

BANDINGS

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Memphis bishop welcomes home gay and lesbian Catholics

By Dennis Coday
National Catholic Reporter
June 17, 2005

Reflecting on the church as home and on recent meetings with Catholics who feel unwelcome in their “home,” Memphis, Tenn., Bishop J. Terry Steib announced the beginning of a diocesan ministry to gay and lesbian Catholics.

Steib began his June 2 column, “This Far by Faith,” published in the diocesan newspaper, by reflecting on the church as home “where [God’s] family gathers to celebrate God’s unconditional love.” Then he wrote the following:

But as I have reflected on the church as home, I have become more acutely aware of the number of people—the number of Catholics—who are no longer comfortable in their home. In fact, some are no longer certain that the church is their home. Sometimes it is the circumstances of life that cause people to feel estranged or separated. Occasionally it is a misunderstanding of the church’s teachings that keeps people away. Often, individuals hide a deep pain that is rooted in knowing that, for whatever reason, their lives do not conform to other people’s lives; or worse, they feel that who they are is unacceptable.

Recently I met with such people. Many of

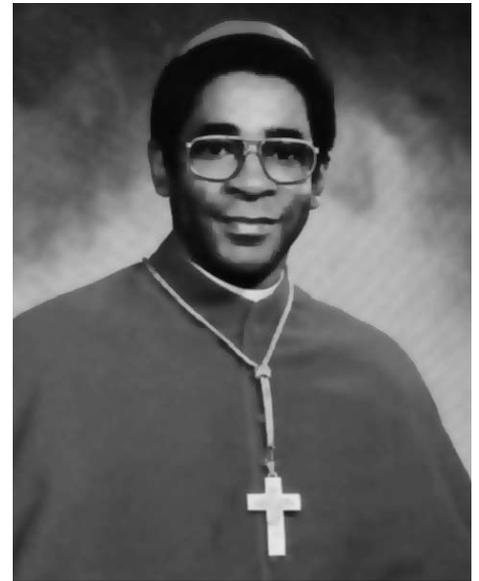
them were born into Catholic families, baptized as infants and attended Catholic schools. They have embraced the faith handed on to them. Others, through the examples of friends and having felt called by God, became Catholics through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. For all of them, being Catholic is at the core of who they are. At the same time, they are people who are not sure of “their place” in their home. They are people—wonderful, good Catholic people—who are gay and lesbian.

Steib wrote about meeting with a group of gays and lesbians and then meeting with parents of gays and lesbians. The parents see their children’s “goodness and their giftedness, but they also see the loneliness of their gay and lesbian children as no one else sees it,” he wrote.

Reflecting on his meetings and on church as home raised questions, the bishop wrote: “How deep is our river of faith if we are not actively working to be sure that all are welcome in their own home—the home given to each of us when we became members of God’s family through baptism? ... [W]ill we allow our hearts to grow if we simply lay aside preconceived notions of who does or does not belong?”

Jesus, the bishop noted, “loved all, lived for all, and died for all.”

Steib then announced the beginning of a diocesan ministry to gay and lesbian Catholics “to be sure that we do not leave anyone behind,



Most Rev. J. Terry Steib, S.V.D.

to be sure that all are welcome in their own home, and to be sure that we promote genuine gratitude and reverence for the gift that each one of us is to the church.”

Paulist Fr. John Geaney, the diocesan spokesman, told NCR that the ministry is being run by a committee under the leadership of the diocese’s director of the office of worship. The committee is convening potluck suppers and discussions at the cathedral parish in Memphis. ▀

Church is home to all people of God

By Bishop J. Terry Steib, S.V.D.
Diocese of Memphis
May 19, 2005

Within the past few months, I have done a lot of thinking about the Church as “home.” As “home,” the Church is not just a building; it is also a community of faith, the gathering of the faithful, the “people of God.”

In baptism, we are received into God’s family, and church is the home where that family gathers to celebrate God’s unconditional love. Throughout our lives, church is the home where together we mark the pivotal moments, those moments that tell us who God is and who we are because of God’s love. With other members of the family of God, we are like homing pigeons returning time and time again to celebrate births and deaths, baptisms and marriages, confirmations and the Eucharist. These sacramental moments are spent together in addition to our regular “family” gatherings at Sunday liturgies, pastoral council meetings, Scripture studies, choir rehearsals, adult faith formation sessions, youth groups and so many other vital parts of our lives as Christians and Catholics.

But as I have reflected on the Church as home, I have become more acutely aware of the number of people—the number of Catholics—who are no longer comfortable in their home. In fact, some are no longer certain that the Church is their home. Sometimes it is the circumstances of life that cause people to feel estranged or separated. Occasionally it is a misunderstanding of the Church’s teachings that keeps people away. Often, individuals hide a deep pain that is rooted in knowing that, for

whatever reason, their lives do not conform to other people’s lives; or worse, they feel that who they are is unacceptable.

Recently I met with such people. Many of them were born into Catholic families, baptized as infants and attended Catholic schools. They have embraced the faith handed on to them. Others, through the examples of friends and having felt called by God, became Catholics through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. For all of them, being Catholic is at the core of who they are. At the same time, they are people who are not sure of “their place” in their home. They are people—wonderful, good Catholic people—who are gay and lesbian.

On two occasions, we came together to listen. At a first meeting, there were gay and lesbian persons. At a second meeting, there were Catholic parents of adult gay or lesbian persons. Among the parents were Catholics who have spent their lives as active members of the Church, helping to make it a welcoming home for many. They have given generously of themselves, even though they knew that their own children felt unwelcome. These parents of gay and lesbian Catholics are extremely proud of their children. They see their goodness and their giftedness, but they also see the loneliness of their gay and lesbian children as no one else sees it.

As I listened, I could not help wondering: how deep is our river of faith if we are not actively working to be sure that all are welcome in their own home—the home given to each of us when we became members of God’s family through baptism? How far will we go to ensure that all are valued for the unique gift each one is? How much, I asked myself, will we

allow our hearts to grow if we simply lay aside preconceived notions of who does or does not belong? And finally, I wondered: how great will God’s love be in each one of us if we follow the example of Jesus who loved all, lived for all, and died for all?

We are called to BE church to one another, to be God’s family to one another. In giving us this Church, God has given us a spiritual home here on earth. This spiritual home is to be a precursor of the home we will have for eternity when all walls have come down and we are truly and completely dwelling in union with God and with one another. Our task while we are in this earthly home is to do all we can to help each other grow into the home we will share in heaven.

To be sure that we do not leave anyone behind, to be sure that all are welcome in their own home, and to be sure that we promote genuine gratitude and reverence for the gift that each one of us is to the Church, we have begun to lay the foundations for a diocesan ministry with Catholic gay and lesbian persons.

A brief look at history—from slavery to

the “march of tears” of our Native American sisters and brothers to the grape strikes in California—reminds us that God’s work is always hampered when human beings are afraid of differences in each other. A new ministry with gay and lesbian persons will push open even further the door to promoting understanding and compassion among all of us. It will open the door to “home” for many who are an important part of who we are, and to a segment of our family that has been apart from us for too long.

The message of Jesus is clear: “Love one another as I have loved you.” In my meetings with gay and lesbian Catholics, I told them that God does not withhold love from any of us. I believe that wholeheartedly. God’s love is unconditional and that is the gift God offers us in Christ Jesus: the gift of loving each other with that same Godly and unconditional love.

Please pray for this ministry. Participate in the work of welcoming the entire family into the home which is our Church, where all are embraced by God’s unconditional love. Let us all dare to love as God loves. ▀

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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.

For more information, contact:
New Ways Ministry, 4012 29th St.,
 Mt. Rainier, MD 20712
 (301) 277-5674
 E-mail: NewWaysM@verizon.net
 Web: www.newwaysministry.org



Gay-Friendly Catholic Colleges



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

California

Belmont: Notre Dame de Namur University
Los Angeles: Loyola Marymount University
Moraga: Saint Mary's College
Rancho 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

Univeristy 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

Oregon

Portland: University of Portland

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

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Court axes suit over university's refusal to recognize gay group: Rules religious exemption applies

Associated Press, Newark, N.J.
 June 24, 2005

A student's efforts to establish a gay and lesbian group at Seton Hall University, a Roman Catholic institution, suffered a significant setback Wednesday when a N.J. appeals court dismissed his lawsuit.

Anthony Romeo charged that the university's refusal to recognize the group violated the state Law Against Discrimination, which bars bias based on sexual orientation.

A three-judge panel, however, found that the law's exemption for religiously affiliated institutions applies to Seton Hall, and that the school did not waive the exemption with its anti-discrimination policy.

Romeo lawyer Marianne F. Auriemma said they had hoped the court would limit the religious exemption.

"Seton Hall is so secular in its nature, that it is hiding behind that exemption," Auriemma said, noting the school

receives state and federal funds and is part of the NCAA.

"As a taxpayer, I find it ridiculous that they say they are a religious institution," she said, adding that the exemption is better applied to a seminary or parochial high school.

They will consider whether to have the case heard by the state Supreme Court, since the decision "relegates gay and lesbian students to second-class status, and that's unconscionable."

Seton Hall spokesman Thomas White said the decision "affirms that religious organizations are legally permitted to act in accordance with their doctrines."

Romeo's suit, filed in March 2004 when he was a sophomore, had initially been dismissed by a lower court judge, but was later reinstated, bringing the appeal from the South Orange-based school, which is operated by the Archdiocese of Newark.

In an interview last year, Romeo, of Walton, N.Y., said it was unfair for Seton Hall to permit his group to sponsor educational events but not religious services or social activities.

Continued on page 4

Catholic school restricts gay parents' roles

By Christopher Curtis
PlanetOut Network
June 14, 2005

A Catholic school in Orange County, Calif., that allowed a same-sex couple to enroll their sons last year has created a policy that would prevent the two men—or any other same-sex couple—from appearing as a couple at school functions. The Los Angeles Time published the memo obtained by a parent at St. John the Baptist School in Costa Mesa. The memo, dated May 6, states: “The children adopted by a same-sex couple” may enroll “on the condition that the same-sex couple agree not to present themselves as a couple at school functions.”

