

# BANDINGS

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## Former Archbishop speaks about Catholic Church and homosexuality

By Laurie Goodstein  
*New York Times*  
May 14, 2009

In spring 2002, as the scandal over sexual abuse by Roman Catholic priests was escalating, the long career of Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland of Milwaukee, one of the church's most venerable voices for change, went up in flames one May morning.

On the ABC program "Good Morning America," the archbishop watched a man he had fallen in love with 23 years earlier say in an interview that the Milwaukee archdiocese had paid him \$450,000 years before to keep quiet about his affair with the archbishop — an affair the man was now calling date rape.

The next day, the Vatican accepted Archbishop Weakland's retirement.

Archbishop Weakland, who had been the intellectual touchstone for church reformers, has said little publicly since then. But now, in an interview and in a memoir scheduled for release next month, he is

speaking out about how internal church politics affected his response to the fallout from his affair; how bishops and the Vatican cared more about the rights of abusive priests than about their victims; and why Catholic teaching on homosexuality is wrong.



Archbishop Rembert Weakland (photo: Nicole Bengiveno/The New York Times)

"If we say our God is an all-loving god," he said, "how do you explain that at any given time probably 400 million living on the planet at one time would be gay? Are the religions of the world, as does Catholicism, saying to those hundreds of millions of people, you

have to pass your whole life without any physical, genital expression of that love?"

He said he had been aware of his homosexual orientation since he was a teenager and suppressed it until he became archbishop, when he had relationships with several men because of "loneliness that became very strong."

Archbishop Weakland, 82, said he was probably the first bishop to come out of the closet voluntarily. He said he was doing so not to excuse his actions but to give an honest account of why it happened and to raise questions about the church's teaching that homosexuality is "objectively disordered."

"Those are bad words because they are pejorative," he said.

Archbishop Weakland's autobiography, "A Pilgrim in a Pilgrim Church" (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), covers his hardscrabble youth in Pennsylvania, his election as the worldwide leader of the Benedictine Order and his appointment by Pope Paul VI to the archbishop's seat in Milwaukee, where he served for 25 years.

"He was one of the most gifted leaders in the post-Vatican II church in America," said the Rev. Jim Martin, a Jesuit priest and associate editor of *America*, a Catholic magazine, "and certainly beloved by the left, and sadly that gave his critics more ammunition."

In an interview at the Archbishop Weakland Center, which houses the archdiocesan cathedral offices in downtown Milwaukee, Archbishop Weakland said the church opened itself to change in the 1960s and '70s after the Second Vatican Council but became increasingly centralized and doctrinally rigid under Pope John Paul II.

Archbishop Weakland was among those who publicly questioned the need for a male-only celibate priesthood. He also led American bishops in a two-year process of writing a pastoral letter on economic justice, holding hearings on the subject across the country.

A later effort by the American bishops to issue a pastoral letter on women was quashed by the Vatican, he said, because the Vatican did not want to give the national bishops conferences the authority to issue sweeping teaching documents.

The archbishop said it was partly because of his strained relations with Pope John Paul II that he did not tell Vatican officials in 1997 when he was threatened with a lawsuit by Paul J. Marcoux, the man with whom he had a relationship nearly 20 years before and who had appeared on "Good Morning America."

Mr. Marcoux said then that he had been deprived of income from marketing a project he called "Christodrama" because of Archbishop Weakland's interference. Archbishop Weakland said he probably should have gone to Rome and explained that he had had a relationship with Mr. Marcoux, that he had ended it by writing an emotional letter that Mr. Marcoux still had and that the archbishop's lawyers regarded Mr. Marcoux's threats as blackmail.

But, the archbishop said, a highly placed friend in Rome advised him that church officials preferred that such things

## Transgender boy barred from Catholic school *Parents of 8-year-old allow 'him' to live as 'her'*

KBSW.com  
May 18, 2009

An Omaha couple is allowing their 8-year-old son to openly live life as a girl. It's a decision that means the child is no longer able to attend Catholic school.

Therapists and the child's parents say the second grade student is transgender, a medical condition where a person's inner sense of identity doesn't match their biological gender. Some gender experts say as many as one in 500 people may be transgender or carry significant traits of the opposite sex.

"It's kind of like you're trapped somewhere and you can't get out," said the boy, whose name and face are not being made public to protect the family from potential harm.

"She's been a girl since the beginning, everything about her, the way she dances and skips around and the things she's attracted to. It's more than toys and clothes," said the child's mother.

The mother said the child has consistently asked to be called a girl since she was 4 years old.

"One night, she said, 'Every night when I go to bed, I pray my inside will match my outside. But it never happens,'" the mother said, recalling the words of her middle child.

The child's artwork is filled with crayon-colored images of princesses and mermaids. Her family has allowed the child to wear dresses and female clothing in their west Omaha home, but until recently, she had to change into boy clothes for her brother's baseball games, church or any outing outside the house.

"Now I can wear nail polish, get rid of all my boy clothes and not worry about that name," the child said.

The child's case recently came to light when her parents met with a leader of the Omaha Catholic Archdiocese to

talk about transitioning the student into third grade at her school, St. Wenceslaus.

The family wanted the child to use a new female name, be able to wear a girl's uniform and be included in girls' activities.

The mother, a life-long Catholic, thought making the transition in their parish would be the best place for their child to continue friendships, with a support system that included other parents and children.

"The child is welcomed to come, but it would not be acceptable to change the child's gender and present as a girl," said Omaha Archdiocese's Chancellor, the Rev. Joseph Taphorn.

Taphorn said having the child attend the school for three years as a boy, and then presenting as a girl would not be a good learning environment for the child or other students. He said school has to be a peaceful, positive environment for everyone.

The child will attend a public school in the fall, using her chosen name and wearing a ponytail in her hair.

"It was not a decision that was made rashly at all. It was a decision to protect her psyche and her self-esteem," the mother said.

Therapists agree that forcing a person to live in a social role outside their perceived gender is damaging.

Omaha mental health therapist Ellie Hites said she's worked with more than 200 transgendered clients in Omaha over the past 35 years.

Hites said she does psychological evaluations on all of her clients.

"One hundred percent of the time, I've never had anybody show up anything other than healthiest in the chosen gender role, as opposed to biological," Hites said.

She said her adult transgender cli-

ents have lived through nervous breakdowns, suicide attempts and deep depression because they could never truly be themselves. She has four transgendered clients right now.

"The story that I get is that I've known since I was real little, but everybody laughed or nobody paid any attention," Hites said.

The therapist said transgendered children insist they are the opposite sex, consistently.

"It's like they arrive here with one biology but the mental set is counter to that," Hites said.

The 8-year-old's favorite color is aqua. Her favorite toy: American Girl Dolls. And right now she's reading a Junie B. Jones book that made her giggle when she talked about the plot.

Pink and aqua barrettes held her shoulder-length layered hair out of her face, while she drew chalk pictures of clouds on the pavement.

When her mother announced that the child would be allowed to pierce her ears next week, the girl screeched and had a huge smile on her face.

"You've waited long enough to live as a girl," the mother said.

The mother is on a mission to educate the community and encourage churches to open a dialog about diversity and acceptance of all people.

She recently waged an e-mail campaign to urge her church members to place an empty envelope in the collection basket on Mother's Day weekend. She said she wanted to send a message to the church that church members can have a voice and that they shouldn't just blindly follow the flock.

"Just take the time to listen. It is different. It's something most people have never heard of, but it doesn't make it scary or pathological," she said. ✦

*Continued on page 8*

# 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 the institutional structures in the Roman Catholic Church.

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

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# Gay Catholics discuss marriage equality

By **Seth Hemmelgarn**

*Bay Area Reporter—San Francisco*  
July 9, 2009

Reaching out to people of faith is seen as one of the most important aspects of repealing Proposition 8, and that was one of the topics addressed as Dignity USA, a group for LGBT Catholics, held its biennial convention in San Francisco last week-end.

Catholic church leaders, including San Francisco Archbishop George Niederauer, urged parishioners to support the measure, which eliminated the right of same-sex couples to be married in California.

