

B BNDINGS

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New pope selection angers many gays

By Tom Musbach

PlanetOut Network, Gay.com

April 19, 2005

ROME—White smoke rose above the Sistine Chapel and bells heralded the election of a new pope on Tuesday, but the symbolism lacked joy for many LGBT Catholics once they learned the new pope is Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Germany.

The 78-year-old ultraconservative cardinal has been the doctrinal guardian for the church as prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith since 1981. Liberals often refer to him as “God’s rottweiler” because of his reputation for cracking down on dissenters, including those who have challenged the church’s teachings on homosexuality.

Ratzinger, who takes the name Benedict

XVI as pope, has been one of the most powerful men in the Vatican and was Pope John Paul II’s chief theological adviser for the past 20 years.

After the traditional white smoke signal and bell-ringing in St. Peter’s Square, the new pope greeted a cheering crowd on Tuesday and offered his first papal blessing.

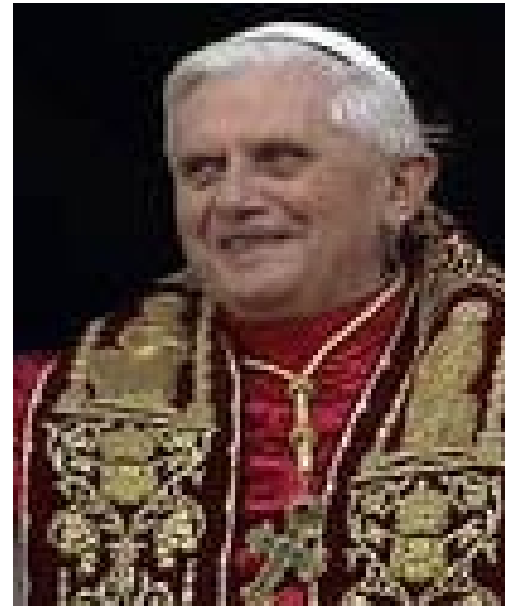
Cheering was not offered, however, from many liberals and gay Catholics.

“I am very disappointed at the selection of Cardinal Ratzinger as pope,” said Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry, which serves U.S. gay and lesbian Catholics. “He has been a lightning rod for the anger that many lesbian and gay people and other progressive Catholics have felt during the papacy of John Paul II.”

“He has been notorious in his resolve

to silence discussion,” DeBernardo told the PlanetOut Network. “He authored the 1986 ‘Letter to the Bishops on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons,’ which attempted to end welcoming pastoral approaches to lesbian and gay people, and tried to end the discussion on homosexuality.”

Matt Foreman,



Pope Benedict XVI

a gay Catholic who is also head of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, called the new pope’s record “one of unrelenting, venomous hatred for gay people.”

“Someday, the church will apologize to gay people as it has to others it has oppressed in the past,” Foreman said in a statement. “I very

much doubt that this day will come during this pope’s reign.”

“It’s a full-scale attack on the reformist wing of the church,” wrote conservative political blogger Andrew Sullivan, who is a gay Catholic. “The swiftness of the decision and the polarizing nature of this selection foretell a coming civil war within Catholicism. The space for dissidence, previously tiny, is now extinct.”

Laura Montgomery Rutt, a spokeswoman for the U.S. group Soulforce that fights “spiritual violence” against LGBT people, recalled trying to meet for a dialogue with Ratzinger in Rome in 2001. His administrators refused and threatened to call the police.

“His refusal to meet with us indicates his unwillingness to even acknowledge the Spirit evident in the lives of LGBT people,” Rutt said. “The Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, the office from which he was promoted, was the old office of the Inquisition, and now he brings the Inquisition to his appointment as pope.”

DeBernardo noted that Catholics who support LGBT equality in the church are hearty, having survived the 26 years of John Paul II’s pontificate.

“That experience has taught them to remain steadfast and prophetic,” DeBernardo said. “I hope and pray they will do the same under the new pope. We will not be overcome.” ■

Growing presence of gay/lesbian groups on college campuses

By Jennifer Morgan

New Ways Ministry

May 2005

It was a typical South Bend day—cold and gray—but orange shirts reading “Gay, Fine By Me” could be seen all over campus as I, and an overwhelming number of students and faculty, showed our support for the GLBT community on the University of Notre Dame campus. For the past several years, gay and lesbian issues have been hot-button topics at Notre Dame, specifically the issue of club recognition, as Student Activities has repeatedly denied official club status to the GLBT student groups. Is this situation typical of all Catholic college campuses? I recently did some research on the presence of gay/lesbian groups on Catholic college campuses, including my alma mater, to answer that very question. Do gay/lesbian groups exist on Catholic college campuses? What do they look like? Who are the members? What challenges do the groups face? And where do they fit in on campus?

Of the approximately 220 Catholic 2- and 4-year institutions in the United States, almost 1/3 of these boast some type of gay/lesbian group, and several of the groups exist at smaller schools, such as Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts, Carroll College in Helena, Montana, and Saint Martin’s College in Lacey, Washington. Geography and size do play somewhat of a role. A large majority of colleges with groups were in big cities, such as New York, Philadelphia, Milwaukee, and Chicago. Further, better known Catholic colleges, such as Boston College, Georgetown, Notre Dame, the Loyolas, and Gonzaga usually tended to offer some type of group and/or resources for GLBT students and friends. These include organizations such as Loyola University of Chicago’s “Rainbow Connection,” Loyola’s official GLBTQ organization, or Gonzaga’s HERO (Helping Educate Regarding Orientation), a gay-straight alliance group with the stated goal “to eliminate discrimination and increase understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in our community.”

The overwhelmingly prominent type of GLBT group on college campuses is the Gay-Straight Alliance (usually referred to as GSA, although each college differs), or “Allies” program. These groups are open to anyone, regardless of sexual orientation, but are usually organized and led by students. What differs most among the college groups is the level of involvement within the campus community, as well as the primary purpose of each specific group.

The first type of group is what I would call the “education and awareness” group, whose main purpose is to educate the community about GLBT issues. St. Michael’s College “Ally” group aptly illustrates this type of group. Ally’s Mission Statement says, “Ally will work to educate the St. Michael’s community on issues that affect lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning people and their friends and families.” Similarly, Holy Cross Allies “[i]s committed to educating itself and the campus community regarding issues related to sexuality.” In addition, Sacred Heart

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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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Gays, straights discuss homosexuality in church

By **Pete Daly**
The Trentonian
March 20, 2005

LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ—In a small room in a building behind the Church of St. Ann, the discussion was quiet but intent on solving an age-old question — can homosexuality exist within the Catholic church?

The answers, of course, don't come easily, even among the two dozen or so gay and lesbian Catholics who gathered yesterday with straight



Francis DeBernardo

parishioners to ponder how homosexuals could gain greater acceptance from the Vatican to Sunday Mass.

"Even if it's a parish that's not in a gay neighborhood, gay and lesbian Catholics are everywhere," said Frank DeBernardo, executive director of the New Ways Ministry, a Maryland-based Catholic group that seeks to reform how churches deal with homosexuality.

"They are probably sitting next to you in a pew. It's not a problem outside the church. Gays and lesbians are inside already," DeBernardo said.

Inside, but rarely "out." In 1991, a report by the

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'Open up the conversation' on gay priests

By **Paula Doyle**
The Tidings
March 17, 2005
Los Angeles, CA

Breaking through the pervasive silence about the existence of gay priests in the church will lead to a healthier community of faith, said a panel of Catholic leaders at the recent 2005 Religious Education Congress.

Speaking at a workshop on "Homosexuality, Celibacy and the Priesthood: Opening Up the Conversation," Dr. Tom Beaudoin, an assistant professor of religious studies at Santa Clara University, told a packed workshop audience that he believes almost everyone who has raised objections against gay priests has "very likely" learned something about God's love from a priest who has a homosexual orientation.

"For generations, gay men have served in the Catholic priesthood," said Beaudoin. "They have lived and are living holy lives, human lives, celibate lives; it's time to try to open up the conversation about that." Denying that the panelists were pushing any political agenda, Beaudoin said the workshop presented a "spiritual task" for participants to try to "be present to what is and receive it prayerfully."

He said talking in a "more adult way" about the blessings and challenges of gay priests similar to the way blessings and challenges of straight priests are discussed will allow Catholics to become "more human" and "more holy with each other...so that at long last our church in this regard can finally begin to deal with reality."

Silent presence

"Today there are hundreds, if not thousands, of celibate gay priests ministering to Catholics in parishes, schools, hospitals, high schools, colleges, retreat houses, soup kitchens, nursing homes and chanceries," said Jesuit Father James Martin, associate editor and TV columnist for *America* magazine. In spite of this fact, according to Father Martin, the U.S. church has great difficulty discussing the issue of gay priests at all. He cited eight reasons for this situation:

—Fear and hatred of gays and lesbians.

—Assumption that being a gay priest means that one is, by definition, sexually active and incapable of chastity.

—Assumption that being a gay priest means one is a pedophile or ephebophile.

