

BANDINGS

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A monumental quest at a parish sculpted by compassion

By Sean Kirst
The Post-Standard
Syracuse, NY
July 26, 2011

Syracuse, NY—Like most Americans, Brother Edmund Dwyer was stunned by early coverage of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington D.C. As he struggled to grasp the scope of the carnage, scrolling type along the bottom of his television screen announced the death of Rev. Mychal Judge, a legendary New York City fire department chaplain.

For Dwyer, a vast tragedy became painfully real.

"He was a saint," said Dwyer, 90, a retired Brother of the Christian Schools who resides at Christian Brothers Academy in DeWitt. He worked closely with Judge during the 1980s, when both men comforted dying AIDS patients in New York City.

Judge was killed by flying debris at the World Trade Center. "He always wore his Franciscan robes, and he had a smiling face and a beautiful manner," Dwyer said, recalling how Judge spent hours with young men who felt abandoned. As a tribute to his friend, Dwyer is serving on a committee at All Saints Church in Syracuse, which intends to honor Judge with a memorial.

A Canadian sculptor, Timothy Schmalz, created a statue that depicts several firefighters carrying the body of the Franciscan priest. If parishioners at All Saints can raise about \$15,000, a bronze rendering of the statue will be unveiled outside the church on the 10th anniversary of the attacks. The Rev. Fred

Daley, pastor at All Saints, intends to ask local firefighters to attend the dedication. While the memorial will honor those killed on Sept. 11, Daley said the way Judge lived his life carries special meaning for the All Saints congregation.

Judge was a Catholic priest. After his death, several close friends said he was a celibate gay man, which is also how Daley speaks of himself. In June, after months of discussion, parishioners at All Saints

voted 256-3 to offer a statement of welcome to gays, lesbians and transgendered men and women. Daley said the vote meshes with his beliefs on what it means to be a Christian.

"More and more, I've been called in my spiritual life and in my heart to identify with the powerless and with the broken, and I think some of that comes from my own journey as a gay person," Daley said.

The Catholic Church teaches that

homosexual acts are inherently wrong, Daley said, but that a homosexual orientation is not. While a new state law has

legalized same sex marriage in New York, the church does not recognize those ceremonies. Yet officials with the Diocese of Syracuse say embracing gay men and women at a parish does not contradict church teaching.

"Our hope is that all parishes are so welcoming, and it's certainly in line with who we are as Catholics," said Danielle Cummings, a diocesan spokeswoman.

Paul Lawrence, 76, an All Saints

parishioner with a

gay son, said family experience taught him a simple truth about the gay community:

"Once you meet these folks, you wouldn't say they were gay or not gay," he said. "You'd just say they were awfully nice people."

Meg Ksander, a staff member at All Saints, said the journey toward the monument began last December, with a series of talks by parishioners who at some point felt excluded by the Catholic

Church. The congregation was especially moved by the stories of several gay men and women, who spoke of how they'd spent their lives feeling ostracized.

As a result, Ksander said a parish committee came up with the statement of affirmation — and with the idea of a statue.

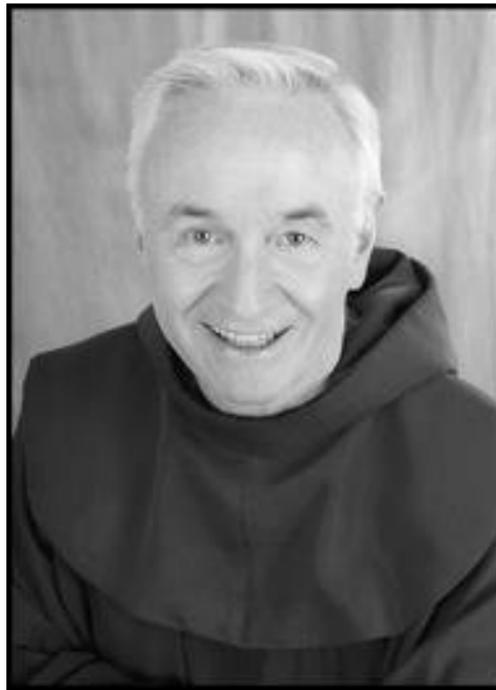
"The parishioners were talking about how our young gay folk so often had no role models until recently, and (we) saw Mychal Judge as both an interesting person and the ultimate example of a role model," said Daley, now seven years beyond his own decision to reveal that he was gay. He went public as a means of support for young people struggling with their own identity, he said, and to underline that gay priests are not the cause of the child abuse scandal in the church.

While he knows his story undoubtedly draws some gay parishioners to All Saints, he maintains the central factor is the open nature of the congregation.

"I was a Buddhist for many years, and now I'm a returning Catholic, and that's because of the message of (All Saints) which is so pure, so beautiful, so tolerant and so spiritual in the grandest sense of the word," said Michele Mosca-Wells, a gay member of the parish. She's also moved by the plans to build a statue of Judge, who to her symbolizes the mission of the church:

"It's a wonderful affirmation," she said, "of being an authentic Catholic community that embraces all and loves all."

To help, contact the church by calling 472-9934 or by writing Rev. Fred Daley, the pastor, at 1340 Lancaster Ave., Syracuse, 13210. †



Father Mychal Judge, OFM

Satan may cause homosexuality, writes Catholic official

By Becky Garrison
www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/on-faith/
November 3, 2011

According to multiple press reports, *The Boston Pilot*, the oldest Roman Catholic newspaper in the country, apologized and retracted an opinion column written by Daniel Avila, policy advisor for Marriage and Family at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) suggesting the devil may be responsible for same-sex attraction.

In Avila's apology, he admitted "his column does not represent the position of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the column was not authorized for publication as is required policy for staff of the USCCB." Furthermore, he professes, "The church opposes, as I do too, all unjust discrimination and the violence against persons that unjust discrimination inspires. I deeply apologize for the hurt and confusion that this column has caused."

The Rev. James Martin, S.J., culture editor for *America* magazine, welcomed Avila's apology but also commented on the original article: "Clearly Satan does not cause people to be gay, any more than Satan causes people to be straight. God creates gays and lesbians, men and women who should be loved for who they are." Here Martin draws upon the Catechism of the Catholic Church which states that "(homosexuals) must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided."

When asked about Avila's column,

GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) stated, "The retraction of Daniel Avila's column is in line with the majority of American Catholics who are supportive of their gay and lesbian family, friends, and neighbors. We hope in the future that the Archdiocese will further messages of love and support for all members of the Church instead of such false and alienating statements." Joseph Ward, Director, Believe Out Loud, a Christian LGBT advocacy group, adds how these comments made by an employee of the Catholic hierarchy "underscores the

disconnect prevalent between the Catholic hierarchy and the Catholic community on LGBT issues."

Bryan Cones, Managing Editor, *U.S. Catholic* magazine expounds on how Avila's position within the USCCB impacts the spiritual health of LGBT Christians:

"Gay, lesbian, and bisexual Christians have long complained of the spiritual violence' done to them by traditional Christian attitudes toward homosexuality. The ideas expressed by Avila are justly described as spiritual violence because they call into question the fun-

damental dignity of God's daughters and sons who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual. These women and men--many of whom are members of the church through their baptism--are no more in need of redemption than any other human being because of their sexual orientation, and it is time for the U.S. bishops to say so in unequivocal terms, especially now that one of their own employees has harmed lesbian, bisexual, and gay people in such a profound and shocking way."

Marianne Duddy-Burke, Executive Director of DignityUSA, the nation's oldest and largest organization of LGBT Catholics, expresses similar concerns that a man with such extreme beliefs remains an advisor to the U.S. bishops, and will still be permitted to write for the *Pilot*. According to Duddy-Burke, "This shows that Catholic officials are willing to go to extremes in their anti-gay campaign" adding that "the Archdiocese of Boston and the USCCB should immediately terminate their relationship with Mr. Avila."

Even though Avila regrets penning this column, there is little evidence that this is not part of a pattern of belief and behavior. Wayne Besen of Truth Wins Out describes Avila's "very aggressive and ambitious plans to use the Catholic Church to turn back the clock on LGBT equal rights." For example, when Besen attended the 2011 Values Voters Summit, he filmed a speech by Avila on his iPhone that he believes reveals a substantial campaign being organized on his part and seemingly on behalf of the Catholic Church. †

Avila Resigns

WashingtonPost.com
November 4, 2011

A policy adviser to the U.S. Catholic bishops' anti-gay-marriage initiative resigned on Friday (Nov. 4), a week after writing a column that blamed Satan for homosexuality.

Daniel Avila had been an on-staff adviser to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage since June.

Unofficially, Avila referred to himself as the "bishops' marriage guy" and represented the USCCB's

stance on marriage in Washington.

Avila also apologized in a statement on Wednesday. "The teaching of Sacred Scripture and of the Catechism of the Catholic Church make it clear that all persons are created in the image and likeness of God and have inviolable dignity," he said.

"I deeply apologize for the hurt and confusion that this column has caused," Avila added. Avila also said that his column did not reflect the opinion of the Catholic bishops and was not authorized before publication. The USCCB has not taken an official position on the causes of homosexuality, Walsh said. †

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

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

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

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Archbishop Nichols Criticized over Comments on Civil Unions

By Michael Sean Winters
Ncronline.org/blogs
December 7, 2011

Archbishop Vincent Nichols is being attacked by some conservative Catholics for remarks he made regarding civil unions for same-sex partners, according to a report at *Vatican Insider*.

This is silly. The Archbishop did not endorse civil unions, which are already the law of the land, but he insisted that they allow some of the objectives sought by those seeking same-sex marriage in the UK and are, in his estimation, a preferable alternative to changing the legal definition of marriage. More importantly, how is what Abp Nichols said different from what then-Abp, now Cardinal, William Levada endorsed when, as Abp of San Francisco, he worked out a compromise with the city government regarding the extension of health care and other benefits to same sex partners? Levada and the city agreed that those



Archbishop Vincent Nichols

who work at agencies that receive government funds can name anyone they want to receive benefits, provided that person lives with them legally. It can be an unemployed cousin, a retired aunt, or a same sex partner.

The beauty of this solution is that it allows the Church to avoid acting against any of its teachings. If Nevada had drawn a line in the sand and decided the archdiocese would not give health care benefits to anyone, that would have contradicted the Church's teaching that health care is a basic human right. And, the solution he worked out does not require the Church to acknowledge any relationships which it might find morally

objectionable. It was brilliant and, not unimportantly, theologically bullet-proof, signed off on at the time, and in subsequent iterations, by then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger.

What Nichols Said: Archbishop Praises Civil Unions

The Tablet
London, England
November 25, 2011

The Bishops of England and Wales believe civil partnerships successfully provide a legal protection for those in same-sex relationships, according to the Archbishop of Westminster.

"We would want to emphasise that civil partnerships actually provide a structure in which people of the same sex who want a lifelong relationship [and] a lifelong partnership can find their place and protection and legal provision," Archbishop Vincent Nichols said at a press conference after the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales meeting last week. ✦

The Loud Few and the Loving Many

By Michael O'Loughlin
AmericaMagazine.org/blog
November 4, 2011

I've read a couple different stories over the last few days that offer a glimpse into the polarization of the Catholic Church on certain issues, in this case homosexuality and the place of gay people in the Church.

First was the news that *The Pilot*, the newspaper of the Archdiocese of Boston, ran an opinion column in which Daniel Avila, an employee of the USCCB, said that homosexuality may well be the work of the devil. From the *SFGate*:

In the column, Avila says "the scientific evidence of how same-sex attraction most likely may be created provides a credible basis for a spiritual explanation that indicts the devil."

It also says "disruptive imbalances in nature that thwart encoded processes point to supernatural actors who, unlike God, do not have the good of persons at heart." It says that when "natural causes disturb otherwise typical biological development, leading to the personally unchosen beginnings of same-sex attraction, the ultimate responsibility, on a theological level, is and should be imputed to the evil one, not God."

Both Avila and *The Pilot* apologized for the column; *The Pilot* said the claim was contradictory to Church teaching and presented theological errors. Today, the USCCB said that it had accepted Avila's offer to resign.