In a phone interview, Marianne Duddy-Burke, Dignity's executive director, said that along with other progressive Catholic organizations, Dignity is part of a program called Catholics for Marriage Equality.

"We're really trying to tap into that support that exists and that we believe has grown since those 18,000 [same-sex] couples were able to legally wed in California," said Duddy-Burke, noting the unfairness of couples being allowed to marry before Election Day in November while, later that same week, same-sex couples weren't allowed to wed.

"We really have to do it one heart at a time, one family at a time, one congregation at a time," said Duddy-Burke. "Unlike the bishops we can't send a pastoral letter to every church in California and expect it will be read at Sunday mass, so we depend on the power of truth and Catholics' commitment to justice to do this work."

Duddy-Burke drew a distinction between civil marriages and religious marriages.

"Dignity has certainly believed that our relationships should be recognized with both civil and religious marriage, but I think for purposes of political discussion, keeping the clarity between the two is important because of the lies that our bishops told in 2008," said Duddy-Burke, referring to claims during the Prop 8 campaign that clergy would be forced to recognize same-sex marriages if Prop 8 didn't pass.

Duddy-Burke said that at its highest point the convention, which ran from July 2-5, had about 370 people on hand. She said Dignity has close to 4,500 members.

During a Prop 8 panel at the convention, Father Geoff Farrow, a Fresno priest who lost his position after coming out last October as a gay man and urging his parishioners to vote no on the measure, recalled the dread of at least one person who had come out to him.

"This is an issue of human dignity ... the greatest fear a young person has when they're lesbian or gay is they'll be rejected," said Farrow during the panel.

In a phone interview, Farrow said that the most important thing for LGBT people to do is "tell their stories, come out."

It's easy to be opposed to an issue, but it's another thing to be opposed to a person, said Farrow, "so I think the greatest thing that first of all LGBT people or their families and loved ones can do is simply to make themselves visible, to tell their stories."

Farrow, who now lives in Los Angeles, said that he's been working with the group Love Honor Cherish, which is preparing to collect signatures for a ballot initiative to repeal Prop 8 in November 2010. He's also been doing public speaking engagements and interviews with the media to talk about Prop 8.

Eugene McMullan, another panelist, talked about how the grassroots activism after Prop 8 inspired him to get involved. He participated in the march to Sacramento this spring led by the group One Struggle, One Fight. McMullan, who identifies as bisexual, wore his rosary every day and said the march was a "deeply religious"

and "life changing" experience "about figuring out how to be Catholic and be fully who I am and be an activist."

McMullan also started a group called Catholics for Marriage Equality. The group he started will be combining efforts with the Dignity group of the same name, he said.

Another group working on marriage equality is California Faith for Equality.

Pastor Samuel Chu, California Faith for Equality's interim executive director, said that when working with Catholics, his group is focusing on training lay members.

"The people in the pews are the people we really need to connect with and engage," and change the minds of, said Chu. He said California Faith for Equality will be working with Dignity on marriage equality.

Andrea Shorter, Equality California's coalition coordinator, also has been reaching out to communities of faith and color on marriage equality.

Responding to an e-mail addressed to Shorter and her about EQCA's plans for reaching out to Catholics, Vaishalee Raja, EQCA's communications director, said in an e-mail that Shorter was traveling and wouldn't be able to comment, but Shorter's "coalition building and faith outreach efforts are broad-based and designed to reach out [to] the diverse faith community."

Farrow after Fresno

Farrow, the Fresno priest who lost his job after coming out, said he supports himself from honorariums from speaking engagements, a small stipend from his family, and performing weddings.

Farrow said he did have a job "lined up" as executive director at Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice-Los Angeles. However, Farrow said a board member told him that the Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles had said that if CLUE-LA hired Farrow, the archdiocese would disaffiliate from the group.

The Reverend Jim Conn, chairman of CLUE-LA's board, said the group had liked Farrow's application and had scheduled an interview with him but had not offered him a job.

Conn, who was limited in what he could say about the situation since it involved a personnel matter, said he couldn't say anything about the archdiocese and would not confirm the archdiocese's threat. He said he was the board member who had told Farrow of the interview cancellation.

"There are a lot of reasons. This is a personnel issue. That's stuff that's hard to talk about," said Conn.

He said CLUE-LA doesn't get any direct funding from the archdiocese.

"CLUE is a broad coalition of faith communities who organize people of faith to advocate for low-wage workers," said Conn. "That's what we do. That is the single purpose of this organization. So everything that we do has to be consistent with that mission statement, and to our best ability we're going to do nothing that jeopardizes that capacity."

Conn said the archdiocese is a participant in the group's work, along with Methodists and other faith communities.

Asked about the archdiocese protesting the possibility of Farrow's hiring, Tod Tamberg, director of media relations for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, offered a curt response.

"CLUE has its own procedures for hiring people and retaining people," said Tamberg. "That's not our business. You'll have to talk with CLUE."

Tamberg said individual priests are members of CLUE. He said he didn't believe the archdiocese provides funding to CLUE. †



*Father Geoff Farrow, who lost his job at a priest at a Catholic Church in Fresno after he came out as gay and urged congregants to vote against Prop 8, spoke at Dignity USA's conference in San Francisco last week.*

# San Francisco's blast at Vatican was legal, court says

By Bob Egelko  
San Francisco Chronicle  
June 4, 2009

San Francisco didn't cross into constitutionally forbidden territory of government hostility to religion when the Board of Supervisors denounced a Vatican order to Catholic Charities not to place adoptive children with same-sex couples, a federal appeals court ruled Wednesday.

The 2006 resolution condemned the Vatican's "hateful and discriminatory rhetoric" and urged local church officials to defy the order by Cardinal William Levada. The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights sued, contending the city was expressing hostility toward Catholicism in violation of the Constitution.

A federal judge threw out the suit, a

decision that the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco upheld Wednesday. It said the supervisors had acted for a legal secular purpose - to protect gay and lesbian couples from discrimination - and not to express the city's disapproval of Catholicism.

"The board's focus was on same-sex couples, not Catholics," Judge Richard Paez said in the 3-0 ruling. Promoting equal treatment for those couples in adoptions isn't anti-religious, he said, "regardless of whether the Catholic Church may be opposed to it as a religious tenet."

Judge Marsha Berzon, in a separate opinion, said the resolution was close to the constitutional boundary and might have been invalid if it contained binding regulations or was part of a "pervasive public campaign" against the Catholic

Church.

The board passed the nonbinding resolution, sponsored by then-Supervisor Tom Ammiano, in March 2006, days after Levada, former archbishop of the San Francisco Archdiocese, issued his decree as leader of the church's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Levada said Catholic agencies "should not place children for adoption in homosexual households." Quoting a statement by the Vatican office, he said allowing children to be adopted by same-sex couples "would actually mean doing violence to these children."

Ammiano's resolution called the decree "an insult to San Francisco." The supervisors urged Levada to withdraw his order and called on his successor as archbishop, George Niederauer, and the

local Catholic Charities to disregard it.

In response, Catholic Charities of San Francisco stopped placing children for adoption, the same step it has taken in Massachusetts and other areas with similar nondiscrimination policies, said Brian Rooney, a lawyer at the Thomas More Law Center, which sued San Francisco on behalf of the Catholic League.

Rooney said the league would appeal Wednesday's ruling.

The supervisors' resolution would have led the public to believe that "the government is disfavoring of Catholicism," he said.

But Deputy City Attorney Vince Chhabria said the lawsuit sought to insulate the Vatican from criticism by government bodies.

"Religious groups are not entitled to preferential treatment in public debate," Chhabria said. †

## Same-sex marriage gains in DC

By Alice Popovici  
National Catholic Reporter  
June 8, 2009

(The following article was edited by *Bondings* staff for space requirements. To read the full article, visit [nronline.com](http://nronline.com))

Last July, Cynthia Nordone and Helen Schietinger took a number at the District of Columbia Department of Health, waited in line and walked away with a document that bound them to one another as domestic partners. But there were no gifts or greeting cards to mark the occasion -- just the seal of a government institution and a few legal benefits.