—Fear that discussing the existence of gay priests will

drive away straight seminarians, leading to a gay dominance among clergy.

—Fear that if a gay priest is held up as a positive role model, it might undermine the teachings of the Catholic Church.

—Fear that any discussion of gay priests would scandalize the faithful.

—Fear that discussion of gay priests would invite negative media attention.

—Fear that knowledge of the number of gay men in the priesthood would make the Vatican use this as an opportunity to discipline the American church or take punitive action against any who broach the topic.

"Some of these reasons could be set aside if only there were more public models of gay priests," said Father Martin. "In the absence of any healthy gay priests for Catholics to reflect on publicly, and with the only examples being notorious pedophiles, the stereotype of the gay priest as child abuser only deepens."

As for why gay priests are reluctant to speak openly about their lives, Father Martin offers the following reasons: Gay priests are often forbidden from speaking about their experiences by their religious superiors or bishops; they may experience pressure from superiors, colleagues or parishioners to be silent about their sexual orientation; and/or the gay priest may be fearful about reprisals or identifying himself with a group that is now frequently blamed for the clergy sexual abuse crisis.

"As I see it, there are very many gay men who are good priests in the church today," declared Father Martin, who estimated the population of gay priests among the clergy as 25 percent. "The vast majority are healthy, hard-working, faithful, loving celibate members of the clergy. That is simply the truth. In order to grow as a people, we need simply to admit that truth."

... Workshop participant Patricia Mathews, 55, said the church is "opening up channels of compassion" by talking about homosexuality. As a relative of a homosexual family member, Mathews said she saw how the gay teenager experienced misunderstanding in school and at home. "Having sessions like this provides a venue for people to talk about their injuries," Mathews reflected. ■

A people adrift in San Diego

By Rosemary Johnston
National Catholic Reporter
April 8, 2005

SAN DIEGO—As San Diego Catholics absorb the fallout from a recent decision by Bishop Robert Brom to deny a Catholic funeral for the owner of a gay nightclub and the bishop's subsequent apology, it is clear that the polarization of red and blue states that characterized the 2004 presidential election also holds true for the local church.

The 31-year-old nightclub owner, John McCusker, had died unexpectedly March 13 while vacationing in Mammoth, Calif. His parents had arranged for a funeral at the Immaculata, a Spanish Renaissance-style church, the largest in the diocese, located on the campus of the University of San Diego. However, when "concerned Catholics" learned of impending funeral services from a death notice printed in the March 16 San Diego Union-Tribune, they immediately contacted the chancery about the nature of McCusker's business activities, demanding that the bishop prohibit the planned March 18 services at the Immaculata. Brom announced that none of the 98 Catholic churches in San Diego County or Imperial County would be allowed to provide services.

When the story first broke on Page One of the Friday, March 18, Union-Tribune, the reaction from both blue and red Catholics was intense and immediate. McCusker's family had by then scheduled services at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, headquarters for the San Diego Episcopal diocese. As the cathedral's rector said: "Our basic philosophy is whoever you are and wherever you find yourself on the journey of faith, we welcome you."

By Saturday morning, March 19, the Union-Tribune's letters to the editor brimmed with responses from readers, gay and straight, Catholic and non-Catholic. One letter pointed out that the convicted pedophile priest John Geoghan, who was killed while incarcerated, was granted a full Catholic service in Boston while McCusker, a businessman who operated an "establishment for mature, consenting adults," was not. Yet another letter writer insisted the bishop had done the right thing, that allowing Catholic funeral services for McCusker would be tantamount to Jesus "inviting pagans to the Last Supper."

Meanwhile, diocesan chancellor Rod Valdivia issued a series of backpedaling statements in rapid succession, claiming the bishop's decision, described as a "pastoral action," should not be interpreted as a "condemnation of Mr. McCusker." Rather, the bishop's action was intended to prevent the faithful from being "misled" by concluding that, if a Catholic funeral service had been allowed, the church would be condoning McCusker's business activities. The e-mail contained an attachment showing marketing material for porn videos filmed at two clubs owned by McCusker.

Apparently, diocesan officials believed this explanation would justify what was fast becoming a major public relations disaster. On Saturday morning, the Union-Tribune published an editorial condemning Brom's decision. "Intolerant bishop: Denial of funeral contradicts human dignity," the headline read. The scandal, the editorial said, was not the nature of McCusker's business, but the bishop's "narrow-minded ostracism," a gaffe that sends a message that is "the sheer antith-

esis of charity and tolerance."

Behind the scenes, local Catholics gathered in small clusters after Palm Sunday liturgies and exchanged rapid fire e-mails: Isn't it enough that the Catholic community must bear the burden and the shame of the pedophilia scandal and now this? About the safest comment diocesan priests would make to inquiring parishioners was: "Well, I would have handled things differently."

By Monday, March 21, when gay Catholics and their supporters gathered at the San Diego Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Center to craft a respectful and dignified response, McCusker's mother announced to them that Brom had apologized to her and her husband for the anguish his decision had caused the McCusker family. Brom also announced plans to preside at a memorial Mass for McCusker at the Immaculata, a service that will be closed to the public.

The response to this amazing development was a collective expression of gratitude, relief, and admiration for the bishop's apology among those who shuddered when they read about the cancellation of the funeral service, and an outraged cry of betrayal from those who condemned the apology.

San Diego Catholics, who had hoped that the goodwill generated by the bishop's apology and the afterglow of Easter celebrations, would quell this funeral fiasco, learned their relief would be short-lived when the March 25 Union-Tribune printed excerpts from taped voice mail messages the bishop had left for an evangelical Christian activist and "reformed homo-

sexual" who crusades against homosexuality. In the messages, the bishop tries to explain his apology: "... how it's all wrong and how I was done in. ... I stood for our position and I still do, but I need to explain." Activist James Hartline, whose troubled past includes physically abusive parents, stints in jail and drug addiction, has now dedicated himself to crusading against homosexuality and pornography. He never returned Brom's calls. Instead, he contacted the local media, which ran another story. "Bishop's careful apology fails to end dispute," the headline read. Catholic readers wondered why it was that Hartline, who had spoken to the bishop four times about the McCusker funeral plans, including a one-hour meeting with Brom, had such easy access to him.

What next? Once again, a Catholic bishop had made a decision he thought would prevent scandal, only to create a bigger one, just as U.S. bishops all over the country have done when they transferred pedophile priests to other parishes, rather than face the awful truth about that never-ending story. And once again, the Catholic faithful, divided and polarized, looked in vain for leadership from their shepherd. Once again, damage control overshadowed the Gospel imperatives: "Let those without sin cast the first stone. ... Judge not lest you be judged."

"We need bishops who really model Jesus for us," a married friend and fellow parishioner who is active in the local chapter of Dignity lamented in a phone conversation last week. We remain, in the words of Peter Steinfel's recently published book on the crisis in church leadership, a people adrift. ■

Bishop Protests Notre Dame Films

By Felicia R. Lee
The New York Times
February 12, 2005

NOTRE DAME—The second annual Notre Dame Queer Film Festival, a presentation of films by gay and lesbian filmmakers, with panel discussions, including one on the history of gay marriage, has been denounced by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind. The festival at Notre Dame University, which began on Thursday and ends today, is "an abuse of academic freedom," Bishop John M. D'Arcy said in a statement. Notre Dame,

in South Bend, is considered one of the nation's premier Catholic universities and is a sponsor of the festival. Matthew V. Storin, a spokesman for Notre Dame, said in a news release that the university had "great affection and respect" for Bishop D'Arcy but disagreed with his interpretation of academic freedom. "Within reason, we would prefer that our students encounter the secular American culture, with all its faults, in the context of their Catholic education rather than attempting to cloister them till the time they graduate, only then to confront reality," the statement said. ■



Rochester couple receives award

Jennifer Morgan and Francis DeBernardo (L) of New Ways Ministry congratulate Mary Ellen and Casey Lopata (R), the most recent recipients of New Ways Ministry's "Bridge Building Award." The couple received a plaque and a \$1,000 gift at an awards luncheon held in Rochester, New York, April 10, 2005.

Growing presence of gay/lesbian groups

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University's "Task Force Against Homophobia" has a stated goal of increasing "the awareness and sensitivity of GLBT Issues facing our campus community. In doing so we hope to combat the stigmas of homophobia while creating a safe and welcoming environment for the entire community."

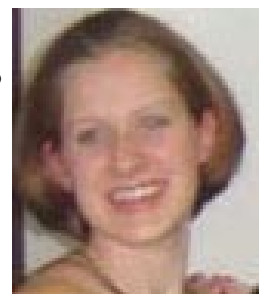
The second type of group I identified is the "activist" group. These groups, such as Boston College's LGBC (The Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community at Boston College), have programs already in place to educate and raise awareness. LGBC, a presence on the BC campus since 1974, offers many services, including training sessions for Resident Assistants and "'Guess Who's Gay,' the highly popular, stereotype-smashing educational program . . . available by request for the residence halls." Also at Boston College, the BC Lambda Law Students Association sponsors and participates in National Coming Out Day and the National Gay and Lesbian Law Association's annual conference (Lavender Law). As a last example of

the "activist"-oriented group, the Rainbow Alliance at St. Norbert College encourages its members to get involved with the ACLU Get Equal Campaign, a campaign dedicated "to make significant changes in the way America treats LGBT people," by offering an ACLU link and directions of how to get involved on their website.