Regardless of Avila's official employment status with the Catholic Church, it is clear that some within the Church still believe that gay men and women are demonic; are less than images of God; and are not worthy of the dignity that by the Church's own teachings should be afforded to all human beings. It is doubtful that Avila's views are unique to him.

Now contrast that with this story from the *Chicago Tribune* that profiles Anthony Alfano, the first openly gay student body president of DePaul University, the nation's largest Roman Catholic university. From the article:

When Alfano ran for student government president

last spring, he didn't make special note of being gay. His closest friends knew, and that seemed enough. Over the summer, though, he decided he owed it to other young gay people to be more candid, so he opened up in the student newspaper last week, despite worrying about how his candor might affect his conservative Catholic family.

"This story needs to be shared," he said. "It's for the gay youth, especially those thinking about taking their lives. I want to let them know I'm in a position of influence at a Catholic university, the largest Catholic university in the country, and I have all this support. I want to tell them, 'You can come out too.'"

Alfano, of course, has his detractors, but he says that his experience has been overwhelmingly positive, with support from the University community. It is a credit to Catholic universities in the US, beacons of hope for Catholics here, that DePaul released this statement:

"Anthony is a remarkable young man and student leader," said an official DePaul statement, "and we hope that his candor helps other young people facing these issues to feel comfortable discussing their orientation with family and friends."

The Catholic Church in the US is a big tent if there ever were one, so it is not surprising that the range of opinions on certain subjects is wide. These two anecdotes offer a glimpse into that range. Though it would be naive to use them to make too large a claim, it is hopeful that the individuals involved in the DePaul story represent the generation that will supplant those involved in the first episode.

Taken together, these two stories represent my own experience in the Church. There are the few who readily denounce those who are different from the norm. But alongside those individuals are the many who stand ready to welcome people where they are, to affirm their gifts, and to walk alongside them without judgement or callousness. Sadly it seems that the few have the loudest mics available to them. But when I search just a bit, it's not too difficult to find the many, and that is where the Church truly lives. ✦

See related stories, pages 1 and 5.

Conversation on sexuality begins

Though some note missing voices, first session draws praise

By Alice Popovici
Ncronline.org
September 27, 2011

NEW YORK -- One night during Holy Week last year, Kate Henley Averett was too upset to sleep, so she sat at her computer and wrote what she calls her "breakup letter with the Catholic church." It began: "My heart is so heavy right now I'd swear it was causing serious damage to my other internal organs. I feel like I can't quite catch my breath. It's not quite that I can't breathe, but that I can't seem to be able to breathe deeply enough -- like if I could just get one giant gulp of air in my body, it would feel better, normal, not so tight, not so heavy. Do Catholics who leave the church always feel like this?"

She wrote about the teachings that inspired her and about the hierarchy's cover-up of priests' abuses, and about feeling worn down. "I no longer look to the church and see any of my values, my priorities, my convictions reflected back at me," she wrote. "This place has become too foreign to me, and I can no longer call it home." Averett said she sent the letter off immediately that night, without editing a word, in an e-mail to a few people who were important to her.

On Sept. 16, she read it to a couple hundred people gathered at Fordham University's Lincoln Center campus in New York for a conference titled "Learning to Listen: Voices of Sexual Diversity and the Catholic Church." It was the first of a four-part series of conferences meant to expand the conversation on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues within the Catholic church, to bring more voices out into the open so the conversation becomes, like the title of the series, "More Than a Monologue" -- "monologue" referring to the voice and perspective of the Catholic church. (More details are available at www.morethanamonologue.org.)

"I can't pinpoint in my memory the

specific first time I learned that being gay was not OK, or even when I learned what being gay was, but I can tell you thousands of stories about learning that heterosexuality was right. About all the emphasis on marriage," said Averett, who is 29 and studying for her doctorate in sociology at the University of Texas in Austin. "It wasn't about being told, 'You're wrong and you're bad,' but about being told what is right and what is good, and not feeling like I fit into that."

Hilary Howes, a 56-year-old event designer and transgender activist from Washington, D.C., who said she was born "with male genitalia and a female brain," talked about the unique position of transsexual people who are Catholic. Howes "transitioned to live as a woman" through a sex-change operation 16 years ago, and was baptized and confirmed in a Catholic marriage of 33 years, to the most understanding woman in the world -- making ours one of the few same-sex marriages affirmed by the Roman Catholic church," Howes continued, drawing laughs from the audience. (A 2003 *Catholic News Service* article, discussing a secret Vatican document on the matter, said that the church may continue to recognize a marriage even after one of the partners has a sex-change operation. To read the article, visit the *NCR* Web site: NCRonline.org/node/26662.)

The stories came from other vantage points as well. Eve Tushnet, a D.C.-based writer who called herself "openly gay and faithfully Catholic" talked about

the decision she made in 1998 to lead a life of celibacy in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic church.

Deb Word of Memphis, Tenn., talked about her gay son, who "is Catholic in a way that doesn't let the church get in the way," and about volunteering at a shelter for gay and lesbian teens,



Audience members talk during a break at the "Learning to Listen: Voices of Sexual Diversity and the Catholic Church" conference at Fordham University in New York Sept. 16

who wouldn't be safe in city shelters. Fr. John Duffell, of New York City's Church of the Ascension, said he believes "the church is perhaps the only way of affecting change in the world," but he added: "The church is not perfect." To an audience member who asked, in writing, how he should deal with the feeling that

he is "broken" after being told he cannot enter the priesthood because he is gay, Duffell answered: "You're not broken, the system is broken, and therefore you deal with it as a broken system; you lie."

A few audience members posted updates, questions and criticism on Twitter, under the hashtag #mtam2011. "Interesting start. But where are the collars? Is a convo between the marginalized moving the ball forward?" asked LLebrija.

According to New Ways Ministry: "Fr. Duffell: as a way of welcome, he frequently mentions sexual orientation in homilies. Response to him is positive."

From Paul Snatchko: "Spoke with a @Fordham senior during reception at #mtam2011. He made a good point: there are no undergraduate voices on any of the panels."

Snatchko later tweeted: "The evening panel at #mtam2011 also has no conservative voices. All speakers in agreement. What happened to having a

conversation?"

Joe Moreshead, a 20-year-old philosophy student at Fordham who is considering entering the priesthood, said he was surprised by the direction of the conversations. "I expected it to be a discussion of church teaching, but instead it kind of assumed that church teaching was wrong -- and I wasn't expecting that," he said. "I didn't agree with a lot of their [panelists'] conclusions, but I was impressed with its thoughtfulness."

Overall, audience members -- including theology students, retirees and others mingling at a reception before the evening panel -- praised the event.

"It's very encouraging to me because it's coming from an institution of higher learning," said 82-year-old Erma Durkin of Maryland. "The church better start catching up with them."

Bill, a 77-year-old retired naval officer from New Jersey, said the event was "a great eye-opener," and added: "I get a certain consolation from realizing that there were a lot of people growing up as I did, with the same problems, the same uncertainty, the same pain." Bill, who attended with his partner, asked to be identified only by first name because some family members don't know he is gay.

Fordham theology professor Christine Firer Hinze, a member of the faculty planning committee who organized the conference, estimated that about 400 people filtered in and out of the auditorium throughout the day, including a few Catholic priests. She said the panelists were not "a perfect representation of everyone in the church," but that "our approach to this was that the Catholic church teaching is the context for this whole conversation."

"What was very striking to me and moving," Hinze said, "was the love for the Catholic church that came through in all the voices." †

Upon Return From Vatican, Mexican Bishop Vows To Continue Gay Outreach

Ontopmag.com
September 12, 2011

Raul Vera Lopez, the Catholic bishop of Saltillo, Mexico has vowed to continue his outreach to the gay community.

The Vatican had summoned the bishop to Rome to inquire about a gay-inclusive group of Catholics headed by Noe Ruiz.

Vera publicly affiliated his diocese with the group and sponsored its film festivals, which lead to harsh criticism from the Peru-based Catholic news agency, *ACI Prensa*.

Vera told *El Universal* on Sunday that the Vatican had not reprimanded him.

"It is no surprise that the Church supports sexual diversity because there are at least 50 dioceses in the United States serving gay communities," Vera said.

He said that Vatican officials simply made observations about his work, but the bishop did not elaborate.

"I will not abandon these children," he added, referring to children with gay parents. "We cannot abandon people who depend on us."

Earlier, Vera chided *ACI Prensa*, which had claimed Vera supported groups that advocate for marriage between members of the same sex and abortion.

"In the Diocese of Saltillo, we have very clear objectives," Vera told the *Zo-*



Bishop Raul Vera

calo Saltillo. "We work with [the gay community] to help them recover their human dignity, which is frequently attacked at home and in society, and they are treated like filthy people."

"Some would like to weaken my work on behalf of vulnerable groups, that is what they want, but I'm going to go ahead in the struggle for human dignity which is the principle of the Gospel," he added. †

New Blog Traces Ups and Downs of LGBT People and Catholic Church

MOUNT RAINIER, Maryland--A new blog, focused on a positive Catholic approach to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) issues has been started by New Ways Ministry, a 34-year-old national Catholic ministry of justice and reconciliation which works at building bridges between the LGBT community and the Catholic Church.

Entitled *Bondings 2.0* and found at www.NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com, the site strives to provide up-to-the minute information, opinions, and reflections for people interested in the intersection of Catholicism with sexual and gender minorities.

"News about the Catholic Church and LGBT issues is happening almost every day," said Francis DeBernardo, New Ways Ministry Executive Director and blog editor. "Catholics are making an important difference in so many LGBT discussions both in the church and in greater society. They need to have access to information at their fingertips immediately."

"Because the blog is interactive, we are able to have a conversation with our constituents and supporters," DeBernardo added. "We can all learn from each other. We hope to make this blog a community for Catholics interested in advancing the discussion of LGBT issues."

The blog, which is updated daily, has already garnered some attention from postings about the Catholicity of Hilary

Clinton's Human Rights Day Address on LGBT issues (see page 10), the controversy brewing in the United Kingdom and Australia as Catholic bishops there break rank with the Vatican and support civil unions for lesbian/gay couples, the discussion in the U.S. surrounding religious liberty and marriage equality, and even a popular post which views the Catholic feast of the Immaculate Conception through the lens of gay spirituality. Additionally, the blog has started a feature entitled "ALL ARE WELCOME," a series of posts focusing on developing Catholic parishes, schools, and colleges as gay-friendly institutions.

The blog title, *Bondings 2.0*, is an allusion to New Ways Ministry's tabloid newsletter, *Bondings*, which has been published continuously since 1978. The title was given to that newsletter to emphasize that the work of the organization was to strengthen the "bond" between the lesbian/gay community and the Catholic Church. "We named the blog *Bondings 2.0* to signal that we are maintaining the same tradition as our printed newsletter, though now in a more 21st century communication format. '2.0' is computer-speak for a new version," DeBernardo explained.

To receive email notices about blog updates, go to NewWaysMinistry-Blog.wordpress.com and click the "Follow" button in the first box of the top right column. †

\$1 million gift for Georgetown University LGBTQ center

By Lou Chibbaro, Jr.
Washingtonblade.com
October 31, 2011

Former NFL Commissioner Paul J. Tagliabue and his wife, Chandler Tagliabue, have donated \$1 million to Georgetown University for the creation of a new program to assist LGBT students.

In a statement released on Oct. 26, the university said the gift will establish the Tagliabue Initiative for LGBT Life: Fostering Formation and Transformation, which will be overseen by Georgetown University's LGBTQ Resource Center.

The LGBTQ Resource Center, the first such center at a Catholic university, opened on the Georgetown campus in 2008.

"The Center is inspired by Catholic and Jesuit principles of respect for the dignity of all and education of the whole

person, and we are very pleased to support its services that provide a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for LGBTQ students and promote their acceptance in the entire campus community," the Tagliabues said in the statement.

The \$1 million gift for the LGBT student life initiative is part of an overall \$5 million donation the Tagliabues made to Georgetown University that will fund other university programs such as undergraduate scholarships, including athletic scholarships.

