

BONDINGS

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Papal envoy breaks ranks on gay couples

By Ben Sills in Madrid
and Stephen Bates
The Guardian, London
May 5, 2004

The Pope's ambassador to one of Europe's leading Catholic countries has hinted that the church should "acknowledge" gay partnerships — a significant crack in the Vatican's resolute opposition to "evil and deviant" gay relationships.

Monsignor Manuel Monteiro de Castro told a conference of Spanish bishops at the weekend: "The new political situation in which we are living in Spain sets new challenges in the spreading of the gospel and we must meet those challenges in an appropriate manner."

Departing from his prepared speech, the papal nuncio added that although the law in Spain, and many other countries, defines marriage as the union of a man and a woman, "there are other forms of cohabitation and it is good that they be recognised."

The uncommonly outspoken remarks,

reported in the Spanish press, will cause extreme annoyance within a papal circle desperate to stop the encroachment of what it sees as decadent sexual morality.

Although he insisted that same-sex unions could not be regarded as marriages, the envoy implied that they were at least worthy of compassion.

"They are not the same as marriage," he said. "We will leave the term marriage for that which it has always referred to, and other arrangements should be given other names."

The nuncio said gay couples should be given access to certain civil rights, including those within the social security system. He added: "The church can also help them in their spiritual life."

The remarks were in sharp contrast to last year's Vatican guidelines which called on Catholics to campaign against the legalisation of gay relationships, calling them evil, deviant and a grave threat to society.

The document said: "We must refrain from any formal cooperation with the promulgation or application of such seriously unjust laws



Monsignor Manuel Monteiro

Notre Dame gays reach out to other schools

By Ron Goldwyn
Philadelphia Daily News
April 30, 2004

They're the loyal gay sons and daughters of Notre Dame. They even have a parking-lot party at Fighting Irish football weekends.

Now the leaders of Notre Dame University's 850-member gay and lesbian alumni-alumnae group are taking their message to the homosexual graduates of other Catholic universities and colleges.

The Gay Lesbian Alumni/ae Associa-

tion of Catholic Colleges and Universities will announce its formation in Philadelphia tomorrow.

The coming-out is part of Equality Forum, which wraps up a week of gay-lesbian-oriented programs with 37 cultural and social events this weekend.

David Pais, who graduated Notre Dame in 1972, said he expects gay grads from 32 schools, including Villanova, St. Joseph's and La Salle in the Philadelphia area, to join in launching the group.

Successful Catholic graduates who have come out as gay will serve as role

Continued on page 4

and, as far as is possible, from any material cooperation in their application."

It added: "There are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God's plan for marriage and family. Marriage is holy while homosexual acts go against the natural moral law.

"Legal recognition of homosexual unions or placing them on the same level as marriage would mean not only the approval of deviant behaviour ... but would also obscure basic values which belong to the common inheritance of humanity."

The debate mirrors the crisis in the worldwide Anglican communion, threatened with splits over the church's attitude to homosexuals, particularly those who are ordained. A commission is wrestling with new structures that would enable the Anglican church to hold together despite breaches over the issue.

In November the US Episcopal church consecrated its first openly gay bishop and the Anglican church in Canada is poised next month to approve blessing services for same-sex couples. In Britain the gay cleric Canon Jeffrey John, denied promotion to a bishopric last year, has been appointed cathedral dean of St Albans.

The Catholic church is far from such considerations — though studies have suggested a high proportion of priests in

training in the west for the priesthood are gay.

Although some Catholic bishops in England might be privately relatively sympathetic to the nuncio's views, they have publicly criticised the government's proposed civil partnerships legislation.

But there has been a growing sense within the Spanish church that it should acknowledge and accept different lifestyles. A meeting in the Gerona diocese last week also defended gay relationships.

But the Archbishop of Madrid, Cardinal Antonio María Rouco Varela, told the conference: "Marriage, as an institution, contributes to the growth and stability of society as a structure for bringing up children. For that, we owe it the recognition and legal support of the state.

"Homosexual cohabitation, which can never fulfill that role, cannot be credited with the same social function as marriage and the family."

He added: "This is not about denying anyone their rights, on the contrary it's about defending the rights of the family in a coherent fashion, and that is an issue of vital importance for the present and future of Spanish society."

The cardinal said acceptance of homosexuality as equivalent to marriage was a "sad truth" about the declining importance of religious values in Spanish society. ■

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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 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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Gay Catholics Denied Communion at Chicago Mass; Others Blocked at the Altar in Minnesota

By Mike Colias

Associated Press

May 31, 2004

CHICAGO — Parishioners who wore rainbow-colored sashes to Mass in support of gays and lesbians were denied communion in Chicago, while laymen in Minnesota tried to prevent gay Roman Catholics from getting the sacrament. Priests at Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago refused to give the Eucharist to about 10 people wearing the sashes at Sunday Mass. One priest shook each person's hand; another made the sign of the cross on their foreheads.

"The priest told me you cannot receive communion if you're wearing a sash, as per the Cardinal's direction," said James Luxton, a Chicago member of the Rainbow Sash Movement, an organization of Catholic gay-rights supporters with chapters around the country.

An internal memo from Chicago Cardinal Francis George that became public last week instructed priests not to give communion to people wearing the sashes, which the group's members wear every year for Pentecost. The memo says the sashes are a symbol of opposition to the church's doctrine on homosexuality and exploit the communion ritual.

"The Rainbow Sash movement wants its members to be fully accepted by the Church not on the same conditions as any Catholic but precisely as gay," George wrote. "With this comes the requirement that the Church change her moral teaching."

Rainbow Sash Movement spokesman Joe Murray was among those denied communion in Chicago. He said

Priest refuses order to remove name from letter supporting gays

Associated Press

May 20, 2004

MESA, Ariz. — A retired Catholic priest said he won't comply with an order to remove his name from a letter calling for full inclusion of gays in religious and community life.

In a letter dated May 16, the Rev. Andre Boulanger of Phoenix acknowledged two letters from Phoenix Bishop Thomas Olmsted, who asked that Boulanger withdraw his signature and support of the "No Longer Silent Phoenix Declaration."

The declaration was also signed by eight other Phoenix Diocese priests and other Arizona clergy.