Finally, many groups are "social," and serve as places for discussion and socializing, often offering gatherings where GLBT people and their friends can come together in an accepting and affirming environment. Bisexuals, Gay and Lesbians of Villanova (B.G.L.O.V.) states that a "particular aspect of B.G.L.O.V. is the opportunity for the development of true friendship." Marquette's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Questioning (GLBQ) group offers bi-weekly meetings. Many other groups, such as St. Scholastica's Open Doors group, St. Louis University's Rainbow Alliance, and DePaul's Spectrum offer weekly meetings and events.

All of the groups have some aspect of the education and awareness, activist,

and social in them. Xavier Alliance, Xavier University's Gay-Straight Alliance, was established "to provide a safe place for people of all sexual orientations to meet, offer opportunities to learn, teach and discuss the challenges surrounding sexual orientation within the teaching of the Catholic church



Jennifer Morgan

and build community spirit, mutual understanding and support for all." Xavier Alliance sponsors a variety of activities, in addition to meetings, such as dances, informational speakers, and Sexual Diversity Awareness Week. This range of involvement was typical of almost all of the groups I studied, including those discussed above.

Interestingly enough, almost every group I found was open to any and everyone, whether or not they identified themselves as gay or lesbian. The

growing trend on Catholic colleges, a trend I experienced at Notre Dame, is for straight friends of gay and lesbian students to join the clubs in support of their gay brothers and lesbian sisters. Because most groups have some aspect of awareness-raising to them, it is appropriate that the groups are open to all. This is not an uncommon trend of non-academic groups. For example, at Notre Dame, the Black Student Organization is open to people of all colors, the Texas Club encourages non-Texans to become members, and the Hawaii Club luau is one of the most well attended club events on campus all year long. Of all the organizations I researched, none required that its members "come out" to be a member of the club, and confidentiality was almost always stressed in the club's mission statement or its equivalent. Of the schools with organizations, many also offered clubs for graduate students, law students, and faculty and staff, or the already-existing organizations included these people.

As far as the organizational structure of each club, most fell under the "Student Activities" umbrella and were thus formally recognized as clubs by the college (unfortunately, my alma mater is an exception to this rule, as ND still does not accept the gay/lesbian student groups, although the Standing Committee is a formally recognized body. Boston College's LGBC has also applied for recognition and been denied several times, according to their website). A couple of the colleges offered groups or programs run by Campus/University ministries. For example, at Loyola Marymount University, Beati, the Lesbian and Gay Community in Campus Ministry, was a campus affiliate of the Los Angeles Archdiocesan Office of Ministry with Lesbian and Gay Catholics. Villanova has the Gay Straight Coalition, but B.G.L.O.V. falls under Campus Ministry. In addition, counseling centers at several schools offered confidential support groups for gay and lesbian people, such as the counseling center at Rivier College in New Hampshire, which offers a "Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender of Questioning/Exploration Support Group." University of San Diego, in addition to its student groups, also has a LGBT Support Group, sponsored by the counseling center. Moreover, though some counseling centers did not have such groups, the GLBT groups already in existence at these colleges had support groups in place.

Further, many of the existing groups offer or participate in the "Safe Zone"

The 'gray zone' of nondiscrimination policies

By *The Heights* Editorial Board

The Heights

Boston College

April 11, 2005

The Issue: It's unclear how many Jesuit institutions protect sexual orientation.

What We Think: Be clear - and add sexual orientation to policies

In an editorial on Feb. 14 suggesting that Boston College add sexual orientation to its nondiscrimination policy, *The Heights* stated that 20 of the nation's 28 Jesuit colleges and universities included the words in their clauses.

A few days later, on Feb. 17, we issued a correction, saying that 25 of the 28 schools extended protection from discrimination to homosexuals.

Today, we're correcting that statistic again.

After a review of the nondiscrimination policies of the 28 institutions, here's what we found: 20 colleges and universities include sexual orientation. Five - BC, Loyola Marymount University, the University of Scranton, Spring Hill College, and Xavier University - do not.

Three institutions - Creighton University, John Carroll University, and Wheeling Jesuit University - have policies that are so unclear, it's hard to say if their documents include sexual orientation or not.

John Carroll, for example, has four nondiscrimination statements, governing its admissions, employment, housing, and

programming practices. Two include sexual orientation, two do not.

At Wheeling, homosexuals are afforded protection in the university's diversity statement, but not in its nondiscrimination policy.

Not even the staff at Creighton is sure of whether or not sexual orientation is included in its policies. An employee in the university's Office of the Registrar told *The Heights* that he believes Creighton included the words in its nondiscrimination policy last year. The clause, found on the university's Web site, does not include the words. Its harassment and discrimination policy, however, does include sexual orientation. The difference? It's anyone's guess.

That, however, is not the end of the confusion.

Of the 20 institutions that include sexual orientation in their nondiscrimination policy, three reserve the right to basically renege the promise.

Gonzaga University's document, which explicitly states that it doesn't discriminate against any person on the basis of sexual orientation, also says that the university "reserves the right to take religious faith into consideration where it is deemed appropriate."

The situation is similar at Marquette University, which protects homosexuals in its policies . . . sort of. "At the same time," its nondiscrimination policy reads, "Marquette cherishes its right and duty to seek and

retain personnel who will make a positive contribution to its religious character, goals and mission."

Same thing at Regis University, which "reserves the right to give employment preference to persons who demonstrate by word and practice a commitment to the University's mission and educational goals."

So, depending how you look at it, as many as 23 Jesuit schools include sexual orientation in their nondiscrimination policies, or as little 17 do.

Unfortunately, this discrepancy probably isn't keeping many administrators of the schools in the "gray zone" up at night. The aforementioned nondiscrimination policies are intentionally unclear - universities can save face by saying their documents affirm the rights of homosexuals, while their practices may speak to the contrary.

There shouldn't be loopholes in discrimination policies that enable institutions to pick and chose who, and when, they protect individuals that are a part of their community.

The nation's 28 Jesuit colleges and universities should adopt nondiscrimination policies that protect all persons. While the Catholic Church does not approve of homosexuality, it calls on the faithful to treat homosexuals with "respect, compassion, and sensitivity." As explained in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided." ■

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Gay/Lesbian Groups

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program or its equivalent. "Safe Zone" programs usually consist of a required training period for the participant, whether this be a short seminar, a series of classes, or something similar, on issues surrounding homosexuality and homophobia, specifically applied to college life and on college campuses. After completion of training, the participant, who can be faculty, staff, or student, is given a decal to place outside of their office or dorm room to signify that that place is a "safe space," and is welcoming to all.

At my alma mater, the University of Notre Dame, I completed such training as a Resident Assistant, and proudly placed my Rainbow Dome (the Golden Dome atop Notre Dame's administration building is a common symbol of ND and both students and graduates are referred to as "Domers") decal outside my door (each college has its own decal—University of Maryland, although not Catholic, has a Rainbow Terrapin!) The "Safe Zone" training consisted of two 2-hour sessions with Sr. Mary Louis Gude, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs and a member of ND's Standing Committee for Gay and Lesbian Student Needs, as well as student members of the Standing Committee who shared their stories. Approximately 15-20 future RAs participated in the training, which covered issues such as what to do and what not to do if a student chose to come out to you, how to deal with homophobia in the dorms, and how the experience of a gay or lesbian student may differ from that of a straight student.

Although it is a positive sign that so many resources exist for the LGBT community, there are still obstacles to be overcome. Student groups still have to fight for recognition, and homophobic incidents still occur on college campuses. I visited with Catholic colleges in the DC metropolitan area, and spoke with both students and administrators. All said the situation for gays and lesbians has improved significantly in the past few years, but that there was a long way to go. They noted that, occasionally, slurs still appeared on dorm wipe boards, or negative editorials were published in student publications. However, both administrators and staff said that these incidents were now the exception, not the norm, and that it was no longer acceptable to be homophobic in a campus community. In fact, one administrator told me that, when a homophobic incident did occur, the student who had made the negative comment was ad-

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
Moraga: Saint Mary's College
Ranchos Palos Verde: Marymount College
San Diego: University of San Diego
San Francisco: University of San Francisco
Santa Clara: Santa Clara University

Colorado

Denver: Regis University

Connecticut

Fairfield: Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University
New Haven: Albertus Magnus College
West Hartford: Saint Joseph College

District of Columbia

Georgetown University

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
Weston: Regis 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
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

Poughkeepsie: Marist College

Riverdale: College of Mount Saint Vincent

Rochester: Nazareth College of Rochester

Syracuse: LeMoyne College

Tarrytown: Marymount College

Ohio

Cincinnati: Xavier University, Univ. of Cincinnati

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

versely affected by the remark, rather than the person whose orientation she was criticizing.