Sivagami Shiva Subbaraman, director of Georgetown's LGBTQ Resource Center, called the Tagliabues' gift "exciting and wonderful news"



Flanking Sivagami Subbaraman, director of Georgetown's LGBTQ Resource Center, are donors, Chandler and Paul Tagliabue.

and said it would have a beneficial impact on LGBT-related programs and centers at colleges across the country, especially other religious institutions.

"To have someone of Paul Tagliabue's stature and reputation make this commitment is a huge validation and endorsement of the necessity, value, and importance of the work we do," Subbaraman told the *Blade*. "Paul and Chan's generosity – their courage and vision – sets an incredible example of the importance of our allies," she said. "Given his stature in the world of athletics, this is even more powerful."

Subbaraman said that similar to the LGBTQ Center's current programs, the new initiative funded by the Tagliabues will operate under the supervision of the university's Vice President of Student Affairs. She said the center's work is carried out "consistent with, observant of, Jesuit values and principles of education" and in collaboration with the university's Office of Mission and Ministry.

She said details of the new initiative will be worked out over the next several months but that she envisions "some form of a hybrid academic/student life program."

In collaboration with their gay son, Drew Tagliabue, Paul and Chan Tagliabue have also been supportive of the organization Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), according to PFLAG officials. Liz Owen, communications director for PFLAG's national office in Washington, said the Metro D.C. PFLAG chapter honored the Tagliabues in 2009 with its Spotlight Award recognizing their support for the group. †

Gay-friendly Catholic Colleges and Universities

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



Alabama

Mobile: Spring Hill College

California

Belmont: Notre Dame de Namur University

Goleta: St. Mark's University

Los Angeles: Loyola Marymount University, Mount Saint Mary's College

Moraga: St. Mary's College

Ranchos Palos Verde: Marymount College

San Diego: University of San Diego

San Francisco: University of San Francisco

Santa Clara: Santa Clara University

Colorado

Denver: Regis University

Connecticut

Fairfield: Fairfield University,

Sacred Heart University

New Haven: Albertus Magnus College

West Hartford: Saint Joseph College

District of Columbia

Georgetown University, Trinity University

Florida

Miami Gardens: St. Thomas University

Miami Shores: Barry University

Hawaii

Honolulu: Chaminade University

Illinois

Chicago: DePaul University,

Loyola University, St. Xavier University

Joliet: University of St. Francis

River Forest: Dominican University in Illinois

Romeoville: Lewis University

Indiana

Notre Dame: Holy Cross College, St. Mary's

College, University of Notre Dame

Iowa

Davenport: St. Ambrose University

Dubuque: Loras College

Kentucky

Louisville: Spalding University, Bellarmine University

Louisiana

New Orleans: Loyola University

Maryland

Baltimore: College of Notre Dame of Maryland, Loyola College of Maryland

Massachusetts

Boston: Emmanuel College, Boston College

Chestnut Hill: Boston College

Chicopee: Elms College

Easton: Stonehill College

North Andover: Merrimack College

Weston: Regis College

Worcester: Assumption College, College of the Holy Cross

Michigan

Detroit: University of Detroit Mercy

Grand Rapids: Aquinas College

Minnesota

Collegeville: St. John's University

Duluth: College of St. Scholastica

Minneapolis: College of St. Catherine

St. Joseph: College of Saint Benedict

St. Paul: St. Thomas University

Winona: St. Mary's University of Minnesota

Missouri

Kansas City: Avila University,

Rockhurst University

St. Louis: Fontbonne University,

St. Louis University

Montana

Helena: Carroll College

Nebraska

Omaha: Creighton University

New Hampshire

Manchester: St. Anselm College

Nashua: Rivier College

New Jersey

Caldwell: Caldwell College

Jersey City: St. Peter's College

South Orange: Seton Hall

New York

Albany: College of Saint Rose

Brooklyn and Patchogue:

St. Joseph College

Bronx: Fordham University,

Manhattan College

Buffalo: Canisius College

Loudonville: Sienna College

New Rochelle: College of New Rochelle,

Iona College

Poughkeepsie: Marist College

Riverdale: College of Mount St. Vincent

Rochester: Nazareth College of Rochester,

St. John Fisher College

St. Bonaventure: St. Bonaventure University

Sparkill: St. Thomas Aquinas College

Syracuse: LeMoyné College

Queens: St. John's University

Ohio

Cincinnati: Xavier University

Cleveland Heights: John Carroll University

Dayton: University of Dayton

Pepper Pike: Ursuline College

South Euclid: Notre Dame College

Sylvania: Lourdes College

Oregon

Marylhurst: Marylhurst University

Portland: University of Portland

Pennsylvania

Cresson: Mount Aloysius College

Dallas: Misericordia University

Erie: Mercyhurst College

Greensburg: Seton Hill University

Philadelphia: Chestnut Hill College,

LaSalle University, St. Joseph's University

Pittsburgh: Carlow University,

Duquesne University

Radnor: Cabrini College

Reading: Alvernia University

Scranton: Marywood University

Villanova: Villanova University

Rhode Island

Newport: Salve Regina University

Providence: Providence College

Texas

Austin: Saint Edward's University

San Antonio: University of the Incarnate

Word,

Our Lady of the Lake University

Vermont

Colchester: Saint Michael's College

Washington

Lacey: St. Martin's College

Seattle: Seattle University

Spokane: Gonzaga University

West Virginia

Wheeling: Wheeling Jesuit University

Wisconsin

De Pere: St. Norbert College

Madison: Edgewood College

Milwaukee: Alverno College,

Cardinal Stritch University,

Marquette University

Canada

Toronto: Regis College

Queer on Campus

(Continued from page 12)

versity of San Diego in 2001, McGuire wondered just how revealing she could be about her sexuality.

"I had my doubts and I believed I probably needed to stay in the closet because it was a Catholic university," she said.

Having grown up in a strong Catholic family in Buffalo, N.Y., Ms. McGuire had long struggled to find a venue in which she could talk about the issue of sexuality and Catholicism with the help of a support group.

After coming to USF, things began to change for the better. McGuire and a group of 12 USF faculty members formed a caucus to aid LGBTQ members in their quest to "form an adult relationship with the Church."

"When I visit other Catholic campuses, they have trouble talking about their sexuality," said McGuire. "Here, I think we [USF] are starting to do a better job of reconciling both religion and sexuality."

Nevertheless, the push to incorporate the LGBTQ community at USF has been gradual, and in the eyes of some students at the roundtable, not committed enough.

Andy Berlin, a Theology major, had been skeptical of the acceptance of St. Ignatius Church toward gay members of the community. For Berlin, the "juxtaposition" between the conservative stance of many Catholic Churches and the activism college students showed against Proposition 8 was one he thought couldn't coexist.

Despite the issue of St. Ignatius, however, Berlin, who was raised by a single, lesbian, Catholic mother, has found the University and the classroom to be accepting of the LGBTQ lifestyle. According to Berlin, for some the idea of a gay Theology major seems incompatible.

"Coming to this university, I've rediscovered an appreciation for my faith," said Berlin. "I actually feel the Theology major has the most queer-friendly staff." †

DePaul SGA president speaks on coming out, feels right at home

By Natalia Hernandez
DePauliaOnline.com
October 24, 2011

Anthony Alfano, the president of the Student Government Association (SGA) drew in a long sip from his water bottle. He twisted his head to the ceiling and closed his brown eyes. For a second, he was silent. Anthony smiled and with confidence said, "I came out on October 4th, 2008, at a freshman retreat called 'Escape.'"

Alfano is the first openly gay president of SGA at DePaul, a 113-year-old Catholic institution.

"Coming out and being in the position that I am, I think it's super important that students who either identify that way, or don't, hear this story," he said.

As a senior, double majoring in political science and international studies, Alfano described his newly acquired position at SGA as a full-time job.

But being in a position of power for Alfano means leading by example and inspiring the LGBT community in light of its recent spikes in high suicide rates.

"Being that this is a religious-based

institution, I think it's awesome that they offer so much for gay students. I specifically picked DePaul because of its diversity," he said. "For me, diversity wasn't just various shades of skin or ethnicities but diversity in a sense that everyone has different experiences than me or even different views on life."

"You can be in a position of power and people can respect you. You can be an influence in the world and it really does 'get better.'"

Alfano says he is adamant about improving the conditions of the university when it comes to diversity, awareness and seeking a better environment for individuals who are not allotted the same opportunities as other students.



SGA President Anthony Alfano poses with Vice President Kendall Raymond. Alfano is the first openly gay president of Student Government Association at DePaul University, the nation's largest Catholic university.

Rev. Dennis Holt-schneider, C.M., President of DePaul University, said, "Good for him. Anthony is a fine young man and very effective SGA president. We're proud that he's part of the DePaul family."

Alfano personally sits in on every major committee within the university. He is the only student representation in the Strategic Resource Allocation Committee (SRAC)

where nine voting members draw up the year's budget with students' tuition dollars.

"We do everything you can think of that's advocating on students behalf. Whether it's something with tuition or the budgeting, whether it's new policy that's going to be implemented, it's anything with facilities, any-

thing with the provost resigning; we are in every one of those conversations."

Alfano is working on behalf of students like sophomore Khloe Battle.

"I don't feel that DePaul allows the same benefits concerning race," she said. "Being that I am an African-American, I feel that there should be a stronger sense of community for 'us,' but there isn't. DePaul touches organizations like BSU with a 10-foot pole. I say this to mean (and this is my opinion), that DePaul is mildly interested in our culture."

Alfano hopes to pass an initiative that would allow him to implement a health and wellness office that would be a haven that would serve a wide variety of students' concerns while promoting education and access to resources.

"I think a year definitely gives me a chance to really start a huge conversation around issues that the university may be afraid of taking," he said.

"I work for students, so I can't get fired. If you don't like something at your school that you're paying all this money for, let us know, because we can try and help change that for you." †

Decade after defiance, Jeannine Gramick as hopeful as ever

By Jamie L Manson
Ncronline.org
July 11, 2011

It's been more than a decade since the Vatican attempted to silence Sr. Jeannine Gramick and Fr. Robert Nugent from their work with gay and lesbian Catholics.

Though Nugent agreed in 2000 to abide by the church's prohibition on speaking and writing about homosexuality, Gramick politely declined. In a statement that has become a mantra for many Catholics who seek reforms in the institutional church, Gramick responded, "I choose not to collaborate in my own oppression."

A newspaper story about her struggle with the Vatican caught the eye of a straight, feminist, New York filmmaker. Barbara Rick, herself a lapsed Catholic, was stunned by the nun's courageous story of defiance. "A woman standing up to the church really got to me," she told the audience.

Rick's nonprofit documentary company, Out of the Blue Films, is "devoted to exceptional storytelling that explores, articulates, and celebrates humanity." Like a true documentarian, she saw film in Gramick's story.

Four years later, *In Good Conscience: Sister Jeannine's Journey of Faith* premiered at Lincoln Center as part of the 2004 Independents Night series.

Gramick and Rick reunited in Manhattan during New York City's Pride Week this year in a program titled "Clips and Conversation," hosted by the Strand, a legendary independent book store in the heart of Union Square. Seeing the chemistry between the pair, with their equal wit and passion for justice, it is little wonder they were able to create a film that is as humorous and playful as it is moving and inspiring.

Rick recounted the story of bringing aboard Albert Maysles, considered by many the "dean of documentary filmmaking," to shoot the film. During a meeting with Maysles, Rick ran through a bunch of ideas for film projects. Gramick's story made him sit up in his seat and ask eagerly, "Do you have anyone to shoot it?"

Grasping Maysles attention was no small feat given that his works include the cult classic *Grey Gardens*, a riveting portrait of an eccentric mother and daughter secluded in a deteriorating mansion, and *Gimme Shelter*, a profile of the

Rolling Stones widely considered one of the greatest rock and roll movies.

