

# BANDINGS

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## A New Archbishop for San Francisco

*Tolerant statements toward gays/Homosexuals can minister as priests, Niederauer says*

By Wyatt Buchanan  
*San Francisco Chronicle*  
December 16, 2005

San Francisco's incoming Catholic archbishop, George Niederauer, has spoken boldly in support of gay priests and has praised gay parishioners, leaders of gay Catholic organizations said Thursday.

Many in the church hierarchy have blamed the international clergy sex abuse scandal on gay priests, and the Vatican's recent instruction on gays in the priesthood stated new rules on gay clergy were "made more urgent by the current situation."

Niederauer disputed those ideas in an interview with his diocesan newspaper in Utah.

"Some who are seriously mistaken have named sexual orientation as the cause of the recent scandal regarding the sexual abuse of minors by priests," Niederauer said in the interview with the *Intermountain Catholic News*, which was published Monday.

His reference to "sexual orientation" stands in contrast to the Vatican instruction's description of "persons with deep-seated homosexual tendencies."

Niederauer said gay men committed to Christ and the church can effectively minister as priests, and he said sexual orientation was "a structure of human personality." In contrast, the Vatican instruction states that men "who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture' " are unfit for priesthood.

"I don't think there are any ifs, ands or buts that the Vatican is trying to blame the sex abuse crisis on gay priests, and this man says that is 'seriously mistaken,'" said Sam Sinnett, national president of DignityUSA, an organization in Washington, D.C., of gay and lesbian Catholics.

"Very few bishops have come out and said clearly that this is not about sexual orientation," Sinnett said. He added that, if the statements reflected the bishop's thinking, his appointment in San Francisco would be "more than a small step forward for gay and lesbian Catholics."

As archbishop, Niederauer will have a central role in determining who is ordained in San Francisco, Marin and San Mateo, the counties included in the San Francisco diocese.

In 10 years as bishop of the Diocese of Salt Lake City, Niederauer rarely had to address gay and lesbian issues in the church. DignityUSA, which has chapters in 24 states, isn't active in Utah.

In 2004, however, Niederauer publicly opposed a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage that appeared on the Utah state ballot, even though he opposed same-sex marriage.

Many Protestant leaders and the powerful Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints supported the ban. But Niederauer said he was troubled that the amendment banned any union beside marriage. He also saw the ban as unnecessary because same-sex marriages already were prohibited by Utah law.

Niederauer also helped form the "Coalition of Concerned Religious Leaders," a group



Archbishop George Niederauer (center)

of Utah clergy who urged tolerance for gays and lesbians after the state legislature in 1996 banned gay student clubs when students at one school expressed interest in starting such a club.

Before he was assigned to Utah, Niederauer spent his career in Southern California, including a stint at a parish in West Hollywood, which has a large gay population. In a 2003 interview with the (Salt Lake City) *Deseret News* about his work in West Hollywood, he was enthusiastic.

"I don't have to take a back seat to anyone in the church in my admiration for the people

I met," Niederauer said. He added, "They were as wonderful and gifted and generous and compassionate as any you meet."

Francis DeBernardo, who leads New Ways Ministry, a national advocacy group for gay and lesbian Catholics, and met with Niederauer in Salt Lake City, said the bishop was genuinely interested in reaching out to the gay and lesbian community.

"With his pastoral experience in an overwhelmingly gay Catholic parish in West Hollywood, and his political experience dealing with extremism from anti-gay forces in Utah, I think that Bishop Niederauer is one of the best candidates to lead the heavily gay-populated Catholic community of San Francisco," DeBernardo said.

Niederauer's predecessor, Archbishop William Levada, received mixed reviews from gay and lesbian Catholics. Levada spoke several times at the Most Holy Redeemer Church, a largely gay parish in San Francisco's Castro neighborhood, and appointed gays and lesbians to important positions in the diocese.

But on Levada's watch, the diocese stopped its ministry specifically for gay and lesbian Catholics and left that work to local parishes, said the Rev. Jim Schexnayder, who founded the Berkeley-based National Association of Catholic Diocesan Lesbian and Gay Ministries. Schexnayder said he hoped Niederauer would revive that ministry.

"There's a great need obviously in San Francisco, with so many gay and lesbian Catholics who would greatly benefit from a public pastoral outreach," Schexnayder said. ▀

## In Strong Terms, Rome Is to Ban Gays as Priests

By Ian Fisher and Laurie Goodstein  
*The New York Times*  
November 23, 2005

ROME, Nov. 22 - A new Vatican document excludes from the priesthood most gay men, with few exceptions, banning in strong and specific language candidates "who are actively homosexual, have deep-seated homosexual tendencies, or support the so-called 'gay culture.'"

The long-awaited document, which has leaked out in sections over the last few months, was published Tuesday in Italian by an Italian

Catholic Web site, *AdistaOnline.it*.

The document appears to allow ordination only for candidates who experienced "transitory" homosexual tendencies that were "clearly overcome" at least three years before ordination as a deacon, the last step before priesthood. It does not define "overcome." Several critics worried that that language would make it nearly impossible for men who believe their basic orientation is gay – but who are celibate – to become priests.

The anticipation of the document has divided Catholics, especially in the United States, igniting contentious debate over whether this

is an appropriate response to the recent sex scandals and whether celibate gay men can still be good priests.

On both sides of that divide, there was general agreement on Tuesday night that the document presented a strong deterrent to homosexual men, but with some limited room for seminaries to make exceptions.

The document puts the onus on bishops, seminary directors and the spiritual advisers "to evaluate all of the qualities of the personality and assure that the candidate does not have sexual disorders that are incompatible with priesthood."

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# BONDINGS

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

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

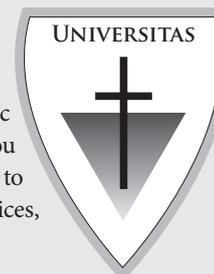
New Ways Ministry seeks to eradicate prevalent myths and stereotypes about homosexuality and supports civil rights for lesbian and gay persons in society.

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## Gay-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  
Ranchos Palos Verde:  
Marymount College  
*San Diego:* University of San Diego  
*San Francisco:* University of San Francisco  
*Santa Clara:* Santa Clara University

### Colorado

*Denver:* Regis University

### Connecticut

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

### District of Columbia

Georgetown University

### Florida

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

### Illinois

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

### Indiana

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

### Iowa

*Dubuque:* Loras College

### Kentucky

*Louisville:* Spalding University

### Louisiana

*New Orleans:* Loyola University New Orleans

### Maryland

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

### Massachusetts

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

### Missouri

*St. Louis:* Saint Louis University

### Minnesota

*Collegeville:* Saint John's University  
*Saint Joseph:* College of Saint Benedict  
*St. Paul:* St Thomas 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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## Catholic colleges discuss making school a good place for gays

By Lisa Leff  
*Associated Press*  
October 29, 2005

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—More than 40 Catholic colleges were represented on Saturday at a conference that was billed as the nation's first on how gays and lesbians fit in at universities guided by a faith that says their sexual orientation is wrong.

But rather than lamenting the Catholic Church's stand on homosexuality, the two-day "Out There" conference at Santa Clara University showed that plenty of gay-related scholarship and student affairs planning is going on in Catholic higher education, said co-organizer Linda Garber.

"It's important and interesting to know there are Catholic universities that have offices and staff people specifically geared toward LGBT concerns," said Garber, director of the women's and gender studies program at Santa Clara. "There are a lot of people out there who are teaching (LGBT) studies without a national professional organization, a newsletter or anything."

The conference drew about 150 people, most of them facul-

ty and administrators who deal with gay subject matter or students. Topics included "Curriculum and Same-Sex Marriage in a Jesuit University" and "Can I Be Gay and Catholic?"

The continuing tension was demonstrated into the oft-repeated anecdote that Notre Dame University has had an active gay and lesbian student group for years, but the college does not recognize or provide financial support to the organization.

One sign of how far the universities have come in openly addressing gay issues is that the dean's office and campus ministry at Jesuit-run Santa Clara provided money for the event, while the school's president sent a welcome letter to participants, said Lisa Millora, assistant dean for student life.

"There are a lot of people who subscribe to Catholic values as they relate to academic work, but don't necessarily agree with how the Catholic Church carries out its work," Millora said.

Among the universities represented at the conference were Georgetown, Loyola Marymount, Gonzaga, Fordham, DePaul, Boston College, College of the Holy Cross, La Salle, Marquette and Emory. ▀

# Vatican to Survey Seminaries for Homosexuality

By Caryle Murphy

*The Washington Post*  
September 16, 2005

The Vatican has ordered an inspection of Roman Catholic seminaries in the United States to look for “evidence of homosexuality” and for faculty members who dissent from church teachings, according to a document containing guidelines for the year-long review.

The inspections of more than 220 seminaries and theological schools, set to begin later this month, was authorized in the wake of the church’s child-molestation scandal. It will be carried out by a committee of 117 bishops and priests, who will break into small teams to visit each seminary for at least four days.

The Vatican’s instructions are in an 11-page document detailing how the visits should be conducted. All faculty, students and graduates from the past three years are to be interviewed. Areas to be examined include whether “there is a clear process for removing” dissident faculty; if seminarians “know how to use alcohol, the Internet, television, etc. with prudence and moderation,” and how students’ “behavior outside the seminary” is monitored.

A copy of the document was obtained by *The Washington Post* from a priest. The instructions were reported in yesterday’s *New York Times*.

The mandate to look for “evidence of homosexuality” reflects a concern among some church officials and members that Catholic seminaries have become too tolerant of a gay lifestyle. It also reflects the contention by some Catholics that the pedophilia scandal grew out of lax moral discipline and the presence of gay men among the clergy. Other Catholics dispute that view, saying there is no evidence that homosexuality leads to sexual abuse of children.

The review begins as Catholics await a new Vatican directive on whether gays should be admitted to the priesthood.

Some church scholars fear that directive may ban gay men from seminaries; others say a ban is unlikely but the directive may make it harder for gays to enter the priesthood.

