

# BONDINGS

Volume 25, No. 3

A Publication of New Ways Ministry

Spring 2005

## Cardinal's anti-gay marriage letter draws condemnation

By Allison Dunfield  
*The Globe and Mail*  
Toronto, Canada  
January 19, 2005

TORONTO—A group representing progressive Catholics has condemned a call by the Roman Catholic archbishop of Toronto for the Liberals to maintain marriage as a union between heterosexuals, calling his comments “fearmongering” and out of touch with reality.

*Challenge the Church*, a Toronto-based organization of Catholics who push human-rights issues within the church, argued Wednesday that comments made by Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic in a letter urging Prime Minister Paul Martin to block gay marriage are “draconian.”

“I would say the majority of Catholics would disagree with him,” Helen Kennedy, a spokeswoman for *Challenge the Church*, told globeandmail.com.

“He’s living in a cocoon if he thinks

that Catholics don’t support same-sex marriage.”

Ms. Kennedy cited an August, 2003, *EnviroNics* poll showing 57 per cent of Canadian Catholics are in favour of allowing such unions. She said the cardinal is simply “fearmongering” ahead of the Liberal government’s proposed same-sex legislation.

The letter is the latest gearing-up activity of groups on both sides of the same-sex debate as they ready themselves to lobby either for or against homosexual marriage ahead of the Liberal bill, expected to be tabled some time after Parliament resumes its session on Jan. 31.

The Conservative Party launched an advertising campaign against same-sex marriage Wednesday, aimed especially at some in Canada’s ethnic community.

Mr. Martin was forced to defend his government’s decision to introduce the legislation during a trip to India this week after a powerful Sikh religious leader there condemned the idea. And

the Canadian Forces have indicated this week that they will support same-sex marriages on their bases, by drafting a policy for military clergy who may choose to perform the ceremonies.

In his letter to Mr. Martin, published in Wednesday’s *Globe and Mail*, the cardinal urged Mr. Martin to use the notwithstanding clause to allow for a long-term discussion of the possible implications of gay marriage.

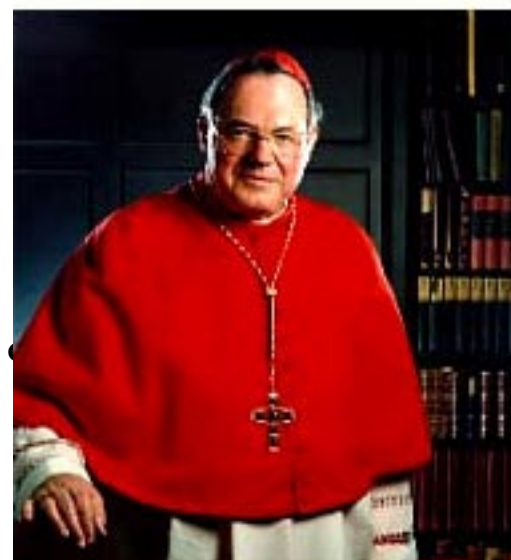
The cardinal asked Mr. Martin to use the notwithstanding clause, which has five-

Ms. Kennedy called that ludicrous. “The legislation and the Supreme Court decision was very clear. The Catholic church does not have to marry same-sex couples if it doesn’t want to.”

Cardinal Ambrozic’s letter is the second high-profile church proposal in recent weeks.

Calgary Bishop Fred Henry recently sent a letter to his followers arguing that the state must use its coercive power either to proscribe or to curtail homosexuality. That letter causing a flurry of angry mail and editorials across the country.

Ms. Kennedy



Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic

year lifespan, to allow for a “sober and careful decision on the matter.”

The notwithstanding clause is a mechanism that the provincial and federal governments can use to override the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which provincial courts have cited in decisions upholding the right of gay couples to marry.

Gays and lesbians must be protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms just like any other group, Ms. Kennedy argued.

“It’s absolutely absurd to think that we wouldn’t have the same rights as any other Canadian,” Ms. Kennedy said. “It’s human rights issue. You can’t cherry pick under the Charter.”

The cardinal’s letter contended that Parliament’s passing same-sex marriage legislation would affect the fabric of the country’s social institutions, including schools, where children would have to be taught about same-sex relationships, and that it would teach society that same-sex relationships are “morally equivalent” to heterosexual ones—something the cardinal disagrees with.

The Roman Catholic leader also feared that Catholics would be required to perform same-sex marriages against their beliefs.

said her group plans to hold a meeting this week to make further plans to lobby MPs and get them to support the legislation.

“It’s a wake-up call for gays and lesbians across the country. . . It puts us on notice that we really have to step up and get in touch with our MPs.”

The proposed legislation has the support of the Bloc Québécois, the NDP and some Liberals. Mr. Martin has publicly said that he supports same-sex marriage and has announced that cabinet members will be required to vote for the bill, although the vote will be free for other MPs.

**Tories launch anti-gay marriage ad**

The Conservative Party, meanwhile, is against the bill and has launched a print advertising campaign on the subject.

Copies of the ad were supplied to media outlets on Wednesday.

The ad asks Canadians to send the Tories a reply on whether they support gay marriage.

With block letters reading: “Where do you draw the line”, the print ads show a picture of Mr. Martin with a caption saying he intends to impose gay marriage on Canadians and a photo of Mr. Harper saying he believes in traditional marriage.

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## California Catholic school angers parents by admitting gay couple's sons

*The Associated Press*  
January 2, 2005

COSTA MESA, Calif. (AP) - A group of parents and parishioners has accused the Orange County diocese of violating church doctrine by allowing a gay couple to enroll their children in a Catholic school.

The group demanded last month that St. John the Baptist School in Costa Mesa accept only families that pledge to abide by Catholic teachings. That would likely bar the men’s two adopted boys from attending the school’s kindergarten because of church opposition to relationships and adoption by same-sex couples.

“This is not a radical or mean-spirited approach to Catholic education,” the group told the school in a letter reviewed by the *Los Angeles Times*. “It is a

straightforward assurance to any prospective parent that their child will be taught the fullness of Roman Catholic doctrine.”

School officials, however, rejected demands for a parental covenant last week and issued a new policy stating that a family’s background “does not constitute an absolute obstacle to enrollment in the school.”

“I firmly believe that this policy is in line with the teaching of the Catholic Church,” Rev. Martin Benzoni, who oversees the 550-student elementary and middle school, told the *Times*.

Rev. Gerald M. Horan, superintendent of schools operated by the diocese, suggested that hewing too closely to Catholic beliefs would mean banning children whose parents divorced, used birth control or married outside the church.

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# BONDINGS

Spring 2005

Vol. 25, No. 3

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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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## Spain's Catholic Church Backs Condoms

*The Associated Press*  
January 19, 2005

MADRID—Spain's Catholic Church said it supports the use of condoms to prevent the spread of AIDS - a substantial shift from traditional policy.

The Vatican states that condoms, being a form of artificial birth control, cannot be used to help prevent the spread of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

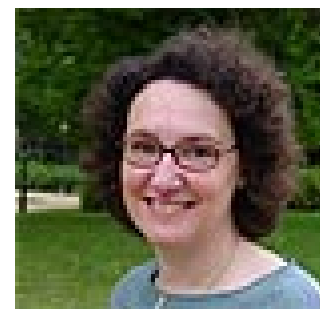
But "condoms have a place in the global prevention of AIDS," Juan Antonio Martinez Camino, spokesman for the Spanish Bishops Conference, told reporters after a meeting Tuesday with Health Minister Elena Salgado to discuss ways of fighting the disease.

Martinez Camino said the Spanish Catholic Church's stance is backed by the scientific world. He cited a recent study by experts in the medical magazine *Lancet* that supported the so-called "ABC" approach of fighting AIDS - "A" for abstinence, "B" for being faithful to partners, and "C" for condoms.

"The Church is very worried and interested by this problem," he said.

There was no comment from the Vatican to the Spanish statement.

The Spanish Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Transsexuals and Bisexuals welcomed the change in policy.



**Beatriz Gimeno**

"I think it was absolutely inevitable that the Church would change its stance," said the group's president, Beatriz Gimeno.

The daily newspaper *El Pais* noted that as recently as November, the Spanish Bishops Conference had vehemently opposed the Health Ministry's campaign to promote the use of condoms. The paper quoted Martinez Camino as saying then that it was "gravely false" to maintain that contraceptives prevented the spread of HIV.

In June, the president of the Pontifical Council for the Family, Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo, said condom use was "a form of Russian roulette" in fighting AIDS, *El Pais* said. The remark was roundly condemned by the Spanish government, the World Health Organization and other organizations involved in fighting AIDS, the papers added.

The United Left parliamentary coalition described the change in stance as "a historic advance." ■

## Pope Advocates Education to Prevent AIDS

*The Associated Press*  
January 22, 2005

VATICAN CITY—Education, chastity and sexual fidelity are the responsible methods to combat AIDS, Pope John Paul II said Saturday, reiterating Vatican policy days after Spanish bishops supported condom use to fight the disease but then quickly reversed their position.