"It's very statistical," said Nordone, as she and Schietinger prepared dinner at home on a recent evening. "It's not any kind of communal recognition of the commitment that we're making to the one and only."

What the couple are looking for -- beyond the meaning and implications of terms like domestic partnership, civil union and civil marriage -- is a sense that their relationship is real to the greater community, outside the walls of the Northwest D.C. home they have shared for nearly 10 years.

"What I think is important is the public witness to the relationship," said Nordone, 49, a lawyer and lifetime Catholic. "It happens every time I say, 'This is my partner, Helen' -- I'm giving witness to what's important to me."

Schietinger, 61, a social justice activist and retired nurse, prepares a salad in the kitchen as Nordone goes back and forth between the stove and the grill outside. They talk about the similarity in their values, their ease and comfort with each other and the ability to share the other person's interests and learn from one another.

"This is, sort of, my bedrock -- this is where I get my energy for the day," Nordone said. "And where I come home and lick my wounds when it's been a rough day," she added with a laugh.

The women spend their free time sailing, hiking and tending to the lush yard behind their home. They both take care of Schietinger's 90-year-old father and three cats with various ailments, and regularly mentor a neighborhood teenager. It's a "generative" relationship, Nor-

done said, in that it enriches the life of others.

Legally, the couple are bound by contracts established independently of the domestic partnership, giving one

When and if this will happen is unclear. For now, the council's 12-1 ruling has drawn criticism from the district's African-American religious leaders, who last month held a rally protesting

equal rights, he said. "To protect people's rights is a very Catholic thing to do. In protecting people's rights and in supporting same-sex couples, we're really working to stabilize society and the common good."

For many gay and lesbian Catholics who grew up within the church, coming out has been a spiritual journey that led many to seek their own relationships with God in order to understand their sexual orientation. They have something to offer to the church, DeBernardo said, and that is the "ability to speak the truth and live courageously."

The ministry recently supported a Maryland same-sex marriage bill that failed to pass, and signed on to a brief urging the California Supreme Court to overturn Proposition 8, the ballot measure that banned same-sex marriages in November, after the Supreme Court legalized the unions last June.

DeBernardo said New Ways has not joined the debate in Washington because it did not appear that there was strong Catholic opposition to the initiative, and the statement from the Washington archdiocese received little attention from the media.

"The strong opposition came from the African-American Protestant congregations in the district," he said. "I don't think the archdiocese, either by chance or design, had much of a role in this debate."

But Communications Director Susan Gibbs said the Washington archdiocese has always been very clear in its opposition to same-sex marriage.

"We've been present, but again, we have a council that shut us down," she said, by voting on the initiative through an amendment process that did not give residents an opportunity to voice their opinions.

Gibbs said people often misunderstand the meaning of marriage, as it is described in Catholic church teachings: They believe it relates to "how people feel about each other" rather than "the complementarity of male and female," who have the unique ability to bring children into the world. A union between a man and a woman protects the rights of children to have a mother and a father, who both contribute a unique perspective and create a stable foundation for society, she added. †



Helen Schietinger and Cynthia Nordone

another power of attorney in the event of a medical emergency or death. In addition, the partnership confers certain health coverage benefits, mutual hospital visitation rights and the right to make decisions regarding a deceased partner's remains.

But even as the debate on same-sex marriage gains momentum around them -- following the District of Columbia Council's May 5 decision to recognize unions performed in other states -- the couple remain ambivalent on the issue. It isn't that the legal benefits aren't important, they explain. And they are quick to point out the overarching significance of the issue. It's just that being married to one another in the legal sense would not be a priority right now, they say, even if it were an option in the district.

The decision. The Washington archdiocese has issued statements expressing concern over the council's actions, and applauding the District of Columbia Defense of Marriage Act introduced in Congress May 21, to define marriage as a union between a man and a woman.

But there is growing support of the issue in the Catholic community, said Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry, a Maryland education and outreach ministry that acts as a "bridge" leading back to the church. He said there is a "very strong current" of support for gays and lesbians among Catholic people, who more and more believe the right to marry is a social justice issue.

"The only strong opposition comes from the hierarchy," which looks at the issue in terms of sexuality rather than

# A Queer Conversation

## A traditional nun and her openly gay cousin discuss sexuality and the Catholic Church

**Editorial Staff**  
BustedHalo.com  
June 3, 2009

(The following interview was edited by *Bondings* staff for space requirements. To read the full interview, visit [www.bustedhalo.com](http://www.bustedhalo.com))

Growing up just south of Los Angeles, Sr. Bernadette (Mary) Reis would see her cousin Paul Mages when her family took vacation trips to visit his family in the Milwaukee area. For the first 25 years after she entered the convent with the Daughters of St. Paul at the age of 14, Sr. Bernadette and Paul saw each other only at a couple of family gatherings.

Having reconnected over the past two years while living near each other in New York City, Sr. Bernadette and Paul have developed a deeper friendship. This has forced them to bridge the very different worlds they inhabit: Paul's as an openly gay man and Sr. Bernadette's as a member of a traditional Roman Catholic religious order.

During their wide-ranging discussion they confront issues ranging from how Sr. Bernadette reconciles the Catholic Church's teachings regarding homosexuality with her relationship with her cousin and his longtime partner, to how being gay deepens Paul's commitment to his Christian faith.

**BustedHalo:** What was it like for you, Sister Bernadette, when you found out Paul was gay?

**Sister Bernadette:** I figured it out before he told me. I knew that Paul was up in Canada, and suddenly all of the letters that he addressed to me had his partner's name along with his, and I knew. I knew from the very beginning. I was not surprised. I did start to really hope that eventually in his own time he would be able to tell me and know that he would be accepted.

**BH:** So your first reaction wasn't that you were upset?

**SB:** No, no. It was more like this profound longing — because I knew, just knowing our family, I knew why he would be keeping it under wraps. My family is very, very traditional. My parents were taught to judge actions based on a morality that is very black-and-white. They also feel obligated to remind family members of the Church's teaching in the area of sexual morality, because of their concern for the salvation of family members. We are a bit more faithful churchgoers than most people are so there was just this deep yearning that — even though I “wear my religion on my sleeve” that Paul would somehow know that I'm a human being first, and that our relationship hopefully would have been built on a foundation that he would know that sensitive side of me. So that's where I was coming from.

**BH:** But you didn't address that though when you next saw each other?

**SB:** . . . No, I really felt it should come from him. And I didn't make any hints that I knew. I didn't want to embarrass him. I didn't know where he was at.

**Paul Mages:** Well, I didn't come out to anybody in the family until I met somebody that I thought at that time that I'd be with forever. Because I thought that would add some validity to being gay, and then they wouldn't think it's some sexual thing that you just try out and it's casual and not serious, not meaningful. So after I met my partner — I was only with him a few months — I thought that would be forever. So I told my parents. And surprisingly, they were very nonjudgmental. Because, you know, my parents aren't maybe quite as extreme as far as their religious observance, as Mary's family is; but they



Paul Mages

were still pretty traditional . . . And so I wanted to tell other people too. Slowly I let people in, you know, telling other people in the family. But it wasn't difficult to tell Mary. Because first off, she's family, so I expected her to be loving. Secondly, she's a religious, so I was thinking she wouldn't be judgmental, which she wasn't, but I guess a lot of religious might be, even though they probably shouldn't be. I just knew that she would let God do the judging and she wouldn't make me feel at all like I wasn't accepted. And then personally I just knew that she'd be compassionate and she's a great listener, too. . . .

**BH:** And your connection to the Catholic Church maybe hadn't been strong?

**PM:** Well, my connection was very strong. In college I started just questioning, and I would still go to church all the time and I was very much into it, but I wanted it to make sense. I wanted it to be real. I wanted it to be meaningful. And so I slowly got a little bit away from being Catholic, but more into being Christian. And so now I go to a Christian church that's not Catholic. But to me all the essentials are there. . . . I find the environment more welcoming to me. I never felt that the Catholic Church was outwardly condemning me, but I just knew the hierarchy was feeding the message of “being gay is wrong.” So after a while I thought, “why am I in this environment where I'm not officially welcomed?”