On a personal note, both my junior and senior years (2002-2003, 2003-2004), Notre Dame was ranked by the Princeton Review as the #1 homophobic campus in the U.S. But students organized the "Gay, Fine By Me" campaign, a tactic employed at other schools in the past, such as Duke and Boston College, to show support for the gay community and to rid ourselves of one title of which we were not proud. The campaign, as I already mentioned, consisted of wearing bright orange t-shirts with the slogan "Gay, Fine By Me" printed on the front, on a designated day. I wish I could say that everyone wore the bright orange t-shirts, but I cannot. There were newspaper articles written by people who disagreed with what the shirts repre-

sented, and negative comments made. But there was also such an overwhelming number of both students AND staff who bought and wore the t-shirts that more had to be printed and a "repeat" day scheduled. I missed out the first time (the shirts were sold-out), but proudly sported my bright orange t-shirt the second time around. And I will never forget how a very dear friend of mine, now a member of the Standing Committee, saw me wearing the shirt and gave me a huge hug, telling me how happy it made him and how encouraged he was to see so many members of the Notre Dame family showing their support for him, and for his other gay brothers and lesbian sisters under the Golden Dome.

In the past, college campuses have been catalysts for social change. Perhaps it is because, in college, you are

forced to find out who you are, and then try to the best of your ability to be that person each day. I loved an E.E. Cummings quote that St. Louis University's Rainbow Alliance had on its website: "To be nobody-but-yourself—in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else—means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight; and never stop fighting." I can only hope that, with the promising signs I found in my research, gays and lesbians will not only be accepted and celebrated on college campuses, but everywhere, for who they are. ■

For more information on gay and lesbian groups on Catholic college campuses, contact New Ways Ministry at 301-277-5674 or via e-mail at newwaysm@verizon.net.

Pope's legacy on gays recalled

Praised for working for poor but criticized on sexuality & condoms

By **Eartha Metzler**
The New York Blade
 April 8, 2005

As people around the world reflect on the life of Pope John Paul II, many remember that the pope's negative pronouncements on homosexuality and on sexuality generally, have been a source of great pain.

Pope John Paul II, who died on April 2, led the Catholic Church for 26 years and was the longest reigning Pope in recent history. He presided over a church that grew to a billion people and became well known for his opposition to communism and high profile visits to 127 countries.

Many remember the pope as a great communicator who reached out to the poor. According to the Associated Press, even communist leader Fidel Castro expressed condolences for the pope, writing on Monday "Rest in peace, tireless fighter for friendship among peoples, enemy of war and friend of the poor."

Says who? Some observers believe that the pope's strict traditionalist views had to do with his experience leading a church within a communist state — he was a cardinal in Communist Poland. As such, he was isolated from the liberalizing forces that were impacting the Catholic Church in other countries.

While the pope spoke out for peace in the Middle East and apologized for some past wrongs of the Catholic Church, he rigidly upheld the Church position that sex was for procreation only.

The pope called homosexuality "evil", and used his position as head of the

out among the highest in supporting gay and lesbian rights. This could be because Catholic teaching is more complicated than some think, it does not condemn homosexual orientation," said Francis DeBernardo of New Ways Ministry, a 28-year-old ministry which seeks to build bridges between lesbian/gay Catholics and the broader Catholic community,

"Another reason for Catholic support may be the emphasis on family, people are less likely to hate gay and lesbian people if they have a gay or lesbian family member," DeBernardo added.

Despite a broadening sense of acceptance of gay men and lesbians within the Catholic Church, in 1986 Pope John Paul II issued a "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons." This letter, which was written in English and aimed at American Catholics, called same-sex attraction an "objective disorder" and "intrinsically evil".

Dignity USA, the largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered Catholic organization, founded in 1969, had been holding meetings in Catholic churches at that time. In response to the pope's 1986 letter Dignity chapters across the country voted unanimously to leave the Catholic Church.

"This was quite traumatic," Sinnett said.

"People are hurt by the church's language. We exist to support people who are integrating spirituality and sexuality."

Dignity now has between 3,500 and 4,000 members, Sinnett said, and has around 50 chapters. "There is an ultra-

orthodox belief that the church is the people of God," Sinnett said. "The Bishops may have shut out gays and lesbians but gay and lesbian Catholics are still able to practice."

Sinnett said that he attends a Roman Catholic mass with his Dignity chapter in St. Louis. The service is held in an Episcopal church.

Why did some gay men and lesbians go to such lengths to stay close to a religion that had rejected them?

"During the Vietnam era conservatives used to say to protesters "Love it or leave

it" they didn't understand the concept of loyal protest," Sinnett said,

"Faith is a lot more [than the Church's statements on homosexuality] we can dissent faithfully."

Grassroots change

In 1987, theologian Charles Curran was fired from his position at Catholic University because he refused to follow the Vatican line on homosexuality and birth control.

Sister Jeannine Gramick began pastoral work with gay men and lesbians in 1971 as a nun with the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Baltimore. Gramick said she was encouraged and supported in this work by her church leaders at the time.

"Gays and lesbians felt so abandoned, some hadn't been to church in 10 or 20 years and felt there was no place for them," Gramick said, "I told them every baptized person has a place in the church, it belongs to you as much as it belongs to straight people."

"We began having weekly services in homes and gradually they realized that people cared ... gradually the feelings of rejection were replaced with feelings of being welcome," Gramick said, "There was an article that came out that first year ... in a major Philadelphia paper about a nun doing work with lesbians and gays. I got a couple dozen letters and two to one were in favor of what I was doing."

"Catholics are more tolerant and flexible than church teachings would have us believe," Gramick said. "The real church is the people."

Despite popular support for her work, the Vatican conducted an 11-year long investigation into what she was doing and in 1999 issued an order forbidding her to speak about homosexuality or about the church investigation of her ministry.

"During his papacy, the movement for gay and lesbian rights at the higher level of the church deteriorated," Gramick said of the reign of John Paul II. "But," she added, "the movement of middle management in the church in the U.S. progressed due to advocacy by gays and lesbians and their families."

"The Pope's pronouncements became much more repressive than pastoral. The documents produced by U.S. bishops show the contrast between what we see on the Vatican level and on the national level," Gramick said. "Those who are leaders in name are not leaders in fact. The real leaders are at the grassroots level, the leaders are catching up to where the people have already moved."

Gramick said that the movement toward acceptance of gay men and lesbians within

the Catholic Church will continue no matter what negative pronouncements come from the Vatican.

Pope and politics

The Church under John Paul II argued not only that homosexuality is against natural law, but that it should be against civil law as well. In 1992, the Vatican issued a letter to bishops urging them to oppose gay rights initiatives.

The pope pressured the Italian government to withdraw support for the World Pride Celebration in Rome in 2000.

The pope supported the Federal Marriage Amendment to limit marriage to

The Le Pope Joh

opposite sex couples and asked bishops to get involved in campaigns against same-sex marriage.

Rather than deal openly with the problem of sex abuse by priests, the pope promoted Cardinal Bernard Law, who chose to cover-up sex abuse problem and attempted to scapegoat homosexual priests, according to Sinnett.

In November 2002, the church released a letter entitled "Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life," which stated that Catholic politicians should advance Catholic teachings in their work.

AIDS activists say that by traveling to Africa and speaking against the use of birth control and condoms, the pope set back anti-AIDS work and that many have died because of the pope's theological rigidity and opposition to condom use.

"One of the greatest successes of this pope was in globalizing the church and listening to the voices in the Third World," said Francis DeBernardo, "My hope is that the next pope will similarly listen to the voices of gay and lesbian people."

"I do believe that the Holy Spirit guides the choice of the next pope," DeBernardo said, "Catholic people have worked for justice for gay and lesbian people. If the spirit can work under a papacy opposed to lesbian and gay

continued on page 6



Sam Sinnett

Catholic Church to oppose the use of birth control and of condoms against AIDS and to exert political pressure against gay rights and same-sex marriage. He also attempted to scapegoat gay priests for the priest sex abuse scandals, according to Dignity President Sam Sinnett.

Different time for gay Catholics

During the 1970s ministries developed for gay men and lesbians within the Catholic Church.

"When polls have been done among various religious groups, Catholics come

Pope John Paul II's words on homosexuality, 1978-2005

By Ethan Jacobs

Bay Windows

Boston, MA

April 7, 2005

As the world mourns Pope John Paul II, many in the GLBT community find it hard to join in the chorus of loving tributes. Since the pope's election in 1978, one of the most consistent features of his tenure has been his dogged opposition to GLBT rights, and as the world's most visible religious leader the pope's words carried weight. What is more tragic is that throughout his life his opposition to GLBT rights became more pronounced, and his language became more poisonous. In a book published less than two months before his death the pope argued that

Legacy of John Paul II

continued from page 6

issues ... it can work under whoever comes next."