The Vatican has come under fire from AIDS activists because it forbids use of condoms, even to prevent transmission of the HIV virus.

"The Holy See ... considers that it is necessary above all to combat this disease in a responsible way by increasing prevention, notably through education about respect of the sacred value of life and formation about the correct practice of sexuality, which presupposes chastity and fidelity," John Paul told the Netherlands' new ambassador to the Holy See, Monique Patricia Antoinette Frank, who presented her credentials to the pontiff.

The pope's comments came days after Spanish bishops made front-page headlines by announcing an apparent change in policy toward condom use. On Tuesday, Bishop Juan Antonio Martinez Camino, spokesman for the Spanish Bishops Conference, said "condoms have a place in the global prevention of AIDS."

But on Wednesday night, the conference issued a statement saying the bishop's comments "must be understood in the context of Catholic doctrine, which holds that use of condoms is immoral sexual conduct."

Spain's gay groups reacted by saying they regretted the church's return to old policy after its "attack of lucidity."

The pope said the church has mobilized itself on behalf of AIDS victims, especially by insisting they be assured access to necessary treatment.

On Friday, the pope told members of a Vatican council on health care issues that they should pay special attention to AIDS victims.

In his speech to the ambassador, John Paul also spoke of the need for "absolute respect for human life, from conception to natural death," in a reference to abortion and euthanasia, both of which the church forbids.

The Netherlands legalized euthanasia, or doctor-assisted suicide, in 2001 in cases where the patient is in unbearable pain and there is no hope of recovery. Last month, a Dutch medical commission, in a nonbinding report, said euthanasia should also be allowed for those who are not physically ill but are suffering mentally and don't want to live. ■

# Pontiff condemns same-sex marriage

continued from page 7

Commission was rejected after he espoused conservative Catholic views, like considering homosexuality a sin.

Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, president of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, said then that "a new holy Inquisition" threatened to persecute the Continent's faithful.

But Monday's message was perhaps an even stronger indictment of what the Catholic Church sees as loose secular values, both because it was delivered in the pope's own words and because it came during his so-called state of the world address, which establishes the Vatican's priorities for the coming year.

Thus, the pope's unusual emphasis on matters of sexual morality underscored the importance the church now places on such issues, especially as some countries, like Belgium and the Netherlands, have passed legislation making same-sex marriages legal. Even Spain, an overwhelmingly Catholic country, has taken the proposal under consideration.

The pope, who suffers from Parkinson's disease, read the opening and closing remarks of the speech while entrusting the rest to an aide. The five-page address touched on a wide variety of issues.

It reiterated the pope's staunch opposition to abortion and to the use of human embryos to foster stem-cell research, stating that "the Church's position, supported by reason and science, is clear, the human embryo is a subject identical to the human being which will be born at the term of its development. Consequently, whatever violates the integrity and the dignity of the embryo is ethically inadmissible."

The diplomats and their spouses stood dressed in a sober black that contrasted with the bright frescoes in the hall of the Apostolic Palace and listened silently as the pope's comments stretched to trouble spots across the globe.

John Paul criticized the unfair distribution of wealth in the world, and urged leaders to do something about the hunger and poverty it causes.

"An adequate response to this need, which is growing in scale and urgency, calls for a vast mobilization of public opinion, especially in those countries enjoying a sufficient or even prosperous standard of living," the pope said.

He also mentioned the numerous grim events of the past year, from the Dec. 26 tsunamis to the locusts that befall northwest Africa to the "inhuman violence" in Darfur, Sudan, and what he called the "barbarous terrorism" afflicting Iraq. ■

## 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: SS. 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 Bente: St. Martha  
Long Beach: St. Matthew's  
Los Angeles: Blessed Sacrament, Christ the King, Loyola-Marymount University, Mother of Good Counsel, St. Camillus Center-LAUSC 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 Luis Obispo: Old Mission of San Luis Obispo  
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

Anaconda: 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

Banyan: St. Mary of the Cella  
Chicago: Loyola University, St. Clare, St. Gregory  
Curtzy Club Hills: St. Francis  
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. Williams

### 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  
Severn: St. Bernadette

### Massachusetts

Boston: Boston College, Jesuit Urban Center, Paulist Center, St. Anthony's Shrine  
Newton: Our Lady Help of Christians  
Roxinatown: St. Peter the Apostle  
Sharon: Our Lady of Sorrows  
Worcester: Holy Cross College

### Michigan

St. Ignace: St. Ignace Loyola

### Missouri

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

### Minnesota

Minneapolis: St. Frances Cabrini, St. Joan of Arc, St. Stephen  
St. Paul: College of St. Catherine, Univ. of St. Thomas

### New Jersey

Clifton: St. Brendan  
Weyside: 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: SS. Cyril and Methodius, Deer Park; St. Brigid'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  
Ryetteville: St. Patrick  
Raleigh: St. Francis of Assisi

### Ohio

Akron: St. Bernard, St. Martha  
Cincinnati: Lesbian/Gay Ministry, Xavier University, Newman Center, University of Cincinnati  
Cleveland: Ascension of Our Lord; Gesu Parish  
University Heights; St. Ladislav, Westlake; St. Malachi; St. John Vianney, Mentor; St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Wooster  
Columbus: 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

### Rhode Island

Providence: St. Francis Chapel & City Ministry Center

### Texas

Austin: University Catholic Center-Univ. of Texas  
Dallas: Holy Trinity  
El Paso: 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-Gladlype



# Sister Jeannine Gramick: 'Rebel nun' with a gay and lesbian cause

By Robert Kahn

Newsday

June 9, 2004

NEW YORK – This is the story of a 61-year-old nun with inclinations toward Birkenstocks and Jane Fonda exercise videos, and a knack for incurring the concentrated fury of the Catholic hierarchy in Rome.

In 1977, Sister Jeannine Gramick - dubbed "the rebel nun" these days in the mainstream press - heeded a call from God and her conscience by co-founding a groundbreaking ministry for gay and lesbian Catholics outside Washington, D.C.

"You can't go against the cardinal," she recalls her elderly father telling her, when he learned what she had done.

"I was breaking the cardinal rule," she acknowledged to friends, with a resigned humor.

For more than two decades, from her base in Maryland, Gramick worked to heal Catholics who felt excluded from their spiritual heritage and were struggling to discern what sexual behavior was permissible in the eyes of God.

Her efforts were stunningly challenged in 1999, when a powerful cardinal and Pope John Paul II himself demanded that she halt all pastoral work involving gays.

Gramick turned her back on those "obediences," and her unorthodox tale is being brought to national attention in a new documentary, "In Good Conscience," debuting tonight at Lincoln Center.

Gramick was raised in a Roman Catholic family in Philadelphia. In 1971, while in graduate school, she became friendly with a gay man who had forsaken Catholicism for the Episcopal church. His homosexuality, he had come to believe, excluded him from his spiritual heritage.

The friendship proved a watershed moment for Gramick. With a Jesuit priest named Robert Nugent, she went on to co-found the New Ways Ministry, a "compassionate ministry" for gays and lesbians. The two worked to forge a place within the faith, through workshops, conferences and pilgrimages to Rome, for a group historically relegated to the fringes.

As part of her work, Gramick in 1992 published "Building Bridges: Gay and Lesbian Reality and the Catholic Church." The book brought her to the attention of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith - formerly, she notes with irony, "the Office of the Inquisition"

- and spurred a Vatican investigation.

The Congregation, finding that Gramick's ministry was orthodox but failed to emphasize the church teaching that denounces gayness as "inherently evil," demanded that she publicly condemn homosexuality.

"Sister Gramick has caused confusion

among the Catholic people and has harmed the community of the church," read a May 31, 1999, telegram she received from Cardinal John Ratzinger and approved by the pope.

"For these reasons, she is permanently prohibited from any pastoral work involving homosexual persons."

A similar letter from her order of nearly 40 years, the School Sisters of Notre Dame, followed suit in 2000.

Her response to Ratzinger - "I choose not to collaborate in my own oppression by restricting a basic human right" - resulted in Gramick's being abandoned by the Sisters of Notre Dame and forbidden by the congregation from giving workshops for gays and lesbians.

"To me," she rejoined, "this is a matter

of conscience."

News reports of the Vatican's efforts to thwart Gramick caught the attention of Emmy-winning journalist Barbara Rick. She reached out to Tom Fontana, the influential creator of HBO's prison series "Oz." Respectively, the pair directed and executive-produced "In Good Conscience."



U.S. Premiere of the documentary, *In Good Conscience*, at the Lincoln Center, New York, NY, June 9, 2004. Left to right: Sister Jeannine Gramick, SL; Barbara Rick, Director; Tom Fontana, Executive Producer.

"One of my brothers is gay," Fontana said in an e-mail explaining his motivation for joining the project. "He was a devout Catholic, until the hierarchy made him feel like a stranger in the House of God. I find the church's attitude very un-Christian."