Cathy Jo Liebel, the president of the parent's auxiliary for St. John the Baptist for 2003-2005, confirmed the existence of the memo to the PlanetOut Network.

“Father Martin Benzoni drafted the policy for the new school year starting in September,” she said. “He says it is ‘just discrimination.’ I don't know how he can justify that. I can't imagine not being allowed to watch my child participate in school.”

“He says we can't have inappropriate behavior at the school, but I don't walk without sin,” Liebel said. “Who does?”

This memo comes after St. John the Baptist officials adopted new admission guidelines requiring parents to display “appropriate conduct, in order to support the school's mission and provide positive role models to our students.”

Some parents told the Los Angeles Times that the school's principal for 31 years, Sister Mary Vianney, had not had her contract renewed after she objected to the new attendance requirements. They held a candlelight vigil for her on Saturday.

“She has basically dedicated her entire adult life to St. John the Baptist School and the children and families there,” Suzi Brown, the incoming president of the parents auxiliary, told the Times. “To think that her tenure with the school is coming to an end in this fashion is devastating.”

Lawyer Michael J. Sundstedt, who represented more than 30 parents who questioned the boys' enrollment, said Vianney should step down immediately.

“It's sad the nun is leaving, but I also think that it may be the best thing in the long run if she is impeding the teachings of the church,” he told the Times. “This parish would be better served if they would have a prayer vigil in support of the teachings of the church.”

“It is truly unfortunate that a family who wants to provide a Catholic education for their children have to endure such blatant hostility

and hatred from those who profess to be Christian,” Corri Planck, deputy executive director of the Family Pride Coalition, told the PlanetOut Network. “This is just another effort to drive this family from the school based on nothing but homophobia.”

According to the Los Angeles Times, the two boys, who just finished kindergarten, have caused some parents to suspect they are pawns in a larger campaign by LGBT Catholics to gain acceptance within the church.

Other parents accused school leaders of defying the teachings of the late Pope John Paul II, who in 2003 condemned same-sex marriage and adoption by same-sex couples.

“We think that positive role models are honest and open. Two loving parents regardless of their gender are positive role models,” said Jay Smith Brown, director of communications strategies for Human Rights Campaign. “It's too bad the school doesn't see that.”

If you'd like to know more, you can find stories related to Catholic school restricts gay parents' roles. ▶

Outside the Box:

Gay Unitarian Appointed St. Mike's Dean

By Stacey Horn
Out in the Mountains, Burlington, VT
May 5, 2005

Colchester—Professor Jeffrey Trumbower, a gay man and a Unitarian, has been appointed dean of St. Michael's College, a Catholic school established in 1904 by the Society of Saint Edmund, a French order of Catholic priests.

Trumbower, who holds a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago Divinity School, currently chairs the Religious Studies Department at St. Mike's, where he has been on the faculty for 16 years. Though he is not the first non-Catholic to be dean of the college, he is the first openly gay man in the position. In his experience, Trumbower said, St. Mike's has always shown a dedication to non-discriminatory hiring practices and an environment of tolerance on campus: “The climate has always been wonderful. I have never experienced any kind of discrimination.” In fact, the college adopted a non-discrimination clause that includes sexual orientation in the early 1990s—before Vermont law required it.

According to search committee chair and political science professor Bill Grover, “We were very fortunate to have two terrific people [apply] and Jeff rose to the top.” Grover said that religion was not a factor in choosing the dean and that the committee wanted a candidate who would “fit with the overall mission of the college.” Of Trumbower, Grover said, “He's going to be a terrific dean.”

Trumbower said that he expects to work closely with the faculty curriculum committee this fall. “The current curriculum has been in place for ten years, and it will be my job to manage conversation and raise issues” about possible changes, Trumbower explained, adding that it is his responsibility to oversee the committee, but not to dictate its actions.

Faculty evaluation will be another of Trumbower's focuses. During his time at the college, Trumbower has seen the role of faculty change. He said, “The goal now is that we are teacher-scholars. Academically, expectations for faculty have become higher.” Faculty members now take on somewhat smaller teaching loads to allow them to publish and remain active in their fields. “Expectations for tenure are not as high as at a research university. We don't expect that kind of quantity,” Trumbower said, “but we expect quality.”

Trumbower acknowledged that being dean will leave him less time for his own scholarship, but he plans to maintain his work in the field of religious studies. He finished his last major book project in 2001. Titled *Rescue for the Dead: The Posthumous Salvation of Non-Christians in Early Christianity* and published by Oxford Press, the book discusses the early Christian practice of saving the souls of deceased friends and relatives by praying for them. Currently, he is working on a project about Jewish sectarian logic. “It is appealing,” he said, “to understand the roots of tradition.”

The newly appointed dean traces his own roots to Florida, where he was raised Episcopalian. He said he was drawn to “the atmosphere of mystery” but curious about what lay behind that mystery. “In terms of content,” he said, “we hardly ever cracked open the Bible.” Trumbower said he has “never felt oppressed by religious traditions,” but he has always been interested in the “various voices” within different traditions, including the voices of “marginalized groups.”

Trumbower went to college at Vanderbilt in Nashville, where he majored in Spanish and Political Science. He took four religious studies courses and found the field “such a turn-on” that he wanted to pursue graduate work. He graduated from Vanderbilt in 1982.

Before going on to graduate studies at the University of Chicago Divinity School, Trumbower completed a year of service with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. He worked with an outreach program for the elderly in Albuquerque, New Mexico, coordinating services between different churches. As a Protestant, Trumbower was delegated “to approach various Protestant churches and see if they would be a part of our network.” Similar to the position he now holds at St. Mike's, Trumbower mused, he was “a non-Catholic in a Catholic setting.”

Trumbower came to St. Mike's in 1989, after completing his dissertation. He was not familiar with the area before he came, and when he arrived, he “started going to the church at the head of church street. I resonated with that community and realized that I was home spiritually.” Trumbower met his partner here in Vermont. They have been together for ten years.

In addition to overseeing curriculum and faculty development, Trumbower especially looks forward to continuing to work with students: “A huge percentage of our students are involved in social justice activities. This aspect of the college is really great. I see that continuing.”

During his time at the college, Trumbower has also attended some meetings and events sponsored by Ally, a student-led group that identifies itself as a “gay-straight alliance.” Mike McCaffrey, a member of Ally, said that Trumbower's appointment “shows a dedication that St. Mike's has that other institutions might not. I think it will definitely open up some doors for not only him but for other LGBT students and staff.”

Jeff Trumbower, the gay Unitarian religious studies professor, will assume his new position as dean of the Catholic college of St. Michael's on July 1. ▶

Boston College Students Vote To Add Sexual Orientation To Nondiscrimination Clause

Advocate.com, Associated Press
March 3, 2005

Boston College students have overwhelmingly approved a petition urging the Catholic institution not to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. More than 80% of the 4,000 undergraduates who voted in student elections on Monday and Tuesday backed a nonbinding referendum calling for including sexual orientation in the college's nondiscrimination clause. More than 2,000 students and 200 faculty and staff members signed the petition to put the question on the ballot for this week's student government elections. But other officials at the Jesuit-affiliated college have raised concerns that the petition endorses homosexuality.

College administrators are not required to act on the referendum, and a spokesman said the school's leaders are opposed to adding sexual orientation to the nondiscrimination policy. The state requires colleges and universities to adopt a nondiscrimination policy that includes sexual orientation, but religious institutions like Boston College are exempt. School spokesman Jack Dunn said removing that exemption “could force us to take actions that are in conflict with our Catholic beliefs and values. We do not discriminate in our hiring practices or tolerate harassment in any way, including on the basis of sexual orientation. However, as a Catholic university in a state with a history of anti-Catholic bias, we choose not to forfeit the protections afforded us by the state constitution.” ▶

Opinion

Catholic Church Can Overcome Fear of GLBT People

By Michael J. Bayly
Minneapolis Star Tribune
 December 18, 2004

In response to an act of vandalism at the Cathedral of St. Paul last month, church officials have declared that an "anti-gay exorcism" involving the "ritualistic sprinkling of oil and salt" was the action of a "deluded" individual.

Yet for many gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) Catholics, it is difficult to separate such delusional anti-gay behavior from the increasingly anti-gay rhetoric of the Catholic Church—rhetoric that is so contrary to the lives of GLBT Catholics that it seems equally delusional.

When the church hierarchy labels GLBT people's longing for relational intimacy as "intrinsically evil" and "objectively disordered," it gives subtle permission for anti-gay behavior. If such behavior on the part of an individual is going to be denounced by the church as "misguided" and "deluded," then so too should the church's language and theology that fuel and justify it.

The hierarchy needs to recognize the direct connection between its own anti-gay language and how the internalization of this language leads to anti-gay behavior.

Some within the hierarchy have made the connection. Thomas Gumbleton, bishop of

Detroit, has described the church's language concerning homosexuality as "cruel" and "unjustified." He goes on to advise: "I would never expect a parent to say [such words] to his or her child."

As a gay Catholic man, I respectfully challenge the leadership within the church to prayerfully reflect upon Bishop Gumbleton's words, as well as those of Dr. Rowan Williams, the archbishop of Canterbury. Williams recently declared to the world's Anglican churches, "Any words that could make it easier for someone to attack or abuse a homosexual person are words of which we must repent."

GLBT Catholics and their families who know and declare that their lives and relationships are a gift from God are accused of wanting to "change the church." Fueling this accusation is the erroneous belief that the Catholic Church is somehow unchanged and unchangeable, somehow incapable of growing and developing. If this were the case then not only would the Catholic Church still be teaching that the sun revolves around the earth, but it would also be ambiguous on the moral issue of slavery and hostile to the idea of democracy.

Catholics open to the development of church teaching have also been accused of basing their morality on cultural trends. Such suspicion of culture denies the reality that it

is through a range of relational contexts that the church as the people of God has always experienced God's transforming presence.

For example, in the past women were judged to be incapable of many of the things men could do. That view has been nearly erased due to the dramatic emergence and involvement of women in church and society.