"I have given the matter much thought and soul-searching in these past weeks," Boulanger said in the letter, and "in the end, I found it necessary, as a matter of conscience, not to withdraw my name."

Boulanger said that centuries of church documents that "refer to homosexuality as an intrinsic disorder, a pathological constitution, a perversion of nature, etc.," and "objectively sinful" are based on human science for 1,500 years ago and earlier.

"The best science that we have to this date tells us that homosexuality is not a disorder or pathology, but that it is a variation of the human sexual expression," he said.

In April, Olmsted ordered the nine diocesan priests to remove their names from the letter developed by No Longer Silent/Clergy for Justice in January 2003.

To date, seven of the priests have withdrawn their names. ■

members wearing the sashes should be seen no differently than a uniformed police officer or Boy Scout seeking communion.

"What we saw today in the cathedral is discrimination at the Eucharistic table, and that shouldn't be happening," Murray said. Those denied communion returned to their pews, but stood while the rest of the congregation knelt.

The movement, which started about five years ago in England, also has members in Dallas, New Orleans, New York and Rochester, N.Y.

In St. Paul, Minn., people wearing the rainbow-colored sashes were given communion Sunday despite protests from some parishioners who knelt in front of the altar blocking their way.

The Rev. Michael Skluzacek said in a written statement that both sides were "mistakenly using the Mass and the Eucharist to make their own personal statements."

Brian McNeill, organizer of the Rainbow Sash Alliance of the Twin Cities, said the local group has worn the sashes every Pentecost at St. Paul Cathedral since 2001, but the group had never experienced such a confrontation.

A Vatican doctrinal decree last year directed at Catholic politicians said a well-formed conscience forbids support for any law that contradicts "fundamental" morality, with abortion listed first among relevant issues. A second Vatican statement said it is "gravely immoral" not to oppose legalization of same-sex unions. ■

Associated Press Writer Elizabeth Dunbar in St. Paul, Minn., contributed to this report.

Psychologists Back Gay Marriage

Associated Press

July 29, 2004

HONOLULU — The nation's largest association of psychologists is backing same-sex marriage. The American Psychological Association's Council of Representatives made its support official Wednesday, the first day of the group's annual convention in Waikiki. The council also expressed opposition to discrimination against lesbian and gay parents. It also found same-sex and heterosexual couples remarkably similar, and parenting effectiveness and children's psychological well-being unrelated to parental sexual orientation.

The positions, drawn up by the APA Working Group on Same-Sex Families and Relationships, are meant to guide psychologists in the public debate over civil marriage for same-sex couples. "In the context of the huge social and political debate that is currently going on, APA and psychologists had to grapple with the issue of what psychology believes is in the public interest in this controversy," said Armand R. Cerbone, a Chicago psychologist who chaired the working group.

The seven-member working group based its recommendations on research into same-sex relationships and families. The Washington-based APA has more than 150,000 members, including researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students. ■

U.N. gay benefits plan approved

The Catholic Messenger
April 15, 2004

NEW YORK — Catholics and other opponents of a U.N. policy to give partners of gay and lesbian staff members the same benefits spouses of married staffers receive reached a compromise on language in the policy. The agreement, reached after lengthy debates and informal negotiations, ensures the policy's wording will not link domestic partnerships or same-sex unions with marriage and family. Archbishop Celestino Migliore, the Vatican's U.N. nuncio, said in a telephone interview April 5 that the compromise took into account objections the Vatican had raised and "avoids the confusion" of using the same terminology for the two kinds of relationships. "No one wants to deprive people of anything," he said. "But we would not like to see the U.N. be ambiguous or, even worse, establish a link between the family and domestic partnership or same-sex union." ■

Lewandowski Sees Himself as 'Reconciler'

Continued from page 6

confirmed the exiting bishop's support this week.

Lewandowski said he has not met the newly appointed bishop, Robert McManus, who takes over the diocese in May but did not return calls left at his office in Providence, R.I.

Lewandowski said he became increasingly aware that he needed to minister to gay people when he became chaplain of the Newman Center at Fitchburg State College in 1983.

Stopping suicide

"I have buried kids at the college because they were gay and committed suicide because they were told they were wretched or rotten," he said forcefully. "That's simply not the case. That's simply not the case."

Lewandowski is still FSC chaplain, but he added the St. Camillus pastorship to his duties because of a priest shortage.

He said St. Camillus membership continues to grow as others have declined and has retained most of its lifelong members, many of them elderly.

"They support us with everything we do," said Ben Nogueira. "It seems to be the only church in the city that supports groups that aren't in favor with anybody else." ■

Gay-Friendly Parishes

Below is a partial list of known "gay-friendly" Catholic parishes and faith communities. Thank you for helping us add to this growing list! If you are aware of such a parish that is known as welcoming to lesbian and gay Catholics as members and active parishioners, please let us know. Tell us if this welcome is because of a support program, spirituality group, mission statement, participation in gay community events, involvement with parents, or simply the friendliness of pastoral staff.



Alabama

Montgomery: St. Bede

Arizona

Mesa: Christ the King
Scottsdale: Franciscan Renewal Center
Tempe: All Saints Catholic Newman Center
Tucson: St. Peter and Paul, St. Pius X, Our Mother of Sorrows, St. Odilia

California

Berkeley: Holy Spirit Parish
Claremont: Mother of Good Counsel, Our Lady of the Assumption
Eagle Rock: St. Dominic's
Glendale: St. Mark's University Parish
Hawthorne: St. Joseph's (Spanish)
La Puente: St. Martha
Long Beach: St. Matthew's
Los Angeles: Blessed Sacrament, Christ the King, Loyola Marymount University, Mother of Good Counsel, St. Camillus Center-IAUSC Medical Center (Spanish), St. Paul the Apostle
North Hollywood: St. Jane Frances de Chantal, St. Patrick's
Sacramento: St. Francis of Assisi
San Diego: Christ the King, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, St. Didacus
San Francisco: Most Holy Redeemer, Old St. Mary's Cathedral
San Rafael: Church of San Rafael & Mission San Rafael Archangel
Santa Clara: GNA, Santa Clara University
Santa Cruz: Holy Cross
Santa Monica: St. Monica's
Spring Valley: Santa Sophia
Valinda: St. Martha's
West Hollywood: St. Ambrose, St. Victor's
Whittier: St. Mary of the Assumption