The 80-minute film follows Gramick to Rome, where she futilely attempts to deliver a copy of her book to Cardinal Ratzinger; to the 2002 U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Dallas; and to the outskirts of Louisville, Ky., where she

begins the process of joining a new order, the Sisters of Loreto.

The film's director of photography is Al Maysles, who created "Gimme Shelter," the Rolling Stones' famed Altamont documentary. Financial backing came from sources including Ellen DeGeneres, Susan Sarandon and

Trudie Styler.

Today, Gramick continues to speak out about the discrimination faced by the gay community. Forbidden to hold workshops, she instead tours the country, holding question- and-answer sessions at coffeeshops and bookstores.

"You find creative ways to go about things," says Gramick, who deflects inquiries about her own sexual orientation. "The directive did not say I couldn't speak or write about homosexuality."

Gramick's drive, and in fact her

moral "permission" to pursue her work, comes from "the church's best kept secret," primacy of conscience, the vaunted tenet that holds Catholics will be judged by how true they are to their beliefs and not how precisely they follow canonical rules.

"Any time we make conscious decisions, we hope they will be in tune with church doctrine," she says. "But if what I've come to believe is not the same as what my church leaders say, I have an obligation to follow my conscience." ■

## In Good Conscience: Sister Jeannine Gramick's Journey of Faith

A Film by Barbara Rick

**WORLD PREMIERE** – 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Turin Int'l Gay & Lesbian Film Festival  
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# New Vatican Document on Homosexuality and the Priesthood Coming Before Fall 2005

LifeSiteNews.com  
December 13, 2004

VATICAN CITY – John Thavis, the Vatican correspondent for the Catholic News Service, an agency of the US Bishops Conference, reports that the Vatican will soon publish a document concerning homosexuality and the priesthood. The report notes that Vatican officials are preparing an inspection (or visitation) of US seminaries to commence in the Fall of 2005 and the document is expected prior to the visitation.

Bishop John C. Nienstedt of New Ulm, Minn., chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation, said in an interview in Rome, "I think they intend to have it out by the time the visitation begins."

The Vatican has confirmed several times that men with homosexual sexual

orientations should not be ordained. The December 2002 bulletin of the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments contained a letter signed by Cardinal Jorge Medina Estevez, who has since retired as the head of the Congregation, which said ordaining such men would be imprudent and "very risky."

A prominent Vatican document dealing with the issue was released as early as 1961. The 1961 document from the Sacred Congregation for Religious prohibits the admission of homosexuals to the diocesan priesthood and religious orders. The document states: "Those affected by the perverse inclination to homosexuality or pederasty should be excluded from religious vows and ordination," because priestly ministry would place such persons in "grave danger".

The document is being prepared by

the Congregation for Catholic Education in consultation with several other Vatican agencies, including the doctrinal congregation. In a report earlier this year, the education congregation described it as an "instruction on the criteria and norms for the discernment in questions regarding homosexuality in view of the admission of candidates to the seminary and to sacred orders."

Commenting on the coming document which has been more than five years in the making, Bishop Nienstedt

said, "I think it's going to be a balanced document, because the whole question of homosexuality not only has psychological dimensions but also has varying degrees of a person acting out or not acting out." He added, "So the whole question has to be nuanced considerably: 'What is homosexuality?' 'What are the homosexual attractions?' and that sort of thing. I think this document will be helpful because it is going to address those questions." ■

## Cardinal letter draws condemnation

continued from page 1

"Frankly, we think a clear majority of Canadians support the compromise I put forward, including a lot of people who vote Liberal and traditionally don't vote for this party," Mr. Harper said following a speech to the local chamber of commerce in Quebec City.

The campaign will target Canadian ethnic groups. During Mr. Martin's trip to India on Tuesday, he was forced to defend the Liberals on the domestic issue of same-sex marriage after a top Sikh religious leader there came out strongly against gay unions.

### Canadian Forces drafts policy to guide chaplains in performing same-sex marriage ceremonies

The Canadian Forces, meanwhile, has drafted a policy providing guidelines for military chaplains to marry gay and lesbian Canadian Forces members.

A spokesman for the Department of Defence told globeandmail.com that the full set of proposals is still being finalized.

Lieutenant Luc Charron said that basically, the policy says as long as chaplains are comfortable with conducting gay weddings, they may do so.

Colonel Stan Johnstone, a military chaplain who helped draft the policy,

told globeandmail.com that Canadian Forces wanted to "put information into place that our chaplains could conduct their ministry according to, because this is something new, and it's something very different for our churches as well."

The policy was put together by the interfaith committee of the military chaplaincy, he said.

Churches represented in the armed forces include Roman Catholic, Baptist, Presbyterian and United Church. In 2003, military chaplains conducted 228 marriages on military bases across Canada, statistics provided by the Defence Department said.

However, there have so far been no requests for same-sex ceremonies, Col. Johnstone said.

He said the military is leading the way on this issue ahead of any federal legislation.

"We represent all sides of it within the armed forces."

According to an article in the *Ottawa Sun*, the Canadian Forces policy will be considered "interim" until the legislation is passed by Parliament.

With a report from Canadian Press and Michael Valpy ■

## New Ways Ministry Financial Statement

July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004

Revenues	Total	% of Total
Contributions	\$ 74,422.83	50.9
Grants	37,000.00	25.3
Investments	20,636.30	14.1
Programs	8,064.00	5.5
Publications	5,796.16	4.0
Other	202.36	.1
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$146,121.65</b>	<b>99.9*</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Contributions	\$ 3,270.34	2.9
Salaries and benefits	62,873.89	56.4
Telephone, equipment, supplies	2,807.16	2.5
Postage and Printing	9,432.31	8.5
Occupancy	4,120.83	3.7
Travel and conference	7,495.84	6.7
Depreciation	4,872.00	4.4
Fees and payroll taxes	4,836.25	4.3
Staff dev., library, PR, consult., vol.	11,815.05	10.6
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$111,523.67</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Fund balance, beginning of year	\$308,943.64	
Excess for year	34,597.98	
Other changes in net assets	1,078.89	
Fund balance, end of year**	344,620.51	

\*Rounding equivalent

\*\*Approximately \$245,000 of the current fund balance represents a reserve for fifteen months operational expenses. The fund balance also includes land, building, and equipment assets of approximately \$100,000.

# Grace Builds on Nature: A Gay Catholic Theological Response to the Vatican's Statement on Gay Marriage

By Daniel A. Helminiak

*White Crane Journal of Gay Spirituality*  
Summer 2004

The Vatican's core argument against gay marriage or unions can be stated in an equation: marriage = sex = procreation.

Supposedly, the linkage between these three elements is inviolable, and, supposedly, this linkage expresses the nature of sexual relationship itself. Same-sex marriage cannot qualify.

Contemporary insight into the nature of human sexuality shows that the Vatican equation is wrong. The Vatican



Daniel Helminiak

emphasizes the basest dimension of sex: the biological production of offspring; and it devalues the distinctively human dimension of sex: the bonding of hearts and minds in interpersonal relationship. In humans sex is first and foremost about personal bonding and only secondarily, incidentally, about procreation.

The official Catholic position needs to be challenged outright. However, this rejection of the official Catholic teaching is not a rejection of the Catholic presupposition. Natural law remains the basis of this whole discussion. But on the pivotal question—What is the nature of human sexuality?—the Vatican is wrong.

Of course, the Second Vatican Council weighted the procreative and the interpersonal (“unitive”) dimensions of sex equally, but insistence on procreation continues to define Catholic teaching and controls its every practical application. As is blatant in the document on gay marriage, the Vatican downplays the interpersonal meaning of human sexuality.

## Inconclusive Religious Arguments against Same-Sex Relationships

Not only is the Vatican's basic teaching about sex off base. Everything the Vatican proclaims about homosexual relationships—except that they are not procreative—is wrong.

The Bible does not condemn same-sex relationships. In light of stunningly convergent biblical scholarship, an honest person today must, in the very least, admit that serious question surrounds the texts that

supposedly condemn homosexuality.

As Catholic scholars John Boswell and Mark Jordan have shown, Christian Tradition has simply not always condemned same-sex relationships.

In practice, Catholicism does not insist on procreative sex. The church continues to bless the marriages of known sterile couples and allows sex between couples who are beyond child-bearing age.

The argument about the supposed complementarity of man and woman is bogus. Psychologically any two people might valuably complement one another, so the touted complementarity must regard genital plumbing and is but another biological reductionism.

Research shows conclusively that homosexuality is in no way an

illness—or an “intrinsic disorder,” according to the Vatican. Rather, homosexuality is a natural variation, an aspect of the diversity that the Creator built into the universe.

Finally, gay and lesbian people are not godless or sinful in their relationships. In fact, they report their “coming out” as a moment of grace. Honest self-acceptance allows their lives to blossom in gratitude, love, generosity, and societal contribution.

