are listed first and intentional Eucharistic communities follow. For links to many of these parishes’ websites, go to www.NewWaysMinistry.org

Delaware
North Wilmington: Holy Child
Wilmington: St. Joseph

District of Columbia
Holy Trinity, St. Matthew Cathedral

Florida
Daytona Beach: Our Lady of Lourdes
Flagler Beach: Santa Maria del Mar
Ft. Lauderdale: St. Anthony,
 St. Maurice
Kissimmee: Holy Redeemer
St. Petersburg: Holy Cross
Tampa: Sacred Heart, Christ the King

Georgia
Atlanta: Shrine of the Immaculate
 Conception

Idaho
Boise: St. Mary

Illinois
Berwyn: St. Mary of the Celle
Chicago: Immaculate Conception,
 St. Clement, St. Gertrude,
 St. Gregory, St. Peter, St. Sylvester,
 St. Teresa of Avila, St. Thomas the
 Apostle, Our Lady of Lourdes, Our
 Lady of Mt. Carmel,
 Old St. Patrick
Clarendon Hills: Notre Dame
Country Club Hills: St. Emeric
Evanston: St. Nicholas
Inverness: Holy Family
Johnston City: St. Paul
Morton Grove: St. Martha
Oak Park: Ascension, St. Catherine of
 Sienna-St. Lucy
Schaumburg: St. Marcelline

Indiana
Indianapolis: St. Thomas Aquinas

Iowa
Coralville: St. Thomas More

Kentucky
Louisville: Epiphany, Cathedral of the
 Assumption, St. William

Louisiana
New Orleans: St. Augustine

Maine
Portland: Sacred Heart-St. Dominic
Saco: Most Holy Trinity

Maryland
Baltimore: Corpus Christi,
 St. Francis of Assisi, St. Ignatius,
 St. Matthew,
 St. Vincent dePaul
Columbia: St. John the Evangelist
Gaithersburg: St. Rose of Lima
Hagerstown: St. Ann
Severn: St. Bernadette

Massachusetts
Boston: Paulist Center, St. Anthony
 Shrine, St. Cecilia
East Longmeadow: St. Michael
Newton: St. Ignatius
Provincetown: St. Peter
Sharon: Our Lady of Sorrows
Springfield: Sacred Heart

Michigan
Ann Arbor: St. Mary Student Parish
Detroit: St. Leo, Christ the King, Gesu
 Parish
St. Ignace: St. Ignatius Loyola
Westland: Ss. Simon and Jude

Minnesota
Minneapolis: St. Frances Cabrini,
 St. Joan of Arc

Missouri
Kansas City: Guardian Angels,
 St. James
St. Joseph: St. Francis Xavier

St. Louis: St. Cronan, St. Margaret of
 Scotland, St. Pius V

Montana
Billings: Holy Rosary, St. Pius X

Nebraska
Omaha: Holy Family, Sacred Heart

Nevada
Las Vegas: Christ the King,
 Guardian Angel Cathedral

New Hampshire
Merrimack: St. John Neumann
Pelham: St. Patrick

New Jersey
Keyport: St. Joseph
Lawrenceville: St. Ann
Long Beach Island: St. Francis of
 Assisi
Maplewood: St. Joseph
South Plainfield: Sacred Heart
Tinton Falls: St. Anselm

New Mexico
Albuquerque: Holy Family,
 Shrine of St. Bernadette
Espanola: Sacred Heart of Jesus

New York
Albany: St. Vincent DePaul
Baldwinsville: St. Augustine
Bellmore: St. Barnabas the Apostle
Bellport: Mary Immaculate
Binghamton: St. Francis of Assisi
Brooklyn: St. Andrew the Apostle,
 St. Boniface, St. Athanasius,
 St. Augustine, Immac.Heart of Mary
Deer Park: Ss. Cyril and Methodius
East Islip: St. Mary
Elmira: St. Mary
Fairport: Church of the Assumption
Henrietta: Good Shepherd
Manhattan: Holy Name of Jesus,
 St. Francis Xavier, St. Paul the
 Apostle, Church of the Ascension,
 St. Francis of Assisi, St. Francis de
 Sales
Pittsford: Church of Transfiguration
Rochester: Blessed Sacrament,
 St. Mary (Downtown), St. Monica
Syracuse: St. Lucy, All Saints
Utica: Our Lady of Mount Carmel,
 Historic Old St. John’s
Wading River: St. John the Baptist
Wantaugh: St. Frances de Chantal
Westbury: St. Brigid

North Carolina
Charlotte: St. Peter
Durham: Immaculate Conception
Fayetteville: St. Patrick
Raleigh: St. Francis of Assisi

Ohio
Akron: St. Bernard
Cincinnati: St. George-St. Monica,
 St. Robert Bellarmine
Cleveland: Blessed Trinity,
 St. Malachi, St. Martha
Columbus: St. Thomas More
 Newman Center
Fairlawn: St. Hilary
Mentor: St. John Vianney
University Heights: Church of Gesu
Westlake: St. Ladislav
Wooster: St. Mary of the Immaculate
 Conception