Colorado

Arvada: Spirit of Christ Catholic Community
Boulder: St. Thomas Aquinas
Denver: St. Dominic's

Connecticut

Hartford: St. Patrick-St. Anthony

District of Columbia

Dahlgren Chapel-Georgetown University, Holy Trinity, St. Aloysius, St. Matthew Cathedral,

Florida

Casselberry: St. Augustine
Ft. Lauderdale: St. Anthony, St. Maurice
Melbourne: Ascension Parish
Naples: St. John the Evangelist
Winter Haven: St. Matthew

Georgia

Atlanta: Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

Illinois

Berwyn: St. Mary of the Cella
Chicago: Loyola University Chicago, St. Clement
Country Club Hills: St. Emeric
Morton Grove: St. Martha

Indiana

Evansville: St. Mary
Notre Dame: GIANotre Dame/St. Mary's College

Iowa

Iowa City: St. Thomas More

Kentucky

Louisville: Epiphany, Cathedral of the Assumption, St. William's

Maine

Saco: Most Holy Trinity

Maryland

Baltimore: Corpus Christi, Loyola College, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Philip and James
Columbia: St. John the Evangelist
Gaithersburg: St. Rose of Lima
Hagerstown: St. Ann
Sever: St. Bernadette

Massachusetts

Boston: Boston College, Jesuit Urban Center/Immaculate Conception, Paulist Center
Newton: Our Lady Help of Christians
Provincetown: St. Peter the Apostle
Sharon: Our Lady of Sorrows
Worcester: Holy Cross College

Michigan

St. Ignace: St. Ignatius Loyola

Missouri

Kansas City: Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, St. Francis Xavier
St. Louis: Holy Family, Holy Innocents, St. Cronan, St. Margaret of Scotland, St. Pius V

Minnesota

Minneapolis: St. Frances Cabrini, St. Jean of Arc, St. Stephen
St. Paul: College of St. Catherine, University of St. Thomas

New Jersey

Clifton: St. Brendan
Wayzide: St. Anselm

New Mexico

Esparola: Sacred Heart of Jesus

New York

Baldwinsville: St. Augustine
Brooklyn: St. Andrew the Apostle, St. Boniface
East Islip: St. Mary
Fairport: Church of the Assumption

Long Island: St. Cyril and Methodius, Deer Park; St. Bridget's, Westbury; St. Elizabeth, Melville
Manhattan: Holy Name of Jesus; St. Joseph, Greenwich Village; St. Francis Xavier; St. Paul the Apostle
Rochester: Emmanuel Church of the Deaf, St. Augustine, St. John the Evangelist (Humboldt St.), St. Mary's, St. Monica
Syracuse: St. Andrew the Apostle
Utica: St. Francis DeSales

North Carolina

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

Ohio

Akron: St. Bernard, St. Martha
Cincinnati: Lesbian/Gay Ministry, Xavier University; St. Monica-St. George Newman Center, University of Cincinnati
Cleveland: Ascension of Our Lord; Gesu Parish University Heights; St. Ladislav, Westlake; St. Malachi; St. John Viamey, Mentor; St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Wooster
Columbus: St. Thomas More Newman Center, Ohio State University
Dayton: University of Dayton Campus Ministry

Oregon

Central Point: Shepherd of the Valley
Portland: Koinonia Catholic Community, St. Andrew, St. Phillip Neri, St. Vincent de Paul

Pennsylvania

Philadelphia: Old St. Joseph's, Old St. Mary's, St. John the Evangelist, St. Vincent de Paul
York: St. Joseph, San Damiano

Texas

Austin: University Catholic Center-University of Texas
Dallas: Holy Trinity
Plano: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
San Antonio: University of the Incarnate Word

Virginia

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

Washington

Seattle: St. Benedict

West Virginia

Shepherdstown: St. Agnes

Wisconsin

Madison: St. Benedict Center Sunday Assembly
Milwaukee: Prince of Peace, Trinity-Gabalupe

Lewandowski Sees Himself As 'A Reconciler, Not a Divider'

By Matt O'Brien

The Sentinel and Enterprise
Fitchburg, Massachusetts
April 19, 2004

FITCHBURG, MA — The Rev. Richard P. Lewandowski doesn't consider himself a dissident.

He doesn't think he's "unorthodox" either, though some Catholics have accused the priest of abandoning his church's teachings on homosexuality.

"Those are all the buzz words to try to dismiss me, but the fact is, instead of dismiss, why don't we dialogue," said Lewandowski, pastor of St. Camillus di Lellis Parish on Mechanic Street. "Everything that I've been doing in this parish has been according to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church."

When the political arm of the state's four Catholic dioceses, the Massachusetts Catholic Conference, distributed a video denouncing gay marriage, Lewandowski apologized to gays and lesbians for "the hurt" he said the organization caused.

He wrote, in a letter published April 11 in the *Sentinel & Enterprise*, that the MCC's video and statements "do not necessarily represent the views of all Catholic clergy."

The man who made the video, which the MCC endorsed for distribution to parishes across the state, said Lewandowski and a handful of priests are leading parishioners "astray" on the issue of gay marriage.

Out of sync with the Vatican?

"The Vatican has come out very, very clearly with their position on same-sex marriage," said Newton software marketer William Hobbib. "I can say, the Vatican and the Holy Father and the catechism of the Holy Church that embodies the holy teaching would disagree with him. He's out of sync with the Vatican and the published teaching authority of the church."

Hobbib said he was "troubled" by Lewandowski's letter.

"Every bit of that video was backed up by scholarly work and verified," said Gerald D'Avolio, executive director of the Massachusetts Catholic Conference.

Lewandowski counters that he was "troubled" by the video.

"The teaching of the church is not that gay marriage is going to cause problems for the elderly and their medical benefits," said Lewandowski, referring to one of numerous arguments made in the eight-minute movie.

His church, he says, has always come to his side.

"I've not seen the video. I've only heard about it on the news," said Worcester Diocese spokesman Raymond Delisle, who said retiring Bishop Daniel Reilly has always supported Lewandowski's outreach efforts to gays and lesbians.

"I was upset to see his letter, but he also testified to the Massachusetts Legislature in support of same-sex marriage, which is directly against the church's position," Hobbib argued. "It's unfortunate that you have people who are priests that openly disagree with the church teaching."