While many gay and lesbian advocates expressed hope that the next pope will develop more progressive positions on sexuality, 114 of the 117 Cardinals who will decide on a replacement were appointed by John Paul, and many doubt that any major doctrinal changes are on the horizon.

Covering the pope

In a written statement Atheists of America said that the papal death watch was "out of control and over the top" and said the coverage of the pope was crossing over the line from objective reporting to propaganda.

According to Ellen Johnson, president of Atheists of America, media coverage "ignored the fact that he condemned millions of people for their sexual orientation; continued the church's policy of relegating women as second class citizens; and failed to respect the American constitutional guarantee of separation of church and state by pressuring law makers and trying to influence our nation's political process."

Johnson also objected to President Bush's order to lower the nation's flag in honor of the Pope.

"It is inappropriate for the American flag to be lowered in salute to a foreign religious leader," Johnson said. ■

same-sex marriage was part of "a new ideology of evil." For many GLBT people, this rhetoric leaves a stain on the pope's legacy. What follows is a chronology of the pope's words on homosexuality.

October 5, 1979: In a speech to bishops from every American diocese, held at Chicago's Quigley South Seminary, the pope praised the bishops for preaching that gay sex was inherently sinful. Citing a letter that the American bishops had released two years prior supporting many of the church's socially conservative views, the pope said, "As 'men with the message of truth and the power of God,' as authentic teachers of God's law and as compassionate pastors you also rightly stated: 'Homosexual activity . . . as distinguished from homosexual orientation, is morally wrong.'"

September 6, 1983: Speaking before 25 American bishops at an audience at the Vatican, the pope argued that both gay sex and premarital sex are incompatible "with God's plan for human love." According to the *New York Times*, church sources believed that the pope was targeting elements of the American church that held liberal views on sexuality issues. This speech foreshadowed the pope's later efforts to squash any debate within the church on GLBT issues.

December 1, 1983: The Vatican releases its official sex education pamphlet, "Educational Guidance in Human Love," which calls homosexuality both a "disorder" and a "social maladaptation." The document's vision of sex education for gay and lesbian people is a stern warning not to have any. The Vatican's guide also lists several potential causes for homosexuality: "lack of affection, immaturity, obsessive impulses, seduction, social isolation and other types of frustration, depravation in dress, license in shows and publications."

July 25, 1986: The Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, acting with the approval of the pope, stripped the Rev. Charles Curran, a tenured theology professor at Washington's Catholic University, of the right to teach theology for his dissent from the Vatican on a number of issues, including his stance on gay relationships. According to the *Washington Post*, Curran argued, "homosexual acts in the context of a loving relationship striving for permanence can in a certain sense be objectively morally acceptable." Curran also differed from the Vatican on issues pertaining to abortion and sex outside of marriage. Both the faculty of the Catholic University School of Religion as well as the Catholic Theological Society supported Curran's right to dissent, but the Vatican steamrolled over the opposing views.

The week of September 6, 1986: Seattle Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen announced in a letter sent to priests that the pope had stripped him of authority in five

areas, including issues relating to gay and lesbian people, and assigned that authority to an auxiliary bishop with close ties to the Vatican. Hunthausen provoked the ire of the pope in part by allowing the gay Catholic group Dignity to hold Mass in his cathedral. After receiving petitions from priests, nuns and lay people, the Vatican restored Hunthausen's authority in 1987 but placed him under review for two years to ensure that he toed the party line on gay and other issues.

October 30, 1986: Just in time for Halloween, the Vatican's Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith releases the "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons," which warns bishops against being misled by the "deceitful propaganda" of gay activists. Stepping up the rhetoric a notch from previous statements, the document argues that even an "inclination" to homosexuality bordered on the level of "an intrinsic moral evil." In reference to the AIDS crisis the Congregation laments that gay activists continue their push for equality in spite of evidence that "homosexuality may seriously threaten the lives and well-being of a large number of people." The Congregation also blames gay activists for anti-gay hate crimes, arguing that while such crimes are lamentable, "when civil legislation is introduced to

protect behavior to which no one has any conceivable right [one should not be surprised when] irrational and violent reactions increase."

September 10, 1987:

While flying toward the United States for his second visit during his Papacy, the pope actually said something positive and heartwarming to a group of reporters about the gay community. In response to the controversy over the Vatican's October 1986 letter to bishops on gay and lesbian people (see above), the pope said, "They are not outcasts, the homosexuals. Like all people who suffer, they are inside the church. No, not inside the church, in the heart of the church." Then, in an effort to dash any goodwill among GLBT people, the pope said that as part of the church's response to the AIDS epidemic, the church "is doing all that is

possible to heal and especially prevent the moral background to the disease," which reporters took to be a reference to homosexuality.

September 18, 1987: While visiting with AIDS patients at San Francisco's Mission Delores Basilica, the pope stowed away the anti-gay rhetoric long enough to make a heartfelt and moving statement about people living with AIDS. He said, "God loves you all, without distinction, without limit."

December 26, 1988: Keeping up his compassionate streak, the pope called on scientists to find a cure for AIDS and offered hope to people living with the disease during his traditional holiday prayer at St. Peter's Basilica. He said: "These words are addressed above all to the victims of AIDS, called to face the challenge not only of the sickness but also the mistrust of a fearful society that instinctively turns away from them... I invite everyone to take up the tragic burden of these brethren of ours . . . I exhort scientists and researchers to increase their efforts to find an effective treatment."

November 16, 1989: The good will couldn't last. Speaking at a Vatican conference on AIDS, the pope argued that "abuse of sexuality" was one of the causes of AIDS, a remark that many interpreted to refer to homosexuality. The pope also placed himself firmly in the camp of those who opposed

promoting safer sex and condom use, saying that it was immoral to promote AIDS prevention strategies "based on recourse to means and remedies that violate the authentic sense of human sexuality."

July 23, 1992: Shoring up its reputation as the scariest wing of the Vatican, the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith issued a document arguing in favor of the right to discrimi-

nate against gay and lesbian people in employment, housing and adoption of children. The document, called "Some Considerations Concerning the Response to Legislative Proposals on the Non-Discrimination of Homosexual Persons," was allegedly aimed at North American bishops working to stake out a position on anti-discrimination legislation. According to the document: "Sexual orientation does not constitute a quality comparable to race, ethnic background, etc. in respect to non-discrimination. Unlike **continued on page 9**



Pope John Paul II

International News

Bishops issue diversity and equality guidelines

Independent Catholic News

London, England

February 8, 2005

LONDON—The Catholic Bishops Conference of England & Wales issued published a Policy Statement and Guidelines on diversity and equality yesterday.

Archbishop Peter Smith, Chairman of the Department for Christian Responsibility & Citizenship, said the purpose of the guidelines was “to raise awareness, to explain some of the requirements of the law, and to encourage the Catholic community to respond to this new situation in a way that reflects our

particular values and traditions.”

The document follows a series of recent EU Directives on race, employment and equal treatment and new UK legislation to implement these directives.

In the Guidelines, the Bishops call on all Catholic bodies ‘to publicly acknowledge their respect for diversity and

commitment to equality.’

Catholic employers must take care to ensure that no direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation takes place.

In making appointments to committees and commissions, councils, boards and other bodies, authorities should ensure ‘that selection procedures reach out to the full diversity of the Catholic community in their area or constituency.’

Formal and informal monitoring are encouraged by the Bishops, and while reverse discrimination is ‘usually inappropriate,’ other forms of ‘positive action’ are also encouraged.

The Guidelines cover six areas of legislation including, race, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, and disability.

On race, the Bishops accept the reality of ‘institutional racism’ and endorse the Charter of the Catholic Racial Justice Congress 2003.

On gender, they recognised the different roles that men and women are sometimes called to play, while at the same time they ‘recognise and uphold their fundamental equality and support society’s attempt to give them full and equal rights’.

The Bishops urge the Catholic community to ‘seek to include people with disabilities in the pastoral, spiritual, liturgical, social and educational dimensions of Church life.’

They welcome new legislation on religious discrimination in employment’ which needs to be carefully applied so as to safeguard ‘the right of faith communities to practice their faith freely and to engage in a range of religious, educational and charitable activities’.

The Bishops make it clear that ‘every human being, whatever his or her sexual orientation, has a right to live a life free from discrimination and harassment’. At the same time, they point out that Catholic teaching makes a distinction between sexual orientation and sexual activity, and it holds that all men and women are called to a life of chastity, and to fidelity, if they choose to marry.’

New legislation which from 2006 will protect all against discrimination on the grounds of age is also welcomed.

In conclusion, the Bishops ‘call upon all Catholics to make a real effort to be open to the challenge of the new legislation’ and they express their own hope to create within the church ‘a pattern of life founded on the love of God for each person a place of welcome that enable all who wish so to respond to the invitation of faith.’ ■

Cardinal Overrules Bishop Over Gay Teacher Ban

By Peter Moore

365Gay.com

March 28, 2005

EDINBURGH—The Roman Catholic prelate of Scotland has overruled a call from a senior bishop to ban gays from teaching in Catholic schools.