“I think it’s certainly going to raise the bar” for seminary entrance, said the Rev. Stephen J. Rossetti, a priest and psychologist who heads St. Luke Institute in Silver Spring, a facility that treats psychologically troubled clergy.

“I think there are some unique challenges for individuals with homosexual inclinations, and I think the church needs to face that,” Rossetti said. At the same time, he added, the inspection should make clear that the standard for all seminarians is “chaste living.”

Archbishop Edwin O’Brien, who will oversee the seminary review, recently told the *National Catholic Register* that “anyone who has engaged in homosexual activity, or has strong homosexual inclinations” should not be accepted into seminaries, even if their last gay sexual activity was a decade ago. The Washington-based O’Brien, who heads the Archdiocese for Military Services USA, also said that the Vatican would be “coming out with a document about this,” referring to the directive.

O’Brien was unavailable for comment yesterday.

The Rev. Frank Maniscalco, spokesman for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the inspection guidelines are saying only that “seminaries should train priests for the job which the men want to take on, which is priests of the Catholic Church.” And that,

he added, means “making a lifelong commitment to celibacy.”

The emphasis on homosexuality drew fire from the Catholic gay community. “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,” said a statement by Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry in Mount Rainier, Md., a group advocating for justice and reconciliation for gay Catholics.

“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?” DeBernardo said.

Mark Serrano, regional representative of Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, a victims advocacy group, echoed the criticism.

“This is part of the long-term campaign on the part of the bishops to distract from the truth: that the bishops themselves are responsible for the devastation of thousands of lives through their negligence,” he said. ▀

## From the Desk of Father Brian

By Rev. Brian Lang

*Parish Bulletin, St. Joseph’s Church on the Hill, Camillus, New York*  
September 18, 2005

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence.” Matt. 23:25

Over the course of the next year, 117 bishops and seminary staff will visit all facilities in the United States that take part in the training of Roman Catholic seminarians. This delegation will be led by Archbishop Edwin O’Brien. Archbishop O’Brien is currently the head of the Archdiocese for Military Services. The purpose of these visitations is to look for any possible root causes for the scandal that has rocked the Church in the United States over the last four years. Ordered by the Vatican, the review of American facilities at first looks like a good thing. However, one has to question some of the motivations that lie behind the visitations themselves.

Archbishop O’Brien has recently stated that he believes that any individual with an inclination to homosexual orientation should be banned from entering the seminary. He has also made comments that would suggest that homosexuality could be directly linked to priest pedophiles. The Archbishop is currently confident that the Vatican itself is about to release a document that would ban homosexuals from the priesthood.

There are a number of problems with the Archbishop’s logic that cannot simply be

brushed aside. His contention that it is harder for a homosexual to remain celibate than a heterosexual simply has no psychological or sociological proof. His implied suggestion that somehow homosexuals are more dangerous or predatory than heterosexuals is simply false. In many ways it appears that the Archbishop and others in the Hierarchy of the Church are currently looking for a scapegoat to lay the blame of the child abuse scandal on.

It is estimated that anywhere from 15 to 45 percent of ordained Roman clergy in the United States are homosexuals. The vast majority of these men are dedicated, hard-working individuals who have given their lives to Christ and his church. There is no proof that their struggles with celibacy are any more difficult than any of their brother priests. Archbishop O’Brien states that there is a danger in having them in an all male environment where the temptation would be too great for them. Using that logic, since most parishes have all female staffs, heterosexual men would be bad candidates because women surround them all day.

Priests fall in love. It is simply a fact of life. I have and others have and you simply pray for the grace of God to know what to do. That dilemma has led nearly ten thousand men to leave the priesthood in the United States in the last forty years. The conferral of the Sacrament of Holy Orders is not a magic bullet that eliminates human emotion or desire. If anything it should open the human heart to the deeper realities of love. Celibacy is a choice made, not a mystical gift of the Spirit that makes it easier to

be isolated or alone. Homosexuals are no different in this than heterosexuals; in the words of St. Thomas human beings are made to love. However, since the language of the Church recognizes that homosexuality itself is “intrinsically disordered,” this must mean that they are unsuitable for the priesthood. Well, we are all intrinsically disordered; we have all been touched by original sin and will never be fully whole until we achieve perfect union with Christ.

If the Church pursues its present course in this matter how far can we, should we take it? Should we ban any individual that may have had a sexual relationship in their life? Archbishop O’Brien has said even homosexual men who haven’t been active should be banned. Do we remove the men, who may be homosexual, who have already been ordained? Those individuals would obviously present a threat. In one brief statement the Archbishop has managed to insult and devalue all those men in active ministry who have been celibate and faithful to the teaching of the Church. And if they are truly looking for the root causes of the scandal then perhaps they should dissect a dysfunctional and top-heavy organization that has tried to protect its reputation more than it tried to protect its children. Not an easy reality to face but one that has to be addressed. To use any group of individuals as scapegoats, ban them from the Church, and then say we are all better now simply won’t work.

There was an old saying in the Church; error has no rights. Whenever the Church found itself in positions of power it has pulled this concept out to defend its position. Now

it must realize that the saying applies to the Church too. The responsibility for the crisis cannot be swept under the rug or shifted to a “homosexual subculture” whether one exists or not.

I am not a major advocate of gay rights. However, I cannot stand by and watch the Church use homosexuals as a scapegoat for a scandal that had more to do with ignorant or arrogant prelates. The hierarchy of the Church was fully informed to the depth and nature of this scandal almost 20 years ago. In the early 90’s they had to deal with this scandal and the National Bishops Conference assured people that it was taken care of. No one in a position of power in the Catholic Church can say that they didn’t know. After 1992 the people who had the priest personnel files did know and simply did little or nothing that was effective. It appears now that they may have found a different way to shift the blame; ban homosexuals and we can get back to having a safe church. If they go through with this they may find that they will lose much more than they know.

The fact of the matter is that the child sexual abuse scandal has nothing to do with either homosexuality in the priesthood or celibacy. For the Vatican or Archbishop O’Brien, or any other person in a position of authority to shift the focus to those issues simply illustrates the point that they have failed to grasp the issue. If we continue to make the outside of the cup and dish look clean without truly cleansing the inside then we have failed at a true chance at renewal and reconciliation with our people and our God. ▀

# Time for a Catholic Stonewall

By Mary E. Hunt  
Advocate.com  
December 6, 2005

The Vatican has released a document banning priests “who are actively homosexual, have deep-seated homosexual tendencies, or support the so-called ‘gay culture.’” Rome has been floating trial balloons for some time about this document to see what level of anti-gay rhetoric it can get away with. After months of document leaks, the Vatican had already made its point: Local bishops and religious superiors will be expected to scrutinize seminaries lest they become hideaways of gay culture. At this point the actual text of the document is irrelevant; dictatorships always rely more on self-censorship through fear and intimidation than actual punishment to accomplish their goals.



Mary Hunt

The galling fact is that this document, while purporting to “clarify” church teaching or “purify” the priesthood, is really nothing more than an effort to link the criminal activity of pedophile priests with homosexuality and to distract from the reprehensible behavior of bishops who covered up their misconduct. This is an absurd gambit on the part of the Vatican. Homosexuality has no relationship to child sexual abuse. This scandal has made transparent an untenable “kyriarchal” system—a model of church that locates power, both sacramental and temporal, in the hands of a few men who literally lord over the laity, speaking and acting in the name of all believers when in fact they are but a tiny percentage of the community.

It is time for a Stonewall moment.

The Stonewall was a gay bar in New York City where, in 1969, patrons resisted arrest during one of the police’s regular gay-bashing raids. Rather than acquiesce to the harassment that kept up a neurotic minuet between police and bar patrons, courageous lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people stood up, spoke out, and resisted. They probably surprised even themselves at the power of their own righteous indignation.

Catholics should respond to the latest Vatican bullying the same way. After decades of the Vatican implementing a system that takes authority away from local communities and presumes to impose its will on Catholics who can think for themselves, it is time for Catholics to stand up, speak out, and resist.

Evidence suggests that U.S. Catholics do not support many of the narrow-minded tenets of their church. In opposition to the male hierarchy’s belief that ordaining women priests is theological treason, more than 60% of U.S. Catholics say they would support women in the priesthood, according to the

most recent Zogby/LeMoyné poll. Another poll conducted by *The Boston Globe* in the Boston archdiocese—where the incidents of sexual abuse by priests were among the worst—finds that nearly 60% of Catholics oppose a ban on gay priests. Combine this with U.S. Catholics’ clear disregard for the church’s medieval views on marriage, divorce, and birth control, and increasing numbers of Catholics who support abortion under certain circumstances, and it becomes obvious that Americans find themselves in a church that does not speak to their everyday concerns in any meaningful way.

The Vatican, in its patriarchal echo chamber, continues to portray Western values of tolerance and equality as the fallen morality of a secular society. In so doing, the institutional church treats millions of faithful Catholics in the United States not as spiritual adults but as perpetual adolescents in need of discipline. The time has come for U.S. Catholics to claim their full baptismal citizenship and publicly call for changes in church policies on sexuality, ordination, and relationships. Considering the enormous economic and political influence of the U.S. church, if Catholics here really stood up to their bishops, loudly and in numbers, the Vatican would have little choice but to listen.

There is evidence that despite the dissembling of the hierarchy, U.S. Catholics are refusing to let the institution scapegoat

gay priests, feminism, and modernity for the Vatican’s sins.

The Conference of Major Superiors of Men, the leaders of the U.S. men’s religious orders, recently said it would send a delegation to Rome to oppose the antigay seminary policy. In a welcome response to an inflexible Vatican regime, the superior of the New York Province of the Jesuits, Father Gerald J. Chojnacki, wrote, “We know that gay men... have served the church well as priests—and so why would we be asked to discriminate based on orientation alone against those whom God has called and invited?”

This is a question that could be asked about women and married men as well.