## Misrepresentation of Social-Science Findings about Same-Sex Families

It must constitute deliberate distortion of the documented evidence for the Vatican to suggest that gay and lesbian relationships enjoy no unitive or conjugal—that is, positive interpersonal—dimension. Like straight couples, gay couples find in each other affection, support, encouragement, companionship, spiritual enrichment, and meaning, purpose, and stability in the maelstrom of life. Gay and lesbian relationships clearly “express and promote the mutual assistance” of the couples.

Similarly, it must constitute deliberate distortion of the documented evidence to suggest that living in lesbian or gay families developmentally harms—and, thus, supposedly, victimizes—children. Research studies have followed such children through their teenage years, and these children fare at least as well as other children. The Vatican's accusation of harm and violence is outrageous. Many children would be happy to have any place to call home. Besides, the Catholic hierarchy has lost all credibility when preaching about concern for children.

## Misguided Concern about the Social Order

It is glaringly untrue that stable lesbian and gay relationships contribute nothing to the good of society. How could mutually supportive and life-enhancing relationships not benefit the social order overall?

Likewise, how could the institutionalization of same-sex relationships devalue marriage? Husbands and wives are hardly likely to divorce en masse and find homosexual lovers. Neither are same-sex unions going to seduce young people away from heterosexual marriage: As the Vatican officially admits, homosexuality is not a choice. That lesbians and gays respect and desire marriage would seem only to bolster that institution.

Supposedly, to institutionalize gay marriage would be to institutionalize an evil. This argument begs the question. It remains to be shown that homosexual relationships are evil.

Unless lesbian and gay relationships are sinful, institutionalizing them could not give bad example to the young or obscure moral values. The Vatican again begs the question.

Beyond dispute, the civil recognition of gay marriage would imply a change in the organization of society. But whether that change would be good or bad is another question. Abolition of slavery, universal suffrage, racial integration, and women's rights also demanded the restructuring of society. Would the Vatican, on principle, turn back the clock on all social change?

## A Position of Blind Faith

The Vatican has only one reason for opposing gay marriage: It entails a non-procreative use of sex. But whether sex does need to be procreative is debatable, to say the least. Other Christian churches have long abandoned opposition to the use of contraceptives, and Christian churches bless gay relationships. Nothing supports the Vatican position except unthinking acceptance of the Vatican's own teaching.

## A Valid Consideration: Concern for the Children

Nonetheless, buried in the Catholic documents is one concern truly worthy of note: the place of the children. Historically, marriage, family, child-rearing, and procreative sex naturally fitted together. From our current perspective in which sex can be non-procreative, it becomes clear that child-rearing was the real but overshadowed meaning of marriage.

Today a new ideal has emerged: People marry for love, for psychological intimacy, not necessarily to sire offspring and to pass on property. The 12<sup>th</sup>-Century Troubadours, the Romantic poets and novelists, the liberation of women, and the invention of the pill changed the meaning of marriage in

Western civilization. Even Vatican annulments acknowledge the legitimacy of this novelty. The recognition of gay marriage is but the logical unfolding of a historical process long underway.

Many heterosexual couples today remain childless. Then, the case of two childless heterosexuals is an exact parallel to that of two childless gay men or lesbians who enter a long-term, committed relationship. That the heterosexual arrangement should be called *marriage* but not the homosexual one is a claim that cries to heaven for reasonable explanation. Consistency would require either

# Same-Sex and the

that heterosexual relationships be granted the status of marriage only when children become part of the household or that any couple bonded for intimacy and mutual support be granted the status *married*.

Focus on the children recasts the discussion of gay marriage. The line should not be drawn between gay and straight relationships but between child-rearing and childless households, whether straight or gay. This arrangement would better preserve the telling feature in the traditional Western marriage, the feature that, it seems, rightly concerns the Vatican: the rearing of children.

## Civil Union versus Sacred Marriage

A sane sorting-out of the issues requires recognition of the difference between religious and civil marriages. Justice demands that civil society grant equal rights and responsibilities to everyone. So civil authorities need to craft laws that treat all coupled relationships equally and that, in addition, privilege those relationships that involve the rearing of children. Perhaps the former should be called *unions* and only the latter, *marriage*.

The secular resolution need not be the same as the religious. The religions are free to define their sacred rites however they wish. But Catholic opposition to the legalization of gay marriage in whatever form is pure sectarianism; it is the attempted imposition of gratuitous religious beliefs on a pluralistic society. Apart from concern for the children, the Vatican's emphasis on procreative sex is wholly an in-house affair and has no valid relevance to the

**continued on page 7**

# Canada's Two Biggest Faiths Battle Over Gay Marriage

By Ben Thompson  
365Gay.com  
January 24, 2005

OTTAWA—As Canada's Prime Minister Paul Martin and Opposition leader Stephen Harper verbally spar over same-sex marriage, the country's two biggest denominations have come out swinging with one opposing gay marriage and the other endorsing it.

A letter by the Roman Catholic primate of Canada denouncing same-sex marriage was read Sunday in parish churches across the country.

"At the risk of being judged politically incorrect, we need to recall that the bill under

discussion is offensive to the moral and religious sensibility of a great number of citizens, both Catholic and non-Catholic," Marc Cardinal Ouellet writes in the letter.

"We therefore find ourselves at a turning point in the evolution of Canadian society, and the bill announced by the government threatens to unleash nothing less than a cultural upheaval whose negative consequences are still impossible to predict."

But, as the Catholic Church was mustering support to oppose the legislation to legalize gay marriage the country's largest Protestant denomination was sounding its support.

"Some will protest that we must have faith in the Bible, and that the Bible takes an unfavorable view of intimate same-sex relationship. But I would answer that Christian faith is not an uncritical repetition of a received text. It is a mindful commitment to the power of love, to which the text seeks to give witness. Every generation of the Christian faith must decide how they will honor that demand of love in the living of their days. Changing circumstances and changing ideas are not the enemy of faith," said the Right Rev. Dr. Peter Short, Moderator of the United Church of Canada in an open letter to all members of Parliament.

"It is wrong to invoke the love of God in

order that one person's 'values' might diminish another's value. Those who claim that homosexual people threaten to dismantle the value of heterosexual marriage would do well to remember that if anyone destroys marriage, it is married people, not gays and lesbians."

Dr. Short also invited MPs to a parliamentary breakfast that he will host on Parliament Hill on Thursday, February 24, to engage parliamentarians in further conversation on the subject of marriage.

In China, where he is leading a trade delegation, Prime Minister Martin Sunday repeated a threat he made on Friday that he could call a snap election over gay marriage.

Martin said that if his minority Liberals lose a free vote on same-sex marriage it would not necessarily lead to an election call, but, if the Conservatives attempt to invoke the notwithstanding clause of the Constitution he would see it as a confidence motion. If the Tories won that, Martin said, the government would fall.

Martin said that if Conservative leader Stephen Harper wants to ensure marriage in Canada remains between a man a woman, he would have to over-ride the Charter of Rights.

"The only way that that option can be realized is if, in fact, you use the notwithstanding clause. Stephen Harper has got to come

clean and tell Canadians the truth — there are no other options," Martin told reporters.

"I will not allow the rights of Canadians to be taken away and I will make that - the use of the notwithstanding clause - a motion of confidence," Martin said at a news conference in Hong Kong.

Harper remains coy on the use of the clause, which allows a government to opt out of any section of the Constitution with which it disagrees.

"The prime minister keeps talking about the notwithstanding clause and legal mumbo jumbo because he doesn't want to face the marriage issue," Harper from Vancouver.

But, if the government fell Harper said he would be comfortable campaigning on a traditional definition of marriage. Tory ads are already exploiting the wedge issue.

If the government's gay marriage bill were defeated in Parliament it would not affect the rights of same-sex couples to wed in areas of Canada where the courts have ruled in favor. But, gay couples in the other regions would have to go to court to challenge the existing law. In every area where gay marriage has come before the courts same-sex couples have won. ■

## Marriage Church

## A Gay Catholic Theological Response continued from page 6

secular debate about gay marriage. Secular society has long moved beyond sex-for-procreation-only.

### Marriage as a Sacrament

Catholic belief in the sacramentality of marriage also plays into Vatican opposition to gay marriage. Supposedly, only heterosexual relationships provide the appropriate "matter" for a valid sacrament.

Since Augustine, sacraments have been defined as outward signs that give grace. If grace is seen as God's power and love working among us, any non-sinful human situation could be an occasion of grace. In contrast to others, some life events are deemed pivotal, and these are named *sacraments*—for example, marriage.

If lesbians and gays, as well as objective outside observers, can recognize same-sex relationships as blessings from God—for all the positive reasons noted above but denied out of hand by the Vatican—these relationships also qualify as means of grace. Then, for the same reasons as in a heterosexual relationship—mutual sanctification to the partners—a homosexual marriage could also qualify as a sacrament.

In the end, the religions must work out their particular understanding about the sacramentality of marriage. And secular forces that oppose same-sex marriage by naive appeal to the "sanctity" of marriage must acknowledge that gay marriage can be on a par with

straight marriage insofar as sanctity, grace, and sacramentality are concerned. Every wholesome relationship is an expression of the Holy Spirit's action in this world.