Those of us—gay and straight—within the Catholic Church who embrace a theology of sexuality that is reality-based and scientifically supported, understand our efforts as revealing God's love in the lives and relationships of all people—gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people included. We're doing what our brother Jesus did—making visible the reign of God already in our midst but so often hidden by oppressive structures and by ignorance and fear.

History shows that the overcoming of such fear and ignorance takes time. Nevertheless, with a growing number of Catholics, I look forward to the day when the church's teaching on sexuality joyously proclaims God's presence in the lives and relationships of GLBT people, as it should for all. ▀

Michael Bayly, Minneapolis, is the coordinator of the Twin Cities-based grassroots, independent coalition Catholic Pastoral Committee on Sexual Minorities (www.mtn.org/cpcsm).

Court axes suit over university's refusal to recognize gay group

Continued from page 2

"Rosa Parks never sat in the middle of the bus," he said, in a nod to the civil rights figure. "It's not the same treatment that any other group gets."

Romeo submitted an application Nov. 13, 2003, for TRUTH (Trust, Respect, Unity at The Hall), listing himself and 17 others as members. The group aim was to oppose discrimination and serve as a support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and heterosexual students, the application said.

It was denied on Dec. 18, 2003, with Laura A. Wankel, vice president for student affairs, writing, "No organization based solely upon sexual orientation may receive formal university recognition," even though the Student Organization Activities Committee recommended approval.

Wankel in her decision wrote that the church directs us to care for the human person whose fundamental identity is as a 'child of God' — not as a 'heterosexual' or a 'homosexual.'"

She added a "memorandum of understanding" that would allow the group to operate on campus, but with the stipulation that the administration would have to agree to the group's name. Accepting the guidelines meant the group "will neither seek nor expect formal recognition by the University or elsewhere," the memo said. ▀

International News

Gay marriage moves forward in Spain

By Chuck Cobert
National Catholic Reporter
 June 17, 2005

At noon each day, a cannon shot resounds in the Eternal City. It is a reminder to Romans and all Italians of their victory over the papacy and the birth of the Italian Republic more than 150 years ago. Prego.

Closer to our own times, another secular victory approaches in a country no less Catholic than Spain. In late April the lower house of the Spanish parliament gave its preliminary approval -- 183 to 136, with six abstentions -- to a bill that would make Spain the third country in Europe to allow gay and lesbian couples to marry and adopt children. Bravo.

The proposed language of the new civil law would include the phrase: "Matrimony shall have the same requisites and effects regardless of whether the persons involved are of the same or different genders."

A reformulation of marriage doesn't come much simpler or clearer. It is another step forward in the global progress of human rights

for gay and lesbian people. Spain has come a long way. During the Spanish Inquisition, for instance, while Jews were expelled, "sodomites" were burned at the stake as autos da fe, or "acts of faith." Only 30 years ago, a fascist dictator ruled Spain. This Spanish turnabout to liberty, represented by the eventuality of gay marriage, is truly remarkable.

When the Spanish Senate votes to approve the measure, Spain will join the list of two other European countries, Catholic Belgium and the Netherlands, which have already legalized marriage equality.

Undoubtedly the impending reality of Spanish gay marriage is a big defeat for Pope Benedict XVI, formerly Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger.

The legislation is a direct shot at Rome. Socialist Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero has said as much. He wants to create a secular state and level the playing field by removing what he says are the church's undeniable advantages.

Chalk up this victory in Spain to what Benedict terms the "dictatorship of relativism" -- liberation theology as well as the pluralistic secular impulses that run through

the bloodstream of most modern democratic states. That is the liberty and freedom most notably absent in the Vatican City state.

Last fall one church spokesperson called gay marriage counterfeit currency. "It would impose on society a virus, something false, which will have negative consequences for social life," Juan Antonio Martínez Camino said, quoted by the BBC.

Now Benedict's leadership comes out with more fighting words. Colombian Cardinal Alfonso López Trujillo, head of the Vatican's Pontifical Council on the Family, decried the gay marriage legislation -- likely to become law this summer -- as profoundly iniquitous, according to BBC News.

The news agency Reuters also quotes Trujillo as saying that Spanish gay marriage "has changed and falsified the very definition of marriage," adding that same-sex couples who adopt children are doing "moral violence" to them.

"People say these children adopted by same-sex couples are very happy. Maybe, when they are one or two years old," Trujillo said. "But when they are able to think for themselves, when they grow up, what a trage-

dy when they have to say, 'My parents are two men, or two women.' Their personality, their stability is put at risk."

Cardinal Trujillo told the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera* that Christians should use their freedom of conscience, in effect do civil disobedience, to resist the new law he calls "deeply offensive to morality." Trujillo said that every profession associated with implementing gay marriage should oppose it -- even if people lose their jobs, the BBC reported.

Yet the most bizarre comment came from the archbishop emeritus of Barcelona. "To obey the law over conscience takes us back to Auschwitz," said Cardinal Gordó Ricard María Carles.

All this Catholic ugly talk about gays -- iniquity, virus, moral violence, deeply offensive to morality -- really should not surprise anyone. They are voices from the echo chamber of then-Cardinal Ratzinger and his Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Vatican's doctrinal enforcement agency.

Meanwhile, let the Roman cannon shot be heard and celebrated in Spain and all around the world. ▀

International News

Children of Gay Catholic Parents Might Not Be Baptized in Canada

Archbishop of Quebec testifies as the church continues to fight a same-sex marriage bill

By Christopher Guly
The Los Angeles Times
July 16, 2005

OTTAWA — With Canada's gay marriage bill just days away from becoming law, the country's top Catholic leader has warned that the church could refuse to baptize the children of same-sex parents.

"If I take the example of the ceremony of baptism, according to our canon law, we cannot accept the signatures of two fathers or two mothers as parents of an infant," Cardinal Marc Ouellet, the archbishop of Quebec and primate of the Canadian Catholic Church, told a Senate committee hearing held here on the pending legislation this week.

The same-sex marriage legislation, passed last month by Canada's House of Commons, redefines civil marriage to be the "lawful union of two persons to the exclusion of all others," and not just between a man and a woman. But the pending law allows religious officials

to refuse to perform marriages "that are not in accordance with their religious beliefs."

On Monday, the committee will recommend that the Senate pass the same-sex marriage bill with no amendments. The legislation is expected to receive final passage in the upper chamber Tuesday or Wednesday. Canada would follow Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain in passing laws allowing gay and lesbian couples to wed. The cardinal's statement was the latest salvo of Canadian Catholic officials in their opposition to the same-sex marriage bill.

The church has already reprimanded two opposition members of Parliament who are Roman Catholic and who supported the legislation, which passed the House of Commons on a 158-133 vote late last month.

A member of Parliament from the New Democratic Party, Charlie Angus, who represents an Ontario district in the Commons, was denied Communion for supporting the bill.

Meanwhile, fellow Ontario NDP parliamentarian Joe Comartin, an active member of his church who taught marriage preparation classes, had his duties suspended "until [he] has a change of mind with regard to the moral status of homosexual activity," said Bishop Ronald Fabbro in a pastoral letter issued to all churches in the Ontario diocese of London. About 30 parishioners of the church Comartin attends walked out of Sunday Mass last week when the document was read from the pulpit.

Even Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin, a Catholic, has not been immune to the church's hard line against gay marriage. A Montreal priest has said that the prime minister should be denied Communion and that he hoped Martin would lose his seat in the next federal election.

Ouellet declared that the Catholic clergy felt "threatened" by the same-sex legislation.

"Even our priests sometimes do not feel free to preach on homosexual and sexual morality because they are accused of homophobia," he said in his testimony, which

was delivered in French over two hours on Wednesday.

"Once the state imposes a new standard affirming that homosexual behavior is a social good, those who oppose it for religious motives or motives of conscience will be considered as bigots, anti-gay and homophobes, and then risk prosecution," he said.

Ouellet told reporters after his presentation that supporters of same-sex marriage had created an "insane atmosphere" in Canada.

"It is not good for religious freedom if you cannot express your views and you cannot teach your beliefs," he said.

However, it is "false, wrong and offensive" to equate gay marriage with the unions of married opposite-sex couples who have "produced children to society," Ouellet said.

"This is something a homosexual union cannot offer to society, and you would like Canadian society to accept that as justice itself? I have to say I find that completely irrational." ▀

Church shuns MP for backing gay marriage

NDP MP's family felt so unwelcome, they stopped attending mass after priest refused him communion

By Shannon Proudfoot
The Ottawa Citizen,
with files from The Canadian Press
July 6, 2005

NDP MP Charlie Angus says other MPs have received death threats as a result of their support of same-sex marriage, but he is the only one who was the target of religious censure.

A Catholic MP who was denied communion by his priest for supporting same-sex marriage, says his faith has been used as a "political football" and his young family has stopped attending mass altogether as a result.

Charlie Angus, the New Democratic MP for Timmins-James Bay, says his parish priest, who also heads the campaign against same-sex marriage in his diocese, threatened to limit his privileges at church if he did not toe the church's line on the issue.

He says Rev. John Lemire made it clear several months ago that he would be refused communion at St. Patrick's Church in Cobalt if he supported the federal government's same-sex marriage legislation, which passed in the House of Commons last week and is now before the Senate.

Father Lemire's decision was later supported by Archbishop Paul Marchand of Timmins.

Since then, Mr. Angus says he has sporadically attended mass at other churches -- largely to avoid attention from people aware of the controversy at his own -- but his wife and children have not gone back.

"Nobody in the church intended to excommunicate my family, but my wife and children definitely felt there was a principle at stake. If dad wasn't feeling welcome, then neither were they," he says.

Although all NDP MPs were instructed to vote in favour of Bill C-38, Mr. Angus, a lifelong Catholic, says he ruminated on the decision for a long while before sending letters to his diocese, bishop and the Catholic school board where he is a trustee, explaining his decision to support the legislation.

He says while many of his constituents have strong views against same-sex marriage, they continued to support him, despite Father Lemire's assertion that he was banned from communion for "scandalizing" his community.