Thomas Gumbleton, Detroit’s auxiliary bishop, issued this call to action in a recent sermon: “When authorities in our

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*“The Vatican’s latest assault on its gay congregants and priests associates being gay with pedophilia and insults the values of American Catholics. It’s time for a Stonewall-sized rebellion in favor of fairness.”*

---

church say one thing and then act in a different way, it seems to me that we’re called to challenge that, to speak out if necessary

to try to counteract what our religious authorities do.”

He went on to confront the Vatican with the teaching of U.S. bishops, which says that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people are “always our children.” “They say one thing, ‘In you God’s love is revealed,’ but then say, ‘You’re not worthy to be in the seminary.’ It is a terrible cruelty and injustice.”

The Women-Church Convergence, a coalition of Catholic feminist groups, clarified that “all ministers, indeed all members, are called to be responsible agents of their own sexuality” and pledged themselves “to create communities in which all persons can love and be loved openly as is their birthright. Anything less is simply not Catholic.”

And ultimately, as Catholics face their Stonewall moment, where the choice to submit means a choice to violate one’s conscience, this is what it comes down to: the meaning of the word *catholic*. *Catholic* means all-encompassing, universal, comprehensive. *Catholic* does not mean exclusion from the community on the basis of misinformed or capricious reasoning. This message of universal inclusion was the lesson of the first Stonewall. It is still being learned by society as a whole. The Gospel message of love and justice is reason to hope Catholics will be quicker on the uptake. ▀

Continued from page 1

## In Strong Terms, Rome Is to Ban Gays as Priests

A candidate, in turn, would have to be honest about his sexuality.

“It would be gravely dishonest for a candidate to hide his own homosexuality, regardless of everything, to arrive at ordination,” the document states. “Such an inauthentic attitude does not correspond to the spirit of truth, loyalty and availability that must characterize the personality of one who considers himself called to serve Christ.”

Vatican spokesmen refused to comment Tuesday, saying the document would be published on Nov. 29.

But an Italian reporter, Andrea Tornielli, a Vatican specialist for *Il Giornale* who saw the entire document two weeks ago, said the Adista document matched the one he saw. An anonymous church official was quoted by *The Associated Press* as saying the document, a short five pages with footnotes, was genuine.

While church documents as early as 1961 banned homosexuals from the priesthood, conservative Catholics complain that the ban has often been ignored. Some liberals say the priesthood has been enriched, and amplified in numbers, by gay celibate men.

Thus many conservatives called the document a necessary correction, saying

the number of gay men in seminaries has deterred heterosexual men from applying.

“I don’t think it’s anything new or different from the church’s constant teaching, but it’s new in the sense that the teaching has been widely disregarded in seminaries,” said the Rev. Joseph Fessio, editor of Ignatius Press, which published many of Pope Benedict XVI’s books before he was elected last April.

The document draws a clear line at banning active gays, and what many experts said was a less clear one banning candidates with “deep-seated homosexual tendencies,” while leaving the term undefined. Generally, it says, homosexuals “find themselves in a situation that seriously obstructs them from properly relating to men and women.”

“It’s a clear statement by the Vatican that gay men are not welcome in seminaries and religious orders,” said the Rev. James Martin, a Jesuit priest and author of “*In Good Company: the Fast Track from the Corporate World to Poverty, Chastity and Obedience*” (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000). “It raises the bar so high that it would be difficult to imagine gay men feeling encouraged to pursue a life in the priesthood,” he added. “It’s a very stringent set of rules they’re applying. Really the only people that would be able to enter,

according to the document, would be people who had a fleeting homosexual attraction.”

Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry, which advocates the inclusion of gays in the Catholic Church, said, “It seems that its intent is really to keep homosexuality quiet, to silence gay priests and gay seminarians.” Such secrecy, he said, will make it even harder to find candidates who are well adjusted and sexually mature.

But the Rev. Mark Francis, superior general of the Clerics of Saint Viator, a religious order based in Rome, said the document appeared to allow the leeway to ordain a candidate who believed he was gay but also believed he could be celibate.

“You could say, ‘I believe I am gay, but that the tendencies toward being gay are not deep-seated,’” he said. “What constitutes deep-seated homosexual tendencies?” he said. “How does one judge that?”

Critics complain that by discouraging gay men from applying, it will alter the makeup of the priesthood, and possibly reduce its numbers at a time of an already acute shortage. Supporters maintain, however, that the priesthood needs to change, though Father Fessio said he worried whether that would actually happen.

continued on page 5

# Vatican flight from reality

By Michael B. Kelly  
*The Age, Melbourne, Australia*  
 November 29, 2005

Those red-blooded heterosexuals in the Vatican have finally done it. After decades of increasingly shrill condemnations of homosexuality, they have actually banned gay priests. You almost wonder what took them so long.

A document expected to be issued in Rome this week by the Congregation of Catholic Education intensifies the church's stance against gay priests. The document, reported to have been approved by Pope Benedict XVI on August 31, prohibits from the priesthood active homosexuals, those judged to have deep-seated homosexual tendencies and those who support "gay culture".

The Italian newspaper *Il Giornale* recently quoted the document as saying the church should avoid discriminating against gays, but it could not ordain them. For a priest, it said, homosexuality represents "a situation that impedes the building of correct relationships with men and women".

This is just the latest stage in the Vatican's campaign to halt the progress of civil and spiritual liberation for gay people. This campaign has revealed an ugly side of the Catholic Church — a side that rejects modern science and psychology, forbids dialogue, and uses power as a blunt instrument of control. This latest sally in the campaign, however, is likely to backfire.

First, it makes the Catholic hierarchy look ridiculous and mean. No one who has had any substantial involvement with Catholic priests and bishops imagines that they are all chest-thumping heterosexuals. To say that some cardinals, for example, exhibit a certain sensibility that in other contexts might be labelled "gay", is not to say anything remarkable. You just have to look at some of the outfits. This observation, commonplace among both lay Catholics and the clergy, does not detract from broad acceptance that gay priests have long offered devoted ministry to the Catholic community.

Father Richard John Neuhaus, for example, one of the church's most conservative commentators, wrote in 2002 that "it seems more than likely that, in centuries past, some priests who have been canonised as saints would meet today's criteria as having a homosexual orientation". This was confirmed in modern terms by Bishop William Skylstad, the president of the US National Conference of Catholic Bishops, who wrote just last month: "There are many wonderful and excellent priests in the church who have a gay orientation, are chaste and celibate and very effective ministers of the gospel." Even George Pell admitted to Channel Nine's *Sunday* show in 2001 that there is probably a higher proportion of homosexual men in the priesthood than in the general society — but he made no claim that these men were not worthy pastors.

Now the Vatican is suggesting that the ordination of all these men was a mistake. Their ministry has been smeared with the unsubstantiated assertion that men with "deep-seated homosexual tendencies" cannot form "correct relationships with women and men", and so "cannot" be ordained. This crude insult will distress countless gay priests — and it is a kick in the stomach to all gay people. Without question, many young men who would have been fine priests will be lost to the church, and this at a time when the shortage of priests is becoming acute. Catholics have a right to be angry.

They also have a right to be disgusted. Whatever the actual percentages are — estimates vary from 25 to 50 per cent and higher — the clergy at every level includes men with "deep-seated homosexual tendencies". Vatican powerbrokers can get their silk robes in a knot, fulminating about gay seminarians, but plenty of Catholics see through the charade. It's a tragic cliché that the bully who beats up faggots is often hiding his own fear of being seen as homosexual.

The Vatican's neurosis around homosexuality is peaking at a time when Catholics are increasingly affirming gay people. Earlier this year a major poll showed that three-quarters of Australia's Catholics do not believe homosexuality is immoral. Spain recently legalised gay marriage with the support of 70 per cent of its overwhelmingly Catholic population. In the United States,

even conservative Catholic groups have stated that they have no problem with gay priests, as long as they are celibate.

So what is the Vatican's problem? This document is vague about the reasons for the new ban. It refers to the "urgency" of the "current situation", and the "negative effects that can flow" from ordaining gay men — but there is no clarification. Since no case is made, no response can be given. The Vatican just makes scary noises about gay priests, and expects Catholics to accept its dictates.

This is dishonest and insulting. If the Pope and his cardinals have a problem with gay priests, let them state their case cleanly and openly and let independent research and honest dialogue take place. Let them also face the fact that the arguments they offer may well be used to critique their own priesthood.

In the meantime, gay priests have to face the fact that this is a time of radical choice. They can be cowed into silence and collude in their own oppression, or they can stand up for themselves, expose the lies and claim the power of the gospel — that truth that sets us free. Most of all, they must stand up for their younger gay brothers who are called to priesthood, and refuse to let them be insulted and rejected in the name of Christ. ▀

*Michael B. Kelly is a gay Catholic writer and activist. He is scholar in residence at the Easton Mountain Retreat Centre in New York.*

Continued from page 4

## In Strong Terms, Rome Is to Ban Gays as Priests

"It depends on whether it's implemented or not," he said. "Will it be obeyed? I don't know. I've read a lot of documents in the past that weren't."

The document is marked as signed on Nov. 4 by Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, prefect for the Congregation for Catholic Education, the Vatican department that oversees seminaries. It says that on Aug. 31, Benedict "approved the instruction and ordered its publication."

While the document has been in the works for years, begun under **Pope John Paul II**, its release marks one of the most significant acts in Benedict's seven months as pope.

A doctrinal conservative who served as John Paul's defender of the faith for two decades, he spoke out before his election against "filth" in the church, which many observers speculated was a reference to the need to clean up the church after the scandals involving sexually abusive priests.

Some critics both in and out of the church have accused the Vatican of using gay priests

as a scapegoat for that scandal, a charge the church has vigorously denied. Experts have noted that is incorrect to equate pedophilia with homosexuality.

The document concerns only candidates for the priesthood, not already ordained priests. But in anticipation of the document's release, a handful of priests have publicly declared their homosexuality, and a few bishops and leaders of religious orders have spoken out in defense of their gay priests.

The president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, Wash., wrote in his diocesan newspaper in October: "There are many wonderful and excellent priests in the church who have a gay orientation, are chaste and celibate, and are very effective ministers of the Gospel. Witch hunts and gay bashing have no place in the Church."