### The Genius of Roman Catholicism and the Salvation of the Nations

A defining Catholic principle holds that "Grace builds on nature." So the argument here is actually Roman Catholic through and through. Far from being naturalist or secularist, it only highlights the earthly dimension in the

composite Catholic vision.

At this critical time in history, true concern for the common good is needed, not insistence on sectarian beliefs. The Vatican preoccupation with procreation opens onto one positive contribution: concern for the children. As for the rest, the Vatican's limply argued opposition to gay marriage must be embarrassing to any knowledgeable Catholic. It is unworthy of an institution that claims to speak of justice, for Jesus, and in the name of God. Perforce—and

what is more crucial at this point in history—the Vatican's argument is unworthy of humanity. ■

[This article was published unabridged in *White Crane: Journal of Gay Spirituality*, summer, 2004, and will be included in Helminiak's *Queer Quest: Gay Identity and Spiritual Growth* from The Haworth Press.]

## Pontiff condemns same-sex marriage

By Jason Horowitz  
*International Herald Tribune*  
Paris, France  
January 11, 2005

ROME—Pope John Paul II used his annual message to diplomats accredited to the Holy See to deliver an unequivocal condemnation on Monday of gay marriage in an exceptionally strongly worded message meant to define the position and agenda of the Roman Catholic Church at a time when the Vatican feels its values to be under fierce assault.

The 84-year-old pontiff addressed the 174 ambassadors of the diplomatic corps with an incisive account of the Vatican's stance on

family values.

"Today the family is often threatened by social and cultural pressures which tend to undermine its stability; but in some countries the family is also threatened by legislation which - at times directly - challenge its natural structure, which is and must necessarily be that of a union between a man and a woman founded on marriage," said the pope, who spoke in French.

Family, he said, "must never be undermined by laws based on a narrow and unnatural vision of man."

In recent months, senior Vatican officials have increasingly attacked what they see as the decaying of Christian values in Europe and beyond, and expressed a growing wariness that relativism and secularism have run

amok.

In October, the Vatican rallied behind Rocco Buttiglione, an Italian minister whose nomination to the European Commission was rejected after he espoused conservative Catholic views, like considering homosexuality a sin.

Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, president of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, said then that "a new holy Inquisition" threatened to persecute the Continent's faithful.

But Monday's message was perhaps an even stronger indictment of what the Catholic Church sees as loose secular values, both because it was delivered in the pope's own words and because it came during his so-

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## Lesbian couple sues school

By Ed Langlois  
*The Catholic Messenger*  
Davenport, Iowa  
August 12, 2004

PORTLAND—The Archdiocese of Portland said it will “vigorously defend” itself against a lawsuit claiming unlawful discrimination at a Catholic school in Eugene.

The suit filed by a lesbian couple, “is believed to be totally without merit,” the archdiocese said in a statement July 28.

Last summer, the O’Hara School withheld admission from a preschooler who is being raised by a lesbian couple, Lee Inkmann and Trish Wilson. The pair said their lifestyle was the reason Inkmann’s daughter was not admitted to O’Hara.

The pair filed suit July 28 against the school and St. Mary parish, saying the admission decision violated the Eugene city code banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and state law that blocks discrimination because of marital status.

The claim seeks up to \$550,000 in damages for loss of educational opportunity and “severe emotional distress, humiliation, anxiety, depression and damage to their reputations.”

The suit contains “numerous false statements of fact,” said Bud Bunce, spokesman for the archdiocese.

Also named in the suit were Dianne Bert, principal at O’Hara, and Father Mark Bachmeier, pastor of St. Mary parish, which oversees the school.

According to the suit, Bert told

Inkmann that the couple’s lesbian relationship ran counter to church teaching and would be confusing for other children and parents. The suit claims that Fr. Bachmeier said the decision was his.

The suit does not name the archdiocese, but lawyers for Inkmann and Wilson said they plan to file a second suit in federal bankruptcy court, where the archdiocese is working out an unprecedented plan to pay sexual abuse plaintiffs. ■

## California school angers parents

continued from page 1

“This is the quagmire that the parents position represents,” Horan said. “It’s a slippery slope to go down.”

The boys’ fathers, who enrolled their children at the beginning the school year, declined to comment to the *Times*.

The decision outraged some parents, with several promising to ask the Vatican to intervene and threatening to switch schools.

“The teachings of the church seem to have been abandoned,” said parent John R. Nixon. “We send our children to a Catholic school because we expect and demand that the teachings of our church will be adhered to. If our Catholic school is no longer teaching and living Catholic doctrine, we might as well send our children to public schools.”

Others worried the boys’ attendance would set a precedent, portraying it as part of a larger effort by the gay community to change church strictures.

“The boys are being used as pawns by these men to further their agenda,” said Monica Sii, who has four children at the school.

At least a handful of similar disputes have occurred around the country, according to Rev. Jim Schexnayder of the National Association of Catholic Diocesan Lesbian and Gay Ministries. In Oregon, a lesbian couple has sued a Catholic school that rejected their daughter.

Some parents backed the school’s position.

“Let he who is without sin cast the first stone,” said Katie Flores, whose daughter is a classmate of the boys.

Even so, the group of parents planned to continue pressing their demands.

“We’re taking a stand for the faith,” said parent Ken Stashik. “This is much larger than what’s going on in a small Catholic school in a small town.” ■

### Opinion

## Children First

Sr. Camille D’Arienzo  
*1010 Wins—AM Radio Commentary*  
New York, New York  
January 23, 2005

While churches on the east coast are encased in a deep chill, one church on the west coast is embroiled in a hot issue.

Here’s the story. At the beginning of this school term, a gay couple enrolled their two adopted sons in St. John the Baptist School in Costa Mesa, California. Eighteen parents signed a letter demanding that the school only accept families who

pledge to abide by church teachings.

Their pastor and school administrators rejected those demands. They released a new policy insisting that a child’s education comes first “not his family’s background. The kindergartners had been baptized and were entitled to a Catholic education. The priest who serves as Superintendent of Schools agreed. He, too, opposes the introduction of any moral scrutiny in church admissions policies.”

As for the 18 dissenters, they would do well to review the Gospel in which Jesus cautions against those who would cast the first stone. ■

## The Friend Examines History of Same-Sex Unions continued from page 4

Jennis and Anne Fleming (pp. 265-266). Finch specifically described his friendship with Baines in terms of a “connubium” or “marriage” (p. 141). Neville died of “inconsolable sorrow” two days after Clanvowe’s demise, according to a monk’s official chronicle (pp. 18-19). Chitting and Barber, in the Old English inscription on their church monument, “lived and loved like two most virtuous wights [beings], whose bodies death would sever he unites [and] whose souls in heaven embrace...” (pp. 109, 228).

Bray’s final chapter (pp. 289-306) discusses the profound emotional and spiritual bond between Ambrose St. John, a Catholic priest who died in 1875, and John Henry Newman, who was created a cardinal in 1879 and died in 1890. Newman, in his last “imperative”

will, “insisted,” indeed “commanded” – these are his own words – that the two clerics should lie together at burial side by side (p. 291). The cardinal had written about the much younger man, “From the first he loved me with an intensity of love” (p. 292) and at death “put his arm tenderly round my neck and drew me close...” (p. 293). He added, “I have ever thought no bereavement was equal to that of a husband’s or a wife’s, but I [now] feel it difficult to believe that any [sorrow] can be greater than mine” (p. 293).

Bray stresses, at various points, that the Church would never have intended to bless a homogenital relationship through its approved rituals. However, he also states that we cannot “reduce the range of what we recognize today as being sexual to the narrow question of sexual

intercourse” (p. 316). He likewise clearly indicates that “a sexual *potential*” (his emphasis) “would not... have stood in the way of the confirmation of a sworn friendship in the Eucharist” (p. 269).

The author in part summarizes his thesis by citing the English homosexual saint, Aelred of Rievaulx, and quoting the Cistercian abbot’s spectacular Latin formulation that “God IS friendship” (pp. 258, 298). In the same context Bray refers to the reflections of a recent English cardinal Basil Hume (1923-1999) who, after the death of a close friend in 1995, added the following words to his earlier document on homosexuality: “When two persons love... whether of the same sex or of a different sex... they experience in a limited manner in this world what will be their unending delight when one with God in the next”

(p. 298).

Unfortunately, such heartfelt pastoral observations are all too rare today from other Church leaders, who refuse even to acknowledge the existence of committed and loving relationships within the lesbian/gay community. Hopefully, through Bray’s rigorous scholarship, avowed same-sex unions can now be placed in a proper historical perspective, when “their eloquent imagery of friendship,” as blessed by the Church in life and at death, was often “startlingly reminiscent of marriage” (p. 5).