Lewandowski, whose parish outreach programs minister to gay people in the region, believes most of the state's priests did not show Hobbib's video at weekend Masses because they viewed it as a negative distraction from Lenten services.

"That's not the Catholic teaching," Lewandowski said. "There are some people that think that it is. It's not."

The video was produced as a "teaching tool for the future," D'Avolio said.

"I disagree with Father Lewandowski. That's very clear," D'Avolio said. "The Massachusetts Catholic Conference disagrees with that position. We don't apologize for anything."

Parishioners weigh in

Norman Fredette and his wife have been attending St. Camillus for more than 40 years, long before Lewandowski was assigned to the church in 1992.

"I don't see anything wrong with Father (Lewandowski's) position. It just doesn't seem inconsistent to me," said Fredette. "People I speak with I guess are mixed, but it's the kind of place where you can disagree. The people I talk to are not one-issue people. That's the sense that I have."

Julia Casey believes gay marriage is "biologically impossible," but she and her husband have been attending St. Camillus since they moved to Fitchburg from Dorchester 35 years ago.

"He's an activist priest. He's got a lot of enthusiasm," she said. "I don't always agree with everything he says, but people can't always agree. I don't feel as though I need to change my church." Casey said she's lasted through five pastors at the church.

"He hasn't been defrocked. He hasn't been thrown out. He hasn't been censored in any way. I go listen to the homilies, I receive the sacraments," she said.

Not going along

Joan Conroy of Fitchburg also feels strongly against gay marriage, "though not homosexuals themselves."

"I certainly do not go along with a lot of that," Conroy said of Lewandowski's public pronouncements. "He really does a lot of good, so I just have to ignore this and I just pray."

Conroy is part of the church choir, a Eucharistic minister and a lector who sees Lewandowski as a "doer, he gets things done."

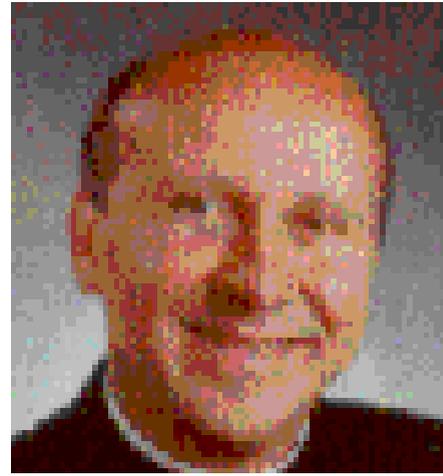
Her daughter was baptized at the church, and Conroy said she doesn't plan

to leave.

"I've been there almost 50 years so you know everybody," she said. "It's like home to me. ... It's still my home."

Fredette thinks the children of gay couples would benefit from gay marriage.

He believes Lewandowski is always careful to be theologically accurate in his public statements but said political issues rarely arise during Sunday services.



Fr. Rich Lewandowski

"It doesn't seem to find its way into the Mass in any overt way. I think that's why people don't feel like he's doing bad things in any direction," said Fredette. "He's an opening and welcoming person, and I can tell he's uncomfortable counting anybody out and saying, well, you shouldn't come to this church. He's the kind of person, and this is what I like about him, is that he just doesn't reject people."

Cultural growing pains

Lewandowski, during a recent interview at his home in the St. Camillus rectory, said he thinks the increasingly vocal divide within the Catholic community on social concerns is a product of cultural growing pains.

He cites Boston Archbishop Sean O'Malley, who recently made public comments calling most of the baby-boomer generation "religious illiterates."

Lewandowski is a baby boomer born just three years after O'Malley. He said it was the upheaval of the 1960s that actually inspired him to become a priest.

"We come from the same generation and somehow we have been formed by that generation differently," Lewandowski said.

Born in Worcester to a Catholic family of Polish descent, Lewandowski was one of nine children and the first member of his family to enter the priesthood.

He was a "social" student at his high school, not a particularly studious one, but one who found inspiration from the sense of idealism he saw in President John F. Kennedy, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and the Second Vatican Council.

He went to a Polish seminary in Michigan and then returned to Worcester, where he was ordained in 1974.

It wasn't until 13 years later, when he was reading scriptures for the Feast of the Annunciation in March, that he knew for sure "he was doing the right thing."

Doing the will of God

"I remember that so vividly because the readings were (about) doing the will of God," he said. "It wasn't any kind of grand revelation; it was just through meditation that I came to realize it."

Lewandowski downplays his difference in views from new church leaders such as O'Malley.

"I think that's a healthy thing," he said. "The danger can be if I become so self-righteous that I have all the answers, and you have none."

"I see myself as a bridge-builder. I see myself as a reconciler rather than a divider," he said.

Not everyone agrees, Lewandowski has come to realize.

He gets a lot of mail at the church, some signed and some not, some supportive and some negative.

"These are from Somerville, Cambridge, I don't know who these people are," Lewandowski said as he sifted through thank you cards that recently arrived to the church because of his recently published letter.

Most of those letters end up in the hands of the lay people who help run his church.

"I've responded to a couple of them, but I don't send any venom back," said Ben Nogueira, the church's deacon.

The deacon said most of the negative comments come from members of the community who do not attend St. Camillus, which he said opens its arms to everyone.

"They're just saying we should go to hell and our teachings are all wrong. That we should read the Bible," said the deacon's wife, Lois Nogueira. "Never has there been anything in the homilies ... that went against church teaching."

Lewandowski said everything he does to minister to gays and lesbians aligns with the church's message and the guidance of the Worcester Catholic Diocese's retiring leader.

The priest got help from the diocese to form an organization, Gay/Lesbian Outreach (GLO), that meets at the church and works with gay people and their families.

"Bishop Reilly is a very compassionate and kind churchman, and he has encouraged us to continue to serve as ministers to gays and lesbians," Lewandowski said. "He has been nothing but supportive."

Delisle, the bishop's spokesman,

Continued on page 7

Former Boston bishop wants gay ban in Catholic seminaries

'Men with pathologies and difficulties, they will draw the same kind,' says Bishop D'Arcy

By Chuck Colbert
Innewsweekly.com
July 28, 2004

BOSTON — Pastoral sensitivity to stem parish closings and advocacy to ban gay men from the clergy made strange spiritual bedfellows when Bishop John M. D'Arcy of the Fort Wayne/South Bend diocese in Indiana returned to a Brighton parish this past weekend.