**SB:** I do wish that when Church teaching is presented to the general public, for example, as in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* or in sermons, that the language chosen could be adapted to the background of the audience. This way, what the Church teaches may have less of a chance of being perceived as insensitive.

**BH:** What do you mean by “the language chosen could be adapted?”

**SB:** For example, the Church uses the word that homosexuality is

“disordered and unnatural” — that's the typical language that's used. These words are understood differently by those who have not studied philosophy or theology. And so for Catholics who do not have the background to understand this language it adds to the level of shame that Paul alludes to. The way that they understand the word “unnatural” for example is like they are in some way inhuman.

**PM:** Like a mistake, maybe.

**SB:** Yeah, maybe.

**PM:** Something to be corrected.

**SB:** Yeah. Right. And really, I think official Church teaching, could use other



Sr. Bernadette Reis

language and provide reasons that are comprehensible to the ordinary person. Even Pope John Paul II admits in *Love and Responsibility* that the Church has really not done Her job in providing the “why” behind the teaching on sexual morality in general; the call to sexuality and how the Church does view the use of that gift from God within marriage, as it teaches. But also I think that it would be helpful if the topic could be dealt with from a personal level as well as a moral level. For example, more contemporary autobiographical accounts of those who have grappled with the teachings of the Church and their own sexuality — like St. Augustine did. Traditionally, however, the language used is borrowed from Thomistic philosophy. There are certain laws that are innate to human nature and are accessible to human nature, that is comprehensible to us through the use of reason. The “natural” expression of sexuality, according to this natural law, is between a man and a woman, the end of which is procreation. This law is comprehensible based on the way that men and women are created and what happens naturally when sexuality is exercised without any outside interference.

The use of the words “unnatural, or disordered” then, means that homosexual activity is an aberration. Other actions in which this language is employed is; for example, murder. It's not natural for us to murder. It's something that happens but inside all of us is something that says that that's wrong. The Church teaches that homosexuality is on that same level, and that's why they use the word “unnatural or disordered” when explaining its position. Many people clearly see the unnaturalness of murder; it is harder for many to understand why homosexual acts, and other sexual acts, are unnatural.

In terms of sexual integration, I think, many people narrow morality to sexual morality. I really believe that two of the strongest drives in the human

person are anger and the sexual drive. This is why there is so much violence and sex in movies. It's because we are *working out* those drives that are in us, and because they're the ones that we just can't seem to control, they're the ones that get worked out the most. And so if we can create a dialogue with people about what they're feeling and how all of our unconscious, past and present experiences are often being acted out through violence and sex, then we may be able to get a really healthy dialogue going with people — a dialogue between experience and morality. . . .

**BH:** I can't tell if you're trying to say, ‘I'd like to call Paul to greater integration’ — meaning greater integration with himself as a homosexual man? Or are you saying, ‘Okay, you're homosexual, but the Church is calling you not to be sexually active.’ — which adds a whole slew of issues? Or, ‘integrate yourself in terms of reparation therapy’-type stuff? Can you talk a little bit about that?

**SB:** Actually, that's a really good question because I've never actually gone there with Paul because it's really none of my business to initiate that discussion. But I think that's a good part of the equation because I think there is some pressure on Catholics to try to convince friends or family who are homosexual that they need to change. This is something I never told Paul, but one of the first times that I called my Dad to let him know that I was going to be seeing you, he asked me if I was going to have a talk with you. And I knew exactly what he meant by that. And I did question if I should do that or not, if I was somehow betraying the Church if I didn't somehow let you know where I stood. But you know, I really felt that number one: Jesus never did that. He never went up to someone and said, “Hi, you have something wrong with your sexuality and I am here to fix you.” He never did that. It wasn't even on my mind as something that I needed to do. . . .

But then I have found out since then that other people have that same dilemma: ‘Am I supposed to convince my homosexual friends that the way that they're living is wrong?’ I think that I am here to be a friend to Paul. From the level of experience, to go over to Paul's home and to see a home set up for him and his partner to live as a couple, it was the first time I had ever been in a situation like that, so of course it's going to feel — what's the word? — *different*, you know. But we do exactly the same things together as I do with other friends, we have the same conversations together, they invited me out with their friends — I mean, I really felt a level of acceptance. And I was glad, you know, that they could just freely bring me, when you know in the back of my mind, what I represent is something that Paul has been hurt by. But in terms of what I would hope for everyone, because I'm a part of this too, is that we can be in a dialogue with ourselves about why we behave the way we behave, and the choices that we make, and who we love, and what we like and what we don't like, so that we each fulfill God's Will for us. How I do

that is going to be different than Paul because my background is different, my calling is different, the way I work things out between myself and God is different. And so I can understand the Church's teaching. For me, I've worked that out. And I mean, I've grappled with things, I'm still grappling with some things, and I'm not perfect. And it's the same for him. But I'm not God; I'm not his God. And if Paul invites me in to that process, that's different...

**PM:** You probably prayed about it, too, I'd imagine.

**SB:** Yeah, I did. And I just felt, I'm gonna trust my gut on this one. I'd like a relationship with you, and what a way to slam the door on a relationship! I mean, "Hello. Before we sit down to dinner I'd like to talk to you about how wrong this all is. Bon appétit." [laughs]

**PM:** It was probably not the time or the place, right? The first meeting. [laughter]

**SB:** It's Pharisaical.

**PM:** "He could just leave. I'd be happy if it was just you, Paul." [laughter]

**SB:** "Yeah, I'll have dinner with you on the condition that..." It's extremely Pharisaical, I think, in the sense that the Pharisees would not associate with someone "outside of the law." Well, in this case this would be considered someone — in Church terms — who can't receive communion. You're outside of the body that's in union with Christ.

**PM:** But Jesus did all the time.

**SB:** That's the whole thing. That is the whole thing. And what did he do. He sat down and he shared a meal with them. He entered into a relationship with them, got to know them first.

**BH:** So do you remember, when you sat down and shared your meal with Paul and his partner, what was going through your mind? You said when you first got there it was like, "This is different." It sounds like you eventually came to a point of being comfortable.

**SB:** Yeah it just became normal. The way that I thought of it was, look, just be as if I was with my brothers. That's it. When I walked in and saw Paul's partner cooking, I mean it was like, the most normal thing in the world, you know? And I knew that their relationship per se, regardless of what I believe — they're friends. They're a couple. And I need to respect that. That is their choice, and a huge amount of respect is due here rather than, "Excuse me, but let me tell you — ." [laughs]

**PM:** I think that helped me. I'm just thinking about what you were saying about a relationship. You know, I would kind of pray about it and talk to God, ask God: "Is this okay? I feel like I'm gay, and this is how I'm born and how I'm intended to be. Is this all right?" I kind of went through that. You know, once I was in a relationship with somebody and it was based on mutual respect and sharing and love, I thought now there's no way God can be looking down and saying, "Nope, I don't approve of that. That's not healthy, that's not good." I thought if two people were loving each other with respect and sharing, I just couldn't see how that could be any worse than a man and a woman doing the exact same thing. So I'm glad she noticed that it was just two people instead of two men instead of a man and a woman...

**SB:** I do believe that the Church is guided by the Holy Spirit, and really does truly seek to know what God's will is for us. And then you have this whole other reality of human experience that makes the clarity just fall away. And I'm in a position now where I really believe that God is extremely active in the midst of each of our lives, no matter what choices we make, and that he will guide each of his children to communion with Him,

even with this mess. With the mess that I bring him, even though I look like I'm living a life that the Church has blessed. . .

**SB:** And I think at the level of conscience, I mean, conscience is a huge area where even the Church recognizes that a person's conscience must be followed regarding moral choices. And yes, the Church does say that we do need to inform our conscience and form it according to divine law — so if I'm Catholic I'm going to find out what the Catholic Church teaches. Again, I don't know what it's like to have been drawn to a homosexual lifestyle and to have that reality to deal with in my conscience along with the teaching of the Church.