"The Catholics in my riding have been great. Whether they agree with the legislation or not, it's been fine. People have been very supportive, very warm," he says.

Mr. Angus says he does not oppose the church taking a stand on social issues, but he is critical of a campaign he feels used fear and confusion to manipulate people's opinions.

"I've always felt that faith was based on not being afraid of the world, and it seemed to me so much fear and suspicion of the other (was used). If I had any doubts about the steps I was taking at the beginning, I certainly didn't at the end," he says.

Mr. Angus says other MPs have received death threats as a result of their support of same-sex marriage, but he is the only one who was the target of religious censure.

Father Lemire says there is an expectation that Catholic politicians will adhere to the church's values while carrying out their legislative duties, just as any Catholic should follow their faith in the workplace.

Following a speech at the outset of debate on Bill C-38, Mr. Angus offered a handshake to Bill Siksay, the NDP's openly gay advocate for same-sex marriage, and it was that televised gesture of support that pushed Father Lemire into action.

He immediately left a message on Mr.

Angus's cellphone, and when the MP called him back early the following morning, the priest told him that if he continued to support Bill C-38, he would no longer be welcome at communion.

"Being very, very public escalated things again to another level," Father Lemire says.

He says refusal of communion applies to many people -- including those who divorce and remarry -- and it is a different matter from being ex-communicated, which excludes someone completely from all aspects of church life. While he will not give Mr. Angus communion, he says he is still welcome at church, but Father Lemire says the MP was not a dedicated attendee before the recent conflicts.

"I find it very interesting that someone who isn't there on regular basis is so interested in this issue, except for political reasons," Father Lemire says.

Catherine Clifford, a professor of theology at Saint Paul University, says refusal of communion is a rare punishment that is "a very serious and painful thing" for Catholics.

"You're labelling someone as heretical. You're saying they do not hold the faith of the church and are therefore excluded from the sacramental life of the church," she says. ▀



Rod MacIvor, The Ottawa Citizen

Vatican Eyes for the Jesuit Guys

By Chuck Colbert
In Newsweekly
June 1, 2005

An employee of the U. S. Jesuit Conference, Erick Meder, lost his job recently, apparently because of an article he wrote for the conference's national newsletter. The piece, "Stranger No Longer: Who is the Other among Us?" advocated an open dialogue with gays inside the Church about homosexuality.

The *National Catholic Reporter*, or *NCR*, broke the story in its May 20th issue. A non-gay layperson, Meder, 34, told *NCR* that no sooner had the piece run in the April/May 2005 issue of *National Jesuit News*, his immediate supervisor, Jesuit Father Jim Stormes, and the executive secretary, Jesuit Father Tom Gant, of the religious order's conference called him into their offices.

During a recent telephone interview, Meder said that in asking him to resign or be terminated Stormes told him, "the article was causing serious problems for the society" and that Gant said it had "already done irreparable harm to the society."

According to *NCR*, Gant confirmed only that Meder had resigned his job as the outreach coordinator for the Jesuit conference's Office of Social and International Ministries — a justice ministry — on April 27, a position he held for 10 months.

In the same interview with *In Newsweekly*, Meder said his motivation for writing the piece was concern over a forthcoming document from the Vatican's Conference for Catholic Education about gays in the priesthood.

"I wanted to be one voice within the Church supportive of gay priests who had worked tirelessly for an institution that said they were inherently disordered." A graduate of Fordham University (undergraduate and law degrees) Meder, who spent five years in the Society of Jesus also, said that any number of gay priests were "role models" for him and others.

Posted on the *NCR* website (www.nat-cath.com) and published in the May 20 issue, Meder's article asks why the Church does not encourage openness and dialogue with gays in the same way it does, for example, with the Other, who are migrants from Mexico.

"Perhaps Catholics, in losing part of our self-understanding, will gain something new and unexpected. Perhaps there is a way of living the Gospel which we have been denied hearing. Perhaps there is a mode of Christianity practiced widely among us — but secretly. Perhaps it is time for the Gospel of homosexual clergy to be proclaimed," he writes.

On the hot button topic of same-sex marriage, Meder also advocates an open dialogue with heterosexual married couples, asking: "Do homosexual couples obscure the value of your marriage? Were homosexual unions legally sanctioned, would you have pursued that option? As a couple, what is your understanding of sexuality within marriage? Of

openness to procreation? Do you know any homosexual couples? Do you share your struggles as a couple — spiritual, relational, economic — with this homosexual couple?"

The firing of Meder comes on the heels of another high profile resignation, that of Jesuit Father Tom Reese, editor the past seven years of *America* magazine. Reese's departure captured national headlines earlier this month. Reese resigned at the request of his order, following years of pressure from the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, or CDF. It was under the leadership of then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Benedict XVI that sought Reese's ouster. *NCR* reported that the Jesuits viewed the ongoing debate with Rome as "unwinnable."

Among the "gay" topics the CDF found objectionable were essays about pro arguments for the use of condoms to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS, homosexual priests, and same-sex marriage.

Reaction to both firings among gay and lesbian Catholics voices a theme of justice.

Francis DeBernardo, executive director of the gay positive New Ways Ministry, said, "The decision to ask Erik Meder to resign is clearly

unjust. Coupled with the same request that Father Thomas Reese step down from his position as editor of *America*, it reveals a pattern of pre-emptive silencing and fear, which is inimical to the Gospel and the best of Catholic intellectual tradition."

DeBernardo added, "Meder's article highlights an important conflict in the Church's teaching: the tradition of social justice is being unevenly applied to human situations. By juxtaposing the way the Magisterium treats geographic minorities and sexual minorities, Meder highlights a grave inconsistency in the Church's thought and practice."

Sam Sennett, president of Dignity/USA, a national GLBT Catholic organization, framed his concerns this way: "We are thrilled to be in dialogue with anyone. People who are in dialogue learn that the ingrained attitudes and beliefs just don't stand up to our humanness."

Neither New Ways nor Dignity issued statements for their respective groups.

Mary Hunt, a Catholic lesbian feminist theologian, of the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (Water), offered her perspective. "The Jesuits are a powerful and well-placed male religious order that is

obviously being made an example of by the Vatican. I suggest and support moves they might make to resist such bullying and stand up for themselves," she said, adding, "There are many gay and straight men in the Society of Jesus who know that [Meder's] article was perfectly fine to publish, just as they know that Tom Reese was pressured to leave his post at *America* in an unfair way."

Locally, Charles Martel, a gay Catholic lay leader, said the resignations shows that "speaking openly and freely from experience, even for a lay person, may cost you your job."

For his part Meder remains "bewildered." It's "frustrating," he said. "I did the unforgivable by asking 'Can we talk?' Is truth so fragile?" ▸

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Vatican Is Said To Force Jesuit O

By Laurie Goodstein
New York Times
May 7, 2005

An American Jesuit who is a frequent television commentator on Roman Catholic issues resigned yesterday under orders from the Vatican as editor of the Catholic magazine *America* because he had published articles critical of church positions, several Catholic officials in the United States said.

The order to dismiss the editor, the Rev. Thomas J. Reese, was issued by the Vatican's office of doctrinal enforcement—the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith—in mid-March when that office was still headed by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak on the matter, said. Soon after, Pope John Paul II died and Cardinal Ratzinger was elected pope, taking the name Benedict XVI.

America magazine, a weekly based in New York City, is a moderate-to-liberal journal published by the Jesuits, a religious order known for producing the scholars who run many of the church's universities and schools. The Jesuits prize their independence, but like everyone in the church, even their top official, the Jesuit superior general in Rome, ultimately answers to the pope.

In recent years *America* has featured articles representing more than one side on sensitive issues like same-sex marriage, relations with Islam and whether Catholic politicians who

support abortion rights should be given communion. Church officials said it was the publication of some of these articles that prompted Vatican scrutiny.

Father Reese, in a statement yesterday, confirmed his departure but gave no indication that he was resigning under duress: "I am proud of what my colleagues and I did with the magazine, and I am grateful to them, our readers and our benefactors for the support they gave me. I look forward to taking a sabbatical while my provincial and I determine the next phase of my Jesuit ministry."

Catholic scholars and writers said in interviews yesterday that they feared that the dismissal of such a highly visible Catholic commentator was intended by the Vatican as a signal that debating church teaching is outside the bounds.

Some Jesuits said that within the last two years they had received spoken or written warnings from then-Cardinal Ratzinger's office about articles or books they had published.

Stephen Pope, a moral theologian at Boston College who wrote the article critical of the

church's position on same-sex marriage, said of the dismissal: "If this is true, it's going to make Catholic theologians who want to ask critical questions not want to publish in Catholic journals. It can have a chilling effect."

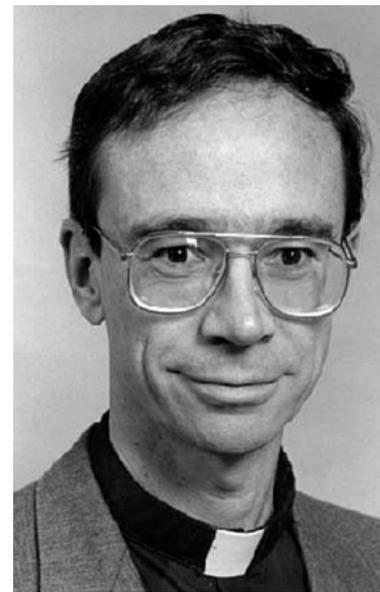
Father Reese, who is 60 and has been editor of *America* for seven years, is a widely regarded political scientist. He has written several books

that examine the Roman Catholic Church as a political institution as well as a religious one, a rather secular approach that was not appreciated in Cardinal Ratzinger's office, an official there said in an interview last month.

Jesuit officials said Father Reese was informed of his ouster just after he had returned from Rome, where he had been interviewed by nearly every major American news outlet covering the pope's funeral and the elevation of Cardinal Ratzinger to pope.

He is being replaced by his deputy, the Rev.

Drew Christiansen, a Jesuit who writes often on social ethics and international issues, and whom Father Reese recruited to the magazine in 2002.