During the 10 a.m. Sunday homily at Our Lady of Presentation Church, where D'Arcy grew up, the bishop said, "We must be careful of who we accept in the seminary and who we ordain as priests," adding, "It's time to ordain men of quality, not just look for numbers," according to *The Boston Globe*, which first reported the story.

Our Lady of Presentation is set to close under a regional parish consolidation plan. D'Arcy's presence lent support to parishioners who are lobbying to keep the church open as a chapel for weekly services. The bishop said he would pray for the parish.

But his comments on banning gay seminarians are what generated headlines from *The Associated Press* to *Advocate.com*.

According to D'Arcy, the Church must find men that can be respected, in other words, "men who would be good husbands, men who would be good fathers." After the Mass in a *Globe* interview, the bishop acknowledged that his good-husbands, good-fathers remark conveyed his belief that only heterosexuals are fit for ordination.

To put gay men in an all-male environment is apparently too tempting with too many attractions. We don't put these [heterosexual] men in with attractive women," D'Arcy told the *Globe*, referring to seminaries. "You're putting him with men. It's not fair to them, it's not fair to the church."

D'Arcy also said that if the church can bring the right men with the right temperament for the priesthood, then more priests will be inspired to work for the Church. "If we ordain men with pathologies and difficulties, they will draw the same kind," he explained. "Don't just pray for priests, pray for priests of quality."

Reaction to the bishop's comments have been swift and pointed, both locally and nationally.

Fewnway resident Charles Martel, a gay Catholic lay leader and psychotherapist, said, "D'Arcy, like so many in the Catholic hierarchy, seem bent on blaming everything wrong in the Church and in society on gay men. His idea that gay men should be banned from the priesthood just on the basis of being gay is an insult to every wonderful gay priest who is serving the Church today."

Explained Martel, "This scapegoating is terribly divisive, harmful, and continues to create a climate of discrimination based on fear that has no place in the Church. Whatever happened to the Church that preached inclusion?"

Martel also offered a suggestion: "If the

bishop and other members of the hierarchy do decide to follow through on their ban, it seems only right that those who are gay should resign their positions now," he said. "After all, how could they in good conscience ban what they themselves are?"

Frank DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry, a gay positive and affirming ministry, echoed Martel's observation. "Bishop D'Arcy's comments reveal his own ignorance about homosexuality," he said. "Gay priests have served the Church faithfully for centuries, and will continue to do so. The only question will be how honest they and their Church can be about homosexuality."

Like Martel, DeBernardo also offered a suggestion: "What the church needs is not a ban on gay priests, but a ban on anti-gay statements from Church leaders."

The National Coalition of American Nuns offered their perspective. "Bishop D'Arcy suggests that clerical sexual misconduct toward males can be controlled by not ordaining homosexuals. This makes as much sense as saying that eliminating heterosexuals from the seminary will prevent a repetition of all the pregnancies, abortions, and sexual abuse of women who have been victimized by priests," said Sister Jeannine Gramick, SL, a member of the executive committee of the nun's organization.

The national organization of gay Catholics also weighed in: "Dignity is appalled that the bishop would begin to hunt gay priests again," said Matt Gallagher, executive director of Dignity/USA, the oldest nationwide organization of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Catholics, based in Washington, D.C., also with a local chapter in Boston.

Gallagher also pointed out that D'Arcy is out of step with his fellow bishops' organization. "The president of the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops] has said that it would not be blaming gay priests or looking into people's sexual orientation," he said.

Kara Speltz, the chairwoman of Soulforce's Catholic team, offered her perspective: "To suggest that gay men are not men of quality is simply outrageous," she said. "Was there a better priest than Mychal Judge?" The reference was to the openly gay priest who was a victim of the 9/11 terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center in New York.

Bishop D'Arcy's comments about pathologies and difficulties conveys beliefs held by some prelates that homosexuality per se is a pathological condition or as the Catholic Church teaching states, an "objective disorder," which if acted upon is immoral, a manifestation of "intrinsic evil."

Prelates like D'Arcy go even further, linking what they believe to be the pathology of homosexuality with that of sex abuse. D'Arcy's views on that kind of misinformed blurring came to light when the scandal of clerical sex abuse

erupted locally and nationally more than two years ago.

For example, the *Globe's* reporting then of the abuse scandal shined light on D'Arcy's views. The bishop wrote any number of letters, including one written in 1984, about the late Rev. John Geoghan, whom D'Arcy warned Cardinal Bernard F. Law, had "a history of homosexual involvement [with] young men."

D'Arcy served as an auxiliary bishop under Law at the time, but was assigned to the Indiana diocese shortly thereafter. Law was forced to resign over the sex abuse crisis.

Geoghan, a major figure in the scandal, had been accused of molesting 150 children, mostly boys. At the time of his murder in prison, Geoghan was serving a nine- to 10-year sentence for molesting a 10-year-old boy.

Altogether, Bishop D'Arcy's recent comments also prompted a response from the Boston archdiocese. "The main issue is celibacy," said the Rev. Christopher J. Coyne, a spokesman, who also acknowledged that while some discussion of a ban on homosexual seminarians among some diocesan officials and those in the Vatican had occurred, no decisions had been made.

Coyne also told the *Globe* that only 20 percent of applicants for the priesthood in the local archdiocese are accepted. "I don't see the need here in Boston," he said of a possible change and overhaul of screening. "I can say the process in Boston is a good one." ■

Recommended Reading

U.S. Catholic
"Mom, Dad, I'm gay"
August 2004
Volume 69, Number 8
pages 18-23

Notre Dame Magazine
"The Love That Dare
Not Speak Its Name"
Summer 2004
Volume 33, Number 2

Boston College prez rejects gay candidates for English department

Whether decision based on sexual orientation remains unclear; some say same-sex marriage issue in play

By Chuck Colbert
Innewsweekly.com
April 22, 2004

BOSTON — The hiring or non-hiring of two gay men in the Boston College English department couldn't have come at a more inopportune time for the university or its president, Rev. William Leahy, a Jesuit priest.

According to a story on April 8 in *The Boston Globe*, the school's president rejected the leading candidates because they are gay. But not so, says Boston College spokesman Jack Dunn, director of public affairs. At no time was the sexual orientation of the candidates discussed during the process, Dunn said in a recent telephone interview.