**BH:** You believe people are born this way.

**SB:** See, I would not even be able to make a judgment.

**PM:** Well, who would choose to be gay? You know? So, yeah, of course we're born that way. But like you say, Mary, you don't know how it feels so it's hard for you to say —

**SB:** — Right. Although I know what it feels like for me to know beyond the shadow of a doubt that I'm called to celibate life — this is more in the area of sexual identity. However, for me, my sexual identity and therefore, my conscience, coincided with the Church's teaching on sexuality.

**PM:** Right. People don't understand the calling.

**SB:** Exactly. And it doesn't matter what people think. For me to live in this way is the only way and to violate that would be, for me, a huge — like, turning against myself — or a betrayal of myself. And if that's true for me, I can only imagine that must be true for Paul. And so this is where the dilemma arises. I, too, am concerned about Paul's salvation, just as I am my own and everyone else's. However, I understand that the choices I make and those that others make differ based on background, level of instruction in the area of the Church's moral teachings, sexual orientation, where someone is at in their spiritual life — things like that. We all deal with the "disorder" that the Church talks about — that is, the drive that is in us due to original sin toward actions that are not in accord with natural law or God's law. The call is to live out our sexuality, like all other areas of life, in a way that is consistent with the following of Christ. It is a process that everyone needs to go through — celibates, heterosexuals, gays, lesbians, bisexuals — everyone.

**PM:** Well, just continuing on that theme: you know, so many leaders of the Catholic Church are white men, but they're making decisions — again, we hope, inspired by the Holy Spirit — but they make all these decisions that impact everybody. Black people, gay people, women. And again, do they know what it feels like to be a woman? Can they tell a woman to do this or to do that; do they know what it feels like to be married with children? Do they know what it feels like to be a racial minority? Do they know what it feels like to be lesbian? So I think — you know, you look at the very small part of the population that feels they were born male but they have a female body. Does it seem odd to me? Yes. Can I understand it? No. Do I judge them? Absolutely not. You know, I think if you feel *that*

strongly that you're willing to go through, like, a sex change for example, it must be pretty powerful. I think, yeah, we're all born different — I don't know why. . . .

**BH:** Sister Bernadette, how have your perceptions of homosexuality changed since getting to know Paul and his partner on a more intimate level, friendship level — personal level?



**SB:** Well, it was my first close relationship with anyone who is gay, and I began to see that on the level of their feelings for each other, their relationship is similar to the feelings expressed by married couples that I know — my brothers and my sisters-in-law, friends. And I remember when I went home in January and my mother told me that she had heard that Paul had broken up and she obviously wanted more information. And I realized that this is just as sacred a relationship as anyone else and if anything's been confided in me, it stays with me. . . .

**SB:** . . . I think I really was able to communicate to my Mom something of what I had developed in my own understanding, and that is that, "what Paul is going through you would understand because you're married, Mom." And it actually came out because she then said to me — after I said something about how broken up you were, and that I was really concerned — and my Mom looked at me and she said, "well, then I guess" — she said — "it's just the same as if a married couple had broken up, isn't it?" with, like, the most 180-degree turn in emotion that I could detect in my Mom. And I felt really, really proud, I think, that I had been able to convey to her from my own relationship that this sensitivity that we owe to my cousin Paul is really the same that we would offer to a couple who's going through a separation or a divorce, even though we may not agree with it or condone it or understand it. Their reality is something else, regardless. . . .

**PM:** It was probably like that in Jesus' time, too. He didn't judge, but he got to know everybody. And then others probably witnessed, "Gee, look how Jesus acts with those people. It's not so strange after all." Or, "Gee, that must be what it's like."

**BH:** You've talked a little bit about your prayer life, Paul, and how in dealing with your sexuality you prayed. I'd be interested in hearing a little more about your own spirituality.

**PM:** It's hard to sum it up. I've never tried to put it into words. Well, I mean being Christian is the most important thing in my life. The last ten, twenty years — ever since I really started questioning things, like in college. I just figured God created us and it just seems like it should be the most important focus in my life and everything comes from God, everything's affected by God. So I just know the way I live is important, for myself and for who wit-

nesses how I live. You know, I believe my soul is going to transform somehow after I die and so I wanted to be in good shape to meet God in whatever state that is — body, soul, both, neither. . . . **BH:** It doesn't sound like coming to terms with your sexuality was even a bump in the road in your relationship with God.

**PM:** Well, it was. I mean, I was hoping I wasn't doing something wrong, and I had to come to terms with it over time. It wasn't just one moment where I just prayed about it, got the answer, and then it was taken care of. But over time, like I was saying earlier, I just thought that if you're with somebody in a meaningful relationship, how can God frown upon it. And how could God create all the people in the world if some of them aren't intended and they're mistakes and they should be corrected or have surgery or be converted? That just didn't seem like what a loving God would do. It just kind of made

sense to me that I am supposed to be this way and these relationships are approved by God.

**BH:** Has getting to know Sister Bernadette again sparked any different thinking in your own sexuality, in your own behavior at all? Has it changed you at all? Reconnecting to a religious sister?

**PM:** I'm proud to have her as a close friend and member of my extended family. My relationship with her has reinforced my belief that in the Church there are capable, purposeful human beings trying to act in as holy a way as possible.

**BH:** Has it changed you, Sister Bernadette, in regards to Paul?

**SB:** It's changed me in the sense that what had been an issue that was very clear for me, is not so clear anymore — not in terms of what the Church teaches but in terms of my own understanding, I guess, just because of how murky and messy — "messy" is not really the right word — how *mysterious*, I think is the better word to use. I don't have access to all of the experience for me to even figure it out, I guess. So I'm willing to just let it go. I'm willing to really believe, like I said, that God is a father. And He's working out with each one of us our salvation. And going back to the fact that each of us is extremely wounded and broken, you know, regardless of the life that we profess or live. And I think I'm a lot more ready to leave it in His hands rather than try to correct someone.

**BH:** Sister Bernadette? One thing you'd like to let people know?

**SB:** I guess the message I would like to give is that our main concern should be the person. And getting to know a person — allowing a person to reveal who he or she is rather than forcing my own revelation onto a person. And in that way, I think, in a relationship of openness and acceptance, I think we have the greatest ability to grow. And if there *are* ways that we need to be able to grow, I think that because of the love that a person has for another person, that it creates the ground for growth to be able to take place. And to allow myself to be challenged, too. I mean, because Paul and his partner, the gift that they've given me, has really challenged my understanding and has left me a lot like — I thrive on being sure — and I'm a lot less thriving on that.

**PM:** I would just hope, you know, the Church — again, that huge entity — would be able to slowly think a little bit more like Bernadette. Trying to just assess before reacting and get to know the people you're dealing with before judging. †

# The sins of the fathers

## Raising kids in a same-sex union

By Lisa Miller  
Newsweek  
June 11, 2009

First comes love, then comes marriage. Then come all the thorny issues that arise with raising kids in a religious tradition when that religious tradition doesn't see you as married.

When another state legalizes gay marriage, as New Hampshire did recently, civil-rights activists cheer. But practicalities are another matter, and same-sex couples—especially those who want to raise their children with religion—may find that the laws intended to protect them may also create new domestic challenges previously unforeseen. That two men or two women would want to marry and raise children in a church that views their love as sinful would be, in the eyes of some, puzzling at best. (I'm focusing on the Roman Catholic tradition here, but any orthodox religion presents similar trials.) Many people feel that religion is essential to them, however, and that family life would be emptier without it. Gregory Maguire, author of the novel *Wicked*, has had all three of his children baptized in the Catholic Church. He recently watched proudly as his youngest child had her first holy communion. "As the daughter of two dads, she sat in the first pew in her beautiful, white, borrowed gown," Maguire told me. "And then she sang, 'I've got that joy, joy, joy, down in my heart!'"

Maguire lives in Concord, Mass., and is legally married now—but wasn't when he and his partner started adoption proceedings for each of their three children (from Southeast Asia and Latin America) more than 14 years ago. In an ironic twist, gay-marriage laws now make foreign adoption *more* difficult for gay couples. Adoption agencies and lawyers say no foreign countries knowingly give babies to gay couples for adoption. Same-sex couples who want to adopt internationally have traditionally circumvented this prohibition with the following fudge: one half of the couple adopts as a single person. Once back home, the couple goes to court and establishes co-parenthood in states that will allow it. A legally married gay couple doesn't have the option of a fudge: truthful responses to questions about marital status on adoption documents crush the couple's chances of ever adopting abroad. That's why Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders advises couples to wait to get married. "If international adoption is important ... then they need to postpone forming a legal relationship," says Bruce Bell, who runs GLAD's help line.