Rev. Thomas J. Reese

‘Strangers No Longer’: Who is the Other among us?

By Erik Meder

The following article appeared in the April/May 2005 issue of National Jesuit News. After the article appeared, Meder was asked to resign from his position as outreach coordinator for the Office of Social and International Ministries at the U.S. Jesuit Conference.

The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God. (Leviticus 19:34)

This is a common scriptural motif: God’s

command that Israel love the Other as herself is coupled by the bid that Israel understand herself. Understanding herself as liberated from the exile of otherness, Israel must not re-create for Others a new Egypt, that land of slavery.

There is a circular relationship between self-understanding and conduct. We behave toward one another according to our self-understanding, which is always aspirational, always projecting from what we are to what we might become.

Just as our self-understanding molds our behavior, so our behavior informs our self-understanding. In relationships, we learn who we are through how we act toward the Other: our spouse, friend. In relationships, we sometimes learn that we are a little more selfish than we would prefer to believe; at [a relationship’s] best, we can discover, too, that we have a capacity for deep love and inspiring sacrifice.

This circular relationship of self-understanding and conduct is not a vicious circle; it is dynamic, owing to the ceaseless imposition of history, personal and corporate. This herme-

neutic might be imagined as a three-dimensional spiral being drawn through space. Our being in the world progresses: We grow, diminish, fail, achieve. We seek authenticity.

The same approximate percentage of the U.S. population is homosexual as is foreign-born: 10 to 15 percent. The majority of American Catholics are neither. How does this majority encounter the Other when that Other is a migrant? A homosexual?

When the Other is a migrant, Catholics are urged by the church to employ a hermeneutic of self-understanding in her encounter with the Other. When the Other is a homosexual, the notion of hermeneutic encounter drops from the scene. Instead, the church has consistently relied upon the detachment of natural law reasoning. Thus, what is of concern is not the homosexual at all, but homosexuality. Perhaps, in the soon-to-be-issued document considering homosexual clergy, the Congregation for Catholic Education will reverse this unfortunate, though consistent, approach and instead encourage hermeneutic encounter.

In “Strangers No Longer,” the U.S. and Mexican bishops encourage the scripturally based hermeneutic encounter with the Other: “Part of the process of conversion of mind and heart deals with confronting attitudes of cultural superiority, indifference, and racism; accepting migrants ... as persons with dignity and rights, revealing the presence of Christ; and recognizing migrants as bearers of deep cultural values and rich faith traditions.”

To impugn one’s own attitudes of cultural superiority and to seek recognition of the presence of Christ in the Other is a conversion process wherein one’s self-understanding is confronted by the reality of the Other and is challenged by that otherness. That confrontation isn’t determined; one needn’t recognize the cultural richness of other traditions. But the bishops seem to encourage an openness characteristic of true dialogue; by encountering the Other as a Thou, a person with reality, history and worth, our self-understanding will be challenged and might be changed. We might no longer be superior; we might be in solidarity.

To enter into dialogue is a daunting experience involving an openness that is never achieved or finalized but is a process of conversion, of humility, of admitting that we might not have all the answers—even about ourselves. To be open is to put one’s self-understanding at risk; in fact, it is to risk losing one’s very self.

In June 2003, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith addressed homosexuality within the context of marriage: “Legal recognition of homosexual unions or placing them on the same level as marriage would mean not only the approval of deviant behavior, with the consequence of making it a model in present-day society, but would also obscure basic values which belong to the common inheritance of humanity.” The same document reminds Catholics that the homosexual orientation is “objectively disordered” and that homosexual acts are “sins gravely contrary to chastity.”

Instead of urging Catholics to engage in dialogue—the hermeneutic encounter with the Other in which the dynamism of self-understanding and chosen openness is the precondition for the possibility of conversion—the CDF employs a detached natural law reasoning that simply states propositional “truth.” Catholics are called upon to participate in this process through assent and obedience. What if the CDF had encouraged hermeneutic understanding? Might there be another means of accessing the *natural law*?

A hermeneutic approach, sensitive to the circular dynamic of self-understanding and conduct, might have included an open dialogue with married persons, perhaps asking: Do homosexual couples obscure the basic value of your marriage? Were homosexual unions legally sanctioned, would you have pursued that option? As a couple, what is your understanding of sexuality within marriage?

Continued on page 11

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Catholic experts said yesterday that they were stunned to learn of Father Reese’s dismissal. “I’d think of him as sort of a mainstream liberal,” said Philip F. Lawler, the editor of Catholic World News, a news outlet on the more conservative end of the spectrum. “I think he’s been reasonably politic. I watched him during the transition, and I cannot think of a single thing I heard that would have put him in jeopardy.”

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith first complained to Jesuit officials about the magazine four years ago, the church officials said, after America published a special issue with articles criticizing “Dominus Jesus,” a document on interfaith relations and the supremacy of Catholicism that had been issued by the Congregation.

Dominus Jesus was broadly denounced by many Catholic and non-Catholic theologians who said it would undermine decades of bridge-building with other faiths, and even with other Christian denominations.

“They were just reporting what a lot of people were saying, they weren’t stirring up trouble,” said the Rev. Mark Massa, a Jesuit who leads the Center for American Catholic Studies at Fordham University. “I can’t think of anything they’ve reported that was scandalous.”

Cardinal Ratzinger’s office also complained to the Jesuits about articles America had published on gay priests and on the work of the Congregation itself. The Congregation threatened either to order the dismissal of Father

Reese or to impose a committee of censors to review the magazine’s content, but backed down after discussions with the Jesuits, church officials said in interviews yesterday.

The magazine then began to more regularly solicit articles examining a single issue from a variety of viewpoints. In 2001, it published a piece Father Reese had solicited from then-Cardinal Ratzinger as a response to an article by Cardinal Walter Kasper, a German who works in the Vatican, that had criticized the Vatican and in particular the Congregation as failing to give local churches and bishops sufficient autonomy.

“For a long while,” Cardinal Ratzinger wrote, “I hesitated to accept this invitation because I do not want to foster the impression that there is a longstanding theological dispute between Cardinal Kasper and myself, when in fact none exists.”

Then in 2004, the Congregation took issue with two more articles: one by Professor Pope of Boston College on same-sex marriage, which criticized the Congregation for issuing a document that he argued dehumanized gay men and lesbians; and one by Representative David R. Obey, a Wisconsin Democrat, who bristled at bishops who would deny communion to Catholic politicians like himself who support abortion rights.

In both of these cases, Father Reese published opposing viewpoints. Mr. Obey’s piece was actually a response to an earlier article in America by Archbishop Raymond L. Burke, now of St.

Louis, who had called for Catholic politicians who support abortion rights to change their positions or be denied communion.

The Rev. Richard John Neuhaus, editor of another Catholic journal based in New York, First Things, which is more conservative than America, said yesterday, “It would be fair to say that during the pontificate of John Paul II that America apparently saw itself or at least certainly read as a magazine of what some would describe as the loyal opposition. And, needless to say, there’s dispute over the definition of ‘loyal’ and the definition of ‘opposition.’”

But Father Neuhaus added that he considered Father Reese a friend who was always “fair-minded” even when they disagreed.

At the Jesuits’ American headquarters in Washington, a spokesman, the Rev. Albert Diulio, said Father Reese and his provincial had jointly agreed on the job change. But he said he did not know if Father Reese had resigned under duress.

The Rev. Thomas Smolich, who as the Jesuit provincial of California is Father Reese’s supervisor, said he was discussing with Father Reese about what he would do next. “Tom is a very talented guy,” he said. “There are many things he could do in Jesuit and Catholic ministries, in a university, in journalism of some kind.”

After the election of Pope Benedict XVI, America ran an editorial that said: “A church that cannot openly discuss issues is a church retreating into an intellectual ghetto.” ■

Vatican to Check U.S. Seminaries on Gay Presence

By Laurie Goodstein
The New York Times
September 15, 2005

Investigators appointed by the Vatican have been instructed to review each of the 229 Roman Catholic seminaries in the United States for “evidence of homosexuality” and for faculty members who dissent from church teaching, according to a document prepared to guide the process.

The Vatican document, given to The New York Times yesterday by a priest, surfaces as Catholics await a Vatican ruling on whether homosexuals should be barred from the priesthood.

In a possible indication of the ruling’s contents, the American archbishop who is supervising the seminary review said last week that “anyone who has engaged in homosexual activity or has strong homosexual inclinations,” should not be admitted to a seminary.

Edwin O’Brien, archbishop for the United States military, told The National Catholic Register that the restriction should apply even to those who have not been sexually active for a decade or more.

American seminaries are under Vatican review as a result of the sexual abuse scandal that swept the priesthood in 2002. Church officials in the United States and Rome agreed that they wanted to take a closer look at how seminary candidates were screened for admission, and whether they were being prepared for lives of chastity and celibacy.

The issue of gay seminarians and priests has been in the spotlight because a study commissioned by the church found last year that about 80 percent of the young people victimized by priests were boys.

Experts in human sexuality have cautioned that homosexuality and attraction to children are different, and that a disproportionate percentage of boys may have been abused because priests were more likely to have access to male targets—like altar boys or junior seminarians—than to girls.

But some church officials in the United States and in Rome, including some bishops and many conservatives, attributed the abuse to gay priests and called for an overhaul of the

seminaries. Expectation for such a move rose this year with the election of Pope Benedict XVI, who has spoken of the need to “purify” the church.

It is unknown how many Catholic priests are gay. Estimates range widely, from 10 percent to 60 percent.

The catechism of the Catholic Church says people with “deep-seated” homosexual tendencies must live in chastity because “homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.”

“The investigation of U.S. seminaries for ‘evidence of homosexuality’ continues the pattern of smoke-screening that Church leaders have employed since the clergy child abuse crisis began. Why not look instead for evidence of cowardice, secrecy, and dishonesty—the traits displayed by so many bishops which magnified the crisis into a public scandal? Leaders with these moral faults do much more damage to the Church than gay priests ever could.”