Boston College is a most open and tolerant university, Dunn told the *Globe*. "We have gay faculty and students who flourish here and who contribute mightily to the intellectual vibrancy of the university. Any assertion that sexual orientation plays into hiring here is completely unfounded."

Dunn also points to openly gay faculty members at the Chestnut Hill campus. For instance, Kevin Ohi teaches a queer theory course, and Andrew Sofer, a gay deconstructionist, are among English department faculty members, Dunn said.

Moreover, the school's notice of nondiscrimination states: "Boston College does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, marital or parental status, veteran status, sex, or disabilities in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its programs and activities."

It also goes on to say, "The University is in compliance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and provides equal employment and housing opportunities without regard to sexual orientation."

And the policy states: "Boston College is an academic community whose doors are open to all students without regard to race, religion, age, sex, marital or parental status, national origin, veteran status, or handicap.

BC does not, however, provide domestic partnership benefits to the significant others of faculty members, employees or students.

But that will change, Dunn acknowledged, when gay or lesbian faculty members, employees, or students marry someone of the same gender after May 17, when the state high court's decision upholding same-sex civil marriage rights

takes effect.

Meanwhile, there were four finalists by the end of the English department's search process, according to Dunn. They were ranked in order and presented to Father Leahy for his final decision.

As president, Leahy has the final say on hiring for tenure positions, "That's his right," Dunn said.

Among those four candidates were two gay men, ranked first and second.

The English department's top choice for the prestigious Rattigan Professorship was Mark Doty, a poet who lives in both New York and Provincetown.

Second was Carl Phillips, a professor of English, African, and Afro-American studies at Washington University in St. Louis.

The other two candidates in order of preference included Jonathan Schell, a former writer for *The New Yorker* and a visiting professor at Yale Law School, and Margot Livesey, a Cambridge novelist.

Leahy "wasn't aware that [Doty and Phillips] were gay until after the fact," Dunn said, quoted in the *Globe*. He thought Schell was the best candidate to meet the needs of the students of the English department.

Boston College is a Roman Catholic university that is run by the Jesuits, a religious order of men.

Last year, Leahy granted official recognition to a gay-straight student alliance group. That decision broke a string of three previous rejections of requests for official status of a gay-friendly student organization.

However, this year Leahy has taken a public stand, in accord with the Boston archdiocese and Archbishop Sean Patrick O'Malley against same-sex civil marriage. Along with other religious leaders, Leahy in fact signed on in favor of a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage.

That anti-gay civil marriage stand, some BC observers say, may well explain Leahy's rejection of gay candidates.

In fact, one of the candidates, Phillips, has a partner.

Phillips, according to the *Globe's* story, said that English department Chairman Paul Lewis, who also chaired the search process, called him to say, "There were problems at the level of the president."

Said Phillips, quoted in the *Globe*, "This somehow had to do with the complicated issue of gay marriage and civil unions. I called him [Lewis] and said: 'Are you saying that I didn't get the job because I am gay and have a domestic partner? That's as if this happened 40 years ago,

and I didn't get the job because I am African-American.' He said it was like that."

For his part, Lewis said that his remarks may have been misunderstood.

"We never suggested that the president acted out of bias," the English department chair told the *Globe*. "We only asked questions about whether this might be going on."

Attempts to reach Lewis by phone and e-mail failed.

Nevertheless, some gay BC observers and insiders wonder about a connection between Leahy's anti-gay marriage position and his decision not to hire gay candidates. Leahy may want to curry favor with Archbishop O'Malley while the university attempts to buy land from the archdiocese, one person, who asked not to be identified, speculated.

"Follow the trail of money to that parcel of land over on Lake Street," one source said.

Not hiring openly gay candidates and coming out strong against gay marriage makes perfect sense, if a key goal is winning favor with the archbishop to

acquire key real estate for the college, other observers and insiders also speculate.

Nonetheless, the prestigious Rattigan Professorship sits empty, difficult to fill. The most recent search was the third to fail.

In the immediate aftermath of the non-hiring, finger pointing prevails.

"It's an outrageous case of discrimination," Phillips told the *Globe*.

"It would be sickening to be working at a place where this could happen. I don't think the president's actions are reflective of the BC community in general. I have a helpless feeling about it."

For his part, Dunn believes that Lewis and the English department are to blame for derailing the process after Leahy nixed their first choices.

"The committee chose to inform the candidates that the search was off," Dunn told the *Globe*. "Why did they forfeit the right to hire an excellent candidate just because he didn't fit their narrow, personal agenda?"

"Such a move was a political statement," he suggested during a phone interview. ■

Notre Dame Gays reach out

continued from page 1

models for students at the schools they attended, he said.

This weekend's "networking," Pais said, could lead to forming groups like Notre Dame-St. Mary's group, which he helped to found 12 years ago.

There's no formal agenda yet, but Pais, 54, of New York City, sees the national Catholic group as an idea whose time has come.

"My hope is what we can do is advance the discussion around spirituality, sexuality and homosexuality," he said.

"When I went to Notre Dame, I was a very traditional Catholic. The whole religion was following laws," said Pais, who says he is a regular churchgoer at a "very inclusive Jesuit parish."

"At Notre Dame I lost my religion but I found my faith - doing good, trying to create a better world and accepting who I was and what God made me."

While Catholic teaching condemns homosexual acts, it calls for compassion for homosexuals. Several surveys have shown Catholic laity are more tolerant of gays than conservative religious Protestants.

At Notre Dame, gay acceptance has been undergoing an evolution, according to both Pais and Matt Storin, the university's official spokesman.

The gay alum group has no official

standing. But Storin said it would soon get its first mention in an alumni publication, "a sort of here-we-exist kind of notice."

"There certainly is no secret that we have gay and lesbian students," Storin said, "so it stands to reason we have gay and lesbian graduates."

Notre Dame's film-TV-theater department hosted in February its first "Queer Film Festival," at which Equality Forum executive director Malcolm Lazin presented "Jim in Bold."

The documentary about homophobia was produced by the Forum and made its debut last year. It tells of a gay Lebanon, Pa., teenager who wrote poetry but was harassed at school and ultimately committed suicide.