Bishop Matthew H. Clark, of Rochester, addressing any "gay young men who are considering a vocation to priesthood," wrote: "We try to treat all inquiries fairly. You will be no exception." ▀

## Priest pulled after refusing to support anti-gay marriage push

*Associated Press*  
 September 29, 2005

Westborough, Mass. —The pastor of a Roman Catholic church was temporarily pulled from the pulpit after he refused to support a petition drive against gay marriage by the state's bishops.

The Rev. George Lange of St. Luke the Evangelist church in Westborough was replaced last weekend by Worcester Bishop Robert McManus, who led the Saturday evening Mass and the Sunday morning Mass.

The move came after Lange and his associate pastor, the Rev. Stephen Labaire, posted an item in the Sept. 11 church bulletin stating their opposition to a proposed Constitutional amendment banning gay marriage. The state's four Catholic bishops are leading a signature drive to get the amendment on a ballot in the 2008 election.

The bulletin item read: "The priests of this parish do not feel that they can support this amendment. They do not see any value to it and they see it as an attack upon certain people in our parish, namely those who are gay."

Worcester Diocese spokesman Raymond Delisle said Lange and Labaire would keep their jobs at St. Luke's and no further disciplinary action was planned against the two priests.

"It was only one weekend," he said. "Everything should be back to the normal schedule."

Delisle said the bishop's intention was not to rebuke the priests, but to explain the church's position on gay marriage.

But parishioner Cindy Hodgdon said her church leaders' "hands were slapped very publicly."

"Bishop McManus told us that Father George 'made a mistake' and 'should not have done that,'" she said.

"Everybody was stunned," said parishioner Rob Wilson. "It was a rather stunning homily."

Messages left at the church for Lange and Labaire were not immediately returned.

Delisle said Lange is on a previously scheduled vacation and would not be present at this weekend's masses, when petitions are scheduled to be distributed. ▀

# Catholic parents set hierarchy straight on gay children

By Kris Berggen

National Catholic Reporter

August 26, 2005

If you'd seen the group arriving for a meeting one fine June evening, you might have guessed they were about to discuss how to grow dahlias or delphiniums or daffodils. Mostly graying, dressed in polo shirts and khakis or sundresses and sandals, they brought potluck dishes and slapped on nametags as they collected in a church hall on Lake Street in south Minneapolis—but they weren't swapping gardening tips. Instead, this grass-roots group of Catholic parents met to plot a collective response to recent Vatican statements reviling the most precious thing they've raised—their beloved children who happen to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered (GLBT).

At a second meeting in July, the group took the name Catholic Rainbow Parents and issued the "Minnesota Catholic Parents' Declaration," which they intend to send to the Vatican as well as the of St. Paul and Minneapolis archdiocese. The statement is a polite but firm rejection of what one father called "the violence of the rhetoric" employed in recent papal proclamations on homosexuality and same-sex marriage. Two-dozen parents signed the statement and they hope more will join them in setting church leaders straight, so to speak, on how their families reflect Christian love.

"We are here to assume a parental role in affirming and supporting our children and their partners," said Mary Lynn Murphy, president of the Catholic Pastoral Committee on Sexual Minorities and a convener of Catholic Rainbow Parents, and mother of a straight daughter and a gay son. "We as parents know our GLBT children intimately. We know their spiritual and moral goodness."

*Continued on page 7*

## The Catholic Rainbow Parents Declaration A pastoral statement of wisdom, love, and support from Catholic parents of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (GLBT) persons.

The following statement was drafted at the Catholic Rainbow Parents' inaugural meeting on July 12th.  
July 2005

We the undersigned, declare the following to be true of our experiences as informed, loving parents of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (GLBT) persons:  
called to express lovingly and responsibly.

1. Homosexuality is a variation of the God-given gift of human sexuality. It is a gift that our blessed GLBT children, like their straight siblings, are Accordingly, we do not accept as truth the notion expressed by the 1986 letter of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, that homosexual orientation is "objectively disordered" or that because of this orientation GLBT people are "intrinsically inclined toward evil."

Such characterizations are in defiance of modern science and the lived experience of families such as ours - families that are in a better position than the Vatican to observe and comment on the moral and spiritual integrity of their children, be they gay or straight.

We believe that the Vatican's very choice of such language indicates a fundamental disregard for the innate value of an entire group of people. The effects of such language are profoundly dehumanizing and spiritually abusive of these persons and those who love them. Additionally, language of this kind fuels the fires of bigotry and places GLBT persons in great physical and emotional danger.

We feel responsible as parents, as Catholics, and as citizens to confront such language that demeans and disenfranchises not only GLBT Catholics, but all GLBT persons.

We also feel a responsibility to confront and challenge misconceptions and inaccuracies concerning GLBT people - including the idea that homosexuality is a choice, that it is a "curable condition" or a "changeable lifestyle," or that it is equivalent to pedophilia. Pedophilia is a mental illness whereas homosexuality is a variation of the God-given gift of human sexuality.

We share the perspective of the National Catholic Risk Retention Group's VIRTUS programs, with which the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis collaborates in response to the mandate of the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in June 2002.

The VIRTUS programs report that, "It is a myth that most sex abusers are homosexuals. Most sex offenders are not homosexual; they are heterosexual. . . . Studies repeatedly show that most male molesters of boys are not homosexual with adults. It is a faulty assumption that an adult male who selects a young boy as a victim is gay."

Recognizing that homosexuality is an expression of the sacred gift of human sexuality, we bear public witness to the joy and blessings that our GLBT children bring to our families and our communities. We celebrate our children as gifts from God in all of their aspects, and regard them as full-fledged members of both Church and society.

2. We acknowledge and celebrate the life-giving relationships of our GLBT children and support them in their choice to have their loving, committed, and sacramentally experienced relationships ecclesiastically and/or civilly validated through either sacramental marriage or civil unions.

Accordingly, we do not accept as truth the notion that same-sex marriage is, in the words of the late Pope John Paul II, part of "an ideology of evil," or that such unions, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, are "fake" or constitute a form of anarchy that "banalizes" the human body. Nor do we support Benedict XVI's contention that gay unions threaten children with abuse.

Such assertions are not based in fact, and amount to an undisguised attack on the loving relationships and families of GLBT persons. In contrast to the Vatican, we see the issue of same-sex marriage as a clear-cut social justice issue. The human rights and dignity of an entire class of people are assaulted when their love and fidelity to each other and their children are broadly dismissed as "evil." No other group of human beings have been subjected to this kind of sweeping denunciation by virtue of their God-given instincts for human love and relational intimacy.

We denounce the Vatican's worldwide activism in support of laws that would deny GLBT persons both marriage and full rights of citizenship in the form of legalized civil unions. We view the enshrinement of discrimination in the laws of local, national, and international governments as the antithesis of the love and justice for which our churches and governments should stand.

We call upon the Vatican and members of the Catholic hierarchy to recognize and confront the specter of internalized homophobia that is a key component of their aggressive posture toward GLBT Catholics, their partners, and supporters

We view the Church as a living, evolving entity that is most catholic when it is shaped by the life experiences of all its members. Throughout its history, the Church has been known to change its position on various issues in the light of increased understanding of specific realities. The time is long overdue for members of the church hierarchy to be open to the realities of GLBT people's lives and relationships.

In light of our parental leadership regarding this issue, we invite those in positions of ecclesiastical leadership to open themselves to the wisdom and love that we have gained as parents of GLBT persons.

It is our hope that openness to such wisdom and love, to the presence of God in the experiences of GLBT people and those closest to them, will compel those in positions of ecclesiastical leadership to a conversion of heart and a change in their language and position on homosexuality and same-sex marriage.

Beverly Barrett\*

Gordon and Margaret Bayly  
Mary Beckfeld\*  
Ward Brennan\*  
Maria and Charlie Girsch\*  
Gladys and Milt Hill\*  
Sue and Rich Kramp\*

Bill and Deb LeMay\*  
Sue and Bob McDonald\*  
Mary and Marsh McDonough  
Mary Lynn and Mike Murphy\*  
Gretchen and Tom Murt\*  
Phyllis Nickels\*

Parents)

Myrna and Ron Ohmann\*  
Chuck and Alice Rice\*  
Darlene and Tom White\*  
Paul and Jessica McGannon  
Ann and Jim Wilger  
Mary C. & Gene Phillips

Frances Gill  
Susan E. Bydalek  
Linda Ekstrom  
Patty Kean

(Members of Catholic Rainbow

(\*Note: All of these parents appear in the **photo** at the top of this page.)  
If you would like to add your name to the Catholic Rainbow Parents' Declaration, please send an email to CPCSM at:

[cpcsm@ourtownusa.net](mailto:cpcsm@ourtownusa.net).

“We are strong on family values,” said Sue McDonald, a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Minneapolis who signed the declaration along with her husband, Bob. “We believe everybody in our family should receive the same value, our two daughters and our transgendered son.”

The declaration asserts that homosexuality is a variation on the God-given gift of sexuality, to be expressed responsibly and lovingly as heterosexuality is. It debunks the myth that homosexuality is equivalent to pedophilia; urges support for committed same-sex relationships, whether civil or sacramental unions; and it calls upon the Vatican to recognize “the specter of internalized homophobia” at the root of its “aggressive posture” toward homosexuals.

The parents’ document reads in part: “We do not accept as truth the notion that same-sex marriage is, in the words of the late Pope John Paul II, part of ‘an ideology of evil,’ or that such unions, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, are ‘fake’ or constitute a form of anarchy which ‘banalizes’ the human body. Nor do we support Benedict XVI’s contention that gay unions threaten children with abuse.” The document cites a 1986 letter of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith in which homosexual orientation is described as “objectively disordered” and homosexual persons as “intrinsically inclined toward evil.”