Francis DeBernardo
Executive Director, New Ways Ministry

The Rev. Donald B. Cozzens, a former seminary rector who set off a controversy five years ago when he published a book asserting that “the priesthood is or is becoming a gay profession,” said in an interview yesterday that many in the church had come to accept his observation.

But he said he was concerned that the seminary review would lead the church to ask celibate faculty members and seminarians to withdraw.

“That would be a major mistake from my perspective,” said Father Cozzens, who teaches in the religious studies department at John Carroll University in Cleveland. “First, I think it’s unfair if not unjust for committed gay seminarians and faculty who are leading chaste lives. And secondly, I don’t know how you can really enforce that.”

The Rev. Thomas J. Reese, a sociologist who resigned in May as editor of the Jesuit magazine

America under pressure from the Vatican, said that with the shortage of priests, the church can hardly afford to dismiss gay seminarians.

“You could have somebody who’s been in the seminary for five or six years and is planning to be ordained and the rector knows they’re a homosexual,” said Father Reese, now a visiting scholar at Santa Clara University in California. “What are they going to do, throw them out?”

“It’s much healthier if a seminarian can talk about their sexuality with a spiritual director, but this kind of policy is going to force it all underground.”

Archbishop O’Brien, who is supervising the seminary review, did not respond to requests for interviews made to his office in Washington. In an interview with The Associated Press, he said the Vatican document was being reviewed by the pope and could be released this year.

The seminary review, called an apostolic visitation, will send teams appointed by the Vatican to the 229 seminaries, which have more than 4,500 students. The last such review began about 25 years ago and took six years to complete.

At each seminary, the visitors are to conduct confidential interviews with every faculty member and seminarian, as well as everyone who graduated in the last three years.

A 12-page document with instructions for the review is now being distributed to seminarians and faculty members. It asks whether the doctrine on the priesthood presented by the seminary is “solidly based on the church’s

Magisterium,” or teaching, and whether teachers and seminarians “accept this teaching.” Among the other questions are these:

“Is there a clear process for removing from the seminary faculty members who dissent from the authoritative teaching of the church or whose conduct does not provide good example to future priests?”

“Is the seminary free from the influences of New Age and eclectic spirituality?”

“Do the seminarians or faculty members have concerns about the moral life of those living in the institution? (This question must be answered).”

“Is there evidence of homosexuality in the seminary? (This question must be answered).”

The questionnaire also asks whether faculty members “watch out for signs of particular friendships.”

The Rev. Thomas Baima, provost of the largest seminary in the United States, St. Mary of the Lake, in Chicago, where the Vatican is sending nine interviewers, said such questions were no surprise.

“The reason we’re having an apostolic visitation now is precisely in the aftermath of the clerical sexual-abuse scandal,” Father Baima said. “Issues about screening our candidates, about formation for celibacy, about how we teach moral theology are going to get more attention than how we teach church history.”

But one gay priest, who said he would not give his name because he has been told by his order not to speak out, said the seminary review would demoralize gay priests.

“It says to gay priests, many of whom are hard-working, faithful men who live their promises of celibacy with integrity, that you should never have been ordained,” he said. ▀

Sex Camp

By Jesse Monteagudo
The Weekly News, South Florida’s Gay Community Newspaper
May 12, 2005

SEX CAMP by Brian McNaught; Author House; 450 pages; \$25.45.

Brian McNaught is a gay icon. Though that term is used frequently these days, in McNaught’s case it is well-deserved. He came out in 1974, before it became fashionable, and has since become the “godfather of gay sensitivity training” by his work as “a sexuality trainer and author whose primary focus are the issues facing gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, and those who live or work with them.” McNaught’s books *On Being Gay—Thoughts on Family, Faith and Love*, *Gay Issues in the Workplace* and *Now That I’m Out, What Do I Do?* are classics that belong in every gay person’s book collection.

For many years McNaught has been a staff member at “Sex Camp,” which we are told is “an annual, week-long, intensive workshop in human sexuality that has, over the past 30 years,

dramatically impacted the lives of hundreds of everyday people, me included.” Properly named the Annual Workshop on Sexuality at Thornfield [New York], “Sex Camp” brings together many people from many different backgrounds and opinions, and is no doubt the setting for many a lively conversation and profound discussion. McNaught must have thought that too, since he used his memories and experiences of “Sex Camp” to write *Sex Camp*, a lighthearted, fictional look at a “typical” week at the Camp.

Sex Camp features the most diverse cast of characters this side of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. Among the 32 campers are a nun, an “ex-gay man,” a cross-dressing heterosexual church organist, a “queer” activist, a homophobic Planned Parenthood educator, a hunky straight man in a wheelchair, two football coaches, and a half a dozen ministers, just to name a few. Add to that a “Sex Camp” staff of 6 intelligent, opinionated men and women (including McNaught, who appears in this novel as himself) and you have the makings of a lively, inspiring, and explosive

Continued on page 9

Quotation to Ponder

“We have first accepted [homosexual persons] as baptized fellow Christians, members together with all in the body of this Jesus Christ, wherein as a result of that baptism there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, free or slave—there is radical equality. And then we spurn them, shun them, because we are all caught up in an acknowledged or a tacit homophobia and heterosexism. We reject them as pariahs, and push them outside the confines of our church communities, and thereby we negate the consequences of their baptism and ours. We make them doubt that they are the children of God, and this must be nearly the ultimate blasphemy.”

-- Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, from the foreword to We Were Baptized Too by Marilyn Bennett Alexander and James Preston (Westminster John Knox Press, 1996)

Pope says gay unions are false and self indulgent

By Michael Paulson

The Boston Globe

June 7, 2005

Pope Benedict XVI, offering his first detailed critique of gay unions since his elevation to the pontificate six weeks ago, yesterday described same-sex marriages as “pseudo-matrimony.”

In a speech to a conference on families held by the Diocese of Rome, Benedict made clear in strong language that he intends to pursue the hard-line defense of traditional Catholic teachings that made him controversial in his role as Pope John Paul II's chief enforcer of church doctrine.

“The various forms of the dissolution of matrimony today, like free unions, trial marriages and going up to pseudo-matrimonies by people of the same sex, are rather expressions of an anarchic freedom that wrongly passes for true freedom of man,” he said, speaking at the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome.

The pope also criticized divorce and artificial contraception in his speech, in which he referred to “banalization of the human body” and said “the greatest expression of freedom is not the search for pleasure,” according to the Reuters news agency.

Benedict made his remarks at a time when same-sex marriage has become a hotly contested public policy issue in Western societies. Same-sex marriage was legalized in Massachusetts last year, although the Legislature is still deciding whether to put on the ballot a measure banning gay marriage, and same-sex unions are legal in Vermont and Connecticut. Same-sex marriage is legal in Belgium, the Netherlands, and parts of

Canada, and Spain has been moving toward legalization.

But the development has sparked resistance, especially in the United States, where many states have passed laws or constitutional amendments prohibiting same-sex marriage. Most recently, the California Legislature defeated a measure legalizing same-sex marriage.

Before he became pope, Benedict—then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger—was the primary explainer of Pope John Paul II's oft-stated opposition to same-sex marriage. In 2003, Ratzinger wrote an important Vatican document outlining the church's opposition to same-sex marriage; the document became controversial because of its assertion that “Allowing children to be adopted by persons living in such unions would actually mean doing violence to these children, in the sense that their condition of dependency would be used to place them in an environment that is not conducive to their full human development.”

Benedict's opposition to homosexuality is longstanding. In 1986, Ratzinger signed another doctrinal document declaring that “It is only in the marital relationship that the use of the sexual faculty can be morally good. A person engaging in homosexual behavior therefore acts immorally.”

“This does not mean that homosexual persons are not often generous and giving of themselves,” he wrote then, “but when they engage in homosexual activity they confirm within themselves a disordered sexual inclination which is essentially self-indulgent.”

Benedict has spoken frequently about his concern that there is no absolute sense of right and wrong in modern society. On

April 18, before the conclave at which he was elected pope, he warned that “We are building a dictatorship of relativism that does not recognize anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires.”



Pope Benedict XVI

Since his election, the pope has spoken only a few times about political matters; last week he declared his support for an effort by the Italian

bishops to persuade voters to boycott a referendum that would overturn a law restricting fertility treatments.

Scholars said Benedict's remarks yesterday were unsurprising, but serve as a reminder that the direct language and doctrinal orthodoxy for which he has been known are not likely to change.

“This is blunt, but it's intentional,” said Chester Gillis, chairman of the theology department at Georgetown University. “He's not a man who speaks idly or without preparation. He wants a sharp demarcation between Christian values and what contemporary culture might condone—there's a sharp line and he wants to make that clear.”

Gillis said Benedict's remarks fit in, not only with his critique of homosexual relationships, but also with his expressed concerns about contemporary culture, which he views as overly secular.

“This is confirming what everybody knew about this pope,” Gillis said.

A former student of Benedict said the pope's description of same-sex marriages as an expression of “anarchic freedom” refers to a contemporary philosophy that “we can do whatever we wish.” Benedict believes instead in a form of human freedom that

is limited by God's will, according to the scholar, the Rev. Joseph Fessio.

“This is not a surprise—you'll find this statement in the catechism of the Catholic Church and everywhere you look for it in the whole 2,000-year history of the church,” said Fessio, who founded Ignatius Press, which has published Benedict's works in the United States.

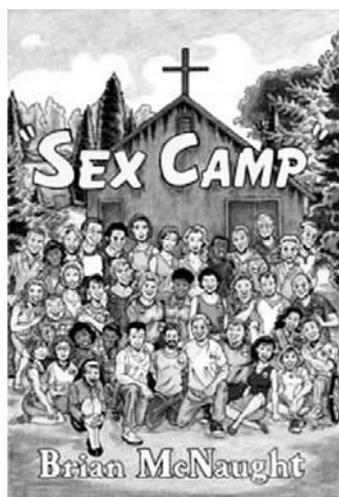
But gay rights advocates criticized the pope's remarks, as expected as they might have been.