With Maysles behind the camera, Rick followed Gramick for over two years. They shot some candid, amusing scenes, like Gramick's morning exercise regimen and her friend's poking fun at her new, "poofy" hairdo. But they also captured compelling moments, like when Gramick encounters anti-gay protestors on a picket line during the U.S. bishops' 2002 meeting in Dallas.

The picket line scene is the most popular episode in the movie, Rick told the audience at the Strand. It's also a scene that almost didn't happen.

"I didn't want to go talk to the protestors...I don't like conflict," Gramick laughingly admitted. But Rick knew well that all films need tension, so she sent Gramick over to talk with a particularly impassioned picketer. Her good direction proved to be revelatory.

Gramick approaches the man, named Michael, who is protesting gay priests, and tries to converse with him. At first, he is belligerent, insisting that there is an underground gay agenda ruining the priesthood. Gramick, seemingly with little effort, interacts with Michael at a human level.

After they talk for a while, he realizes that he is speaking to Sister Gramick, a woman he asked his bishop to remove from diocesan property years ago when she offered a retreat to parents of gays and lesbians. A flash of sorrow runs across his face as Gramick gently tells him how much that action hurt the families.

Though they ultimately cannot agree on their beliefs about homosexuality, they are able to hold hands and pray the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be to God. Maysles positions the camera per-

fectly so that their hands were in the center of the frame.

The scene captures a living example of the beatitudes. Watching Gramick engage the protestor, one understands how blessed peacemakers truly are. Their joined hands brilliantly exemplify why Jesus asks us to love our enemies and



Barbara Rick and Sr. Jeannine Gramick speak during a session at New York's Strand bookstore June 22, 2011.

pray for those who persecute us. With her patience, Gramick finds compassion for this man and together they are able to find mutual respect for their mutual love of the Church.

For Gramick, the scene shows how crucial it is to establish a personal connection with our "opponents" before engaging in heavy intellectual disagreements with them. It is an opportunity increasingly lost in our virtual age where detractors can viciously attack one another anonymously, for all web surfers to read.

Reflecting on the clip of this scene, Rick still seemed struck by the power of its example: "Until Sister Jeannine, I have never met anyone who is able to get this positive message across and follow her conscience and what she believes in without rancor... To do this work without any venom...it's pretty close to Jesus."

For Gramick it is rancor that separates the holy anger of a prophet from destructive anger.

"Anger that eats you up inside and makes you feel badly about yourself and the person you're angry at," she says, is unhealthy for the spirit. "But anger that makes you want to do something positive, anger that 'puts gas in your tank' is the type of anger that leads to justice."

Though the film centers on Gramick's defiance of the Church's edict, she believes it's time to move beyond negative terms when we talk about

our conscientious objections to church authorities.

"It's following the call of God," she says. "It's thinking, studying, praying, in order to come to a decision which may or not be what a moral authority teaches. It's a positive thing. It's obedience to the Spirit."

While she maintains a remarkably hopeful disposition toward the institutional church, Gramick isn't unrealistic. When asked by an audience member whether she thought a greater acceptance of gays and lesbians by the hierarchy was on the horizon, Gramick said that she believes change will happen because change is part of church history.

"But because I know church history, I know change takes centuries," she says.

Of course, she cannot leave that thought without a positive spin.

"We are planting seeds for change at the upper level of leadership," she said. Gramick reminded her listeners that before Vatican II, scholars and liturgists spent years laying the groundwork for the reforms brought about by the Council. Vatican II, she said, was "more evolutionary than revolutionary."

Gramick is also honest about the fears plaguing the laity when faced with challenging the clergy: "It's hard to go against those we have been trained to think are 'the experts.' But we have to learn to trust God within us."

As greater numbers of lay people discover the courage of their convictions, the church will continue to change because "the church" is the people of God.

"When we started this work, only 20 percent of Catholics believed in equal rights for gays and lesbians," Gramick said. "Now it's over 73 percent. . . . The church is moving."

So, these days, when Gramick is asked what the church believes, she always tells the person what the majority of the members of the Catholic community believe, rather than the teachings of the hierarchy.

For Gramick, it is more important than ever that the laity exercise their consciences because that is what truly leads to change.

Harkening back to her film's title, she reminded the audience, "That's what conscience is. It's the voice of God speaking in our hearts. We need to trust that and not separate ourselves from the spiritual treasures of the church. That's our spiritual heritage." †

My path to reconciling Catholic faith and homosexuality

By Teri Guelcher
www.pennlive.com
Mechanicsburg, PA
July 17, 2011

While reading *The Patriot-News* opinion page on June 30 with an editorial and cartoon on gay marriage, I literally felt the "wind go out of my sails" on this journey I'm making through life.

You see, I grew up a Catholic, one of nine children, the oldest actually. My husband and I have been married for 40 years and yep, you guessed it, it hasn't always been easy, but with the love and support of family and good friends we've managed to raise four terrific children, three sons and one daughter and now have six beautiful grandchildren. It's all been pretty amazing, and our love grows deeper and more meaningful with each passing year.

I've worked and volunteered on behalf of my church, teaching religious education, conducting and assisting on retreats for Catholic teens. I've taught in Catholic grade schools, my husband and I have guided young couples on their path to marriage and I've been a lector and parish council member, logging thousands of hours on behalf of my faith and my church. You see I have always loved my church, and my faith is a huge part of who I am.

It breaks my heart in a way that cannot be repaired to continue to see the leadership of our Catholic Church and many other traditional churches deny gay

people the dignity and respect that I believe in my heart Jesus would give them unconditionally.

You know how they say "the straw that broke the camel's back." I think this straw has broken my back and also my spirit.

Everything I believe about the teachings of Jesus and the way he wanted us to treat people seems a complete contradiction to what I hear the Catholic Church leadership say about gay people.

It's certainly not what I feel most Catholics believe or support. I guess this is where faith and religion meet a "fork in the road" and choices must be made, and I already believe "they will make the difference" at least for this believer.

Jesus showed us over and over the difference between "the letter of the law" and "the spirit of the law." He called the Pharisees "whitened sepulchers." He told us "I give you a new commandment that you love one another as I have loved you."

He openly and honestly loved Samaritans, lepers, women, tax collectors and all the marginalized people of his time. There are thousands of straight couples who couldn't even come close to the love, commitment and faithfulness lived every day by many of the gay couples my husband and I have known.

The reason those newspaper pieces bothered me so much and why I just couldn't keep silent anymore is because through our years as a married couple we have had the support and example of

several committed and loving gay couples in our lives who have served as role models for us.

These couples have taught us about

"Every person is a child of God and every person whether gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual or transgendered has a meaningful and world-enriching purpose in the plan of God."

loving selflessly, about being a good and caring parent, about sharing their talents and gifts in service to their communities and finally they have showed us how to be faithful and committed companions with the person you love on life's journey.

My best friend from college and the maid of honor in our wedding 40 years ago is a gay woman committed to her partner for more than 25 years and cur-

rently helping the person she loves battle cancer.

My brother and his partner have been committed lovingly to each other for almost 30 years and have been a constant support and example to everyone in our family and in their community. They are two of the most caring and selfless men I have ever known.

This past spring they were asked by our daughter and her husband to be the godfathers for their little girl and they proudly accepted.

The Lutheran Church where she was baptized welcomed them with open arms. This for me represents the true Christian love that Christ spoke of so many centuries ago and to me an example of how all churches and religious institutions should treat all people.

Those who condemn gays out of fear and ignorance haven't known or loved gay people on their life journey and yet they make judgments without true knowledge, and don't allow themselves to love as Jesus would have all of us love our fellow human beings.

As a society we deprive ourselves in a way that cannot be measured when we refuse to accept and honor the gifts, talents and potential for good in every single citizen.

Every person is a child of God and every person whether gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual or transgendered has a meaningful and world-enriching purpose in the plan of God. ✦

DignityUSA convention 2011: A show of fidelity

By Tom Roberts
nronline.org/blogs/ncr-today
July 7, 2011

Much has been made in recent months of the enormous drain of members from the Roman Catholic Church in the United States in recent decades. The estimated 28 million who have left for an array of reasons would constitute, taken together, the second largest denomination in the country after Catholics who remain.

That statistic occurred to me last Saturday as I sat as one of four panelists during a segment of DignityUSA's 20th national convention in Washington. Dignity is the major organization of Catholic lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Catholics as well as their friends, families and other allies.

During Independence Day weekend more than 300 gathered at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington for a convention headlined "Love Hopes All Things."

Hope, indeed, must be the motivation here. The massive number of ex-Catholics occurred to me as I sat on stage before the crowd while moderator Phil Donahue, a pioneer of the TV talk show format showed that he was yet a master of engaging a roomful of people in conversation. So many people leaving the church for so many reasons, and yet this band of the faithful, certainly representative of many more times those in the room and with more reason than most to leave, refuse to go. Of course, their presence is more than a refusal to go. It is also a statement of affirmation, as the brochure said, of "the wholeness and holiness of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Catholics."

Donahue was quick to pick up on the paradox, a properly biblical one. Members of Dignity, those who persist in staying even as the church levels a cruellest cut at them – deeming homosexuals "disordered" – are the ones the bishops ought to be celebrating, he said.

I've often thought the same. If bishops want to understand fidelity to sacramental life, to the idea of community and

to the social justice tradition they really ought to engage in conversation with, not condemnations of, those in the Catholic LGBT community.

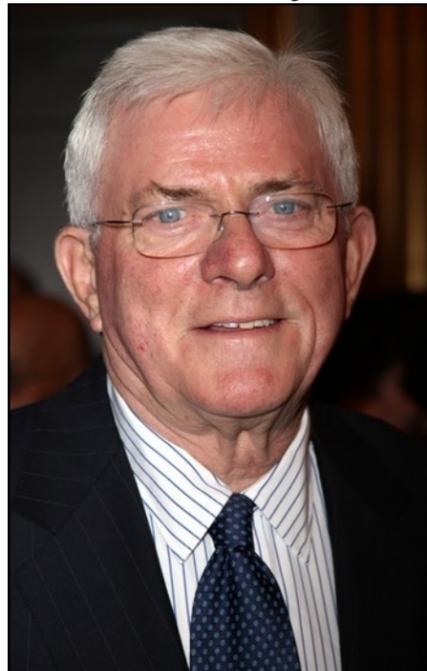
Among those in attendance was John McNeill, the former Jesuit who, as author of the groundbreaking *The Church and the Homosexual*, serves as the movement's theologian and who appeared on Donahue's show shortly after the book was published in 1976.

McNeill has lived through the waves of initial shock at his book, Vatican outrage, dismissal from his order and some of the ravages of time. He moves slowly now, in his 80s, with the aid of a cane and help from Charles Chiarelli, his partner of more than 40 years. He's become a revered wisdom figure among the LGBT community. I noted as part of a brief presentation (others onstage were psychoanalyst William Braun of New York, Sister of Loretto Sr. Jeannine Gramick, co-founder of New Ways Ministry, and Georgetown professor Joseph Palacios, co-founder of Catholics for Equality) an interview McNeill had done with NCR's Robert McClory in 2005.

At that time McNeill said he believed the "whole trajectory of the church is toward the era of the Spirit, when each will know the truth in his heart and there will be no need for extrinsic authority."

To place that in context, McNeill was referring to the teaching of Joachim of Flora, a 12th century visionary, who spoke of three periods of Christian history: that of the Old Testament, which he called the era of the Father; the second was that of the Son, or the period of the development of the institution church, and the coming era of the Holy Spirit.

"I think we're moving into that era," McNeill told McClory. Gays and lesbians are in the vanguard of that era, he suggested. "By being rejected by church leadership, gays and lesbians have had to ask God directly if they can live authentic Christian lives, and they are getting [positive] answers. They've come to see church teaching on homosexuality as destroying their self-image, so they've had to take direct access to God, based



Phil Donahue

on prayer, spirituality and freedom of conscience."

It would be a reasonable inference from that to see the LGBT community as one set apart and engaged in a kind of individualistic, perhaps congregational, approach to spirituality and Catholic life.

But Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of DignityUSA, said following the convention that there seemed to be a new conviction to "move outward, to take the firm conviction that we've all come to about the holiness and wholeness of LGBT people and witness to that in the public sphere," whether in church or the wider community.

She said the group also seemed intent on making greater connection with other individual Catholics and other movements, "at looking at all of our work through the lens of other justice issues – women's issues, immigration issues, ageism, class issues, racism."

In other words, she said, she sees local chapters connecting with other organizations in the church, partnering with people in parishes who find themselves marginalized in other ways – from women's issues to the matter of forced parish closings. She sees the LGBT community as part of what is emerging in the church. "It is all that same energy of the gospel," she said. "The life, death and Resurrection of Jesus is still important in our world. The model for how to make that alive is not coming in a satisfactory way from the hierarchy." Instead, she said, "people are putting their faith into action in ways that matter." ✦

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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 the 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, San Rafael, St. Jude Shrine
San Francisco: Most Holy Redeemer, Old St. Mary Cathedral, St. Agnes, St. Dominic
San Jose: St. Julie Billiart, St. Martin of Tours (Emmaus Community)
San Luis Obispo: Old Mission of San Luis Obispo
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 Stanford 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: Our Lady of Guadalupe, Sacred Heart
Denver: St. Dominic, Christ the King, Mount Carmel
Fort Collins: Blessed John XXIII
Genessee: St. Frances Cabrini Shrine

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 is known as welcoming to lesbian/gay Catholics, please let us know. Tell us if this welcome is because of a support program, spirituality group, mission statement, participation in gay community events, or involvement with parents. Parishes are listed first and intentional Eucharistic communities follow.

Highlands Ranch: Pax Christi
Littleton: Light of the World, St. Frances Cabrini

Connecticut
Hartford: St. Patrick-St. Anthony

Delaware
North Wilmington: Holy Child
Wilmington: St. Joseph

District of Columbia
 Holy Trinity, St. Aloysius, St. Matthew Cathedral

Florida
Cocoa Beach: Our Savior
Daytona Beach: Our Lady of Lourdes
Ft. Lauderdale: St. Anthony, St. Maurice
Naples: St. John the Evangelist
St. Petersburg: Holy Cross
Tampa: Sacred Heart, Christ the King

Georgia
Atlanta: Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

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 Mt. Carmel, Old St. Patrick
Clarendon Hills: Notre Dame
Country Club Hills: St. Emeric
Evanston: St. Nicholas
Johnston City: St. Paul
Morton Grove: St. Martha
Oak Park: Ascension, St. Catherine of Sienna-St. Lucy
Schaumburg: St. Marcelline

Indiana
Evansville: St. Mary
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. 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
Sharon: Our Lady of Sorrows
Springfield: Sacred Heart

Michigan
Ann Arbor: St. Mary Student Parish
Detroit: St. Leo, Christ the King
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. Francis Xavier, 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
Lawrenceville: St. Ann
Long Beach Island: St. Francis of Assisi
Maplewood: St. Joseph
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, Immaculate 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
Pittsford: Church of the 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
Wantagh: 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: Ascension of Our Lord, St. Malachi, St. Martha
Columbus: St. Thomas More Newman Center
Fairlawn: St. Hilary
Mentor: St. John Vianney
University Heights: Church of the 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, Downtown Chapel (St. Vincent de Paul)

Pennsylvania
Huntingdon: Most Holy Trinity
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
Plano: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

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
Pullman: Sacred Heart
Seattle: St. Benedict, 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

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Montreal: Holy Cross
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Growing up Catholic and gay in Minnesota

By Ron Bates
The Star Tribune
Minneapolis
August 31, 2011

Born in rural Minnesota and raised on a dairy farm, I grew up in a devout Catholic family.

While attending St. John's Prep School in Collegeville, I confessed to a priest that I was attracted to another boy who slept across from me. The priest responded that if I ever acted on that, I would go to hell.

As a sincere Catholic teen, I did not act on my attraction but started a harmful journey of self-loathing and personal destruction. I didn't know what "homosexual" or "gay" were, but I understand "queer" and thought it was evil and perverted.

I did not date girls in high school and dated only a couple in college. One of them became a good friend, so I did what all the rest in my family had done: I got married, the summer after graduating from college. I loved all my nieces and nephews and wanted to become a teacher and a father.

With a major in elementary education from St. Cloud State and later a master's as a reading specialist, I taught successfully for 40 years in public education in several Minnesota towns. My marriage never worked.

The sexuality was mostly repulsive, and that was communicated indirectly to

my ex-wife. That is the *most* unfair part. She was one of the innocent victims in the masquerade of "I'm straight."

For years and years, I would prostrate myself on the floor and ask God to change me. Maybe if I just pray more, fast more, do more "works of charity," the male attraction will go away.

After more than 30 years of trying to "burn" the evil out of me, I finally came out at age fifty four. God finally broke through to my heart of hearts and said, "I love you just as you are. You are praying for healing, but you are not sick!"

Our God does not change. God is God always. And God was with me always. After all the self-hatred and foibles of life, God was still there waiting for me.

At that moment, the shame and guilt I had felt for years left -- once and for always. If Pope Benedict had been standing right there to tell me I was "disordered," I would have said to him, "You are wrong. God made me and loves me just as I am."

When I got my annulment from the Catholic Church, I did research and

found that a surprising number of annulments granted are due to one of the partners being gay. Wouldn't it be better for the church to acknowledge that gay people exist and allow them to come out as



teenagers so straight-marriage statistics would improve?

Maybe if "Marriage Encounter" couples handled the pre-marriage classes that potential matrimony candidates have to take, many of the pitfalls of failed marriages could be avoided.

If there were an honest discussion about same-sex attraction issues, potential candidates could avoid disastrous marriages. Instead, the church uses men who have taken a vow of celibacy to conduct the classes.

Some of these men are closeted "gay" cases and/or are dysfunctional in the area of sexual development.

Why have Minnesota citizens bought into the extreme religious-right position on homosexuality?

People like U.S. Rep. and presidential candidate Michele Bachmann, whose husband still uses "reparative therapy" in his mental health clinic, have promulgated this thought. Let me quote what the American Medical Association says:

"RESOLVED, That the American Medical Association oppose any psychiatric treatment, such as reparative or conversion therapy which is based upon the assumption that homosexuality per se is a mental disorder or based upon the *a priori* assumption that the patient should change his/her homosexual orientation."

Do they think the American Medical Association doesn't know what it is talking about?

Please vote to defeat the gay marriage ban [on the ballot in Minnesota in 2012]. Don't continue to force young people into the closet of shame by telling them they have to change.

The truth is they can't. I could be the poster child to prove that. I

Ron Bates married his same-sex partner in Toronto in 2006. They live in Florida. ✦

Sacrificing children for Catholic identity

By Brian Cahill
Ncronline.org
August 5, 2011

For almost 10 years as the executive director of San Francisco Catholic Charities, I was directly involved in efforts to manage the tension between what our church teaches in the area of sexuality, and how we carried out our mission to serve the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalized.

We dealt with many challenges, but the most complex, significant and painful issue was same-sex adoption.

Catholic Charities provides a broad range of services to all in need regardless of their faith. Following the 1906 earthquake, finding adoptive homes for orphans was our first program.

For the last 40 years the focus of the Catholic Charities adoption program had been finding suitable placements for foster care children. In recent years we averaged 25 adoptions per year. Few same-sex couples applied, but when they did, we were pleased to work with them if they met the criteria.

We knew that of the 80,000 children in the California foster care system, half were waiting to be adopted. We also knew that the largest cohort of potential adoptive parents for these children were committed same-sex couples who wanted to create family. In the last five years of the program we had placed 136 children, 5 of them in the homes of gay and lesbian couples.

In early 2003, I received a letter from a parishioner questioning whether we were making same-sex placements. I drafted a response explaining the needs of hard-to-place foster children for qualified loving homes, and said we were guided not only by church teaching, but also by the best interests of the children we served and by state law prohibiting discrimination against prospective adoptive parents because of sexual orientation. I sent the draft letter to Archbishop William Levada, and after some minor edits, he approved the letter.

In June of 2003, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued an updated teaching on gay marriage. For

the first time, same-sex adoption was prohibited and same-sex adoptive parents were characterized as "doing violence" to children by adopting them. Archbishop Levada was a member of the Congregation at that time.

In his parish advisory of June 30, 2003, he only referenced the reiteration of church teaching on gay marriage and made no reference to adoption. From the point of my letter delineating our practice to his elevation as the head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the

I believe Catholic Charities manifests its Catholicism far better by using Mathew 25 as a guide rather than a destructive, irresponsible and un-Christ like Vatican promulgation.

Faith, he never directed me to change our practice regarding same sex adoption.

In late 2005, the *Boston Globe* reported that Boston Catholic Charities had been placing children with same-sex couples. In light of the Vatican directive, Boston decided to end their adoption program in early March 2006.

The *Boston Globe* began to look at San Francisco, and the archdiocesan director of communication alerted Archbishop Levada in Rome. He issued a statement which was released to the *Bos-*

ton Globe on March 9, 2006.

He acknowledged that I told him about three cases of hard-to-place children with same-sex couples. He stated "these placements involved prudential judgments about the needs of the children, the teachings of the Catholic church, and the overall policies of Catholic Charities."

He went on to state that since the 2003 Vatican statement, "it has been and remains my position that Catholic agencies should not place children in homosexual households." It appeared that Roman careerism had trumped pastoral sensitivity and child protection.

Our new Archbishop George Niederauer took a pastoral approach to this issue from the start. We met with the archbishop and his advisors to develop a strategy. We also drafted a joint statement acknowledging church teaching in this area and stating that we would review our adoption program to see how we could best continue to serve the needs of these vulnerable children.

Unfortunately, the archdiocesan communications director subsequently amended the statement to take a more orthodox position, and prematurely released it to the press. Our conflict became public. The real issue here was his desire to tell the world we were stopping these placements and our need to say we were not stopping them until we had an alternative in place.

The archbishop was not happy with either of us, but he was committed to creating an acceptable solution.

We reassured our government partners that we were working on a solution and did not intend to abandon these children. We created a work group of program staff, board members, health care ethicists and two highly qualified priest theologians. Our director of programs began to work with Family Builders, a local adoption agency with rich experience recruiting same-sex couples as adoptive parents. Family Builders also had developed a statewide adoption match Web site called California Kids' Connection. There was limited funding for the Web site, and as a result, county adoption agencies were not using it. Our

employees would transition over to Family Builders and staff the Web site. They would answer questions from prospective adoptive parents about specific children, and would help families find an adoption agency in their area so they could begin the adoption process.

Because they would not do specific matching or placing, our consulting theologians determined that for Catholic Charities there would be no formal cooperation with evil. While I didn't consider anything we were doing as evil, I understood the need to be clear that we were not in conflict with church teaching. I tried to ignore my disgust for this particular church teaching.

The archbishop approved the program and our board approved \$250,000 annually for the staff allocation and related costs. The workers on the Web site responded to more than 400 inquiries per month, resulting in 40 adoptions a year.

When the collaboration was announced, we had a positive response from our local government partners and from the secular press, but the reaction of the conservative Catholic press was scathing in its criticism and condemnation. In spite of the archbishop's support of the program, there was strong conservative pressure to end the program.

As the recession hit, the Catholic Charities budget deficit forced some painful choices. I retired at the end of 2008, the collaboration with Family Builders ended in 2009, and based on a poorly conceived, disrespectful and harshly written Roman policy, San Francisco Catholic Charities joined Boston, New York, Chicago, Washington and other dioceses abandoning a hundred-year tradition and thousands of needy children.

In a speech at the National Catholic Social Workers Conference, Archbishop Charles Chaput pushed the party line on Catholic identity, urging that Catholic social services must be "explicitly Catholic." I believe Catholic Charities manifests its Catholicism far better by using Mathew 25 as a guide rather than a destructive, irresponsible and un-Christ like Vatican promulgation.

Bad Faith: Catholic Hierarchy's Pointless Campaign Against LGBT Rights

By Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata
ReligionDispatches.org
August 3, 2011

In early July, Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles opposed a modest piece of legislation that requires schools in that state to include lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender people, and other previously excluded groups, in their social studies curricula.