The signers decry such “spiritually abusive” language and say there is a “feeling of urgency” to respond to an increasingly rigid church hierarchy. Said Deb LeMay of Victoria, Minn., who has a straight son and a lesbian daughter,



Photo: David J. McCaffrey

Seated (l to r): Chuck and Alice Rice, Mary Lynn and Mike Murphy, Darlene and Tom White; middle row (l to r): Gretchen Murr, Phyllis Nickels, Beverly Barrett, Bill and Deb LeMay, Mary Beckfeld, Ward Brennan; and back row (l to r): Tom Murr, Charlie Girsch, Ron Ohmann, Maria Girsch, Myrna Ohmann, Sue Kramp and Rich Kramp, Gladys and Milt Hill, and Bob and Sue McDonald.

“We wouldn’t talk to our kids that way. We ask the church not do so.”

Most of the signers, like Deb and Bill LeMay, are lifelong Catholics involved in the life of the church, but angered and hurt by the institutional attitude toward their children. The LeMays are Eucharistic ministers and lecturers at their parish, St. Victoria, and participate in small faith communi-

ties. Deb works in the development office at Holy Family Catholic High School in suburban Minneapolis, and was recently asked to facilitate training groups for “Protecting God’s Children,” the archdiocesan program to prevent child sexual abuse by church staff and volunteers. Partly because of their close church connections, coming out as a family has been a deliberate process for them during

the five years their daughter has been out to them.

“What I’m learning in all of this is everything in life has goodness and love—and shadow. Everything has both,” said Deb LeMay. “Do I see that in the Catholic church? Absolutely. Do I walk away because of that? No. I have to stay with it because it’s the church that’s been a part of us too.”

Other signers are closer to the edges of the church’s institutional life, though still connected through prayer communities and activism. For Darlene White of Edina, Minn., mother of two straight sons and a lesbian daughter with two children of her own, signing the declaration is a matter of justice that calls us to “invite the leaders to look at what they’re doing in light of social teaching on the dignity of every human being.” She added, “God’s love for each of us is abundant and generous

and no one has the right to set limits on that which is without limits.

“Dissent is absolutely vital, especially dissent voiced in a loving, non-self-absorbed way. [To suppress dissent] can’t help but blot out the lovely diversity of wisdom that exists in the people of God, including the leaders,” she said. “When that happens the whole church is wounded.”

## The Peace Pulpit: Challenging Church Authorities

By Bishop Thomas Gumbleton  
National Catholic Reporter  
September 25, 2005

Reflecting on these scriptures and trying to put it into the context of the world in which we live, we have to ask ourselves, where do we stand? Are we with those who stand in judgment over others—like the scribes and the Pharisees—or are we willing to challenge authorities, civil or religious, if they are hypocritical, if they say one thing but do another? There are those in our community, our whole church community, who certainly do this. I think of a person who I’ve mentioned before, a friend of ours, I’ve known for many years: Fr. Gerard Jean-Juste. He is imprisoned in Haiti right now and has been for a number of weeks with no charge against him except that he spoke up for the poor. He defended the poor. He tried to help the poor to be raised up, to be accepted, to have a fair chance in that society. Because of this, the elite, the powerful have tried to crush him, to destroy him. He’s in jail, in a terrible situation. He’s willing to speak up, because he identifies with those who are rejected and those who are put aside. He speaks and exposes the hypocrisy of a gov-

ernment that claims to be for all people but is only for the rich, the elite.

But what about in our own country? Are there times when we too must challenge authority, civil authority, for example? I think we could say—and most people now agree to this—that our government mislead us; it took us into a war that has brought about extraordinary, almost unbelievable suffering for the people of Iraq. There are those among us who are standing up and saying no to this government. Many of our own family members are in Washington over the weekend protesting, speaking up, challenging our government, because it told us one thing (Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and was connected with 9-11), and these things were not true. So we have to expose the hypocrisy and speak out against it. It seems to me the responsibility to expose hypocrisy is something all of us could have once we begin to see how Jesus acted toward civil and religious authorities.

What is even harder for us, and it must have been hard for Jesus too, is to challenge religious authority. But when religious authorities in our church say one thing and then act in a different way, it seems to me that we’re called to challenge that, to speak out if

necessary to try to counteract what our religious authorities do. I have here a very small pamphlet. It was published by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. It’s called, “Always Our Children” I’m sure many of you are familiar with this. It’s a pastoral message to parents of homosexual children. At the very end of the message it says:

*“To our homosexual brothers and sisters we offer a concluding word: This pastoral message has been an outstretched hand to your parents and family inviting them to accept God’s great presence in their lives now and to trust in the unfailing mercy of Jesus, our Lord. Now we stretch out our hands and invite you to do the same. We are called to become one body, one spirit in Christ. We need one another ... [and] though at times you may feel discouraged, hurt or angry do not walk away from your families, from the Christian community, from all those who love you. In you God’s love is revealed. You are always our children.”*

What a beautiful message to gay and lesbian people, young men and women or older men and women even. What a beautiful message to say to them, “In you God’s love is revealed. You are always our children.” But then what happened last week? We discover that now the church, the leadership

of the church, is going to bar any gay person from the seminary. That’s an insult, to say that even though you’re made in God’s image—it says right here “in you God’s love is revealed”—but you can’t be in the seminary. It’s a terrible injustice. It’s a terrible cruelty inflicted against this minority in our community. Don’t we have to speak up against that? Don’t we have to say, “No, we’re not going to accept that kind of discrimination, that kind of injustice”? I think we do. I think that’s what Jesus was doing. He spoke up against those who would say one thing and then act in a different way, and that—it seems sadly enough—is what the religious leaders of our church are doing. They say one thing, “In you God’s love is revealed,” but then say, “You’re not worthy to be in the seminary.” It is a terrible cruelty and injustice.

If we listen deeply and carefully to today’s scriptures then surely we must begin to have the courage to speak out when necessary against civil and religious authorities. But it is also important to remember that every one of us is a forgiven sinner, so when we speak out we never do it with arrogance or with pride or with a sense of superiority. We do it humbly, but we do it persistently.

# History reveals unsavory mix of religion, constitutional law

By Michael V. Tegeder

*St. Paul Pioneer Press and wire services*  
St. Paul, Minnesota  
January 10, 2006

A few days after Christmas other Roman Catholic pastors in Minnesota and I received a mailing from the bishops of the state. It was not a word of appreciation after one of the more demanding weekends of the year, nor was it a word of blessing for the coming year. Rather it was to inform us that we were to lead a postcard campaign in our parishes petitioning our legislators to place the issue of a "constitutional marriage amendment" on the ballot for November.

I find this campaign troubling, being unnecessary and mean-spirited. Because five of the six bishops who lead our dioceses are not native to the state, I would like to share with them some perspective from Minnesota's history.

The Minnesota Constitution, like the U.S. Constitution, has a bill of rights including anti-establishment and free exercise of religion clauses. However, the Minnesota Constitution was amended in 1877. Article 13, Section 2, titled "Prohibition as to aiding sectarian schools," was added and read: "In no case shall any public money or property be appropriated or used for the support of schools wherein the distinctive doctrines, creeds or tenets of any particular Christian or other religious sect are promulgated or taught."

Why was this added? Was there a fear back in the late 19th century that some renegade judge would legislate from the bench creating a new right for publicly funded parochial schools?

No, the prohibition clause was an example of the so-called "Blaine Amendments" adopted by more than 20 states. They were considered a direct result of the nativist, anti-Catholic bigotry, which was common in American politics during the 19th and early 20th centuries. It was a message sent by way of the Constitution, especially to Catholics - whose numbers were increasing through immigration - that they and their practices were suspect and second class.

More recently, a group of ultra-conservative church leaders, joined by the Catholic bishops of Minnesota, is promoting an amendment to the state Constitution dictating that marriage is limited to one man and one woman.

After 150 years, is this addition needed in our core document? No, we already have state and federal laws so defining marriage. It seems to be using the Constitution to send a message telling gays and lesbians that they, their relationships and their families are suspect and second class.

In addition, the amendment would take away the possibility of rights enjoyed by other Minnesota families through civil union recognition. These include fundamental

human rights that our church professes to uphold.

It seems hypocritical for our Catholic bishops to promote this amendment as necessary for protecting marriage. A year ago, over the 2004 Christmas weekend, the bishops wanted a pastoral letter disseminated in churches throughout the state that spoke of grave threats to marriage.

They mentioned the usual suspects, artificial birth control and divorce, and then

added same-sex marriages. Obviously, if they sincerely believe this, their main battle is with birth control and divorce, which are much graver threats in terms of pervasive societal acceptance. Why then do the bishops only promote a constitutional amendment against gays and lesbians and their families?

Without the amendment, our church can continue to make distinctions between sacramental marriage, legal marriage and civil unions.

My advice to our Catholic leaders is taken from one known to challenge the religious establishment of his day, "Do unto others as you would have done unto you."

My hope for my Catholic brothers and sisters is that we prayerfully consider, "What would Jesus do?" Let those without sin send the first postcard. ▀

*Tegeder is pastor of the Church of St. Edward in Bloomington.*

## University president says Catholic values may conflict with academic freedom

By Jodi S. Cohen

*Chicago Tribune*  
January 25, 2006

SOUTH BEND, Ind.—The University of Notre Dame's new president said Tuesday that he will put limits on two of the campus' most controversial events, saying the Queer Film Festival and performances of "The Vagina Monologues" raise concerns for the Roman Catholic school.

Rev. John Jenkins stopped short of canceling this year's events, scheduled for next month, but the 52-year-old scholar and priest said he would seek input from students, faculty and alumni before deciding whether the shows should continue in future years. The play will be staged this year in a smaller lecture hall without ticket sales, and the film festival's name will be changed.

In an address, Jenkins acknowledged the "sacred" value of academic freedom but also said that value should not trump all other considerations at the Catholic school.

"In some situations, given the distinctive character and aspirations of Notre Dame, it may be necessary to establish certain boundaries, while defending the appropriate exercise of academic freedom," he told students in the second of a series of speeches this week about potential conflicts between academic freedom and Catholic values.

He argued that events should not be sponsored by the university, or one of its academic departments, when they are "contrary to or inconsistent with the fundamental values of a Catholic university." He said that by doing so, it appears that the university endorses the content of the events, which are sponsored by academic departments so they can be held on campus.