“The comments by Pope Benedict XVI on gay civil marriage. . . sadly reflect what many had feared would be the continued language of hatred and disrespect that has come from the Vatican for many years towards gays and lesbians,” said Charles Martel, a Catholic layman who serves on the board of the Religious Coalition for the Freedom to Marry, a Massachusetts organization. “The pope is creating a dangerous climate of inciting hatred towards gays and lesbians, and needs to be held accountable in attempting to encourage civil societies to perpetuate this prejudice.”

And in Washington, Joe Solmonese, an Attleboro native who serves as president of the Human Rights Campaign, a gay rights advocacy organization, said in a statement, “It is unfortunate that the pope would choose so early in his pontificate to sweepingly condemn so many faithful Catholics. There is a long biblical tradition of showing love and compassion for all. It is from that tradition that so many fair-minded Catholics want to see their pope speaking.”

Sex Camp

Continued from page 8



Sex Camp by Brian McNaught

novel. Those who participated in “Sex Camp” (according to this book) leave with more knowledge of sex than is possessed by 90% of the U.S. population (no surprise there), not to mention a week's supply of life-altering experiences and insights.

During “Sex Camp” the campers and the staffers discuss such important issues as

sexual values, body image, “self-pleasuring,” gender identity, sexual orientation, seduction, abuse, theology, and “turn-ons.” McNaught used those conversations as launching pads to discuss those issues, from various perspectives; and the result is an exposition that is as informative and definitely more entertaining than what you would find in a scholarly dissertation. McNaught should be commended for his ability to write sympathetically about people whose views he does not agree with. (McNaught's portrayal of the “ex-gay” man, and other assorted homophobes, are good examples of his literary empathy.) Though there is much conflict and argument here, most of the campers eventually learn to respect each other and to listen to each other. If “real world” people could get along with each other the way these fictional campers do, the world would be a much better place.

Sex Camp is more than a seminar in human sexuality, of course. And it is more than an introduction to “the world's best kept secret.” It is also an entertaining story; and a great way to spend a rainy afternoon, or a long train

trip. You might even want to attend “Sex Camp” yourself, after reading McNaught's fascinating rendition of it. Every member of Congress and the Bush Administration (not to mention the Vatican) ought to be required to spend a week at “Sex Camp.” I can dream, can I?

“MY FAVORITE BOOK” is by my Saber Club Brother, Michael Hickman. Michael's favorite book is *Interview With The Vampire* by Anne Rice [Knopf, 1976], the first of Rice's vampire series: Rice's “books on Vampires,” he says, “are very erotic, despite the other connotations, plus her style of writing is so descriptive and the verbiage gives you a marvelous mental picture of what is taking place. Many who read these books share the same sentiments.” If you have a favorite book you wish to share with the reading world, e-mail me the title, author and a sentence or two explaining why you like the book so much (along with your name of course) to jessemonteagudo@aol.com. Subject: “Book Nook Favorite Book.”

Jesse Monteagudo is a freelance writer and gay book worm who lives in South Florida. He has never been to “Sex Camp” (yet).

Gay Catholics fight for church acceptance

By Deb Price
The Detroit News
May 23, 2005

Growing up in a traditional Polish Catholic family in St. Clair Shores, Steve Osinski loved attending Mass, saying the rosary and praying to the saints.

"I never was one of the kids who dreaded going to Mass," he recalls. "I got something out of the Bible readings and from listening to the priest. Being Catholic is just part of me."

When adolescence made him aware of being gay, Osinski embarked on a journey that started with trying to deny his sexuality and ended with his finding peace as a gay Catholic. His lifeline was Dignity, a group that ministers to the spiritual needs of gay Catholics.

"I shouldn't have to choose between being gay and being Catholic. This is how God made me," says Osinski, who in September will mark his 20th year with his partner, Joe Lempicki, whom he met at a Dignity Detroit Mass.

Osinski's story is a familiar one in Dignity circles: Since 1969, the nationwide group has empowered gay Catholics who refuse to give up their religious birthright, even as the church leadership has turned increasingly anti-gay.

Preparing for its first convention since the architect of contemporary anti-gay Catholic policy was elevated to pope, Dignity USA faces a huge challenge: Becoming a more visible and persuasive witness to the conviction that gay sexuality is a gift from God that needs to be honored and expressed.

"There is a richness and depth to Catholic heritage that is very important to me," says New Yorker Jeff Stone, a member of Dignity since 1988. "I'm not going to be run out of my church by this pope. If the people who want change simply leave the church, who is going to be there to fight for change?"

In praying for change, gay Catholics join reformers who, for example, long for a future church with married priests, women priests and remarriage for the divorced without annulment.

"You can't leave what you are. It's like saying, 'Why don't you stop being under 6 feet tall?'" says Dick Young of Ohio, a Dignity member since 1977.

Dignity's remarkable powers of attraction—and retention—are being put to the test by the choice of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger to be pontiff.

Beginning in 1986, Ratzinger wrote a series of church documents that branded sexually active gays as "evil," told church officials to kick Dignity chapters off church property and even warned Catholic lawmakers that voting in favor of gay-rights legislation is "gravely immoral" because "the approval or legalization of evil is something far different from the toleration of evil."

And in his brief time as Pope Benedict XVI, his Vatican has urged Catholic clerks to disobey the anticipated law in Spain that will let gay couples marry and adopt children.

The Catholic hierarchy's hostility has been "incredibly damaging," says Dignity President Sam Sinnett of St. Louis. "That damage to people is what motivates so many

of us in Dignity to be an alternative voice. I know I needed people who were comfortable putting the two words together—'gay' and 'Catholic.'"

In rejecting church teaching that gays must remain celibate, Dignity members point to "the primacy of conscience," a moral principle dating from St. Augustine that requires obeying one's conscience when it disagrees with church rules.

Alice Knowles of Boston rekindled her childhood Catholicism at 45 when a friend invited her to Dignity in 1998.

This year, she'll talk about being a gay married Catholic at the convention with Kathy Ann Gianino, her lawful wife. They met in Dignity Boston.

"The church isn't just the pope and the bishops. The church is the people," Knowles says. "It's spiritually fulfilling to be part of Dignity. This community is strong. And we aren't going away."

Dignity allows gay Catholics to be true to themselves and have faith that, one day, the church they love will embrace them. ▀

Gay and Lesbian Catholics Denied Communion at Holy Name Cathedral Service

By Gary Barlow
Chicago Free Press
May 18, 2005

Obedying the Vatican and Cardinal Francis George, celebrants at Chicago's Holy Name Cathedral denied communion to two people wearing rainbow-colored sashes May 15, then watched as others receiving communion shared their wafers with the Rainbow Sash protesters. "We were told many years ago, 'Do

this in memory of me,' and that meant sharing and that meant the Eucharist, for anyone," said Sister Donna Quinn, a Catholic nun who took her communion wafer, broke it in half and walked over to share it with the Rainbow Sash protesters.

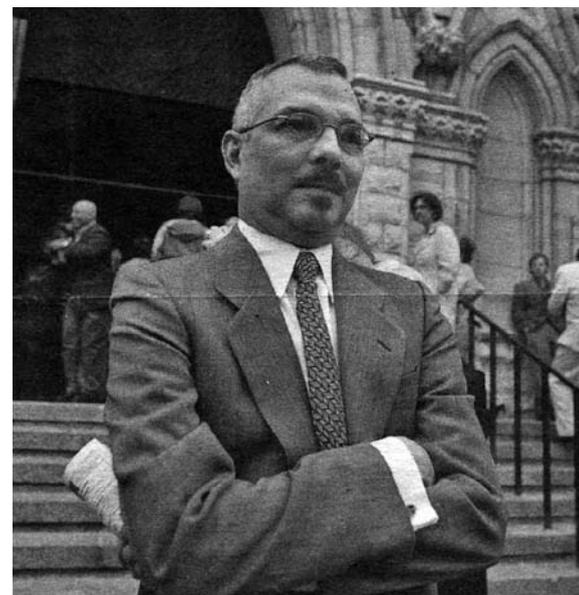
Members of the Rainbow Sash Movement attended Pentecost Sunday services at Holy Name and other Catholic churches across the nation, donning their brightly colored sashes to protest the anti-gay policies of the Catholic

Church. While some bishops and priests have allowed them to receive communion in the past, most have now adopted the Vatican line, articulated earlier this year by Cardinal Francis Arinze, the Vatican official in charge of church policy on administering sacraments.

The Catholic Church has never accepted homosexuality as normal," Arinze said. "You read the scripture. It's very clear." Arinze said Rainbow Sash protesters signal that they are "active homosexuals" and "intend to remain so," which he said violates Catholic teaching.

Last June, George, Chicago's top Catholic, issued a statement saying area churches should deny communion to anyone wearing rainbow sashes. "The policy of the U.S. Bishops' conference, a policy I did not invent, was to refuse communion to anyone who used its reception as an occasion to protest against the Church's teaching," George said in a statement.

The Rev. Ron Kunkel officiated at the 11 a.m. Sunday service at Holy Name and after the service Quinn challenged him to rethink his position on denying communion to sash wearers. "Sister, if you don't think I have thought about it, you're wrong," Kunkel said, telling the nun he'd like to meet with her to discuss the issue. "I have thought about it and prayed about it."



Rick Garcia appears outside of Holy Name Cathedral after offering his communion wafer to a protester. Quinn also shared communion with a protester. "I was happy to share communion with them. I just thanked them and said, 'May the Spirit be with you,'" she said.

Rick Garcia, policy director of Equality Illinois and a devout Catholic, joined with Quinn and two members of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays to share communion wafers with the Rainbow Sash protesters. "They didn't know we were going to do it," Garcia said. "I thought, 'How perfect to have a nun bring them communion.'"

Quinn said, "I was happy to share communion with them. I just thanked them and said, 'May the Spirit be with you.'"

In Minnesota, celebrants denied commu-



Sister Donna Quinn engages the Rev. Ron Kunkel, of Holy Name Cathedral, on why he did not give communion to two gay men from the Rainbow Sash movement during the services May 15.