Lazin said discussions he had after the screening in South Bend, Ind., with students and gay alums such as Pais led eventually to the launch of a national gay alumni organization.

Pais said the football tailgate party drew more than 100 gay alums last year and drew "an amazing" positive response from other fans at pregame festivities.

"We are loyal sons and daughters of the university," he said. "We love Notre Dame as much as everyone else." ■

Sharper Focus: Reasoned Catholic responses to marriage

By Chuck Colbert
Innewsweekly.com
May 26, 2004

Two groups of Catholics, one local, one national, have raised their voice with the advent and now dawn of same-sex civil marriage in America. Both offer the Church much wisdom. From the first group, their statement is not even 200 words long, but its message — signed by more than a 100 Bay State Catholics, members of the clergy, prominent lay persons, theologians, women and men religious — rings loud and clear:

“On May 17, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will begin issuing civil marriage licenses to same-sex couples. This has provoked considerable controversy. Many in our state are opposed, and many are in favor. As members of the Catholic community and people of faith, we are reminded of the pastoral message the United States Bishops issued to parents of homosexual children, ‘Always Our Children,’ and recall the guidance they offered with reference to a previous Vatican document:

‘Respect for the God-given dignity of all persons means the recognition of human rights and responsibilities. The teachings of the church make it clear that the fundamental human rights of homosexual persons must be defended and that all of us must strive to eliminate

any forms of injustice, oppression, or violence against them’ (from *The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*, 1986).

“We call on all our brothers and sisters in the commonwealth to treat same-sex couples with respect, and to do no harm to them or their families. We urge a respectful discourse and dialogue among all people.”

Written and drafted in part by Larry Kessler and Charles Martel, local gay Catholic leaders, along with several priests of the Archdiocese of Boston, the open letter’s purpose had several objectives.

One purpose was to speak out for a peaceful transition as the marital state for gay and lesbian couples arrives, mindful that a number who marry are gay and lesbian Catholics themselves.

Another object was to demonstrate respect and support for gay and lesbian persons. Using the Vatican’s very own teaching sends a powerful message to all — that gays also enjoy full human dignity and fundamental rights. They should not be treated unjustly, be oppressed, or suffer violence or injustice.

At the same time, as any number of faithful Catholic voices among the laity and clergy speak out locally against violence and for respect and human dignity, another group hopes to take the faithful further. While local Catholics fell short of endorsing same-sex civil marriage, another group of courageous

women have done so.

Roman Catholic nuns are speaking out for same-sex marriage as a civil right. The National Coalition of American Nuns (NCAN) had this to say in a recently released statement:

“NCAN believes that a responsible ethic emanates from both individual conscience and theological reflection within a faith community. We further believe that all persons have a right to choose how they fulfill the divine command to love one another. We are opposed to any environment that does not allow people to follow their consciences and make informed judgments about their own lives. We welcome theological reflection from all the people of God to produce a viable sexual ethic.

“There is much disagreement about gay marriage among people of good faith. Some Christian congregations have blessed same-sex unions for years, seeing no contradiction to the Bible or to the natural moral law.

“NCAN believes that human consciousness has slowly evolved to accept the dignity and human rights of all people so that slavery is now generally condemned worldwide. The Christian Church’s appreciation for the inviolability of religious freedom, its sexual theology, and even its understanding of the meaning of marriage have all changed over the centuries. Can we not imagine that God’s Spirit is asking the human community to

further examine the question, ‘What is the nature or essence of marriage?’ NCAN maintains that love, care, and commitment to another human being, not gender or procreation, form the essence or meaning of marriage.

“NCAN believes that civil law, as well as theology, must respect and protect all persons.

“In 1996, when the United States Senate considered passage of the Defense of Marriage Act, which stated that marriage must involve a man and a woman, NCAN opposed the bill. NCAN still opposes any such measure. We believe heterosexual marriage needs no legislative act to defend it because it is no more threatened by same-sex marriage than by celibate single persons.

“While communities of faith debate the theological meaning of marriage and a viable sexual ethic, we believe the political definition of marriage must not be discriminatory. The ethic in the civil arena seems clear: If heterosexual unions or marriages are recognized by the state, a lack of similar recognition of same-sex unions or marriages is an unambiguous discrimination based on sexual orientation. Such discrimination is politically and morally wrong.”

Politically and morally wrong, the sisters say. Would that our local hierarchical (male) Church leadership take note of such courage and listen to those words of reason — and the sisters’ wisdom. ■

Bishops Unable To Agree On Gays And Communion

365Gay.com
June 18, 2004

DENVER — A meeting of America’s Roman Catholic bishops that wrapped up late Friday afternoon was unable to reach a national consensus on what penalties should be meted out to politicians who oppose the Church’s stand on gay marriage.

The bishops have been meeting for the past week in Englewood, Colorado.

While some bishops have called for Roman Catholic politicians who support same-sex marriage to be denied the sacraments of the Church, others prefer a less confrontational approach.

In the end, despite heavy lobbying from both sides, the bishops decided to leave it up to individual dioceses. A closing statement, approved by a 183 - 6 vote said each decision about denying communion to some Catholics in public life should rest with the individual bishop “in accord with established canonical and pastoral principles.” The statement also said bishops can legitimately make different judgments on the “most prudent” course of

action.

The bishops also said they did not want communion, which Catholics believe is the body and blood of Christ, to be reduced to a political issue.

“The polarizing tendencies of election-year politics can lead to circumstances in which Catholic teaching and sacramental practices can be misused for political ends.”

The resolution is bound to frustrate President Bush who last week asked the Pope to put pressure on the American churchmen to be more vocal in their support of a proposed amendment to ban same-sex marriage. Bush reportedly implored the Pope to increase Catholic condemnation of gay marriage in the weeks leading up to the election.

Bush, a Protestant, opposes same-sex marriage while Sen. John Kerry, a Catholic and the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee and who also opposes gay marriage would allow civil unions, also opposed by Bush and the Church.

Some bishops have told the Kerry campaign that he is not welcome in their

churches.

Chicago’s Cardinal Francis George, who has already refused to give communion to members of a gay Catholic group, reportedly supported a ban on the Sacraments to politicians who support gay issues.

Last month, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Colorado Springs said any Catholic who votes for politicians who do not oppose same-sex marriage, abortion rights, stem-cell research, or euthanasia may not receive Communion until they recant and repent in the confessional.