But he said he would spend at least the next six to eight weeks listening to others before making a decision on the future of the film festival and play.

The discussion, which has polarized the campus and the broader Catholic community, comes amid pressure for Catholic colleges to ban "The Vagina Monologues," a performance

about female sexuality and violence against women. Twenty-one Catholic campuses have shows scheduled this year, according to the Cardinal Newman Society, a religious organization that has protested the performances.

Acknowledging that the film fest and monologues have drawn criticism, Jenkins said in an interview that his decision to address the issue was not in response to alumni pressures or a Vatican mandate.

Jenkins, who took over July 1 and is Notre Dame's third president in the last half-century, has said that maintaining Notre Dame's religious character will be difficult in a culture that has become both more secular and more radically religious.

He said he hopes his speeches this week will help the university community understand how he will make difficult decisions. While he will consider others' views, he said decisions will be based on what is best for the school and its mission—in his judgment.

"If the issue is something that touches on the Catholic Church, I have a special role to play in that decision," he said in an interview after his speech.

About 400 students attended his address Tuesday and more watched it on television in the student center. Jenkins spoke to faculty Monday and plans to meet with alumni Thursday.

Jenkins drew a distinction between limiting the individual speech of faculty members or students and putting boundaries on events sponsored by and held at the university.

Regarding the Queer Film Festival and "The Vagina Monologues," Jenkins said he fears it appears that the university is endorsing events that promote homosexuality and sexuality with no discussion of morality.

Jenkins said he will allow "The Vagina Monologues" to be performed this year, but only in a lecture hall. Jenkins also barred fundraising for the student performance, calling it an academic presentation instead. About \$15,000 was raised last year for a YMCA and Sexual Offense Services, organizers said.

The 3-year-old Queer Film Festival, mean-

while, will change its name to Gay & Lesbian Film: Filmmakers, Narratives, Spectatorships, said student co-chair Harry Karahalios.

Discussions during the Feb. 9 to 11 event will be limited to topics related to film and not homosexuality, Jenkins said. Notre Dame senior Kaitlyn Redfield, who has organized "The Vagina Monologues" performance for the last three years, said the play is one of the few avenues where students feel empowered to talk about sexual violence against women.

"What you will be shutting down is free inquiry and the open discernment of faith," said Redfield, one of about 16 students who addressed Jenkins.

All but one of the students spoke against Jenkins' position, but they later argued outside the auditorium with more than a dozen students who favored limiting such events.

"The 'Vagina Monologues' is an expression of sexuality that is not in line with Catholic teaching and goes against the ideals of a Catholic university," said senior Arina Grossu, 22.

Others said they see the potential elimination of the events as a regression after years of moving toward the acceptance of diverse lifestyles. While the university does not recognize gay and lesbian student groups, there is a committee on Gay and Lesbian Student Needs.

History and gender studies professor Gail Bederman said that when she started teaching at Notre Dame 13 years ago, students wouldn't say the word "gay" in class. Now students wear T-shirts that say, "Gay? Fine by Me."

She disagreed that sponsoring an event implicitly means agreement with the content.

"Universities sponsor all sorts of activities that they don't advocate," Bederman said, adding that she still praised Jenkins for addressing the issue.

"As the new president, it has been a hot potato dumped in his lap," she said. "For the president to stand up and say something that is not going to be popular, and to say 'this is my opinion but I want to know what you think,' is just extraordinary." ▀

# Jesuits host forum about gay Catholics

By Carole Eisenberg  
Newsday  
Long Island, NY  
November 17, 2005

A Jesuit retreat house in Manhasset is hosting a workshop about gay Catholics and the church that had been barred from diocesan property last year by Bishop William Murphy of the Diocese of Rockville Centre.

The workshop on building bridges to gay people comes just as the Vatican is about to release a document restating its prohibition barring gay men from the priesthood.

Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry, the organization leading the workshop, said yesterday that the program does not challenge church orthodoxy. "Our mission is simply to try to help Catholic institutions learn more about the reality of gay and lesbian Catholics," DeBernardo said. "We

focus on how you develop programs at a local level so that gay and lesbian people will feel welcome in a Catholic parish."

He said that the pending Vatican document has made his group's message even more urgent—and tougher to sell.

"It makes it more difficult to help people see that there is a tradition in the Catholic church of acceptance of lesbian and gay people," he said. "And it also shows that the thinking of the Vatican's leaders on homosexuality is very much out of step with what American Catholics, not to mention scientists and social scientists, think about homosexuality."

About two dozen people, including several priests and nuns from the diocese of Rockville Centre, are registered, he said.

New Ways Ministry was founded in 1977 by Sister Jeannine Gramick and the Rev. Robert Nugent to advocate for gay Catholics. After the nun and the priest were ordered to stop their

work with the ministry by the Vatican, the Mount Rainier, Md.-based group has continued under lay leadership.

Sean Dolan, a spokesman for the bishop, said yesterday that the diocese is not opposed to outreach to gay Catholics. "The key point is that the outreach has to be consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church," Dolan said.

The Catholic Church holds that homosexual acts are "intrinsically disordered," but also opposes discrimination.

DeBernardo said that last year's workshop was originally scheduled at Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church in Wyandanch,

but had to be moved to a retreat house in Ronkonkoma.

The church's pastor, the Rev. William Brisotti, confirmed that account yesterday.

"It was the bishop's position that some of the positions of New Ways Ministry were against Catholic teaching and that it was not appropriate for them to offer a workshop on church property," he said.

The executive director of St. Ignatius Retreat House said he was unaware of the bishop's objections, but noted that the Jesuits were renting space to the group, not sponsoring the content of the workshop. ▸

## O'Malley calls on Catholics to stop bias against gays

By Charles A. Radin  
The Boston Globe  
November 24, 2005

Archbishop Sean P. O'Malley, reaching out to gays and lesbians just days before the Vatican is expected to issue a strongly worded ban on gays in the priesthood, yesterday called on Catholics to wipe out prejudice against homosexuals.

O'Malley said in an interview yesterday that his decision to write the letter was not prompted by the Vatican document, expected to be released Tuesday, that bans gays from entering Catholic seminaries. He said he was prompted to write by the debate over same-sex marriage in Massachusetts, and to explain the church's support for a referendum that would make such marriages illegal.

"There are many homosexuals out there who want to be faithful members of the church," O'Malley said. "I don't want them to feel the church is bigoted or that we want to discriminate against anyone. . . . The stand on marriage is in defense of an institution we feel is crucial for children, family life, and society."

In his letter, which was sent yesterday to the nearly 300 parishes in the Archdiocese of Boston, O'Malley said: "Many homosexual persons in our church lead holy lives and make an outstanding contribution to the life of the church by their service, generosity and the sharing of their spiritual gifts. We must strive to eradicate prejudices against people with a

homosexual orientation."

At the same time, he stoutly defended church teachings on sexuality. "If we tell people that sex outside of marriage is not a sin, we are deceiving people," O'Malley wrote. "If they believe this untruth, a life of virtue becomes all but impossible."

"Sometimes we are told: 'If you do not accept my behavior, you do not love me,' " he continued. "In reality we must communicate the exact opposite: 'Because we love you we cannot accept your behavior.'"

Peter Borre, cochairman of the Council of Parishes, a Boston-area parishioners' group, said he felt O'Malley was "preparing the ground as best he can, in a decent way" for what is expected to be a major controversy next week over the formal release of the Vatican document on gays in the priesthood, and the church-supported campaign in Massachusetts to let voters decide whether to ban same-sex marriage in a referendum vote.

"One can hear in these words the thoughts of a very decent, pastoral man who is bracing himself to be the instrument of a policy that he may not wholeheartedly endorse," he said.

The Rev. Richard John Neuhaus, editor in chief of the traditionalist Catholic magazine *First Things*, said the letter was "a clear and very pastoral statement fully in accord with the church's teaching. It has become fashionable to disparage the old axiom 'hate the sin, love the sinner,' but in fact that surely is the truth." ▸

## Dissenter Won't Quit

By Eileen McNamara  
Boston Globe  
October 30, 2005

CAMBRIDGE - His name jumps out among the signatures on the declaration of religious support for same-sex marriages in Massachusetts.

Of the hundreds of clergy from more than a score of religious denominations in the Commonwealth to endorse the fundamental human right of gay people to marry, only the Rev. Robert E. Nee is a Roman Catholic priest. He is neither brave nor crazy, he says; neither is he unmindful of the retribution being meted out these days to dissidents by Archbishop Sean P. O'Malley: The pastor in Westborough chastised for calling efforts to overturn gay marriage an "attack" on his homosexual parishioners. The popular, progressive pastor in Newton ousted on trumped-up charges of mismanagement.

In the last two years, Father Nee has seen open-minded colleagues stripped of their churches, placed on unwanted sabbaticals, and forced into premature retirements.

None of it will quash dissent, he says. "Every member of the clergy and the laity has a right and a responsibility to speak the truth as we know it," he says of his decision to break so publicly with the hierarchy, which is urging all Catholics to support a ballot initiative that would define civil marriage as the union of a man and a woman. In many churches, the petition drive is being promoted during Mass. (The Religious Coalition for the Freedom to Marry, meanwhile, has collected 2,400 signatures from Roman Catholics on an alternative statement in support of marriage equity.)

"The church is a human organization and, like any human organization, its investment in the status quo is a political reality," Father Nee says. "In the history of the church, when has dissent ever been welcome?" The 60-year-old priest, a native of Jamaica Plain and a product of Boston's parochial schools, is spending this semester at Harvard Divinity School. His sabbatical from his post as chaplain at Children's Hospital is entirely voluntary,

he is quick to note. He is studying gender and moral theology, sitting in on classes in comparative religions to deepen his understanding of how different traditions cope with illness and death.

While he is at Harvard he hopes to interest sociologists in examining the fallout for the 58 Boston-area priests who called on Cardinal Bernard F. Law to resign in 2002 for his failure of leadership during the clergy sexual-abuse crisis. Law resigned 10 days later, but he has moved on to a comfortable berth in Rome. Many of the priests who signed that letter have been removed from their parishes, though the archdiocese denies that reprisals played any role in those personnel changes. "We have a support group for priests," says Father Nee, who also signed the letter seeking Law's removal. "The Boston Priest Forum is not dead yet."