The archbishop argued that he was merely supporting parents' rights to make decisions regarding their children's education. But Catholics who pay attention to our bishops' energetic campaign to thwart any legislation that legitimizes (or in this instance, even recognizes) same-gender attraction are familiar with this ruse.

Our hierarchy has a habit of invoking noble sounding principles but applying them only when they can be used against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

Cardinal Donald Wuerl of Washington did something similar last year when he announced that the legalization of same-sex marriage in the District of Columbia had forced him to stop offering health insurance to the spouses of new employees of Catholic Charities. The marriage equality law, he explained, would force him to extend benefits to gay and lesbian couples, and since this violated the church's teaching on marriage, he could not do it.

There is Sin, and then There's Gay Sin

To take this argument seriously, one has to overlook the fact that Catholic Charities already offered benefits to the spouses of employees who had not been married in the Catholic Church, or who had been remarried without benefit of an annulment. These are also clear violations of the Church's teaching on marriage. But Wuerl's harsh and unloving stance is typical of a hierarchy that behaves as though there is sin, and then there is gay sin—and gay sin is much

worse.

Catholics faithful to the scriptural admonition to love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly with their God, have become increasingly alienated by bishops who seem obsessed with pushing a narrow anti-gay agenda to the exclusion even of simple charity. Our bishops were in the small minority of religious leaders who failed to speak out when a wave of anti-gay bullying, some of which led to suicides, swept the country last year. At a time when seemingly every organization in the United States was finding a way to tell young lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people that "It Gets Better," our hierarchy, to our shame, was silent.

In their zeal to deny any form of legitimacy to same-sex relationships, the bishops have neglected more urgent pastoral duties. Catholic schools and parishes are closing by the dozen in dioceses across the country, yet somehow the hierarchy and its allies in the Knights of Columbus have found millions of dollars to spend in one state after another opposing marriage equality, or its weaker cousin, the civil union.

Leaders Without Followers

The rhetoric our bishops employ in these campaigns is hardly pastoral. Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York, referred to same-sex marriage as "an Orwellian nightmare" and an "ominous threat." He compared his state's government to North Korea's during New York's recent debate on marriage equality. Then, upon losing the debate, this prince of the Church, with a palace on Fifth Avenue, proclaimed himself a victim of intolerance.

We are well acquainted with the history of anti-Catholic bigotry in this country, and keenly aware of what our forebears in the faith suffered at the hands of hateful fellow citizens. But we find it reprehensible when that legacy is invoked by those who themselves advocate discrimination and repression. If you are the Catholic parent of LGBT daugh-

ter or son, you know firsthand that it is your child's sexual identity, and not a belief in the Immaculate Conception, that puts them at risk for beatings and taunting. Archbishop Dolan and his colleagues should stop pretending that they face anything like the intolerance that our children do.

A Gay-Friendly Church?

The one fortunate aspect of the bishop's campaign against LGBT people is that it has been singularly ineffective. Polling by the Public Religion Research Institute makes clear that almost three-quarters of Catholics support either marriage equality or civil unions, and that we back legal protections for LGBT people in the workplace (73 percent), in the military (63 percent), and in adoptions (60 percent) by significant margins.

We are, in other words, an extremely gay-friendly church; and while it has taken a while for this fact to filter out beneath the bluster of our bishops and their lobbyists, political leaders have begun to take note. A Catholic governor and Catholic legislators made marriage equality a reality in New York. A Catholic governor and legislators passed civil unions into law in Illinois. Heavily Catholic Rhode Island passed a civil union bill over the protests of Bishop Thomas Tobin of Providence, and a Catholic governor has promised to permit same-sex couples to marry in Maryland, if the legislature will only put the bill on his desk.

A few days after Archbishop Gomez announced his opposition to the legislation requiring California schools to give an accurate recounting of the nation's history. Gov. Jerry Brown, a Roman Catholic, signed it into law.

Those of us who support equality for LGBT people in civil society do so not in spite of our Catholic faith but because of it. We learned in childhood that Jesus moved freely among the outcast and the marginalized, that he warned his followers to judge not lest they be judged, and that he taught that our neighbor was not

the priest who passed the beaten traveller on the other side of the road to avoid ritual impurity, but the hated Samaritan who bound up his wounds, and paid for his care.

We learned later that the Church's teachings on social justice compelled us to act as advocates for fairness, justice, and individual dignity, that its teachings on politics instructed us to vote for the common good, and that in making moral decisions, we were to follow the promptings of our own well-formed consciences.

There are times, it seems, when our hierarchy is so committed to cultivating political power, and deploying our Church's resources in contemporary culture wars, that they expect us to forget all of this. We won't.

As Philadelphia Burns

Last week, the Vatican announced that it had appointed Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver as the new archbishop of Philadelphia. The clergy abuse scandal that has badly damaged the hierarchy's credibility is still spinning out of control in Philadelphia, and Pope Benedict XVI clearly thinks that Archbishop Chaput is the right man for a difficult job.

We would only note that in his previous post, he supported a parish priest who expelled a girl from a Catholic school because her parents were lesbians. The archbishop argued that parents must be able to cooperate with Catholic schools in the education of their children, and that those who do not embrace Church doctrine cannot do so.

This was not an argument he employed against Protestants, or non-Christians, or children whose parents had remarried after a divorce. It was employed exclusively against lesbian parents. Because in the theological universe that our bishops are constructing to support their personal biases, there is sin, and then there is gay sin, and gay sin is so much worse. †

Is same-sex marriage really priority number one?

By Scott Alessi
USCatholic.org/blog
October 18, 2011

Earlier this month, Archbishop John Nienstedt of Minneapolis-St. Paul sent a letter to all priests in his archdiocese calling for support of a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would define marriage as a union of one man and one woman. While voicing the church's opposition to same-sex marriage is nothing new, Nienstedt went a step further—asking every pastor to appoint a parish captain of an ad hoc committee to support the amendment.

It is somewhat unusual to see a bishop tell all of his pastors to start a specific parish-level ministry, no less one with a political agenda. But Nienstedt has made clear that for priests in his archdiocese, fighting to ensure that the state defines marriage in the same way as the church is today's top priority.

On a national level, the actions of today's church leaders leave little doubt about how they view the importance of marriage. Archbishop Timothy Dolan, current president of the bishops' conference, has blogged often about the issue and even wrote a letter to President Obama about it. And Louisville's Archbishop Joseph Kurtz, who heads the bishops' ad hoc committee for the defense of marriage, last year warned his fellow bishops that "today is like 1970 for marriage," meaning that America is on the verge of a decision on marriage that would be akin to *Roe v. Wade*. Can we really compare allowing two people of the same sex to get married with legal-

izing abortion?

I've seen "pro-marriage" rallies organized by Catholic parishes and dioceses draw small crowds who support the church's position on this issue. But if we were to poll average Catholics in the pews, how many would really consider a law that prevents same-sex marriage to be the most important issue in the church today? How many would even place it in the top 10?

The church certainly has every right to profess its teachings on marriage, to evangelize, and to try to convince others to follow the gospel. It is worthwhile for practicing Catholics to have a better understanding of what the church teaches about marriage and why. But many Catholics would draw the line at trying to make those beliefs into law and forcing non-Catholics to follow them as well. Catholics may not believe two people of the same gender can exchange the sacrament of marriage, but if the state wants to let them have a marriage license, that's a different issue.

That's not to say that how the state defines marriage doesn't have any impact on the church. There are still a lot of religious liberty issues that need to get ironed out here, such as whether state-contracted Catholic institutions should have to provide adoption and foster care services to same-sex couples. Those are important questions, and the church should not have to compromise its definition of marriage because the state changes theirs.

But the real question is whether this issue should be getting so much attention. If an archbishop can call upon all

his pastors to form grassroots committees, appoint parish leaders, and organize a large-scale effort, is this the issue on which to do it? What if every parish developed an unemployment committee dedicated to helping out of work people in the parish community find jobs? What if a bishop mandated that every parish have a committee to provide outreach to women in crisis pregnancies so they would be less likely to choose abortion?

Or if every pastor was mandated to create a food pantry, or a soup kitchen?

Given the chance, Catholics could probably come up with a long list of initiatives that parishes could implement to address the growing number of problems in society today. It is doubtful, though, that preventing certain people from being able to get married would be at the top of everyone's lists. †

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How Catholic Was Clinton's Speech on LGBT Human Rights?

By Francis DeBernardo

NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com
December 6, 2011

Secretary of State Hilary Rodham Clinton's speech in defense of LGBT rights as human rights should be required reading for Vatican leaders, who have been shamefully silent on abuses against LGBT people around the world. The philosophical basis of Clinton's speech is the same basis for Catholic teaching on human rights: the inherent dignity of every individual.

As I read the text of her talk (and followed it on Twitter) I couldn't help but hear echoes of Vatican II documents which call for respect of all people, regardless of their state in life. I also couldn't help dreaming a little bit as to what it would sound like if Clinton's ideas were applied to the Catholic church. For example, the cornerstone of her speech reads:

"Building on efforts already underway at the State Department and across the government, the President has directed all U.S. Government agencies engaged overseas to combat the criminalization of LGBT status and conduct, to enhance efforts to protect vulnerable LGBT refugees and asylum seekers, to ensure that our foreign assistance promotes the protection of LGBT rights, to enlist international organizations in the fight against discrimination, and to respond swiftly to abuses against LGBT

persons."

What if Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Thomas Bertone said:

"Building on efforts already underway the Pope has directed all bishops and church officials to combat the criminalization of LGBT status and conduct, to enhance efforts to protect vulnerable LGBT refugees and asylum seekers to ensure that our foreign assistance promotes the protection of LGBT rights, to enlist international organizations in the fight against discrimination, and to respond swiftly to abuses against LGBT persons."

Nothing in Catholic teaching would prevent him from doing so. What prevents such a statement is a lack of leadership. Clinton herself addressed the topic of leadership in her speech in a beautiful way:

"Leadership, by definition, means being out in front of your people when it is called for. It means standing up for the dignity of all your citizens and persuading your people to do the same."

As polls continue to show that U.S. Catholics are way ahead of their bishops on LGBT equality, members of the hier-

archy in this country are already behind the curve. On the international scene, Catholic leaders could still play a pivotal role in protecting human rights for LGBT people.

Clinton's speech, though not mentioning Catholic leaders, offered some excellent advice that Catholic leaders should certainly heed:

"Conversely, when we see denials



Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

and abuses of human rights and fail to act, that sends the message to those deniers and abusers that they won't suffer any consequences for their actions, and so they carry on. But when we do act, we send a powerful moral message."

Catholic leaders need to examine what effect their silence is having on the

lives of people.

And in regard to the Vatican's proclivity to attempt to silence discussion on LGBT matters, they should learn another important lesson from Secretary Clinton:

"No one has ever abandoned a belief because he was forced to do so."

Though Catholic leaders do not speak out on human rights for LGBT people, Catholic people are making changes in their homes, their parishes, and their communities in support of their LGBT friends and family members. We should not ever downplay these grassroots initiatives. As Secretary Clinton pointed out:

"And to people of all nations, I say supporting human rights is your responsibility too. The lives of gay people are shaped not only by laws, but by the treatment they receive every day from their families, from their neighbors. Eleanor Roosevelt, who did so much to advance human rights worldwide, said that these rights begin in the small places close to home – the streets where people live, the schools they attend, the factories, farms, and offices where they work. These places are your domain. The actions you take, the ideals that you advocate, can determine whether human rights flourish where you are."

If we want our Catholic church to respect the dignity of LGBT people, we must embody that change in our own lives. †

Catholicism and Sexuality: If Only Hierarchs Would Listen and Learn

By John Falcone

Huffingtonpost.com
November 14, 2011

Few Roman Catholic seminaries can boast an active and vibrant GLBT student organization. Boston College's School of Theology and Ministry is one. Since April 2011, the "GIFTS" group ("G/L/B/T Inclusive Fellowship of Theology Students") has planned and hosted prayer services for the school community. We've celebrated the long tradition of believers who have lived their Catholicism through same-sex love, non-traditional gender roles and the quest for social justice. We have also asked some difficult questions: How can GLBT lay people with a proven calling to ministry best serve the Catholic Church? What is our responsibility to a clergy and leadership which is often homophobic and paternalistic, and profoundly conflicted about sex?