**Fr. Paul Thomas is board chair of New Ways Ministry and archivist emeritus of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.** ■



## Truth Behind Rainbow Week

continued from page 10

He said there is both medical and scientific proof, in addition to the weight of history, that proves that full human development is best realized in a family made up of a father and a mother, and that there is no proof of this for homosexual couples.

This viewpoint was not represented in the Rainbow Week presentations.

Sister Elizabeth Linehan, RSM, one of the Rainbow Week organizers, says that Courage was invited in 2001 to partake in a panel discussion called "Gay and Catholic," but that Courage declined.

According to Courage, the organization was forced to decline because it is unable to be a part of a program that presents homosexuality in a way that is contrary to Church teaching and to its ministry.

Courage noted that this was evident from the presence of Dignity, a group condemned by the Church because its mission, according to its Web site, is to advocate for change in the Catholic Church's teaching on homosexuality.

"The university is not promoting a homosexual agenda," said Joseph Lunardi, assistant vice president for university communications at St. Joseph's. "We are very clear on Church teaching in this regard, and those teachings are presented regularly both in and out of the classroom."

Lunardi also said it was unfair to take Rainbow Week out of context from the other academic and extra-curricular programs held at the school during the rest of the year.

Bishop McFadden suggested that taking a sampling of the students that attended Rainbow Week would be telling.

"If they come away with a lack of understanding of the Church's teaching on homosexuality, then it's St. Joseph's responsibility to look at their work," he said.

The CS&T interviewed students who had attended Rainbow Week and found that many came away with a misunderstanding, or incomplete understanding, of the Church's teaching on homosexuality.

"[M]ost people, like on a Catholic campus, wouldn't expect the Church or the priests to be so open and accept[ing] of that type of lifestyle, especially at the Masses," said sophomore Joe Franco, after attending the Oct. 10 Rainbow Mass, which

kicked off the week. "I agree with the Church, and I accept all my friends that have alternative lifestyles, and support their decisions and their lifestyle. I accept who they are as individuals and what they do."

Junior Laura Burke said that her understanding after the events of Rainbow Week was "[y]ou don't necessarily live that lifestyle, but that it is okay."

St. Joseph's has made a commitment to work toward an inclusive curriculum and campus events by "promoting awareness of and sensitivity to human differences," in compliance with a diversity statement the university signed in March 1998. Lunardi said that the university's purpose is to "teach and promote a wide range of

## Gay-Friendly Catholic Colleges

Below is a partial list of known "gay-friendly" Catholic colleges and universities, that is, those Catholic colleges that have some type of gay and lesbian student group, support group, ally group, etc.. Thank you for helping us add to this growing list! If you are aware of such a college that is known as welcoming to gay and lesbian people, please let us know. Tell us if this welcome is because of a club, support services, participation in gay community events, or simply the friendliness of the faculty and staff.

### California

*Belmont:* Notre Dame de Namur University  
*Los Angeles:* Loyola Marymount University  
*Orange:* Saint Mary's College  
*Rancho Palos Verdes:* 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:* Georgetown University

### Florida

*Miami Gardens:* Saint Thomas University  
*Miami Shores:* Barry University

### Illinois

*Chicago:* DePaul University, Loyola University, Saint Xavier College

### Indiana

*Notre Dame:* Holy Cross College, Saint Mary's College, University of Notre Dame

### Iowa

*Dubuque:* Loras College

### Kentucky

*Louisville:* Spalding University

### Louisiana

*New Orleans:* Loyola University New Orleans

### Maryland

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

### Massachusetts

*Boston:* Emmanuel College  
*Chestnut Hill:* Boston College  
*Easton:* Stonehill College  
*North Andover:* Merrimack College  
*Worcester:* Assumption College, Holy Cross College

### Missouri

*St. Louis:* Saint Louis University

### Minnesota

*Collegeville:* Saint John's University  
*Saint Joseph:* College of Saint Benedict  
*St. Paul:* St. Thomas University, College of St. Catherine  
*Winona:* Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

### Montana

*Helena:* Carroll College

### Nebraska

*Omaha:* Creighton University

### New Hampshire

*Nashua:* Rivier College

### New Jersey

*South Orange:* Seton Hall

### New York

*Albany:* College of Saint Rose  
*Bronx:* Fordham University, Manhattan College

*Buffalo:* Canisius College

*New Rochelle:* College of New Rochelle, Iona College

*Roseton:* Marist College

*Riverdale:* College of Mount Saint Vincent

*Rochester:* Nazareth College of Rochester

*Syracuse:* LeMoyne College

*Tarrytown:* Marymount College

### Ohio

*Cincinnati:* Xavier University

*Dayton:* University of Dayton

### Pennsylvania

*Erie:* Mercyhurst College

*Philadelphia:* Chestnut Hill College, LaSalle University, Saint Joseph's University

*Villanova:* Villanova University

### Rhode Island

*Newport:* Salve Regina University

### Texas

*Austin:* Saint Edward's University

### Vermont

*Colchester:* Saint Michael's College

### Washington

*Lacey:* Saint Martin's College

*Seattle:* Seattle University

*Spokane:* Gonzaga University

### Wisconsin

*De Pere:* Saint Norbert College

*Madison:* Edgewood College

*Milwaukee:* Alverno College, Cardinal Stritch University, Marquette University

ideas, so that young people can discern and learn from those points of views."

In 1990, Pope John Paul II wrote in his Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, "a Catholic University is completely dedicated to the research of all aspects of truth in their essential connection with the supreme Truth, who is God."

Bishop McFadden observed: "The mission of St. Joseph's as a Catholic institution is to teach the truth, and present Catholic moral teachings clearly in light of the teachings of the Church. The purpose is to dialogue but to proclaim the truth. We can't give the impression that there are multiple truths."

In a letter to The CS&T, one parent of a homosexual student at St. Joseph's explained Church teaching in the following manner: "[W]e, as Catholic people, need to be compassionate enough toward those with same-sex attraction to encourage them to seek help. The good Lord did not embrace the homosexual act. He embraced the individuals, and directed them toward a chaste lifestyle. This is Catholic teaching. It needs to be taught at all levels.

"As I have told my child, 'You have a cross to carry. It is your participation in the act of redemption. Your family will help you carry this cross.' However, when others are condoning and encouraging homosexuality, the pleas of parents are ignored." ■

## Book Reviews

# The Friend Examines History of Same-Sex Unions

*The Friend* (2003) by Alan Bray  
University of Chicago Press, 380 pp., \$40  
Reviewed by Rev. Paul K. Thomas

Alan Bray, an English Catholic historian, completed *The Friend* shortly before his approaching death in 2001. John Boswell, an American Catholic historian, published *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe* just weeks before his own death in 1994. Although both books are based upon extensive meticulous research and seemingly impeccable scholarship, perhaps they might have avoided some criticism and controversy if written under less stringent deadlines than onrushing mortality.

Boswell had demonstrated that the Catholic Church, during formal marriage-like ceremonies, once blessed same-gender relationships, but he relied primarily upon documents from the Eastern rite tradition. Bray indicates that similar services for “making brothers or sisters” existed in the Latin Church, as confirmations of “sworn friendship,” although he limits his discussion generally to the British Isles. In a sense Bray begins where Boswell left off, but his work also grows out of research for his much earlier book *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (1982).

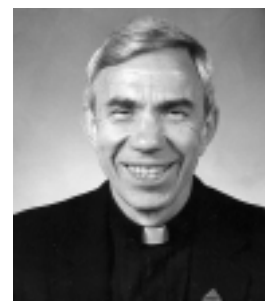
Somewhat surprisingly, as Bray points out (pp. 8, 126, 317), Boswell himself was unaware of the *Ordo ad Fratres Facien-*

*dum*, the Latin Rite for Making Brothers, which had been reported by a Croatian Catholic scholar, O. Antonin Zaninovic, as early as 1971 in an article entitled *Dva Latinska Spomenika*. Bray also had the advantage of another study about fraternal bonds contracted in the Latin West, namely, *Piers Gaveston: Edward II's Adoptive Brother*, published by Pierre Chaplais in the same year as Boswell's own book (cf. Bray, p. 317). Both works in turn influenced a subsequent symposium on ritual brotherhood in the 1997 edition of the scholarly journal *Traditio* (cf. Bray, p. 84).

According to Bray (p. 25), “in the churches of Catholic Europe, from at least the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup>, the Mass provided a familiar culmination for the creation of ritual ‘brothers’.” However, although Bray supplies the Latin text and an English translation of the *Ordo ad Fratres Faciendum* (pp. 130-133), he does not restrict his considerations to such a specific ceremonial procedure. He examines multiple types of English same-gender friendships, from 1000 to 1900, when undertaken or approved in a religious context, even during Anglican services after the Reformation.