Last week, Bishop Joseph Devine said there is no place in faith schools for gay or lesbian teachers.

Devine, who is president of the Catholic Education Commission added that gay teachers “would be offering a lifestyle that is incompatible with Catholic social teaching.”

He has also called for any gay teachers already working in the school system to be “red circled” so they could not be promoted.

But, Cardinal Keith O’Brien has put the brakes on Devine after the bishop’s statement provoked dissent within the senior clergy in the Church in Scotland.



Cardinal Keith O’Brien

In an interview with a Scottish newspaper the cardinal said that gay teachers would not be banned from working in faith-based schools.

O’Brien said that he did not view homosexuality as a problem and it had no relevance to the church. “If there

happens to be a gay teacher and he does happen to be living with a partner, that’s their personal, private life. I don’t see it as a problem,” he said.

The role of gays in religion has also embroiled the Anglican Church. Last

week Scotland’s branch of Anglicanism announced it would accept gays into the priesthood. The decision has infuriated conservatives who are still threatening a schism over the election of an openly gay man as bishop of New Hampshire in the US. ■

Canadian bishops reiterate opposition to same-sex marriage bill

The Catholic Messenger

Davenport, Iowa

February 10, 2005

OTTAWA—As the Canadian Parliament prepared to introduce same-sex marriage legislation, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops sent letters to government leaders reiterating their opposition and urging that legislators be allowed to vote according to their consciences.

The bishops “stand united in their opposition to legislation that would redefine marriage in such a way that it is no longer recognized as the unique, essential and fundamental relationship of a man and a woman,” said letters to Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin, Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe

and Jack Layton, leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada.

The letters, sent on behalf of the bishops by Archbishop Brendan O’Brien of St. John’s, Newfoundland, CCCB president, were dated Jan. 31.

On Feb. 1, the Canadian government introduced a same-sex marriage bill into the House of Commons. The legislation contained provisions protecting religious groups that choose not to perform same-sex marriages.

The legislation said it was designed “to reflect values of tolerance, respect and equality consistent with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms,” part of the Canadian Constitution.

For several weeks, Canadian bishops have urged Catholics to speak out against the legislation.

Archbishop Thomas Collins of Edmonton, Alberta, asked Catholics in his archdiocese to speak against the legislation but to be welcoming of those who struggle with same-sex attractions.

“Like everyone, they will find true inner peace according to the vision of chastity that comes from the Gospel and from our Catholic Christian faith,” he said.

The archbishops of Ottawa and Vancouver, British Columbia, also issued letters urging parishioners to let their voices be heard on the same-sex marriage debate.

The letters were part of a concerted campaign by the Catholic bishops that has included letters from Quebec Cardinal Marc Ouellet, Toronto Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic and Bishop Frederick Henry of Calgary, Alberta. ■

Pope John Paul II's words on homosexuality

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these, homosexual orientation is an objective disorder.”

November 16, 1992: The Vatican releases its 676-page *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the first major compendium of Catholic belief issued since the 1566 Council of Trent. Gay and lesbian people get a special mention in the new book, and for those Catholics who haven't been paying attention the book restates the well-worn argument that gay and lesbian people should be treated with compassion but that they should abstain from sex.

February 23, 1994: In the wake of a European Parliament non-binding resolution in favor of same-sex marriage and adoption by gay couples, the Pope issued a 100-page letter to Catholics on family values. Ratcheting up the rhetoric, the Pope argued that same-sex marriage was not merely sinful but potentially dangerous: “Other interpersonal unions [beyond heterosexual marriage] which do not fulfill the above conditions cannot be recognized, despite certain growing trends which represent a serious threat to the future of the family and society itself.” Three days prior to releasing the letter the Pope told worshippers at the Vatican's Sunday service that the European Parliament resolution “inappropriately confer[ed] an institutional value on deviant behavior.”

December 21, 1995: The Vatican published a guide for parents on their child's sex education. In addition to restating the church's condemnation of gay sex, the 66-page booklet, called “Human Sexuality: Truth and Significance,” also argues against teaching anything about safer sex to prevent the spread of AIDS. The book reads in part that parents should “refuse the promotion of so-called ‘safe

sex,’ or ‘safer sex,’ a dangerous and immoral policy based on the illusory theory that a condom can provide sufficient protection against AIDS.”

July 21, 1998: Cardinal Edward Cassidy, the pope's envoy to the Anglican Communion (whose U.S. branch is the Episcopal Church), warned attendees at the Anglican's Lambeth Conference in Canterbury that relationships between the two denominations would be strained if the Anglicans either allowed gay and lesbian people to marry or enter the priesthood. He said that unity between the two denominations would be ruptured if the Anglican bishops promoted “diversity and differences which cannot be reconciled with the Christian Gospel.”

The week of October 8, 1998: The pope canceled a trip to Sweden to meet with that country's Archbishop Karl-Gustav Hammar; the pope was reportedly angry about an art exhibition going on at the time in Uppsala's Lutheran Cathedral featuring photographs depicting Christ surrounded by gay men. Hammar also alienated the pope by welcoming gay and lesbian people into the church and ordaining them as ministers, even when they were living with same-sex partners.

July 13, 1999: The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith rules that the Rev. Robert Nugent and Sister Jeannine Gramick must end their ministry to gay and lesbian people. Nugent and Gramick's New Ways Ministry, which encouraged gay and lesbian Catholics to remain in the

church, had been the subject of a 12-year investigation, and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of the Congregation argued that the two had misled people into thinking that the Vatican might change their position on homosexuality. Ratzinger declared that Nugent and Gramick “are permanently prohibited from any pastoral work involving homosexual persons.”

July 9, 2000: The pope condemned the World Pride event held in Rome, which was held in the city the same year as the



World Pride in Rome

Catholic Church's Grand Jubilee of the year 2000. He said: “In the name of the Church of Rome, I cannot not express bitterness for the affront to the Grand Jubilee of the year 2000 and for the offense to the Christian values of a city that is so dear to the hearts of Catholics across the world.” For months before the Pride event the Vatican had lobbied unsuccessfully to keep the event out of Rome.

December 28, 2003: Following court decisions in favor of same-sex marriage in Massachusetts and Canada, the Pope issued a public condemnation of same-sex marriage. “In our times, a misunderstood sense of rights has sometimes disturbed the nature of the family institution and conjugal bond itself,” the Pope said.

January 17, 2003: The Vatican issued a document calling on Catholic elected officials to legislate according to Catholic doctrine on same-sex marriage, abortion and other issues. The document, called “Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life,” argued that same-sex relationships can in “no way be placed on the same level as marriage, nor receive legal recognition as such.” In the United States the pressure of the Catholic Church was felt most notably by Sen. John Kerry in his unsuccessful bid to unseat President Bush.

July 31, 2003: The Pope continued his streak of interceding in American and European politics, issuing a 12-page document calling Catholic legislators who vote in favor of same-sex marriage, rights for same-sex couples or gay adoption rights “gravely immoral.” The document argues, “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.” The release of the document coincided with President Bush's statements that his administration was working to ensure that same-sex couples not be allowed to marry.

October 4, 2003: The pope told Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, spiritual leader of the Anglican Communion, that the August selection of V. Gene Robinson as Episcopal

Bishop of New Hampshire threatened to cause a strain in the relationship between the two denominations. Without mentioning Robinson specifically, he said: “As we give thanks for the progress that has already been made, we must also recognize that new and serious difficulties have arisen on the path to unity.”

September 5, 2004: The pope told Canada's ambassador to the Vatican that Prime Minister Paul Martin should abandon his efforts to legalize same-sex marriage. He argued, “Any attempts to change the meaning of the word ‘spouse’ contradicts right reason: Legal guarantees, analogous to those granted to marriage, cannot be applied to unions between persons of the same sex without creating a false understanding of the nature of marriage.”

February 22, 2005: The Pope releases his last book, *Memory and Identity*, which includes the most virulent anti-gay language of his tenure. He argues that the legal push for same-sex marriage is motivated by a sinister agenda (he's obviously never met Annie Goodridge). According to the Pope's new book: “It is legitimate and necessary to ask oneself if [the movement for same-sex marriage] is not perhaps part of a new ideology of evil, perhaps more insidious and hidden, which attempts to pit human rights against the family and against man.” ■

Vatican attacks after Spain's House passes gay marriage

The Washington Blade
April 29, 2005

ROME—A senior Vatican cardinal last week condemned Spain's plans to allow gay marriage and adoption, the *Times* of London reported. Cardinal Alfonso Lopes Trujillo, head of the Pontifical Council on the Family, in an interview with the *Corriere della Sera* newspaper, said of the Spanish bill: “We cannot impose the iniquitous on people. On the contrary, precisely because they are iniquitous, the church makes an urgent call for freedom of conscience and the duty to oppose,” the *Times* reported. The government in Spain,

one of Europe's most Catholic countries, is considering a bill to legalize same-sex marriage, and the measure was adopted last week in the country's lower house of parliament, according to the *Times*. The attack on the measure from the Vatican is an indication of how the new papacy will adhere to precedents put in place by the late Pope John Paul II and supported by the new Pope Benedict XVI, the *Times* reported. Pope Benedict previously has called homosexuality objectively disordered and an intrinsic moral evil, according to the newspaper. ■

Film Chronicles Nun's Crusade for Gay Catholics

By Daniel Burke
The Washington Post
July 31, 2004

PHILADELPHIA—With her shy nun's smile and gentle demeanor, Sister Jeannine Gramick seems the most unlikely of gadflies. But, as a new documentary about her ministry to gay and lesbian Catholics shows, she is fearless in fighting anyone who tries to silence her.