His 21 years in parish work in the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston make Father Nee acutely aware of the grief that the abuse crisis and subsequent church closings have caused individual Catholics. So, too, is he sensitive to the pain being inflicted by the Catholic Church's campaign against gay marriage on families headed by same-sex couples.

"When we were children, there was a sense that if Father or Sister said something then it must be true. Well, we all mature. We were able to say [in response to the pre-Vatican II ban on attendance at Protestant church services], 'I am going to that wedding no matter what Monsignor Kelly says.' Now, many of us need to say, 'I am not going to deny the dignity and the civil rights of gay people.'"

Sitting on his deck on Cape Cod last summer, listening to his neighbors' children playing with their same-sex parents, he bristled at the claim that the embrace of a loving family was damaging these boys and girls. "There is no evidence to support that view," he says, "but the only science that gets acknowledged by the church is the science that was available to Augustine. It is terribly sad to think of the pain these children will suffer if the church prevails. It is not hard to object to that." ▸

## International News

### Church reacts after two priests speak out

By Michael Valpy  
*The Globe and Mail*  
October 22, 2005

An Ontario Roman Catholic priest has been suspended for publicly supporting the ordination of women clergy and a second is under close scrutiny from his superiors after his declaration on national television that he is homosexual.

Rev. Ed Cachia was fired as pastor of St. Michael's Parish in Cobourg, east of Toronto, after he wrote an article in the Cobourg Daily Star urging his church to admit women to the priesthood and reportedly told his bishop he had celebrated mass with women priests in the United States.

Rev. Tom Lynch, a spokesman for the Catholic diocese of Peterborough, which includes Cobourg, said the newspaper article could have been overlooked — "People's memories are short and the Cobourg Star is not the New York Times" — but celebrating the mass with women priests is a clear violation of church canon law.

Canon law forbids Catholic priests from concelebrating or co-officiating at mass with clergy who do not accept the same doctrines as the Catholic Church. Catholic doctrine reserves the priesthood for men.

Father Cachia, 56, plans to appear in St. Michael's tomorrow to say goodbye. He said his bishop has given him \$1,000 a month to live on for the rest of the year and then he is on his own — without pension, benefits or a roof

over his head. He said he estimates about 95 per cent of his congregation supports him.

Meanwhile, Vision TV's flagship public affairs program, *360 Vision*, on Thursday broadcast a profile of Rev. Karl Clemens, who declared to the camera: "I'm a Roman Catholic priest. And I'm gay." Vision said Father Clemens is the first Canadian priest to come out of the closet.

His superior, Archbishop Anthony Meagher of Kingston, immediately ordered a transcript of the program, but made no comment.

Father Clemens administers to the homosexual and HIV-AIDS communities in downtown Toronto and lives with a man, a terminal AIDS sufferer, for whom he says he is caring. He also says he has maintained his celibacy, although he says his church superiors have indicated on more than one occasion that they don't believe him.

The church does not bar homosexuals from the priesthood, but frowns on priests who publicly identify themselves with a homosexual lifestyle or culture.

At issue, a church spokesman said, is whether a priest's statements or lifestyle cause scandal for the church by "sowing confusion in the public's minds." The spokesman said priests are held to a different level of moral conduct than laypersons. "Here is this fellow who has retired to the gay subculture, and people are going to wonder why he's there. Is he reaching out [to the AIDS community] or is it something else? People constantly feel

free to speculate about our [priests'] sex lives, and it's a hard thing for a priest to realize he's a public person."

A Vatican commission is investigating what has been reported to be overt gay culture in some U.S. Catholic seminaries. A statement is expected soon from the Vatican that bars those who visibly belong or have belonged to the gay culture from the priesthood.

Father Cachia said yesterday in an interview that the Catholic Church's harsh repression of dissent is turning it into a dying institution. He quoted dissident theologian Hans Kung as likening the church to a sinking

ship and saying the ones who will be saved are those who swim away from the ship as it goes down, not those who stay on board.

He said he spoke as a matter of justice on behalf of women wanting to enter the priesthood: They are women who feel God's call to become full participants in the church's ministry. He said that to claim that Jesus chose only men as his disciples is a false argument. "Jesus only chose Jews, too."

Father Cachia did not rule out a move to the Anglican Church, in which women can be ordained as priests. ▀

### Martin can receive communion despite gay marriage stance, says PM's priest

*The Canadian Press*  
October 01, 2005

MONTREAL (CP) - Despite his stance on same-sex marriage, Paul Martin will always be welcome to receive the sacrament of communion in his home riding, the prime minister's local parish priest said Saturday.

"We can't use the eucharist as a time... to judge a person's conscience by refusing them communion," Rev. John Walsh told CJAD radio. Roman Catholic bishops meeting at the Vatican this weekend at the first synod led by newly anointed Pope Benedict may consider denying communion to politicians who pass laws that go against their faith.

But Walsh, who also hosts a weekly show on CJAD, disagrees with the idea.

"I think that we must look at the situation and say: 'Are we respecting a person's conscience?' " asked Walsh, who preaches at St. Jean de Brebeuf Parish where Martin attends mass in Montreal.

Speaking in Vancouver following a meeting with Mexican President Vicente Fox on Friday, Martin said he was a practicing Roman Catholic who separates his privately held beliefs from his duties as a politician.

Martin said his prime ministerial responsibility is to uphold Canadians' rights as defined by the courts. ▀

### Pope Chastises Envoy Over Gay Unions

By Malcolm Thornberry  
*365Gay.com* 2005  
December 30, 2005

Britain's first Catholic ambassador to the Vatican since the Reformation presented his credentials to Pope Benedict on Tuesday and received a diplomatic slap over same-sex unions.

Without mentioning civil partnerships by name the Pontiff told Francis Campbell that promoting tolerance and respect must take into account God's plan for humanity, which includes protecting all life and safeguarding the family.

It requires us to acknowledge the indispensable role of stable marriage and family life for the good of society," Pope Benedict said.

He went on to tell Campbell that human freedom "can never be realized independently of God but only in cooperation with his loving plan for humanity."

Britain's civil partnership law took effect last week.

Civil partnerships give same-sex couples an opportunity to register their relationships and receive most of the same benefits

accorded married couples including pension, immigration, and property rights.

Most of the European Union states already have varying forms civil unions. Only The Netherlands, Belgium and Spain in the EU permit same-sex marriage. Elsewhere, Canada and the US state of Massachusetts allow gay marriage.

Vermont offers civil unions and several states have domestic partner laws. Earlier this month the highest court in South Africa gave the government one year to pass a marriage equality law.

Since his election to the papacy in April, Benedict has reaffirmed the Church's anti-gay stand. In June, he issued a stinging condemnation of gay and lesbian families.

Repeatedly driving home his point that marriage can only be a union between man and woman, the Pope called same-sex unions "pseudo-matrimony".

Before becoming Pope, Benedict had long history of attacking same-sex unions. As Cardinal Ratzinger he was the Vatican's most outspoken opponent of gay marriage.

Campbell, a 35-year-old career diplomat, has worked for the British Foreign Office since 1997. ▀

### Gay Clergy Issue Letter on Vatican Policy

*Associated Press*  
Dec 14, 2005

A group of gay Italian clergy said Wednesday that their homosexuality has not stopped them from being good priests, a direct response to a recent Vatican policy statement banning priestly candidates with "deep-seated" homosexual tendencies.

The message, an open letter in which the priests said they felt like the church's "unloved and unwanted children," was posted on the Web site of the Italian Catholic news agency Adista. The agency last month leaked the Vatican instruction on gay priests a week before its scheduled release by the Holy See.

Adista said 39 priests, 26 diocesans and 13 more members of various religious orders had signed the letter. However, the text reproduced on the Web site did not include the signatures or list their names.

"We don't have more problems living chastely than heterosexuals do, because homosexuality is not a synonym of incontinence, nor of uncontrollable urges," the letter states. "We are not sick with sex and our

homosexual tendency has not damaged our psychic health."

The official "Instruction" from the Congregation for Catholic Education released late last month said men "who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture'" cannot be admitted to seminaries. The only exception would be for those with a "transitory problem" that had been overcome for at least three years.

The open letter noted that "we are Catholic priests ... with homosexual tendencies, and that fact has not stopped us from being good priests."

"We consider our homosexuality to be wealth, because it helps us to share the marginalization and suffering of many people," the letter adds.

The Vatican document had been in the works for years, but its existence became known in 2002 at the height of the clergy sex abuse scandal in the United States. A study commissioned by U.S. bishops found most abuse victims since 1950 were adolescent boys. ▀

## Parishioners protest archdiocesan ouster of pastor

By **Chuck Colbert**  
National Catholic Reporter  
October 7, 2005

The ouster of a beloved parish priest and the assignment of a chancery insider to replace him has triggered another eruption of anger and hurt among the laity of the Boston archdiocese.

Fr. Walter H. Cuenin, pastor of the Our Lady Help of Christians Church in Newton, told parishioners that the archdiocese forced his resignation with allegations of financial practices that a chancery press statement said “do not comport with archdiocesan policy, canon law or archdiocesan statutes.”

The alleged financial improprieties include parish payment of a stipend to Cuenin, as well as the use of a Honda that the church leased for use by him and other priests. The finance committee and pastoral council had approved both practices, which had been in place for years.

On Sept. 26, the archdiocese announced that Cuenin's replacement would be Fr. Christopher J. Coyne, who has served as archdiocesan spokesman under Cardinal Bernard Law and Archbishop Sean P. O'Malley. During the peak of the sex abuse crisis, Cuenin had been outspoken in his criticism of Law's handling of the scandal. Over the years, Cuenin also had encouraged dialogue about the ordination of women, and Our Lady Help of Christians was known for welcoming divorced and remarried Catholics, gay and lesbians, and others who felt alienated from the Catholic church.