For example, Bray utilizes extensive excerpts from the multi-volume diaries and letters of Anne Lister, who entered into a union in her words “as good as a

marriage” with Ann Walker during the Easter service of 1834 (p. 241). Incidentally, some of these important lesbian records were properly edited by Helena Whitbread only in 1992 and by Jill Liddington in 1998; the manuscripts themselves were catalogued by



Rev. Paul K. Thomas

considerable body of “less official” documentation (p. 5), such as memorial plaques and burial places, shared by two persons of the same gender in their parish churches, often with images of the couples kissing or holding hands. One Latin inscription, illustrated on the book's dust jacket, beautifully but simply proclaims, “In life united, in death not divided” (pp. 234-235), describing an avowed relationship created beyond the standard conjugal family. Other scholars have generally tended to neglect such funereal sources, perhaps because they succumb to the “temptation of looking only where the light is brightest” (p. 314) in record

Rosalind Westwood and others as recently as 1997 (cf. Bray, p. 319).

Throughout his treatise Bray relies upon a

offices and university archives rather than in cathedral transepts and county chapels.

Bray himself does consider some already well-known English homosexual unions, including those of King Edward II with Piers Gaveston and King James I with George Villiers. However, the author takes pains to place their personal commitment to each other within the context of public religious ceremonies. Edward and Gaveston renewed their “covenant of brotherhood” (p. 27) by making oaths “upon the cross...and upon God's body [the Eucharist]...” (p. 28), noted in the official royal Close Rolls. James, as a “deere daide & husbunde,” wrote to Villiers, as his “sweete chylde & wyfe,” that they “maye mak at this christen-masse a new marriage” (p. 96), that is, he hoped to “seal their friendship and its fidelity by receiving the Holy Communion...at Christmas together, before the eyes of all” (p. 97).

In the book Bray examines many less prominent same-sex partnerships, from John Finch and Thomas Baines (p. 1) to William Neville and John Clanvowe (p. 18) and to Herbert Croft and George Benson (p. 235), also from Ann Chitting and Mary Barber (p. 85) to Catherine

continued on page 5

## “Sex Camp” Gives Fun, New Perspective To Public Debate On “Moral Values”

By Ron Robin

“...searing honesty...for those among us who are courageous and radically open.” ---Bishop John Shelby Spong

In his cutting-edge new book “*Sex Camp*,” Brian McNaught brings together a delightful assortment of strangers who struggle with their feelings and values, and at times with each other, during a legendary, intensive, weeklong workshop on sexuality. Promised that in seven days they would know more about sex than ninety percent of the population, the thirty-two participants leave for home at the end of the week with a lot more than they planned on taking.

“*Sex Camp*” is a lighthearted fictional story based on the very real Annual Workshop on Sexuality, the nationally-renowned training that has been held for nearly thirty years at an Episcopal

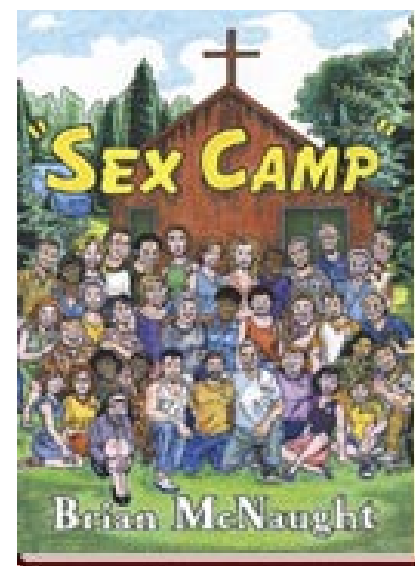
Church-owned retreat facility in upstate New York. Led by a Baptist theologian and sexologist, and five others considered to be among the best sexuality educators in the country, the workshop is affectionately called “Sex Camp” by participants and staff alike. This exciting program is the setting for a fun, moving, informative, honest, and topical book about sexual values, body image, sexual orientation, gender identity, intimacy, abuse, lifestyles, aging, disability, and sexual decision-making.

A nun, an “ex-gay” man, and a cross-dressing heterosexual church organist arrive in Cazenovia, NY, on a hot Saturday in July and there meet a “queer” activist, a homophobic Planned Parenthood educator, a hunky straight man in a wheelchair, two football coaches, and a half a dozen ministers, among others. In the next few days, under the watchful guidance of the staff, these fictionalized

characters, all based on the stories of real life participants, identify for themselves and the others the five events in their lives that have most impacted their sexuality.

Brian McNaught, a staff member at “Sex Camp” and the author of this highly-anticipated book, is a certified sexuality educator who has spent thirty years educating the public about gay and transgender issues. He works in both corporations and universities as a trainer and has written four previous books on homosexuality, including “*On Being Gay*,” “*Gay Issues in the Workplace*,” and “*Now That I'm Out, What Do I Do?*” He's also been featured in five educational videos, three of which have aired regularly on PBS affiliates. The *New York Times* referred to McNaught as “the godfather of gay sensitivity training.”

Episcopal Bishop and author John Shelby Spong commends this book to



“the courageous and radically open.” He says McNaught “ventures into places where most people fear to tread. His searing honesty combines with an overt ability to pose issues about human sexuality that desperately need to be faced.”

“*Sex Camp*” is published by Author House and can be purchased on line at [www.authorhouse.com](http://www.authorhouse.com), and at all bookstores and Internet bookselling sites. ■

# Truth behind Rainbow Week

By Nadio Puzo

*The Catholic Standard and Times*  
Philadelphia, PA  
November 4, 2004

PHILADELPHIA – Outraged parents, students and alumni have inundated St. Joseph's University with e-mails and calls protesting its celebration of Rainbow Week, which they say is nothing more than a way to promote gay rights.

Sponsored by the St. Joseph's Alliance — formerly known as the Committee for Sexuality and Sexual Minorities — and by six other university departments, Rainbow Week was conceived as an effort to “promote dialogue and tolerance around issues of human sexuality.” Similar events take place at various other Catholic colleges in the Archdiocese.

Bishop Joseph P. McFadden, who recently took on responsibility for the Secretariat of Catholic Education, said, “There's a fine line between recognizing diversity and promoting a lifestyle. Being a homosexual is not sinful. Acting on the homosexual lifestyle is — as is all sex outside the bond of marriage, which is defined as a union between one man and one woman.”

Bishop McFadden, a St. Joseph's alumnus, added: “While the Church asks that we recognize the unique dignity of every human person, it does not mean supporting a lifestyle that is contrary to the natural law.”

Catholic attorney David Ermine wrote to the university in an e-mail, pointing out that there is a difference between accepting homosexuals as people and celebrating what has been described as the “homosexual lifestyle.”

“Tolerance and compassion do not call for celebration .... It is the direct opposite of compassion to encourage souls to persist in what is harmful to them. That is not love, but an abdication of responsibility,” Ermine said.

“It is also blatant hypocrisy to give lip-service to the Church's teachings while setting a contrary example,” he said. “Should I look forward to ‘adultery week’ celebrating the special needs and talents of the unfaithful?”

In an official statement by St. Joseph's University, the school defends its position, saying that Rainbow Week is a way of supporting “diversity in all forms as a means of educating students about basic human differences.” The University denies promoting a homosexual agenda or condoning a specific behavior.

*The CS&T* attended this year's event, including the presentation, “Out and on the Air” with NBC-10 traffic news

reporter John Ogden, who spoke about his own coming-out as an active homosexual during the Oct. 11 “National Coming Out Day.”

Ogden spoke about the events that prompted him to come out, saying that he received praise from fans for doing so. He spoke about his responsibility as an openly gay role model, and gave advice about advancing a career in broadcast journalism.

Prompted by a question from the audience, Ogden also stated he was not a practicing Catholic because “I'm a gay man, and I do act on my homosexuality, and that's not kosher in the Catholic Church.”

Although, he believes in God and

Schneider called attention to the “Love Makes a Family” photo exhibit, which celebrates lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender couples and their families, as examples of those who want legalized gay marriage.

However, the most telling presentation was Father Genovesi's “religious perspective” on gay marriage. Father Genovesi also directs the Pre-Cana programs on campus.

The Jesuit priest spent the first half of his presentation speaking about the Catholic Church's teachings on Christian marriage, and the case against same-sex unions. The second half of his talk was dedicated to Catholic theologians who question Church teachings in this area.



## Saint Joseph's University

prays, Ogden said he's not interested in the Church until it changes, or until he finds a church that is gay-friendly.

A panel discussion, “Perspectives on Gay Marriage: Personal, Political and Religious,” included Kevin Vaughan, a practicing homosexual in a long-term monogamous relationship; Cynthia Schneider, the legal director of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights; and Jesuit priest Vincent Genovesi, a St. Joseph's professor of theology.

Vaughan said today's civil rights causes are those of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals — including gay marriage.

“Homosexuality has gone from the ‘love that no one dare speak about’ to the ‘love that can't shut up and shouldn't,’” he said.

He concluded his presentation with these remarks:

“Clearly, the Roman Catholic Church will not recognize same-sex unions as valid or sacramental marriages, but the Catholic Church also knows that civil society does not share her views on some of the essentials of a valid Christian marriage.

“Civil society, for example, has no insistence and makes no demands on openness to children or the permanence of marriage. Thus, many marriages that the Roman Catholic Church would regard as invalid are recognized as perfectly valid in civil society.