And then there's the question of adoption agencies with traditional religious affiliations. In Britain, Catholic-run adoption agencies are in an uproar for having to comply with a 2007 law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual preference. Because the Catholic Church stands so firmly against gay marriage—and reaffirmed this opposition in a 2003 document from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith—any Catholic agency that helps same-sex couples adopt children is, in a sense, helping to foster a lifestyle that it believes is fundamentally



Gregory Maguire (r) and partner, Andy Newman (l), with children.

immoral. (The 2003 document was explicit: allowing same-sex couples to adopt children "would actually mean doing violence to these children.") Now,

with the 20-month transition period over, the British agencies are having to choose between retaining their Catholic affiliation or their function as adoption agencies.

Lest one think this couldn't happen here, it already has. In 2006, Catholic Charities of Boston agonized about whether it could submit to the state's nondiscrimination policies. "What the Catholic Church has tried to say," explains the Rev. J. Bryan Hehir, a professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government who, at the time, headed Catholic Charities, "is that gay men and women ought to have

their civil rights protected. I think on the whole we've pretty much stood for that in terms of wages, jobs, access to living accommodations ... Where you meet the

neuralgic point is the definition of marriage." Hehir says that he and Boston's Archbishop Seán O'Malley understood that the church's teaching left no wiggle room. They shut the adoption agency down.

But there are many ways of procuring children, and once procured, the Catholic Church—on a pastoral level, at least—has had only occasional problems baptizing and educating them in the tradition. "Church law always favors the salvation of the person and is very biased in favor of the person asking for the sacrament," says John Baldovin, a sacramental theologian at Boston College. What canon law actually says is this: any baby can be baptized if the parents agree, and if the infant has a reasonable hope of being raised in a Catholic home. The experts disagree, obviously, about whether two mommies or two daddies are able to do this. Maguire firmly believes he is, and he can imagine severing his relationship with his church over the enforcement of any hard line. What he can't imagine is being anything but Catholic. †

## Gay-friendly Catholic Colleges and Universities

Below is a list of known gay-friendly Catholic colleges and universities, that is, those Catholic institutions that have some type of gay/lesbian student group, support group, ally group, etc. If you are aware of such a college that is known as welcoming to gay/lesbian people, please let us know!



### California

*Belmont:* Notre Dame de Namur University  
*Goleta:* St. Mark's University  
*Los Angeles:* Loyola Marymount University, Mount Saint Mary's College  
*Moraga:* St. Mary's College  
*Rancho Palos Verde:* Marymount College  
*San Diego:* University of San Diego  
*San Francisco:* University of San Francisco  
*Santa Clara:* Santa Clara University

### Colorado

*Denver:* Regis University

### Connecticut

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

### District of Columbia

Georgetown University, Trinity University

### Florida

*Miami Gardens:* St. Thomas University  
*Miami Shores:* Barry University

### Hawaii

*Honolulu:* Chaminade University

### Illinois

*Chicago:* DePaul University,  
Loyola University, St. Xavier University  
*Romeoville:* Lewis University

### Indiana

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

### Iowa

*Dubuque:* Loras College

### Kentucky

*Louisville:* Spalding University,  
Bellarmine University

### Louisiana

*New Orleans:* Loyola University

### Maryland

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

### Massachusetts

*Boston:* Emmanuel College, Boston College

*Chestnut Hill:* Boston College

*Easton:* Stonehill College

*North Andover:* Merrimack College

*Weston:* Regis College

*Worcester:* Assumption College,  
College of the Holy Cross

### Michigan

*Detroit:* University of Detroit Mercy  
*Grand Rapids:* Aquinas College

### Minnesota

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

### Missouri

*Kansas City:* Avila University,  
Rockhurst University  
*St. Louis:* Fontbonne University,  
St. Louis University

### Montana

*Helena:* Carroll College

### Nebraska

*Omaha:* Creighton University

### New Hampshire

*Nashua:* Rivier College

### New Jersey

*Caldwell:* Caldwell College  
*Jersey City:* St. Peter's College  
*South Orange:* Seton Hall

### New York

*Albany:* College of Saint Rose  
*Bronx:* Fordham University, Manhattan College  
*Buffalo:* Canisius College  
*Loudonville:* Sienna College  
*New Rochelle:* College of New Rochelle,  
Iona College  
*Poughkeepsie:* Marist College  
*Riverdale:* College of Mount St. Vincent  
*Rochester:* Nazareth College of Rochester,  
St. John Fisher College  
*St. Bonaventure:* St. Bonaventure University  
*Sparkill:* St. Thomas Aquinas College  
*Syracuse:* LeMoyn College  
*Queens:* St. John's University

### Ohio

*Cincinnati:* Xavier University  
*Cleveland Heights:* John Carroll University  
*Dayton:* University of Dayton  
*Pepper Pike:* Ursuline College  
*South Euclid:* Notre Dame College  
*Sylvania:* Lourdes College

### Oregon

*Marylhurst:* Marylhurst University  
*Portland:* University of Portland

### Pennsylvania

*Cresson:* Mount Aloysius College  
*Dallas:* Misericordia University  
*Erie:* Mercyhurst College  
*Greensburg:* Seton Hill University  
*Philadelphia:* Chestnut Hill College, LaSalle University, St. Joseph's University  
*Pittsburgh:* Carlow University,  
Duquesne University  
*Radnor:* Cabrini College  
*Reading:* Alvernia University  
*Scranton:* Marywood University  
*Villanova:* Villanova University

### Rhode Island

*Newport:* Salve Regina University  
*Providence:* Providence College

### Texas

*Austin:* Saint Edward's University  
*San Antonio:* University of the Incarnate Word,  
Our Lady of the Lake University

### Vermont

*Colchester:* Saint Michael's College

### Washington

*Lacey:* St. Martin's College  
*Seattle:* Seattle University  
*Spokane:* Gonzaga University

### West Virginia

*Wheeling:* Wheeling Jesuit University

### Wisconsin

*De Pere:* St. Norbert College  
*Madison:* Edgewood College  
*Milwaukee:* Alverno College, Cardinal Stritch University, Marquette University

### Canada

*Toronto:* Regis College

**Alabama**

Montgomery: St. Bede

**Arizona**

Mesa: Christ the King  
Scottsdale: Franciscan Renewal Center  
Tucson: St. Cyril of Alexandria,  
SS. Peter and Paul, St. Pius X,  
Our Mother of Sorrows, St. Odilia

**California**

Berkeley: Holy Spirit Parish  
Burney: St. Francis of Assisi  
Carlesbad: St. Patrick  
Claremont: Our Lady of the Assumption  
El Cajon: St. Luke  
Escondido: St. Timothy  
Fremont: St. Joseph - Mission San Jose  
Hawthorne: St. Joseph (Spanish)  
Hayward: All Saints  
LaPuente: St. Martha  
Lemon Grove: St. John of the Cross  
Long Beach: St. Matthew  
Los Angeles: Blessed Sacrament,  
Christ the King, Mother of Good Counsel,  
St. Camillus Center-LA USC Medical  
Center (Spanish), St. Paul the Apostle  
North Hollywood: Blessed Sacrament,  
St. Jane Frances de Chantal, St. Patrick  
Oakland: Our Lady of Lourdes  
Oceanside: St. Thomas More  
Orange: Holy Family Cathedral, Koinonia  
Pleasanton: Catholic Community of  
Pleasanton  
Sacramento: St. Francis of Assisi  
San Carlos: St. Charles  
San Diego: Ascension, San Rafael,  
St. Jude Shrine  
San Francisco: Most Holy Redeemer,  
Old St. Mary Cathedral, St. Agnes,  
St. Dominic  
San Jose: St. Julie Billiart,  
St. Martin of Tours (Emmaus Community)  
San Luis Obispo: Old Mission of  
San Luis Obispo  
San Rafael: Church of San Rafael &  
Mission San Rafael Archangel  
Santa Clara: GALA  
Santa Cruz: Holy Cross  
Santa Monica: St. Monica  
Spring Valley: Santa Sophia  
Walnut Creek: St. John Vianney  
West Hollywood: St. Ambrose, St. Victor  
Whittier: St. Mary of the Assumption