Parishioner and pastoral council member Larry Kessler said the allegations are “a ruse in my mind and the minds of many.” The car and stipend are “smoke screens,” Kessler said, adding that archdiocese wants “to get Walter out of the pulpit” in part because “he encourages people to think” and “O'Malley wants sheep.”

In fact, both financial practices had been approved, Kessler said, and had been in place for 12 years. “The archdiocese approves the parish budget, and it never raised any red flags,” Kessler said.

Several hundred parishioners were joined by Catholics from other parishes as well as Protestants and Jews at an all-night candle-light prayer vigil Sept. 26 at Our Lady Help of Christians.

In the parish social hall, Margaret Roylance, also a spokesperson for Voice of the Faithful affiliates in Newton and nearby towns, addressed the gathering. “We believe that Fr. Cuenin's forced resignation as pastor is part of a systematic purge on the part of the archdiocese of priests of integrity, which is being carried out without any consultation with the lay faithful and with complete disregard for their needs and wishes,” she said. “It has all the earmarks of a witch hunt and must be stopped.” Parishioners applauded her calls for Cuenin's immediate exoneration and reinstatement.

“He's the heart of Newton,” said town resident Holly Gunner.

Coyne assumed his new duties the same day as Cuenin's departure Sept. 27. ▀

# 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 Billiard; 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: Spirit of Christ  
Boulder: St. Thomas Aquinas  
Denver: Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, 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  
Evanston: St. Nicholas  
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; Guardian Angels; St. Francis Xavier; St. James  
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

## Nebraska

Omaha: St. John's (Creighton University); Holy Family; Sacred Heart

## 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: Sacred Heart, Merrick; SS. Cyril and Methodius, Deer Park; St. Brigid's, Westbury; St. Elizabeth, Melville; St. Frances de Chantal, Wantagh  
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

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

## West Virginia

Shepherdstown: St. Agnes

## Wisconsin

Madison: St. Benedict Center Sunday Assmblly  
Menomonee Falls: Good Shepherd  
Milwaukee: Prince of Peace, Trinity-Guadalupe

## Canada

Toronto: Our Lady of Lourdes

# Popular Catholic priest comes out to Louisiana parish as gay

Dallas Voice  
January 13, 2006

THIBODAUX, Louisiana — Deciding he had to practice the honesty he preached, a popular priest has told his family, his bishop and the people in his parish that he is gay.

The Rev. Jim Morrison said he had been working since October on the letter which he sent early this month to 300 members of the congregation at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church and 200 members of the student ministry at Nicholls State University.

He mailed the letter and handed his bishop a copy on Jan. 2, about a month after the Vatican released a policy statement saying

people with “deep-seated” homosexual tendencies should be kept out of the priesthood.

The following Saturday, the pews at his southern Louisiana church were full, *The Courier* newspaper in nearby Houma reported Sunday.

As pastor, Morrison told the congregation, “I ask you constantly to trust me. I ask you come to me with your life, all the blessings, all the struggles.”

“But it’s not a one-way street,” he said. Morrison said he told his parents, four sisters and two brothers before he mailed the letter.

“I wrestled with talking to my parents,” he said. But, he said, the family talks were “very positive.”

In the letter he said that for years, he had counseled people struggling with their sexual orientation to be honest about it with people they love.

“I have come to realize that while I was encouraging others to be honest, I was not putting these words into practice in my own life,” Morrison wrote.

He said he wasn’t looking for attention or approval but trying to be more true to himself, God and those he serves.

“I thought it took a lot of courage,” Winnie Fauchoux of Thibodaux said after the Saturday evening Mass. “I love him. I think he’s a wonderful person. I think the community’s going to grow from him being honest.”

Morrison said he has kept his vows of celibacy and is not in any romantic or sexual relationship. Being celibate and gay is not against Catholic doctrine, so he does not plan to resign, he said.

Nor is he being asked to, said Louis Aguirre, spokesman for the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.

“He’s not being asked to do anything but to continue his ministry,” Aguirre said.

Morrison, a priest for more than 18 years, has been pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church at Nicholls State University for more than three. ▀

## Proud to be celibate, gay priest *He says church should rejoice that gay men are ready, willing to serve*

By Renee K. Gadoua  
National Catholic Reporter  
November 11, 2005

It wasn’t until two years after his ordination as a Roman Catholic priest that Fr. Fred Daley acknowledged he might be gay.

“I was coming down the stairs for morning Mass, and I felt this real deep ache and pain in the pit of my stomach,” he said. “It was the first time I was recognizing an ache within that my activity and work and ministry was covering up, and avoiding something.”

A light went on, he said.

“I began to become aware of my sexual feelings and desires,” he said. He was 27.

Almost 30 years later—after a painful, prayerful and mostly lonely journey—he disclosed his sexual orientation to his Utica congregation in May 2004.

Daley, pastor of St. Francis de Sales Church in Utica, N.Y., is the first priest in the seven-county Syracuse diocese to publicly disclose he is gay. He is thought to be among a handful of gay priests in the country who have done so.

As speculation grows that the Vatican is preparing a document that would bar some gays from ordination, Daley said he’s proud to be a celibate, gay priest.

A forthcoming Vatican document on homosexuals in seminaries will not—as some media reported in September demand an absolute ban on the ordination of homosexuals, a senior Vatican official told *NCR* Oct. 7, but will insist that seminary officials exercise “prudential judgment.” The official said the document will advise against ordaining a gay man if he has not been celibate for at least three years, if he is part of a “gay culture,” or if his homosexual orientation is sufficiently “strong, permanent and univocal” as to make an all-male environment a risk.

Daley said many in the church—gay and straight—are concerned.

“The church is least faithful to Jesus when it is in the business of excluding,” Daley said. “The church should be rejoicing that gay men are ready and willing to use their talents to energize the church. To deprive the church of these gifted men would be a terrible loss.”

Daley says attention to sexual orientation causes gay priests to be blamed for problems in the church, including the clergy sexual abuse crisis and the shortage of priests. It also reinforces stereotypes of gays as immoral and unable to control their sexual impulses, Daley says.

“To the extent the church uses outdated and inaccurate information about homosexual orientation, they are indirectly encouraging the oppression and physical violence against gays and lesbians,” Daley said.

He’s not in favor of outing other gay priests, but said the church needs to acknowledge both their numbers and their contributions.

“There are a lot of us,” he said.

Daley said he loves his career.

“I feel blessed God gave me the gifts to be a priest.”

Daley, 58, grew up in Syracuse, where he attended Catholic schools and was ordained in 1974. His assignments have included ministering at St. Agnes and Blessed Sacrament, both in Utica. He also served as regional vicar of the diocese’s Eastern Region and as director of vocations for the diocese from 1981 to 1988.

He has a reputation for advocating for social justice. In 1987, he led a group of 16 local Catholics on a 10-day retreat in Nicaragua and has been a vocal opponent of war.

In September 2002, organizers of an interfaith service in Utica marking the first anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks removed Daley as the main speaker after some criticized his advocacy on behalf of gays and for celebrating Masses that publicly welcome gay Catholics.

But he is praised for supporting Utica’s Hospitality Row, which includes a soup kitch-

en, a women’s residential program, a used furniture store, a hospice and a program to help low-income people get prescription drugs in the neighborhood near St. Francis.

Daley publicly disclosed his sexual orientation to a newspaper reporter a few days before he accepted an award from the United Way of the Greater Utica Area in March 2004. A few days later, his congregation gave him a standing ovation after an emotional homily in which he described his struggle to accept his sexual orientation.

Daley said he had been grappling with going public for some time. He said he spent years hiding his nature, and felt dishonest. The feeling grew as he saw gays being blamed for the sexual abuse scandal.

“I felt hypocritical as a gay priest being silent,” he said.

Silence about sex characterized his days as a seminarian. “It was the last days of very little time and energy spent on human sexuality and the commitment to celibacy,” Daley said. “I was totally out of touch with my sexuality.”

That wasn’t unusual, said Daley, who attended the former Wadhams Hall Seminary in Ogdensburg, N.Y., in the early 1970s.

“Straight or gay, repressing one’s sexuality was the way many handled it,” he said. “There was never any official interchange with the system on sexuality and celibacy.”

While on vacation a few years after his ordination, Daley visited a gay bar and recognized the source of the ache in the pit of his stomach.

“I couldn’t even say the word *homosexual* to myself,” he said. “But that solidified in my heart that I was gay. I realized I was sexually attracted to them.”

It didn’t bring peace, though.

“I thought it was evil. I thought it was terrible,” he said.

“Ten minutes later I found the nearest Catholic church and went to confession,” he

said. “I thought it was a sin to even go there. I perceived that as a terrible threat to my priesthood, which I loved.”

While on retreat a few weeks later, he told a spiritual adviser he was gay.

“I was hoping he wouldn’t condemn me but would help me negate that feeling,” he recalled. “It was a desire to cleanse my feelings and thoughts so I could go on with my life.”

He credits a 10-year prayerful relationship with that spiritual adviser for helping him to accept himself.

“He helped me to accept my sexual orientation and recognize I was OK and that God created me that way,” he said. “Then I was able to break through my homophobic fears in my heart and accept myself.”

He said the struggle exists for all priests, who need to confront their sexuality as they decide if they can live celibate lives. Worries about Vatican rules and rumors about weeding out gay seminarians create an atmosphere that is neither Christlike nor healthy, he said.

“My fear is this approach is going to create an atmosphere that encourages young men not to deal with those issues,” he said. “This is a terrible step backward.”

Daley looks to the reaction to his disclosure as evidence that the church is ready to accept gay priests. His bishop, James Moynihan, has made no comment to him about the disclosure, he said. His own congregation has supported him, and he’s received hundreds of supportive notes from all over the country.

“I’m not exaggerating,” he said. “Out of the hundreds of letters and phone calls, I received one letter, very polite, from a person concerned I was going to hell and one telephone call, saying I was making the church look bad.”

Daley said he doesn’t regret his decision.

“There’s such peace and freedom in my life and inner feeling of integrity,” he said. “I hope I’m an example that being gay is not the end of ministry.” ▀