Recently, four GIFTS members and I drove to Fairfield University in Connecticut for "The Care of Souls: Sexual Diversity, Celibacy and Ministry" -- the last of this autumn's "More than a Monologue" series on sexuality and the Catholic Church. We went to hear Rev. Donald Cozzens, a respected researcher on the Catholic priesthood and a former seminary president; Mark Jordan, a queer theologian and ethicist at Harvard Divinity School and Jeannine Gramick, a Catholic nun who was silenced by the Vatican for her work with lesbians and gays. We found four themes particularly compelling: the struggles of a closeted clergy, the dynamics of Catholic patriarchy, the troubling theology of priestly vocation and the powerful Christian witness offered by lesbian nuns.

For Cozzens, the Vatican's prohibition of gay men entering the priesthood has worked much like the (now defunct) policy of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Gay

men have not left the priesthood (Cozzens estimates they make up 30-50 percent of US priests), and they also continue to enter -- either by lying about their orientation, or by keeping it under wraps at the direction of seminary directors. Yet gay priests must steer firmly clear of their sexual identity in their preaching and public personas. As GIFTS member Oliver Goodrich asked, "How can so many priests, who preach a gospel of liberation and authenticity, lead such inauthentic lives?"

Jordan was more provocative. In a church that defines "the few and the proud" as its straight male celibate clergy, power gets tangled with maleness. But the clergy's desire for power animates an unseemly dance of dominance, submission and career advancement. Within all-male hierarchical settings, this can smack of sado-masochist pleasures. Accepting gay men into seminary, or acknowledging same-sex love,

shines an unwelcome light on these homoerotic dynamics. To keep this psychology intact and in shadow, the hierarchy must keep gay men (and straight women) out.

The notion that ritual and organizational leadership requires abstinence from sexual love is another problem for Catholic ministry. For almost 2000 years, Catholic monks and nuns have accepted celibacy as a form of spiritual practice. For 1100 years, Catholic priests could marry and raise children. Today, Church officials insist that everyone called to the priesthood automatically receives the "grace" (or spiritual power) to live a celibate life. Why must these two be connected? As Jocelyn Collen, another GIFTS member, remarked, "Grace is not given to someone on command. No one -- not even the Vatican -- can direct the grace of God."

Gramick's reflections were perhaps

(Continued on page 11)

On gay marriage, state and Catholic leaders are out of step

Editorial

The Star Tribune

Minneapolis

September 30, 2011

It's not exactly clear how many gay, married couples there are in America and Minnesota.

Last month, the U.S. Census bureau reported that some 131,700 same-sex couples checked the "husband" or "wife" boxes on the form. That figure was later adjusted to 100,000 after it was discovered that coding errors resulted in an exaggerated count.

In Minnesota, the first count identified 4,325 same-sex, married couples, and the adjustment brought that number down to about 1,300. And even those numbers may not be correct.

Some couples who married legally in another state chose not to list their status because it is not legally recognized in Minnesota.

Despite the lack of reliable statistics,

most Americans' family and social experiences confirm that the numbers are indeed rising. And as the number of gay couples has risen, so have levels of tolerance and acceptance.

That long-overdue cultural change is most apparent in the six states -- and the District of Columbia -- that have legalized gay marriage.

Meanwhile, the U.S. military has dropped its onerous "don't ask, don't tell" policy. And polls show that more and more Americans favor equal rights for members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities.

Given those welcome developments, it's disturbing that some Catholic Church leaders and the state of Minnesota are moving in the other direction.

In a recent letter, Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York, who heads the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, criticized the Obama administration for no longer defending the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act in court.

The administration believes that the law, which defines marriage as between one man and one woman, is unconstitutional.

Dolan said that the federal position could "precipitate a national conflict between church and state of enormous proportions."

Some Catholic leaders, both locally and nationally, are actively campaigning against gay marriage; they consider it a direct assault on church teaching that defines marriage as only between heterosexuals.

Framing gay marriage as a civil right, they say, can cause discrimination against Catholic believers.

But church doctrine and federal laws are two separate considerations. In a country with free religion and speech, any religious group can adopt its own rules. It cannot, however, impose those rules on civil society.

And though some church leaders hold antigay views, there is significant

dissent even among their own parishioners. According to Catholics for Marriage Equality MN, a recent poll of local Catholics showed that a majority favored equal marriage rights.

Minnesotans are about to engage in a statewide debate on the issue in the run-up to a November 2012 vote on a constitutional amendment that would ban gay marriage. We would have preferred that this discriminatory proposal had never made it to the ballot.

It's wrong to enshrine denial of basic human rights in state law, and hopefully the discussion in the next 12 months will make that clear.

We also hope that the Catholic leaders' "national conflict" predictions are overstated. Again, churches can decide whom they will or will not marry.

But under the laws that apply to everyone, GLBT couples deserve the same rights as every other American. †

Gay marriage - a Lutheran leader's plea to Catholic bishops

By Herbert W. Chilstrom
Startribune.com
December 8, 2011

To My Brothers -- The Catholic Bishops of Minnesota:

In 1976 I was elected a Lutheran bishop in Minnesota -- one of seven such Lutheran leaders in the state. Over the next years one of the highlights of my time in office was the annual noon-to-noon retreat with our eight Catholic counterparts in the state.

The bond that developed between us was deep and respectful. We shared our differences; we celebrated our likenesses. My friendship with Archbishop John Roach and Bishop Raymond Lucker, in particular, is a blessing I will treasure as long as I live.

May I share a word with all of you who now lead the Roman Catholic community of faith in Minnesota?

First, I would go to the wall to defend your right to work for the adoption of the so-called marriage protection amendment. Having said that, I must tell you that I believe you are making a significant mistake.

Over my 35 years as an active and retired bishop I have come to know hundreds of gay and lesbian persons. I have yet to meet even one who is opposed to the marriage of one man and one woman. After all, they are the daughters and sons of such unions.

What they cannot understand is why church leaders would oppose their fundamental desire and right to be in partnership with someone they love and respect who happens to be of the same gender and sexual orientation. They don't understand why they should not enjoy all the rights and privileges their straight counterparts take for granted.

More than a half century ago Father Francis Gilligan spoke out for equality for African American citizens of Minnesota. Though many argued on the basis of the Bible that these neighbors were inferior to others, Gilligan fought tirelessly for justice for these brothers and sisters.

In our generation homosexual persons are subject to the same discrimination. Their detractors often use the Bible and tradition as weapons of choice. ✦

Listen and Learn

(Continued from page 10)

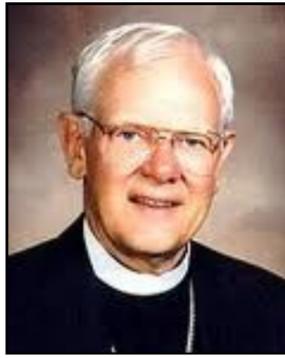
the most hopeful. Drawing from decades of work with lesbian nuns, she described a non-patriarchal model of ministry in which warm and affirming female friendships support lives of celibacy, service and prayer. For these nuns, the experience of sexual orientation is about the longing for intimacy, the romantic desires that shape personality and interpersonal life. This makes profound psychological sense. Lesbian and gay celibates need intimate same-sex friendships; in the same way, straight men called to celibacy need warm and affirming relationships with women. Without such intimate friendships, frustrations multiply, boundaries decay and ministers tragically act out.

At the end of the day, we drove back to Boston through the worst October snowstorm in years, and a certain chill still remains. I've co-written this article with another GIFTS student, whose goal is to teach in a Catholic school. The insights of this minister-in-training are all over this article. But to protect his/her future employment, I cannot disclose a name. Like the prayers that GIFTS has written, and the GLBT saints that we've recalled, the insights of marginalized Catholics speak of Spirit, courage and truth. Our hierarchs should listen and learn. ✦

Is it not time for religious leaders, walking in the footsteps of Father Gilligan, to do the same for another minority, neighbors who are as responsible as our African American sisters and brothers?

I also suggest that you ask yourselves an important question: If the amendment is passed, will it make one particle of difference in our common culture in Minnesota? I don't think so.

Responsible lesbian and gay persons will continue to seek companionship with those they love. This law will only



Rev. Herbert Chilstrom

work to drive many of them deeper into closets of anonymity.

Instead, why not welcome them into our communities of faith where they can work side by side with us as equal partners?

Let me put out a challenge to each of you brothers. Invite 15 gay and lesbian persons from your respective areas, one at a time, to spend two hours with

you.

Thirty hours are a pittance compared to the time you are investing to promote adoption of the marriage amendment. Use the time, not for con-

fession, but to listen to them describe what it is like to live in our culture in Minnesota.

Hear as they tell you what it means to be a child of God and a faithful member of your church, persons who happen to be gay or lesbian through no choice of their own. I can promise you, based on my experience, that your heart will be deeply moved by what you hear.

When you have finished your time with these sisters and brothers in Christ, spend a quiet hour reflecting on a single question: "As I understand the heart of my Savior Jesus, how would he treat these sons and daughters of my church?"

Herbert W. Chilstrom is former presiding bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. ✦

Debating Natural Law

13th century philosophy wins public debate; does it win court cases?

By Duncan Osborne
Gaycitynews.com
August 4, 2011

At a conference held this past April at Liberty University in Virginia, Ryan Sorba, a conservative activist, was discussing the words the right should use when talking about homosexuality. "Gay" should not be used.

"I don't believe that anyone is born gay," said Sorba, the chairman of Young Conservatives of California. "You are your body, your body is procreative by its natural design...It's an important part of who you are, it's you, and, um, and, you know, to divorce your self from the self-evident nature of your procreative design is to divide yourself against, is to slam the door in your own face."

However clumsily, Sorba was using a natural law argument that is rooted in the 13th century philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, a Roman Catholic theologian. As gay marriage battles have raged across the nation, some proponents of traditional marriage have taken the classic natural law position that says that only a man and a woman can procreate, so that relationship should be recognized as unique, important, and it should be privileged over other relationships. Clearly, gay and lesbian Americans disagree with some of that argument.

"The people today who are called natural law theorists are maintaining a view of the natural world that is outdated," said Francis DeBernardo, the executive director of the New Ways Ministry, a Maryland-based, gay-positive ministry that serves queer Roman Catholics. "Aquinas himself would say that the theory has to constantly be updated according to new definitions of nature...Natural law theorists who use that theory to oppose same-sex marriage refuse to acknowledge the naturalness of homosexuality."

Natural law theory says, in part, that moral truths can be found by simply observing the world. Its modern champions include John M. Finnis, a law professor at Oxford and Notre Dame, a Robert P. George, a law professor at Princeton University. Neither professor responded to emails seeking comment. Finnis is credited by some observers with reviving the theory with the publication of his 1980 book, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*. George authored the 2009 Manhattan Declaration, a conservative manifesto, which stated the signers' opposition to abortion, gay marriage, and any infringement on religious liberty. George is associated with the conservative groups the National Organization for Marriage (NOM) and the American Principles Project.

One very rough measure suggests that Finnis has influenced debate among

attorneys. A search in the Lexis database of law journal articles on "natural law" and Finnis returned 98 articles in the decade from 1980 to 1990. That number climbed to 411 in the next decade and to 728 between 2000 and 2011. A search on "natural law" and Aquinas returned 93 articles in the first decade, 498 in the second, and 1,025 between 2000 and 2011.

Whether these theorists have any sway in court cases is a different matter.

A search in the Lexis database of federal and state court decisions returns just 15 that mention "natural law theory" from 1960 to 2011. Cases that mention "natural law" went from 168 between 1960 and 1970 to 178 from 1970 to 1980 to 228 from 1980 to 1990. From 1990 to 2011, 620 cases mentioned "natural law," but some cases use "natural law" to refer to a law of physics or some other science. Short of reading every single

case, it is impossible to discern if natural law theory has made inroads in court cases. One gay group said it has not.