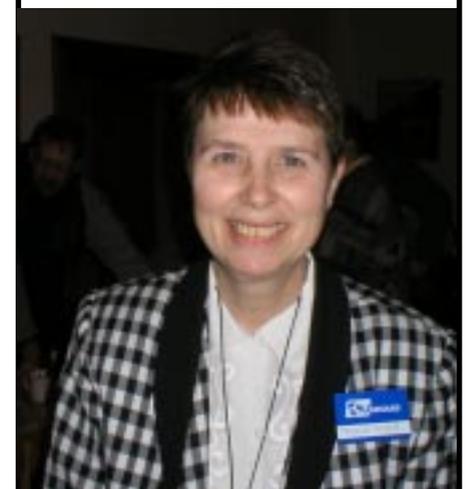
Bishop Michael Sheridan later softened his tone saying that rather than the church refusing them communion they should voluntarily abstain from the rites of the Church, after his Archbishop suggested in a pastoral letter that he opposed blanket sanctions.

Charles Chaput, the Archbishop of Denver said that he would be reluctant to prevent Catholics from receiving the sacrament.

Chaput said communion should be withheld only in “extraordinary cases of public scandal.” ■

**Pilgrimage to
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England's Catholic leaders shrink from Vatican on gays

Where Rome sees 'evil,' British bishops more open to marriage rights

By **Tod Robberson**
The Dallas Morning News
 May 26, 2004

LONDON - England's Roman Catholic Church officially distanced itself Wednesday from Vatican doctrine on the "evil" of same-sex unions, declaring that some "remedy by law" might be necessary to remove barriers to gay partnerships.

The softer position on gay rights emerged Wednesday in a new, 103-page teaching document, "Cherishing Life," outlining the views of the Catholic Church of England and Wales on life, morality and many of the controversial issues confronting modern society.

Endorsed by the church's head, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, the document adds heft to the

pronouncements of senior Catholic officials in Spain and Belgium that the church needs to recognize same-sex relationships.

Although England's Catholic population is small, its challenge to Vatican doctrine suggests a growing concern among the European clergy that Pope John Paul II has alienated the public with his condemnation of gay unions.

The Vatican took its harsher stance last July after several European governments moved to grant nearly the same legal rights to same-sex unions that they confer upon married heterosexual couples. The 26-nation European Union also is considering measures to recognize gay unions.

The Vatican warned Catholic politicians around the world not to support any proposed legislation granting marital rights to gay couples, stating, "Those who would move ... to the legitimization of specific rights for cohabiting homosexual persons need to be reminded that the approval or legalization of evil is something far different from the toleration of evil."

The new British church document counters: "The Church utterly condemns all forms of unjust discrimination, violence, harassment or abuse directed against people who are homosexual."

Although it still rejects gay sex and marriage, it adds, "It must be quite clear that a homosexual orientation must never be considered sinful or evil in itself."

Discrimination concerns

The document also acknowledges the need for some legislation to eliminate discrimination against gays who live together in a committed relationship.

"It may be necessary ... to remedy by law unjust situations in which the bonds of friendship are improperly disregarded (for instance, being excluded from appropriate consultation regarding medical care or from funeral arrangements)," the document states. "In such cases the right to justice is founded on the dignity of every human being and citizenship and not on sexual activity or orientation."

Dr. David Jones, editor of "Cherishing Life," said the original Vatican position employed "forceful terms" that went beyond the comfort level that English bishops

prefer in defending marriage as a bond between a man and woman.

He acknowledged growing concern among the clergy in England and elsewhere that there is a growing perception of the church as insensitive and "nay-saying all the time."

Cardinal O'Connor, writing in *The Guardian* newspaper Wednesday, acknowledged the church's need to counter "a caricature of Christian, and specifically Catholic, morality that has developed over the years. It is wrong, for example, to imagine that Catholics are unusually preoccupied with sin. It would be more accurate to say that we are preoccupied with the notion of forgiveness."

The church has suffered bouts of bad publicity in Europe over the last year following a British television interview with a cardinal in Colombia who suggested that condoms can help spread AIDS.

Belgium's Cardinal Gustaaf Joos, 80, added to the controversy when he condemned a new Belgian law granting nearly full marital rights to gays and declaring in a magazine interview that most gays are "sexual perverts."

Belgian Cardinal Godfried Danneels quickly disavowed the two clerics' remarks. He has since issued conciliatory statements toward gay sympathizers and contradicted Vatican doctrine by advocating the use of condoms to prevent the spread of life-threatening diseases.

A view from Spain

In Spain, the Vatican's official envoy, or papal nuncio, Monsignor Manuel Monteiro de Castro, told a conference of Spanish bishops this month that the church needed to acknowledge the existence of partnerships other than those between heterosexuals.

"There are other forms of cohabitation, and it is good that they be recognized," European newspapers quoted him as saying.

"It is the case that English bishops and Belgians and various others, particularly in the West, have pastoral care and preach the Gospel in places where popular opinion about homosexuality has shifted quite significantly," Dr. Jones explained. "I think they are concerned about alienating individuals of homosexual inclination or people who are friends or feel in solidarity with homosexuals." ■

Deep Within, I Will Plant my Law: A Retreat on Conscience, Catholics, And Homosexuality with Sister Margaret Farley, RSM Yale University Divinity School

October 29-31, 2004

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Loretto Volunteer Joins New Ways for Year



Jennifer Morgan

New Ways Ministry recently welcomed its newest staff member, Jennifer Stapleton Morgan. Jennifer is part of a service program run by the Loretto community, and will be a Loretto Volunteer at New Ways until August 2005.

In May 2004, Jennifer, a native of Mobile, Alabama, graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a degree in Political Science and English. While at Notre Dame, she was a Resident Assistant in her dorm, an intern for Congressman Tim Roemer, sports editor of the yearbook, and an active participant in Campus Ministry programs and retreats. With any time to spare, Jennifer enjoys going on long runs or curling up with a good book.

In addition to her responsibilities at the New Ways office in Mt. Rainier, Maryland, Jennifer will be interacting with Gay and Lesbian Outreach groups at colleges in the DC area, networking with various groups, as well as attending New Ways retreat, seminars, and conferences around the country. ■