“Given the notable gap that already exists in the Roman Catholic Church and civil society regarding marriage, why does the Church oppose any legal recognition to same-sex unions, whether they be called marriages or

civil unions or domestic partnerships?

“In the exercise of its role as the official teaching authority of the Roman Catholic community of faith, the hierarchy or the Magisterium, the bishops are said to be gifted with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, but as the late Richard McCormick, a well-noted Catholic moral theologian, has said, ‘If the Holy Spirit is assisting the Magisterium, you should expect this assistance to show up in the quality of the arguments.’ For too many people, including Catholics, it seems that the arguments so far presented by the Church on this question of legal recognition of same-sex unions remain unconvincing.”

After reading a transcript of Father Genovesi's talk, Bishop McFadden pointed out the essential problem:

“[W]hile it's true he [Father Genovesi] presented the Church's teaching on human sexuality, he gives equal weight in his presentation to theologians who are in opposition to the Magisterium's teaching — as though they were of equal value. And he does nothing to point out the fallacies in their arguments, but continues to give the impression that these teachings are open to change.”

The Bishop suggests that: “St. Joseph's might consider that perhaps their program is not accomplishing the goal of teaching Catholic truth, but is really focused on advancing a lifestyle that is contrary to Catholic teaching. ... [W]e might ask why their program is top-heavy with speakers and groups that are bent on challenging the Church's teachings, while there seems to be an absence of speakers and groups that are in line with Church teachings?”

In the question-and-answer session after his talk, Father Genovesi made it clear that he disagreed with the Church's teaching on same-sex unions, stating, “They say this is doing violence to children because it's depriving them of an experience of either motherhood or fatherhood, and that this will be putting them into a situation in which they will not have the best option for full human development. Well, I don't know what studies prove this today.”

Father Jim Levy, CSP, is a psychologist, professor of human sexuality and acting director of Courage, a Catholic outreach to homosexuals that is sanctioned as part of the Family Life Office in Philadelphia and endorsed by the Pontifical Council for the Family.

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# Catholic students in pro-gay protest

## Administration opposes gay group seeking campus recognition

By Mike Lavers  
New York Blade  
November 19, 2004

Students at a Roman Catholic university in New Jersey are clashing with the school's administration over the right of a proposed gay student group to be recognized as a legitimate campus organization.

Several students at Seton Hall University in South Orange are criticizing the university after officials washed away pro-gay messages from campus walkways. Members of the group Trust, Respect and Unity at the Hall, or TRUTH, scrawled the messages at various points around the campus to commemorate National Coming Out Day on Oct. 11.

Seton Hall administrators maintain that the decision to wash the messages away was a mistake. TRUST members are not buying their explanation.

Member David Jacques maintains that the university's actions amount to further discrimination against gay students. "We followed campus guidelines," Jacques said. "The following morning we were surprised to find that groundskeepers were out there with buckets and hoses. This is kind of strange because chalkings happen once a week and are never washed away."

The Student Government Association, a campus advisory group, passed a formal resolution on Oct. 11, in which it advocated TRUTH's right to scrawl pro-gay messages on campus sidewalks.

"National Coming Out Day has been a time for individuals all over the country to recognize and appreciate their differences," according to the resolution. "As leaders elected to represent the general student body, including those who are gay, we are more than disturbed about the actions taken by the university."

The university did not return repeated requests for comment. However, the administration's decision to remove the messages comes on the heels of a potentially damaging lawsuit filed by TRUTH founder Anthony Romeo. Romeo, a gay sociology student from Upstate New York, filed the lawsuit in March after Seton Hall administrators refused to grant official recognition to TRUTH.

Romeo petitioned the university to recognize TRUTH formally in Nov. 2003. The proposal, submitted to the Student Organization Activities Committee, defined the group and its purpose. The SOAC recommended that the administration grant TRUTH official recognition.

### "Sexual orientation" at issue

Laura Wankel, vice-president of student affairs, in a letter dated Dec. 18, 2003, denied Romeo's request. In her letter, Wankel said that Seton Hall would not recognize an organization that bases itself "solely on sexual orientation."

She also referred to the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine on homosexuality to support her decision. "The Church teaches that an exclusive focus on a person's sexual orientation denies the fullness of human dignity and diminishes persons in a way that is both reductionist and marginalizing," Wankel wrote.

Wankel then offered Romeo a "Memorandum of Understanding." This compromise would have allowed TRUTH to sponsor educational events and participate in community service projects. The university, under this plan, would not allow TRUTH to sponsor activities that

were "contrary to Church teachings on human sexuality."

Romeo rejected this plan. He maintained that TRUTH planned to support Seton Hall's Roman Catholic beliefs. Romeo also said that the group would "teach that sexual orientation does not equal sexual identity." He further argued that the "Memorandum of Understanding" would have relegated gay students such as himself to second class status.

"There are some things I won't sacrifice, and my dignity is one of them," Romeo said. "We are asking for the same rights and privileges afforded to every other campus group."

Seton Hall has adopted a non-discrimination policy, but it does not include sexual orientation as a protected category. However, the university said it would "support" and "implement" all state and federal anti-discrimination law.

The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination includes sexual orientation but makes exemptions for religious institutions such as Seton Hall. Romeo's attorney, Thomas Shanahan, maintains that Seton Hall has waived this exemption.

"They can't pick and choose when they are going to protect students," he said in a phone interview.

Ed Barukous, legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey, agreed. While not commenting on the specifics of the lawsuit, Barukous said there is a possibility that Seton Hall is violating both New Jersey's state law as well as federal anti-discrimination laws.

Seton Hall is named after Mother Elizabeth Seton, the aunt of the school's founder and the first American-born saint. This, he argued, could have an impact on the amount of money the university receives from the state. "The question is whether the denial of a group status is discriminatory," Barukous said.

The lawsuit is currently pending before an appellate court. Meanwhile, the lawsuit and the ongoing contro-

versy surrounding TRUTH have caused strong and heated reaction on both sides.

In a letter to the Seton Hall student newspaper, The Setonian, on Oct. 11, Italian professor Claudine Metallo blasted TRUTH members. "These individuals have no right to defile church property," she wrote. "Nor do they have the right to impose their will on this Catholic institution." She went on to say homosexuality is a "grave sin," according to church doctrine.

Newark Archbishop John J. Myers has spoken in favor of Metallo's statements. In a letter, he said that the church needs to "make it clear that we do not support any organization or persons that oppose that identity," referring to Catholic doctrine.

Some students, including Stephen Chase Pepper, said they would support a gay student organization such as TRUTH under certain circumstances. In an Oct. 11 letter to the Setonian, he maintained that such a group should be allowed to exist, if it chooses not to stand in the way of traditional Roman Catholic doctrine.

"We are called to be tolerant of the person but not his action when we know it to be immoral," Pepper wrote. "This is the truth denied."

### Georgetown's possible precedent

Georgetown University, in Washington, D.C., had previously settled a lawsuit with the Gay People of Georgetown University, which sued over the university's refusal to recognize the organization.

The Catholic university, as part of a settlement, agreed to grant GPGU access to the same benefits as other organizations, including use of university facilities. The court ruled that the university did not have to recognize the group formally, however.

Georgetown did adapt a formal Access to Benefits Policy that allowed all groups and to have similar access. The program is administered at the Jesuit school by a student advisory board. To be eligible, groups need to have at least 12 members, not duplicate an existing group and comply with university policy. ■

## Bartending and the priesthood

By Christian Eichenlaub  
The Advocate  
September 22, 2004

LOS ANGELES – While I was bartending one evening, a friend of mine joked about how ridiculous it now seemed that we had met a year earlier at a college gathering for those who were considering the priesthood. I glanced up from pouring his vodka and tonic long enough to say, "I still am." The surprise that touched his face spoke a thousand words.

Why should it be so shocking that I, a bartender at a gay bar, leader of a gay-straight alliance, also consider a spiritual vocation, even one in the Catholic Church?

Now a senior at Marquette University in Milwaukee, I have been considering the priesthood for about two years. Marquette, while Catholic, is also Jesuit, a sect of the church that has long been considered a liberal bastion of the faith. This fall I will be filling out applications for both law schools and seminaries. After being in and out of Catholic

education all of my life, I have seen the power and grace of the living church, gifts that I know are bestowed to us all. I feel called to spread the truth that I know and to share the ways in which the church has reached into my life and helped my family and me: through community, education, and spiritual guidance.

Many people ask, "Why would you consider a career in an institution that discriminates against gay people?" But we see thousands of gays and lesbians serve the U.S. government faithfully even though there are antigay laws in that establishment.

Oftentimes change does happen from within.

I accept my relationship with the Catholic Church in the way we must accept all relationships: with its beauty, its flaws, its strengths, and its weaknesses, but above all for the love it can shine into the lives of gay and straight people alike. Yes, changes are needed in the church, but it is also time for gays and lesbians to accept religion, flawed as it may be, back into their lives. ■