"I don't think it really does get used by the courts generally," Gary Buseck, legal director at the Boston-based Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, wrote in an email. "We see it essentially in some amicus briefs. George has one in our Gill DOMA case. So, I think it plays, if at all, behind the scenes. At least at the moment, it is not a type of thinking or nomenclature which is comfortable for American courts."

In the court of public opinion, natural law theory is more successful because it is simple. Its rhetoric is accessible to a Ryan Sorba as well as a Robert George. On the surface, its conclusions, on marriage in particular, appear to be self-evident.

"It's wonderfully appealing because of its simplicity, but I have to say it's much more complex than it appears," DeBernardo said. "To be a true natural law theorist, you have to be willing to update your theory."

Aquinas' greatest contribution to Roman Catholic theology was to argue for the application of reason to faith and ethics. Aquinas died in 1274 and was canonized in 1323. His work can fall short because Aquinas knew little about the natural world, so some truths he learned by observing it were wrong. Aquinas said that women were "defective and misbegotten" from birth.

"[T]he production of woman comes from defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external influence; such as

that of a south wind, which is moist," he wrote in one document. On sexuality, the conclusion by some of his adherents that the only moral function of sex is procreation is stilted.

"At its most notorious, this shows up in Catholic teaching on sexual ethics that argues that any behavior that conflicts with the natural law (as evidenced in the biological processes of the human body) is ipso facto immoral," wrote Paul Lakeland, a professor of Catholic Studies at Fairfield University in Connecticut, in an email.

"So, no actions that frustrate (contraception) or that cannot result in (masturbation, homosexual acts) procreation can be countenanced. This interpretation of natural law is especially wooden and a problem for most, if not all, Catholic sexual ethicists

today. But, more to the point, it is not quite what Aquinas was really talking about."

Aquinas was a creature of the age he lived in. He endorsed slavery and saw monarchies as a legitimate form of governance. While Augustine and John Chrysostom, two early Roman Catholic theologians, were virulently anti-Semitic, Aquinas was only mildly so.

"It would be hard to find a medieval Christian scholar who didn't have things to say that we would see as anti-Semitic," Lakeland wrote. "His position develops out of his analysis of Paul's Letter to the Romans, and so it tries to balance two seemingly contradictory truths: on the one hand, the Jews were complicit in the crucifixion of Jesus, while, on the other, they are somehow included in the community of the saved...Aquinas picks up on some of this tension but on the whole leans towards a more positive theological analysis of the place of the Jews than did, say, Augustine. It also has to be said, however, that in his remarks on the role of Jews in the society of his time, he is not an ardent campaigner for their equal place in society."

For DeBernardo at the New Ways Ministry, Aquinas' errors do not mean that everything he asserted is wrong.

"I wouldn't say that because of his mistakes everything that he said is wrong," he said. "He reconciled faith with reason. That's considered his greatest achievement. That's something that the church has to do, but with 21st century knowledge, not 13th century knowledge." ✦



St. Thomas Aquinas

Whose Religious Liberty Is It Anyway? Time to Occupy the USCCB?

By Joseph Amodeo
Huffingtonpost.com
November 17, 2011

"Take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this the chalice of my blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me." --Eucharistic Prayer IV from the Third Edition of the Roman Missal

This past Sunday, like other Catholics throughout the English speaking world, I sat in a pew and listened to yet another installment about the forthcoming changes to the Mass. Being in Church this past Sunday, I couldn't help but wonder whether I'm one of the former members of the "all" that will be lost in the "many" of the newly translated Eucharistic Prayer IV. It is amidst these changes and other issues facing the Church that I'm left asking why Catholics are not occupying the General Assembly of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) taking place in Washington, D.C. this week. Observing the proceedings of the General Assembly, it's clear that instead of listening to the concerns of the laity regarding this new translation, the USCCB and its leadership have decided to proclaim an attack on religious liberty.

As Catholics around the country stand in bewilderment as to the significance of words such as "dew fall,"

"oblation" and "couteance" to their personal spiritual growth and communal celebration of the Mass, Archbishop Dolan attacked what he described as "a drive to neuter religion." At the episcopal gathering, the leadership has argued that government actions related to marriage equality and abortion rights infringe upon individual religious liberty. In fact, Bishop Lori of Bridgeport (who also serves as the Supreme Chaplain for the Knights of Columbus) characterized the United States Department of Justice's refusal to defend the Defense of Marriage Act "as an act of 'bias and prejudice' akin to racism, thereby implying that churches which teach that marriage is between a man and a woman are guilty of bigotry." The concern that I have with Bishop Lori's statement is that it denies the ability of the state to discern and develop a secular definition of marriage. Perhaps what Bishop Lori forgets is that marriage is not only a Catholic institution, but rather a legal state and sacrament in other religious and secular traditions. Further, Bishop Lori should be careful not to neuter secular institutions of their constitutional responsibility to protect the rights of all and not just the many.

Considering the bishops' statements, it's only natural that we ask the Catholic Church what makes its definition of marriage more accurate than that of other Christian communities? For example, the Episcopal Church, Anglican Church of

Canada, Unitarian Universalists, Metropolitan Community Churches, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and others all provide blessings for same-sex unions and/or marriages. Isn't the Catholic Church infringing on the religious liberties of progressive (and I would argue prophetic) Christian communities that have embraced marriage equality? Yes.

For the Catholic Church to argue that its definition of marriage is the only true definition is to deny the validity of other religious traditions to in a discerning manner define their own practices and beliefs. Bishop Lori and Dolan's statements on religious liberty are dangerous, in that if accepted they threaten not only the principle of separation of church and state, but also the ability of the state as well as other religious traditions to exercise their own freedoms independent of the Catholic Church. Demanding that an entire society acquiesce to the USCCB and the Holy See's views on marriage acts to impede not only on the Halls of Congress, but also the mosques, churches, synagogues and other houses of worship that exercise a freedom of conscience that is not, and should not be, subject to Rome.

As the USCCB attacks efforts to pursue marriage equality and to protect the rights of women, I'm left wondering where the moral voice of the Church is on issues of social justice. As thousands of Americans take to the streets with the

Occupy Wall Street movement (including many Catholics), Dolan and other leaders have remained silent even though the movement is well aligned with Catholic social teaching on economic justice. If the American Catholic Church were to focus its moral might on an issue like economic justice (in short, follow the Holy See's lead), they would be uniting rather than dividing Catholics and Americans. It saddens me to think that the American Church's episcopal leaders continue to speak out against secular definitions of marriage while failing to adequately respond to the great injustices of our time.

If the Church remains silent in the face of injustice and instead continues to use the religious liberty argument, and succeeds in bullying legislators to accept religious principles and beliefs as secular definitions, the "all" that are protected by the liberties enshrined in our Constitution may not merely become *the many*, but rather *the few*. As Catholics, we should occupy the pews and call out to the Church's leaders to be a voice for justice rather than an institution that seeks to infringe on the liberties of Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

When will Catholics start to occupy the United States Conference Catholic Bishops and diocesan offices across the country to demand a moral voice that focuses on Christ's message of love and justice? †

Equally Blessed Presents U.S. Bishops With Anti-Bullying Petitions

Equally-Blessed.com
November 17, 2011

BALTIMORE, Maryland — The Equally Blessed coalition on Monday presented the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops with a petition signed by more than 1,700 U. S. Catholics urging the conference to take a firm public stand against anti-gay bullying. The bishops have previously made no statement on this issue.

"Faithful Catholics find it extremely discouraging to watch their bishops devote ever more time and ever more money on denying lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender people the rights that other citizens of this country take for granted, while remaining silent about the



Delivering the petition: Tom Pluecker, Fortunate Families; Chuck Busnuk, DignityUSA; Francis DeBernardo, New Ways Ministry; Don Clemmer, Assistant Director of Media Relations, USCCB; Claire Pluecker, Fortunate Families; Bob Mialovich, DignityUSA and Call To Action. (Photo: Dwayne Fernandes, New Ways Ministry)

violence that many of us face," said Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive direc-

tor of Dignity, a member of the coalition. Equally Blessed collected the signa-

tures online and through social media in two weeks.

"As Catholics we believe that we can sin through action and inaction," said Nicole Sotelo, director of communications for Call To Action, an Equally Blessed coalition member. "A few words from our bishops would give great comfort to LGBT Catholics, and clear instruction about the dignity of every human being to the members of our Church. Yet the conference has repeatedly failed to act."

Coalition members presented the petitions to a staff member of the U. S. Catholic Conference because they were told that none of the more than 200 bishops meeting in Baltimore had time to greet them. †

Pro Life Catholics and Transgendered Persons

By Sidney Callahan
AmericaMagazine.org/blog
October 11, 2011

Transgendered persons, as an emerging minority group, are becoming newly visible in the media. Unfortunately this attention usually arises from the fact that people are being attacked, bullied, excluded and even killed. The transgendered population now joins homosexual and lesbian individuals who have suffered from their "difference." This is a moment for Pro Life Catholics to take the lead in offering protection and acceptance.

More is at issue than the Church's efforts to see that all human persons are granted dignity and rights in a just society. In addition Catholics are committed to protecting the value of embodied human life in all its varied forms, from embryo to fetus to infant, child, adult, and the impaired and dying. Difference and uniqueness of development characterize bodily life.

The current secular culture does not yet affirm the rights of nascent fetal life

and also tends to reject bodies that do not meet favored norms of health and beauty. Within the Church other rejections can exist. Many intra church arguments have arisen over gender identity, gender orientation and acceptable expressions of embodied love. The varied and complex unique development of each human body has been downplayed. One adult heterosexual model of the reproductive "nuptial body" has been validated as the privileged norm.

It seems important at this point for Catholics to develop a deeper and more comprehensive theology of the body. We need an approach taking in new scientific, theological and experiential lived findings. Our Pro Life witness and understanding can be expanded and deepened. What for instance are the implications for this age of bodily resurrection and our membership in the body of Christ? In the meantime, waiting for an expanded conversation, and/or a new ecumenical council, Catholics can seek to protect and value all nascent and different lives. †

Being Queer on a Catholic Campus

By Roland Argomaniz
foghorn.usfca.edu
October 27, 2011

As part of National Coming Out Week, [University of San Francisco] University Ministry teamed with Queer Alliance and the Gender & Sexuality Center to host a forum exploring what it means to be a queer student and faculty member on a Catholic Campus.

Students and faculty gathered near the cafeteria, many of them sporting rainbow-colored buttons on their book bags and shirts, to participate in a round table discussion on the state of the gay community on campus.

Rev. Donald Godfrey, S.J., was among one of the special invitees who spoke about the relationship between the gay and lesbian experience on a Catholic campus in San Francisco.

Having grown up in Ireland, a country that has been long known for its conservative Catholic roots, Godfrey has often reflected on the following question: could a person be accepted as Catholic and gay?

"I don't believe being Catholic and being gay is an oxymoron," said Godfrey, associate director of University Ministry. "There are people on this cam-

pus who are both [Catholic and gay] and the church needs the experiences and voices of the gay community. There has to be an engagement between the Catholic tradition and the gay experience."

Godfrey cited his experience at USF and in the San Francisco LGBTQ community as having helped to shape his understanding of the relationship between the Catholic faith and the gay lifestyle.

The Castro, before becoming the epicenter of the gay rights movement in the 1970s, was home to many Irish Catholic immigrants who left a lasting legacy.

For Godfrey, the fusion of the two cultures, while at times contentious, has helped both communities to reconcile their understandings of faith and sexuality. Godfrey has since returned several times to Northern Ireland to help the gay and lesbian community of both the Catholic and Protestant Church wrestle with these same questions.

Dr. Shirley McGuire, professor of psychology, had some serious reservations as to whether Catholic universities around the country were ready to give support to the LGBTQ community.

After arriving at USF from the Uni-

(Continued on page 4)