The film, "In Good Conscience: Sister Jeannine Gramick's Journey of Faith," has made the rounds at film festivals from Milan, Italy, to Kansas City. It recently won an "audience favorite" award at the Philadelphia International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival in Gramick's hometown.

The film follows four years of Gramick's three-decade quest to make her church more accepting of homosexuals. It is a quest that began with a question.

"I was a good little nun for many, many years," Gramick says in the film. "Until I met a gay man, and that friendship really changed the direction of my life. The question that Dominic kept asking me was, 'Now Sister, what is the Catholic Church doing for my gay and lesbian brothers and sisters?'"

That was in 1971. Soon after, she co-founded New Ways Ministry, a national research and advocacy center for gay Catholics. She has also written books on gay and lesbian issues, and consistently challenged church leaders to rethink the theology that condemns homosexual acts as a "grave depravity" and "intrinsically disordered."

The church hierarchy has not been pleased. In 1999, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who heads the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, issued a gag order on Gramick because she had "caused confusion among the Catholic people" and "harmed the community of the church." For those reasons, Ratzinger ordered, "Sister Jeannine Gramick ... is permanently prohibited from any pastoral work involving homosexual persons."

Gramick complied with the prohibition, but she continued to speak out for greater tolerance of homosexuals. In 2000, the general superior of her order, the School Sisters of Notre Dame, told Gramick, "You are not to speak or write, by any means whatsoever, on matters related to homosexuality."

Barbara Rick, the director of "In Good Conscience," remembers reading the nun's response to her superior in the newspaper: "I choose not to collaborate in my own oppression," Gramick said.

"I sat straight up in my seat," Rick said

in an interview. "Because here was a nun that was a hero to many on this issue. And this muzzling, it was almost medieval."

The filmmaker was also taken by Gramick's humility.

"She's not just out to bad-mouth the church," Rick said. "She's actually following her conscience, which is a primary Catholic tenet."

Gramick's conscience has led her to join a different order, the Sisters of Loretto; to accept speaking engagements across the world; and to travel to Rome, where she talked her way past sword-bearing Swiss sentries guarding Ratzinger's Vatican office.

For four years, Rick's camera was there to document it all.

To young Catholic students, Gramick argues that Scripture — which many point to when denouncing homosexuality — also condones slavery and prohibits "hump-backed priests."

"We hold on" to certain parts of the Bible, she says in the film, "because we use them to justify prejudices that already exist and we're going to use Scripture to back it up."

To homosexual men and women, she preaches the primacy of conscience and advises them to "not censor (themselves) from the things in the church that (they) have a right to."

But all of her preaching and counseling

won't change a thing, Gramick said in an interview. "The church has not yet had a chance to see



Audience reaction to screening of "In Good Conscience," Philadelphia, July 17, 2004

interview, unless the church begins to democratize itself. "Unfortunately, they modeled the governance of the church on the Holy Roman Empire," she says in the film. "We have an emperor and monarchs and that's so far from the gospel. So, when the Vatican talks about scandal — I think that's the scandal."

In the film, most of Gramick's attempts to buttonhole bishops to talk to them about gay rights fail, and Ratzinger says he's too busy to meet with her and doesn't acknowledge her letters.

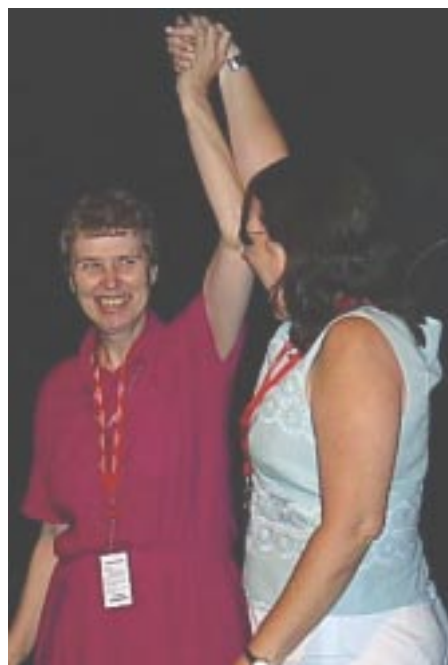
The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Office for Film and Broadcasting, which routinely reviews movies, said

"In Good Conscience."

One moment in the film encapsulates Gramick's journey: Driving through Tennessee and unable to find the home of her new order, the Sisters of Loretto, Gramick and a companion pull over to consult a map. The companion asks Gramick which saint they should pray to for help. "Well, St. Anthony, he's the one who finds things — he can help find the way for you," Gramick says.

They consider for a moment, then think that perhaps they should also entreat St. Jude, "the saint for impossible cases." ■

Detroit Archdiocese Cancels Reception for Nun Supportive of Gay Catholics



Sister Jeannine Gramick (L) and Barbara Rick (R), director of "In Good Conscience," following screening of the film, Royal Oak, MI, January 30, 2005

By Kevin Eckstrom
Religion News Service
January, 2005

DETROIT—Supporters of a nun silenced by the Vatican for her work with gay and lesbian Catholics have been turned away from a Detroit-area parish because their mission is "not in accord with the mission and message of the church."

The Archdiocese of Detroit ordered a halt to a reception at St. Mary's Church in Royal Oak, Mich., that was scheduled for Sunday (Jan. 30) following a screening of "In Good Conscience," a documentary about the work of Sister Jeannine Gramick.

Detroit's archbishop, Cardinal Adam Maida, led a Vatican investigation into Gramick's work with the Maryland-based New Ways Ministries that led to a 1999 directive to cease her work. Gramick transferred to a different order of nuns and continues to advocate for greater inclusion for homosexuals.

Maida's office said the "sensitive and necessary" discussions about ministry to gay Catholics "can cause more harm than good if it is conducted in the midst of controversy and ambiguity."

The archdiocese said church property was "not the appropriate setting" for Gramick or the reception. Gramick, in a statement, said the move was "uncalled for."

"Decisions like that are what makes the Catholic Church look foolish in the eyes of the world," she said. "It's embarrassing to me as a Catholic that the leaders of my church would censor."

Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministries, said the decision reflected the church's "paranoid" approach to gay issues.

"Repressing discussion is not an authentically Catholic way to deal with the complex and sensitive issue of homosexuality," he said. "Censorship and silencing by church leaders are a source of scandal for all Catholics." ■

Gays, straights discuss homosexuality

continued from page 2

National Conference of Catholic Bishops reconciled the church with reality when it stated a homosexual person is not evil, and that being gay was an orientation, not a choice, and thus not a sin.

The report also said Christians should offer homosexuals "a special degree of pastoral understanding and care."

Yet the church maintains that homosexuals should live in chastity, and that while being gay isn't a sin, homosexual sex is "morally wrong." The Diocese of Trenton had no official comment on yesterday's forum.

"They will accept you only if your an asexual single person," said Karen, a lesbian who is Catholic. "Who wants to go through life by themselves? As nice as all this fluffy stuff sounds, could you be in a relationship with a person of the same sex without having a sexual relationship?"

"It makes me angry," she said.

Another woman said that while Catholics may be slowly softening their hardline stance against homosexuality, the church often fails to be inclusive.

"The church doesn't try to correct people's perception," she said.

But DeBernardo said change, even at a glacier-like pace, is evident. In 1998, when New Ways Ministry began keeping track of Catholic churches that are accepting of gay members, there were just 20 across the nation. The list now includes more than 120.

"The issue of homosexuality is more discussed and Catholics are more aware and accepting," DeBernardo said. "Catholics are really hungering for more information on gays and lesbians. It was such a secret issue for so long."

He and others yesterday acknowledged, however, that the widespread sexual abuse cases by priests against minors, mostly boys, has made acceptance even more difficult.

"People confuse pedophilia and sexual abuse with homosexuality, and gay people were made scapegoats because of that," DeBernardo said.

Still, as churches add discussion groups, list parishes as gay- and lesbian-friendly in bulletins, and enlist support groups for parents of gay children, some said Catholics are closer to understanding the issue than ever.