**Colorado**

Arvada: Spirit of Christ  
Avon: St. Edward  
Colorado Springs: Our Lady of Guadalupe,  
Sacred Heart  
Denver: St. Dominic, Christ the King,  
Mount Carmel  
Fort Collins: Blessed John XXIII  
Genesee: St. Frances Cabrini Shrine  
Highlands Ranch: Pax Christi  
Littleton: Light of the World

**Connecticut**

Hartford: St. Patrick-St. Anthony

**District of Columbia**

Holy Trinity, St. Aloysius,  
St. Matthew Cathedral

**Florida**

Cocoa Beach: Our Savior  
Ft. Lauderdale: St. Anthony, St. Maurice  
Naples: St. John the Evangelist  
St. Petersburg: Holy Cross  
Tampa: Franciscan Center

**Georgia**

Atlanta: Shrine of the Immaculate  
Conception

**Illinois**

Berwyn: St. Mary of the Celle  
Chicago: Immaculate Conception,  
St. Clement, St. Gertrude, St. Gregory,  
St. Peter, St. Sylvester, St. Teresa of Avila,  
St. Thomas the Apostle, OL of Mt. Carmel  
Clarendon Hills: Notre Dame

## Gay-friendly Catholic Parishes

Below is a partial list of known "gay-friendly" Catholic parishes. Thank you for helping us add to this growing list! If you are aware of such a parish that is known as welcoming to lesbian/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, or involvement with parents.

Country Club Hills: St. Emeric  
Evanston: St. Nicholas  
Morton Grove: St. Martha  
Oak Park: Ascension, St. Catherine of  
Sienna-St. Lucy  
Schaumburg: St. Marcelline

**Indiana**

Evansville: St. Mary  
Indianapolis: St. Thomas Aquinas

**Iowa**

Iowa City: St. Thomas More

**Kentucky**

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

**Louisiana**

New Orleans: St. Augustine

**Maine**

Portland: Sacred Heart-St. Dominic  
Saco: Most Holy Trinity

**Maryland**

Baltimore: Corpus Christi, St. Francis  
of Assisi, St. Matthew, St. Philip and  
James, St. Vincent dePaul  
Columbia: St. John the Evangelist  
Gaithersburg: St. Rose of Lima  
Hagerstown: St. Ann  
Severn: St. Bernadette

**Massachusetts**

Boston: Paulist Center, St. Anthony Shrine,  
St. Cecilia  
East Longmeadow: St. Michael  
Newton: St. Ignatius  
Springfield: Sacred Heart  
Worcester: Holy Cross College

**Michigan**

Ann Arbor: St. Mary Student Parish  
Detroit: St. Leo, Christ the King  
Kalamazoo: Lambda Catholics  
St. Ignace: St. Ignatius Loyola

**Minnesota**

Minneapolis: St. Frances Cabrini,  
St. Joan of Arc

**Missouri**

Kansas City: Guardian Angels,  
St. Francis Xavier, St. James  
St. Louis: St. Cronan, St. Margaret of  
Scotland, St. Pius V

**Montana**

Billings: Holy Rosary

**Nebraska**

Omaha: Holy Family, Sacred Heart

**Nevada**

Las Vegas: Christ the King,  
Guardian Angel Cathedral

**New Hampshire**

Merrimack: St. John Neumann  
Pelham: St. Patrick

**New Jersey**

Clifton: St. Brendan  
Lawrenceville: St. Ann  
Long Beach Island: St. Francis of Assisi  
Trenton Falls: St. Anselm

**New Mexico**

Albuquerque: Holy Family, Shrine of St.  
Bernadette  
Espanola: Sacred Heart of Jesus

**New York**

Baldwinsville: St. Augustine  
Bellmore: St. Barnabas the Apostle  
Bellport: Mary Immaculate  
Brooklyn: St. Andrew the Apostle,  
St. Boniface, St. Athanasius, St. Augustine  
Deer Park: Ss. Cyril and Methodius  
East Islip: St. Mary  
Elmira: St. Mary  
Fairport: Church of the Assumption  
Henrietta: Good Shepherd  
Manhattan: Holy Name of Jesus,  
St. Francis Xavier, St. Paul the Apostle  
Melville: St. Elizabeth

Rochester: Blessed Sacrament,  
St. John the Evangelist (Humboldt St.),  
St. Mary, St. Monica  
Syracuse: St. Andrew the Apostle, St. Lucy,  
All Saints  
Utica: St. Francis DeSales  
Wantaugh: St. Frances de Chantal  
Westbury: St. Brigid

**North Carolina**

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

**Ohio**

Akron: St. Bernard  
Cincinnati: St. George-St. Monica,  
St. Robert Bellarmine  
Cleveland: Ascension of Our Lord,  
St. Malachi, St. Martha  
Columbus: St. Thomas More Newman  
Center  
Mentor: St. John Vianney  
University Heights: Church of the Gesu  
Westlake: St. Ladislav  
Wooster: St. Mary of the Immaculate  
Conception

**Oregon**

Central Point: Shepherd of the Valley  
Portland: Journey and Koinonia Catholic  
Community, St. Andrew, St. Phillip Neri,  
St. Vincent dePaul

**Pennsylvania**

Huntingdon: Most Holy Trinity  
Philadelphia: Old St. Joseph, Old St. Mary,  
St. John the Evangelist, St. Vincent DePaul  
York: St. Joseph

**Rhode Island**

Providence: St. Francis Chapel  
Wickford: St. Bernard

**Tennessee**

Memphis: Cathedral of the Immaculate  
Conception

**Texas**

Colleyville: Good Shepherd  
Dallas: Holy Trinity  
Houston: St. Anne  
Plano: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

**Virginia**

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

**Washington**

Pullman: Sacred Heart  
Seattle: St. Benedict, Prince of Peace  
Newman Center  
Tacoma: St. Leo

**Wisconsin**

Madison: Our Lady Queen of Peace, St.  
Benedict Center Sunday Assembly  
Menomonee Falls: Good Shepherd  
Milwaukee: Good Shepherd, Prince of Peace,  
Trinity-Guadalupe

**Canada**

Montreal: Holy Cross  
Ottawa: St. Joseph  
Toronto: Our Lady of Lourdes

**England**

London: Our Lady of the  
Assumption & St. Gregory

**To add your faith community to our list, please contact New Ways Ministry at [info@newwaysministry.org](mailto:info@newwaysministry.org) or call 301-277-5674.**

## Catholic collections aimed at preventing same-sex marriage

By Marnie MacLean

NCEN.com

September 13, 2009

The fight over Maine's same-sex marriage law has started to heat up, and opponents of the new law have received a large cash infusion from the Catholic Church.

During Mass on Sunday, parishioners were asked to donate money to defeat the new law.

At the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Portland, Maine hundreds of parishioners gathered for the Sunday Service.

This is one of about 140 catholic churches across Maine taking part in a special second collection asking for money specifically to defeat Maine's same-sex marriage law.

"Marriage is clearly, biblically, ecclesiastically, logically, rationally and naturally the union between a man and a woman, for us Catholics, marriage is a sacrament," Father Louis Phillips said on Sunday.

The money raised from the special collection will go directly to Stand for Marriage Maine, the group running the "Yes On One" campaign. In November, Maine voters will have the chance to overturn the law by voting yes on a referendum question.

"I believe marriage is between a man and a woman, the doctrine is clear

and doesn't change based on emotion and political pressures, it is what it is, it supports marriage between a man and a woman," Mary Conroy said.

But not all Catholics agree with the church on this issue, and just this week over one hundred people joined a new group called Catholics for Marriage Equality.

"My model is Jesus and Jesus preached and practices love and inclusion. That's what I hope our church would do," Elaine McGillicuddy said.