Holy Name Service

Continued from page 10

nion to more than 100 people wearing rainbow sashes at May 15 services at the Cathedral of St. Paul. The Rev. Michael Skluczczek announced before beginning Eucharist that sash-wearers approaching the altar would receive a blessing but not communion. ▀

Sash-wearers Granted Communion

St. Stephen's Catholic Church was not reprimanded for granting Holy Communion to a handful of church members who wore pro-gay rainbow sashes on Pentecost Sunday, May 5, despite an admonition by their archbishop against the practice.

The Advocate
June 21, 2005

'Strangers No Longer': Who is the Other among us?

Continued from page 7

Of openness to procreation? Do you know any homosexual couples? Do you share your struggles as a couple—spiritual, relational, economic—with this homosexual couple? Can you say with the U.S. and Mexican bishops: "Part of the process of conversion of mind and heart deals with confronting attitudes of cultural superiority, indifference and racism; accepting [homosexuals] ... as persons with dignity and rights, revealing the presence of Christ; and recognizing [homosexuals] as bearers of deep cultural values and rich faith traditions"?

Before the [Congregation for Catholic Education] document on homosexuality and the clergy is issued, Catholics—laypersons, priests, homosexuals, heterosexuals, married, celibate—would do well to examine how one's own sexual self-understanding determines how one treats and defines the Other. Can we achieve a measure of the openness which the bishops call for in encountering migrants and which is a precondition for the possibility of conversion?

Perhaps the CCE document will encourage American Catholics to be open, to enter into a genuine dialogue wherein one's own self-understanding is challenged. Perhaps Catholics, in losing a part of our self-understandings, will gain something new and unexpected. Perhaps there is a way of living the Gospel which we have been denied hearing. Perhaps there is a mode of Christianity practiced widely among us—but secretly. Perhaps it's time the Gospel of homosexual clergy be proclaimed. We might not all be ready for such a bold proclamation, but so was Christ a stumbling block and foolishness for many in his day. ▀

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 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
Carlesbad: 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)
LaPuente: 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-LA USC 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 Jose: St. Julie Billiart; St. Martin of Tours (Emmaus Community)

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: Shrine of the Immaculate Conception
Boulder: St. Thomas Aquinas
Denver: St. Dominic's, 10:30 Catholic Community
Highlands Ranch: Pax Christi
Littleton: St. Frances Cabrini

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 Chicago, St. Clement, St. Gertrude, St. Gregory
Country Club Hills: St. Emeric
Morton Grove: St. Martha

Indiana

Evansville: St. Mary
Indianapolis: St. Thomas Aquinas
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. Matthew, St. Philip and James, St. Vincent de Paul
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: University of St. Thomas

Nevada

Las Vegas: Christ the King, Guardian Angel Cathedral

New Hampshire

Manchester: Parish of the Transfiguration
Merrimack: St. John Neumann

New Jersey

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

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. JohnVianny (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-University 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 Assmblly
Milwaukee: Prince of Peace, Trinity-Guadalupe

Canada

Toronto: Our Lady of Lourdes

Should homosexuals remain in the Catholic Church

By Gregory Baum
Catholic New Times
 Toronto, Canada
 January 16, 2005

Catholic homosexual people committed to the Gospel ask themselves whether they should leave the Catholic Church where they are spurned, to become members of the United Church of Canada where they are respected. The Catholic Church teaches that homosexuals lack full human integrity and that homosexual love is always sinful, while the United Church looks upon homosexuality as a natural variant and accepts gays and lesbians as equal members of the congregation, including the right to seek ordination.

What should a Catholic theologian say to Catholic gays and lesbians who ask whether they should switch their ecclesiastical allegiance? One answer would be to insist that they obey the church's magisterium, that they humbly accept themselves as damaged personalities and abandon the idea that they are just as normal as other people.

According to the Doctrinal Congregation of the Vatican, "they are deprived of their essential and indispensable finality" and hence "are intrinsically disordered." While the Congregation defends their human rights in society and disapproves of public gestures of hostility toward them, it nonetheless insists that the homosexual life style is always sinful and should not be honoured by society. While the loss of an eye or a leg damages a person's integrity in a purely material way, the homosexual orientation, according to the Congregation, produces a more profound wound: it represents an ontic lack of human integrity.

Gays and lesbians should therefore learn to think of themselves as damaged in their very being. If they want to be good Catholics, they must learn to look upon themselves as wounded personalities, intrinsically disordered, ontically sick, merely tolerated in church and society, and forever excluded from sharing their life with a person they love.

I would be quite unable to give such an advice. What should gays and lesbians committed to the Gospel then do? Should they join the United Church of Canada?

Through a process of reflection, prayer and consultation over a period of twelve years, involving all their members, the United Church of Canada has come to understand homosexu-



ality as a natural variant and see homosexuals as normal members of the human family, enjoying full human integrity, despite their minority status. According to the teaching of the United Church, God creates the majority of human beings as heterosexual and a minority as homosexual. Gay and lesbian believers must learn to accept their sexual orientation as a divine gift. Their life of faith, hope and love, in the keeping with the New Testament, does not prohibit them from seeking a partner and expressing their mutual love in sexual intima-

cy. If they think they have a call to proclaim the Gospel and become pastors in the church, they may present themselves — like other members—as candidates for the ministry.

Since the United Church professes the sola scriptura principle, the twelve-year-long decision-making process had to wrestle with the biblical texts that condemn homosexual behaviour. The United Church followed the hermeneutical principle that biblical passages which damage the humanity of people, such as women, Jews, homosexuals or other outsiders, must be subordinated to the central biblical message of the equality of humans before God and of God's universal love for them. The United Church had previously applied this principle when it decided to teach the equality of men and women, and consequently admit women to the ordained ministry.

A third option?

Is there a third option for Catholic gays and lesbians? Many of them love the Catholic tradition, the fusion between the biblical and Hellenist tradition, the double imperative of faith and reason, the sacramental and communal inheritance, and the church's transnational vocation. How can they give up what they regard as their spiritual, cultural and intellectual home? Is it possible to remain an active Catholic while dissenting from a particular teaching of the magisterium?

This question was widely discussed in the 1970s when vast numbers of Catholics, in fact the majority in North America, remained unconvinced by Pope Paul VI's encyclical of 1968, *Humanae Vitae*, condemning all forms of what he called artificial birth control. According to the HarperCollins Encyclopaedia of Catholicism (1995, p. 421) "Many Catholics

— including theologians and priests — could not accept the central assertion of that document: the intrinsic immorality of every contraceptive act. Such dissent was viewed as illegitimate and, if public, punishable. Others viewed it as a dimension of the critical responsibility of Catholics and as an indispensable part of the teaching-learning process of the Church. The U.S. bishops in their pastoral letter, "Human Life in Our Day," (1968) viewed dissent as legitimate under three conditions: 1) it is based on serious reason, 2) it is respectful of teaching authority, and 3) it does not cause scandal." Empirical research shows that to this day the majority of Catholics in North America dissent from the church's contraceptive teaching.

It has generally been held that the church's authoritative teaching that is not proposed as divinely revealed must be embraced — not by faith, but by an act of obedience, an act of the will recognising rightful authority. Yet what can the will do in the area of truth? The will can make Catholics read a teaching with attention and try their best to assimilate it, yet since conviction resides in the intelligence, conformity of the mind cannot be produced by the will. Conviction results from the persuasiveness of truth.

If Catholics swallow the official teaching and act upon it without being convinced of it, they compromise their own conscience and enter upon an ethically ambiguous territory. I doubt whether in present-day western culture homosexuals can be convinced by the church's official teaching that "they are intrinsically disordered and deprived of their essential and indispensable finality." The excessive language makes the claim incredible. While living on God's earth, no human being is ever deprived of his or her essential and indispensable finality.

My answer to the question raised by Catholic gays and lesbians is to remain in the Catholic Church, actively and yet discreetly, dissenting from the official teaching, according to which they are intrinsically disordered personalities. ▀

Theologian Challenges Pope To Rethink Church's Position On Gays

By Mary Ellen Peterson
365Gay.com
 San Francisco Bureau
 June 9, 2005

(Wittenberg, Germany) Crowds gathering in front of the famous Wittenberg Cathedral watched curiously as American theologian Matthew Fox walked to the building's great wooden doors and then nailed up a challenge to the Catholic Church just as Martin Luther did in 1517.

Like Luther, Fox believes that the church is in trouble and in need of a drastic change.

Fox's challenge was in the form an updated version of Luther's 95 Theses—applying them to today.

While Luther's protest was against indulgences and corruption in the administration of Pope Leo X, Fox's beef is more attuned to the injustices and power abuses he sees in the Vatican under Pope Benedict XVI and the apathy epidemic present in Protestant Churches.

"I have great respect for what Luther achieved when he protested against corruption. I also believe the church needs a reformation more today than it did 500 years ago," Fox said.

Fox and the new Pope are old opponents who had intensive debates on theological issues in the 1980s. Fox and 100 other prominent theologians were silenced by then Cardinal Ratzinger. A year later, Fox

was forced to leave the Dominican Order by Pope John Paul II and subsequently converted to the Episcopal church.

"Jesus said nothing about condoms, birth control or homosexuality," says one of the Theses. Fox said it is time for Christians to choose who the Church will follow: an "angry exclusionary God or the loving God who opens the path to wisdom."

Among his other theses are: "God is both Father and Mother" and "Religion is not necessary, but spirituality is."

German camera crews recorded the nailing of the theses to the church door and continued to roll as curious tourists read them—some proclaiming their agreement.

"The traditional purpose of a thesis is to

open up constructive debate in the search for truth," said Fox.

"At this critical time in human and planetary history, when the earth is being ravaged by the violence of war, poverty, sexism, homophobia and eco-destruction, we need to gather those who offer a future that is one of compassion, creativity and justice to stand up and speak their conscience together as never before. Religion ought to be part of the solution, not the problem."

Fox has written 26 popular religious and theological textbooks. His newest, "A New Reformation!" (Wisdom University Press) challenges Pope Benedict XVI and exposes what he calls the corruption of the papacy. ▀