"Even with their lack of inclusion, I'm pleased that lesbians and gays are sticking it out," said Myron Novitsky, a deacon at St. Joe's in Toms River. "We have a ways to go, unfortunately. But we came a long way on race, on separation, and on divorce, and I think we're learning to celebrate the whole fabric." ■

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
Carlsbad: St. Patrick
Claremont: Mother of Good Counsel, Our Lady of the Assumption
Eagle Rock: St. Dominic's
El Cajon: St. Luke
Escondido: St. Timothy
Goleta: St. Mark's University Parish
Hawthorne: St. Joseph's (Spanish)
La Puente: St. Martha
Lemon Grove: St. John of the Cross
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
Oceanside: St. Thomas More
Sacramento: St. Francis of Assisi
San Diego: Ascension, Christ the King, San Rafael, St. Jude Shrine
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: GALA, 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

Connecticut

Hartford: St. Patrick-St. Anthony

District of Columbia

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

Florida

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 Celle
Chicago: Loyola University, St. Clement, St. Gregory
Country Club Hills: St. Emeric
Morton Grove: St. Martha

Indiana

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

Iowa

Iowa City: St. Thomas More

Kentucky

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

Maine

Portland: Sacred Heart/St. Dominic
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
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: St. Cronan, St. Margaret of Scotland, St. Pius V

Minnesota

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

Nevada

Las Vegas: Christ the King, Guardian Angel Cathedral

New Jersey

Clifton: St. Brendan
Lawrenceville: St. Ann
Wayside: St. Anselm

New Mexico

Espanola: Sacred Heart of Jesus

New York

Baldwinsville: St. Augustine
Brooklyn: St. Andrew the Apostle, St. Boniface
East Islip: St. Mary

Elmira: St. Mary's

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

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

Ohio

Akron: St. Bernard
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

Texas

Austin: University Catholic Center-Univ. of Texas
Dallas: Holy Trinity
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
Tacoma: St. Leo

Wisconsin

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

Canada

Toronto: Our Lady of Lourdes

Sunday Lunch with ... Rick Garcia

By Debra Pickett
Chicago Sun-Times
February 13, 2005

"I'll have a Manhattan," Rick Garcia declares almost immediately as he takes a seat in the red-velvet-lined corner booth at Petterino's. "I've had a long morning."

It surprises me somewhat that Garcia, the state's leading gay-rights activist and an accomplished political operator, so quickly orders a cocktail with lunch. I guess I've gotten used to everyone pretending they consume only bottled water and herbal tea.

But the amber-colored cocktail has nothing on the other big surprise of Garcia's arrival: It's Ash Wednesday, and Garcia has clearly been to church.

Isn't he supposed to be on the other side of the red-blue cultural divide?

"People always ask how can I reconcile being a Catholic with being a gay-rights activist," says Garcia, who attended Catholic grade school, high school and college and goes to mass three times a week. "But the truth is that I couldn't do this without being Catholic. . . . For one thing, the nuns taught me that part of our faith is pursuing social justice and living gospel values. But,



Rick Garcia

also, the abuse you get — if I was not able to go to mass or to sit quietly and say the rosary and comfort myself, I wouldn't be able to take it."

So, yes, on this first day of Lent, Garcia orders fish to go with that cocktail, which he nurses throughout the two-hour lunch. And, yes, he has a few more surprises in store.

"I am a Roman Catholic," he says without hesitation. "I believe in the teachings and traditions of my church. I believe in the faith. And I believe we are obliged to adhere to those teachings as we are able."

So the pronouncements of the pope and of all the bishops, I start to ask, what do you do with all those teachings?

"What I say," he replies, "is that our church teachings need updating in the area of human sexuality."

Just getting started

He lists the church's official stands on birth control and divorce, but then stops himself. Because Garcia, who studied theology at the College of Notre Dame in St. Louis, knows there's more to it than all of that.

"You know," he says, "too many people reduce our church to what we do or don't do with our genitals. I mean, people say, 'How can you be a Catholic when you so ardently support gay rights?' But you never hear anyone ask, 'How can you be a Catholic when you so ardently support the death penalty?' Or: 'How can you be a Catholic when you so ardently support the war machine?'"

But just when I'm starting to rethink everything I supposedly know about the inexhaustible activist who only half-jokingly refers to himself as "Chicago's

leading professional queer," Garcia switches from thoughtful philosophical question mode into saucy sound-bite mode. He has a few choice words for some of the more prominent American cardinals and bishops.

"I am not going to allow a bunch of pedophile-protecting prelates to tell me whether I'm a good Catholic," he declares in a tone that practically begs for an in-your-face finger snap. "Those old goats have no business criticizing any of us."

And now Garcia, 44, is just getting started.

"Right-wing Catholics go after me constantly," says Garcia, who was born and raised in St. Louis. "When I say I'm Catholic, they refer to me as a 'self-proclaimed Catholic.' Well, no, thank you very much, I didn't declare myself Catholic. Father Sommers, who baptized me, proclaimed me Catholic, thank you very much. OK? And Bishop Gottwald, who confirmed me, thank you very much."

Garcia's smile never fades during his rant, and he never loses the cool look of a man whose French-cuffed shirts are laundered and pressed with heavy starch. He also never loses his train of thought, even when Cook County Commissioner John Daley stops by to hold court, or Illinois Film Office head (and Blair Hull's ex-wife) Brenda Sexton comes over to chat.

Petterino's, though it only opened in 2001, has the feel of a real Chicago institution, and Garcia clearly relishes the scene. Located a few minutes' walk from City Hall, the County Building and the Thompson Center, the place has become a nexus of political power-lunching. And, in those same years, Garcia himself has, as the political director of Equality Illinois, crossed over from being a persistent activist to a ubiquitous player.

Still, he says, fighting for equal rights for Illinois' gay and lesbian citizens is not exactly the sort of position that offers big progress or dramatic rewards. The gains here have been slow and not always steady.

'Is that all there is?'

Last month, when the governor signed into law a bill banning discrimination against gays in housing and employment, Garcia scored his biggest legislative victory since founding Equality Illinois in 1988. There is something bittersweet, he says, about a decadeslong fight to do something as basic as outlaw discrimination.

"It means nothing," he says of the new law, "and yet it also means everything."

Many of Garcia's victories are like that. Cook County now has a registry where same-sex couples can make their domestic partnerships official. But what is it worth, he can't help thinking, when it doesn't guarantee the legal right to visit one another in an intensive-care unit?

"You work so hard," he says, "and then you think, as Peggy Lee sang, 'Is that all there is?'"

Garcia takes a sip of his Manhattan. And then he begins to sing, "If that's all there is, my friends, then let's keep dancing. Let's break out the booze and have a ball, if that's all there is."

This, I have to admit, is something closer to what I was expecting from our lunch. But it's also a lot more.

His voice is full of something I might not have recognized were it not for my seeing the mark of his faith and asking about it — something I would never have been smart enough to do without such an obvious prompt.

Garcia's voice is full of grace. ■

Vatican officials say sash wearers disqualified from Communion

By John Thavis
The Vatican
February 10, 2005

ROME—The Vatican's top liturgy official said Rainbow Sash wearers disqualify themselves from receiving Holy Communion because they are demonstrating their opposition to church teaching on homosexuality.

Cardinal Francis Arinze, head of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, made the comment in a written response to Catholic News Service in early February.

Rainbow Sash, which describes itself as an organization of gay and lesbian Catholics and their families and friends, has criticized church statements on homosexuality, including the church's teaching that homosexual acts are "intrinsically disordered" and that homosexual orientation is "objectively disordered."

To underline their point, the group's members sometimes attend Mass and receive Communion wearing the sash. Rainbow Sash members have said they consider their wearing of the sash an act of celebration, not protest.

Cardinal Arinze discussed the issue with at least one U.S. archbishop during U.S. bishops' visits to the Vatican in 2004. A Catholic Web site recently reported that in a private communication, Cardinal Arinze's

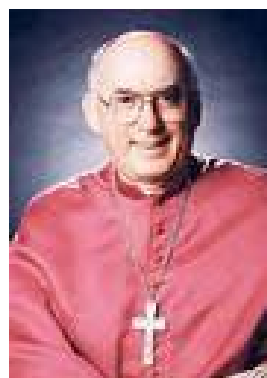
secretary said the cardinal thought sash wearers should not receive Communion.

Asked about his position by CNS, Cardinal Arinze said: "Rainbow Sash wearers are showing their opposition to church teaching on a major issue of natural law and so disqualify themselves from being given holy Communion."

Cardinal Arinze did not elaborate, and he declined a request for an interview on the subject.

In December, Archbishop Harry Flynn of St. Paul-Minneapolis spoke with Cardinal Arinze about the Rainbow Sash question. Archbishop Flynn allows members wearing the sash to receive Communion, while some other bishops do not.

In an interview afterward, Archbishop Flynn said Cardinal Arinze did not ask for a change in his archdiocesan policy, but did express concern about the clarity of church teaching on the issue. In a statement issued in January, Archbishop Flynn said Cardinal Arinze also indicated that "ideally, all of the bishops who have pastoral care for the members of this movement should seek to adopt a uniform approach." ■



Archbishop Harry Flynn