This was not the first time Maine's Catholic Church has done a special collection to raise money to fight a controversial referendum question. It was also done to fight partial birth abortions and physician assisted suicide.

Stand for Marriage campaign manager Marc Mutty said for the church, this is not a political issue -- it is a moral one. And that asking parishioners to fund this cause was something the bishop felt compelled to do.

"It was crystal clear: it was his responsibility, his duty to do this," Mutty said.

Not all Catholics agree, but Stand for Marriage hopes it can count on enough parishioners to use the power of prayer and the pocketbook to defeat same-sex marriage in Maine. ✚

# Time to remove 25 years of barricades in New York

By Tim Gay

*The Villager—New York City*  
July 1, 2009

Dear Archbishop Dolan,

We're sorry that you missed your first New York Lesbian and Gay Pride March. We heard you were in Rome, meeting with the pope and getting a new wardrobe.

If only you had been here, you would have seen the most beautiful, colorful Gay Pride ever — our 40th anniversary to mark the Stonewall Riots of 1969. Floats and dancers, people of all colors, some on bicycles, some on tricycles, some on stilts and some in wheelchairs.

The governor was there — David Paterson was the honoree for pushing for our marriage right! Mayor Bloomberg was there, as well as Senator Chuck Schumer and the Queen of the Imperial Court her/himself.

Fifth Ave. was lined with happy observers cheering us on. Police officers gladly took photos for paraders and out-of-towners. People threw streamers from windows, and ministers and volunteers handed out water at Marble Collegiate Church, and the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches on lower Fifth Ave.

Except not at St. Patrick's.

For one block, between 51st and 50th Sts., Fifth Ave. was once again prepared for a full riot. Police officers stood at guard with three rows of barricades between the curb and the steps. The only onlookers were some sad church representatives (they were allowed to stand on the cathedral steps) holding homophobic signs including one with "church" misspelled as "churc."

It wasn't always like that.

I remember the Gay Pride March of

1983. It was a beautiful Sunday.

Phil and I loved going to the Gay Pride March on our bicycles. We would weave in and out of the various groups, circle back, go forward, and always

float high above Rockefeller Center, and a few balloons might go lightly around the corner and float past a newly wed heterosexual bride and groom coming out the side entrance.



LGBT Catholics and friends march in the London gay pride parade.

catch up with the Catholic gay and lesbian organization, Dignity, as they reached St. Patrick's at 50th St.

As in many of the past years, first was a moment of silence. And then one Dignity member would walk up the steps and release a bouquet of pink and purple balloons. And this would be followed by the spectacular release of hundreds of purple and pink balloons. Some balloons would get caught in the century-old gothic ornamentation, some would

And the cheering! Jubilant, loud, off-key cheering! These were (and are) true believers making a joyful noise unto their Lord!

A friend called out Phil's name and mine. We turned around on our bicycles and waved, like thousands of marchers spontaneously posing for photos. Our photo was snapped just in time for the balloons.

I still have that photo.

Little did we know that would be the last year for Dignity releasing the balloons.

In 1984 the new Archbishop O'Connor had the cathedral barricaded by three rows of blue sawhorses and 100 police officers, arms crossed and batons ready at their sides. And on the other side of Fifth Ave. was a church-sanctioned anti-gay enclave of at least 100 people. They spewed forth venomous homophobic lies that were not biblically based, psychologically or medically accurate or, for that matter, in good taste.

We squeezed between these opposing menaces on the left and the right. Of course, voices became angry. Of course, fair-weather friends and politicians demurely refused to march with us, until we reached 23rd St., well within the "gay safety zone."

That was the harbinger for what we were to see for the next quarter century. Starting in 1984 the archdiocese slammed the door on not just Catholics, but all gay and lesbian New Yorkers.

AIDS was just beginning. But Car-

dinal O'Connor's first response to the gay and lesbian community was to spend some \$50 million to fight the city on Executive Order 50, which banned sexual discrimination in hiring practices at any company or nonprofit organization that did business with the city.

Dignity could no longer meet at St. Xavier's on 16th St. No safer-sex education would be taught at Catholic schools, hospitals or (at least officially) Covenant House. Discrimination is O.K. on St. Patrick's Day.

And as much as no one would believe us back then, H.I.V. truly became an equal opportunity for men and women of all races. Despite the gay stigma and the associated hysteria of the 1980s, it is now the unspoken disease affecting our minority communities.

H.I.V. is the leading cause of death for black and Hispanic women of child-bearing age in New York City and has been for at least the last 10 years. (I sometimes wonder what the outcome would have been if there had been any outreach from the Hispanic parishes to women. But we'll never know.)

Cardinal O'Connor drew the line. But somewhere along the way, that line has become irrelevant.

As the years have gone by, those anti-gay hecklers opposite St. Patrick's have grown fewer and older. When we see that one sign, "God didn't make Adam and Steve," we confidently yell back, "Oh yes, God did! As well as Alice and Gertrude and Ellen and Portia, too."

Now, here we are at Stonewall 40. You know very good and well that we are the police officers, teachers, doctors, full-time parents and even managing partners at law firms who live and work and play side by side with heterosexuals in our great city. We are city councilmembers, congressmembers and school board members. Some are priests, some are preachers and, of course, we'll always be your church organizers.

We can even get married in a number of states, including Iowa! That's only about 100 miles north of where you, Archbishop Dolan, grew up in St. Louis!

So, don't you think it's a good time to remove the barricades from the steps of St. Patrick's?

Look, it's a new administration there at the archdiocese. Next year, let the police do real work and let Dignity release the balloons.

No one is asking you to hand out condoms. But try handing out some cups of water. It's a long walk down to Marble Collegiate at 30th St.

And while you are at it, you and those Ancient Hibernians should know that not all Irish-Americans are Catholic. Lighten up and let all people march on St. Patrick's Day.

With or without your blessing, we are free. †

Continued from page 1

## Ex-Archbishop speaks about Catholic Church and homosexuality

be hushed up, which is "the Roman way."

"I suppose, also, being frank, I wouldn't have wanted to be labeled in Rome at that point as gay," Archbishop Weakland said. "Rome is a little village."

Asked if he had regrets about the \$450,000 payment to Mr. Marcoux, he said, "I certainly worry about the sum."

The morning in 2002 that Mr. Marcoux surfaced on national television, Archbishop Weakland said he phoned the pope's representative, or apostolic nuncio, in Washington — Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo — who, he said, told him, "Of course you are going to deny it."

Archbishop Weakland said he told the nuncio that while he could deny emphatically that it was date rape, "I can't deny that something happened between us." (Archbishop Montalvo died in 2006.)

Archbishop Weakland is still pained that his scandal, involving a man in his 30s, became intertwined with the larger church scandal over child sexual abuse.

But at the time, many Catholics in Milwaukee said they were angrier about the secret settlement with Mr. Marcoux than with the sexual liaison.

Archbishop Weakland and the Milwaukee archdiocese are also the target of several lawsuits accusing them of failing to remove abusive priests, allowing more minors to be victimized.

In the interview, he blamed psychologists for advising bishops that perpetrators

could be treated and returned to work, and he blamed the Vatican's tribunals for spending years debating whether to remove abusers from the priesthood. In one case, he said, the Vatican courts took so long deciding whether to defrock a priest who had abused dozens of deaf students that the priest died before a decision was reached.

"The concern was more about the priests than about the victims," Archbishop Weakland said.

In Milwaukee, Peter Isely, the Midwest director of the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, said Archbishop Weakland ultimately failed his people.

Mr. Isely pointed out that while Archbishop Weakland was waiting for the Vatican courts to defrock abusive priests, he allowed them to continue working in ministry without informing parishioners of their past. And he said the \$450,000 payment was particularly galling to victims because many received "no compensation whatsoever."

In June, Archbishop Weakland, who has been living in a Catholic retirement community since his resignation, is moving to St. Mary's Abbey in Morristown, N.J., where he said he would be closer to his family in Pennsylvania and grow old in the care of a community of Benedictine monks. †

## The Upper Room



A retreat for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and gender-variant church personnel

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