Oregon
Beaverton: Mission of the Atonement
Portland: St. Andrew, St. Francis of
 Assisi, St. Phillip Neri, Down-
 town Chapel (St. Vincent de Paul)

Pennsylvania
Philadelphia: Old St. Joseph,
 Old St. Mary, St. John the
 Evangelist, St. Vincent DePaul

Rhode Island
Providence: St. Francis Chapel,
 St. Mary’s
Wickford: St. Bernard

Tennessee
Memphis: Cathedral of the
 Immaculate Conception

Texas
Colleyville: Good Shepherd
Dallas: Holy Trinity
El Paso: All Saints
Houston: St. Anne

Virginia
Arlington: Our Lady Queen of Peace
Richmond: Cathedral of the Sacred
 Heart, Sacred Heart Parish
Roanoke: St. Gerard
Triangle: St. Francis
Virginia Beach: St. Nicholas

Washington
Seattle: Christ Our Hope, St. Benedict,
 St. Joseph, Prince of Peace
 Newman Center
Tacoma: St. Leo

Wisconsin
Madison: Our Lady Queen of Peace
Menomonee Falls: Good Shepherd
Milwaukee: Good Shepherd,
 Prince of Peace, Trinity-Guadalupe

Canada
Montreal: Holy Cross
Ottawa: St. Joseph
Toronto: Our Lady of Lourdes

England
London: Church of the Immaculate
 Conception (Mayfair)

INTENTIONAL EUCHARISTIC COMMUNITIES

Arizona
Scottsdale: Franciscan Renewal
 Center

California
Orange: Koinonia
Pleasanton: Catholic Community of
 Pleasanton
San Diego: Mary Magdalene Catholic
 Community

Colorado
Colorado Springs: Benet Hill Monastery

District of Columbia
Communitas

Florida
Tampa: Franciscan Center

Maryland
Catonsville: Living Water Inclusive
 Catholic Community
Greenbelt: Greenbelt Catholic Comm.

Michigan
Grand Rapids: Marywood
Kalamazoo: Lambda Catholics

Minnesota
Minneapolis: Spirit of St. Stephen's
 Catholic Community

Oregon
Portland: Journey and Koinonia
 Catholic Community

Virginia
Arlington: NOVA Catholic Community

Washington
Olympia: Holy Wisdom Inclusive
 Catholic Community

Wisconsin
Madison: Holy Wisdom Monastery

Civil Law Has Nothing to Do with Catholic Sacraments

How a secular state defines marriage has nothing to do with bishops or what is their area responsibility

By Rev. Michael Kelly, SJ
InternationalLa-Croix.com
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It continues to amaze me that Catholic bishops the world over get trapped in the same-sex marriage cul de sac time after time.

It has happened again in Taiwan and is likely to happen elsewhere in Asia.

Whenever gay marriage or same-sex civil unions become a public topic, the bishops immediately become hostile. In some if not most instances, they contribute to the success of the very thing they oppose. In so many instances the world over, the opposition of bishops has been part of why same sex marriage has become law – in Latin America, the United States and Europe.

Civil unions – which, in many countries are virtually existent if not legally declared – actually morph in to "marriage." And Catholic opposition to formalizing what actually exists contributes to seeing that civil unions become "marriage!"

Why am I amazed if it happens so often? My answer is simple: the issue of how a secular state defines marriage has nothing to do with bishops or what is their area of focus and responsibility – the sacrament of marriage. The sacrament is a mystery that is regulated by the church's internal system – the Code of Canon Law.

But it is something to which a man and a woman have access if they are Catholics or one is marrying a Catholic and the non-Catholic is happy to be married according to Catholic rites. And it may or may not have civil significance – depending on whether the state recognizes a Catholic marriage as legally binding.

In today's world marriage is a civil contract – a legally recognized bond between two people. In most parts of the world that means people of different genders. Yet that contract has only the most approximate relationship to what Catholics believe the sacrament is.

Organizing campaigns against gay unions makes about as much sense as organizing campaigns to repeal divorce laws. Who on earth could see the virtue in such a campaign? Divorce may well be frowned upon by church leaders and in at least one country in Asia – the Phil-

ippines – Catholic opposition has prevented the development of divorce laws.

Catholics need to be very careful about agitating to have our morality legislated for all to abide by. In some instances advocating that Catholic morality become the law of the land would be deeply unjust. For example, agitating to have Catholic morality on divorce and remarriage become law applying across

tions. And it is by an accident of history in some jurisdictions that Catholic marriages and other religious marriages are also recognized civilly.

That happens in those countries influenced by British or U.S. law and its certifying Catholic priests – along with other Christian ministers, Muslim Imams and Jewish rabbis as well – as civil celebrants for the sake of simplicity.



society, to Catholics and non-Catholics – would rightly be seen as a violation of the human rights of the wider population.

As far as the state is concerned in most contexts, the separation of powers means Catholics have no right to legislate Catholic morality – in this case, an opposition to divorce – and impose it on a wider, non-Catholic population. To impose our morality on others is a misunderstanding of the proper jurisdiction of the church and the proper jurisdiction of the state.

What is the lesson for the future in a matter of social policy that will spread across Asia, beginning from Taiwan? These campaigns are wrong headed for one simple reason: civil law has nothing to do with Catholic sacraments.

Lifelong monogamous marriage is a Christian concept long ago adopted and then modified by secular states. It is now revocable by divorce in most jurisdic-

But in many countries including where I live in Thailand and other Southeast Asian nations, and in European countries with a history of anticlericalism, like France and even, perhaps most remarkably, Catholic Italy, no such ecclesiastical overlap with civil law exists.

In such jurisdictions, a couple seeking a Catholic sacramental celebration of their union must also get the civil marriage recognized by the state. And even in the U.K., Ireland and Australia, it is only since the 1860s that the laws recognizing marriages by Anglican clergy were extended to Catholic clergy.

Until that time, most marriages among Catholics in the British Empire were Common Law marriages (i.e. not civilly sanctioned but "de-facto" and recognized under civil law as an effective contract).

Today, we would say people in Common Law marriages were "living in

sin!" And it was that way for centuries in Ireland where Catholics were repressed with particular effect until Catholic Emancipation arrived in 1829.

With such a mixed history and so much contemporary variation, why do bishops the world over make the mistake of assuming they are the keepers of the treasures of marriage? Why do they get very upset when some things are proposed that will apply to the majority of people in their societies and who in Asia mostly aren't Catholics? Redefining marriage in no way limits or restricts Catholics from acting according to Catholic teaching on marriage. What is the basis of episcopal displeasure?

The simple answer must be they seem to think we still live in Christendom where church morality should be law. That social and political paradigm ended for secular, pluralist democracies with the French Revolution over two centuries ago. And it never happened in countries in Asia.

Where to from here? Intelligent Catholics see that this is a civil rather religious matter. In some parts of the world, some bishops sought to have civil unions recognized as "the lesser of two evils" – the other being gay marriage. But in almost every instance, successful opposition to civil unions among same sex couples led to the more highly developed gay marriage provisions applying in many jurisdictions.

The present pope has been reported as saying that his efforts among the bishops of Argentina to have civil unions recognized in law was one of the few failures he had as president of their bishops' conference. He could see gay marriage coming and saw it as something that flew too close to the marriage sacrament for his liking, and believed that civil unions was a workable compromise. Not so the majority of the bishops in Argentina; the result: fully developed gay marriage became law.

Bishops around the world should be very careful what they wish for. ✚

Father Michael Kelly SJ is executive director of ucanews.com and based in Thailand.

In India, Catholic Church Offers Support for Transgender People

By Shawn Sebastian
Ucanews.com
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The church in [the Indian state of] Kerala has formed a group of priests, nuns and laypeople to respond to the pastoral needs of transgender people. Formed in Kochi under the aegis of Pro-Life Support, a global social service movement within the church, the ministry is significant as it is one of the few outreach programs for the transgender community by the institutional church in India.

"The whole church has a big role to play," said Father Paul Madassey, who is in charge of Pro-Life Support for the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council (KCBC). He noted Pope Francis had talked about the need to give "pastoral care to the LGBT community."

"There is an active sex racket from north India eyeing transgender people in Kerala. They are trying to exploit the discriminatory situation they face," said Fr. Madassey.

India has an estimated 500,000 transgender people. They are often ostracized from their families and without adequate state support in terms of employment, health and education, end up on the street begging for money or are exploited in the sex trade.

In mid-December, Sisters of the Congregation of Mother Carmel offered their buildings to form an exclusive school for dropouts among transgender

people, considered the first of its kind in the country.

The nuns offered their venue after at least 50 building owners declined to let out their buildings, indicating the discrimination prevalent in the society, says Father Madassey.

Earlier this year, Caritas India, the social service wing of the Catholic Church, announced a program to fight such discrimination.

Vijaya Raja Mallika, a leading transgender activist in Kerala, is pioneering a three-month pilot school for transgender school dropouts in Kochi. Mallika said the "church has been very supportive" to their struggles.

"Religion plays an important role in social and behavioral change at the grass-roots level," said Mallika.

"We don't stand for exclusion but stand for inclusion along with education and employment support from society and the state." Mallika has worked in the past with Bombay Diocese for about three months to support the pastoral needs of transgender people there.

Mallika calls the idea of a residential school for transgender people a world first. It will be opened at Kochi on Dec. 30. The school will follow a National



Priests, nuns and lay people honor transgender person Vijaya Raja Mallika during a function in Kochi, Dec. 12. The Church in Kerala has formed a group to work for trans people, in what is considered the first such Church initiative in the country. (Photo provided by Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council)

Open School Curriculum and will conduct classes, enabling students to finish class 10 and 12 examinations.

"The school will cater to those transgender people who had dropped out from schools in their early age due to

various reasons," said Mallika, noting that many transgender children undergo psychological trauma at school which forces them to abandon education at an early age. ✚