

# BANDINGS

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Summer 2010

## Children denied Catholic schooling, lesbian couple speaks out

By Tom Fox  
National Catholic Reporter  
March 15, 2010

Two Boulder women have been at the center of a firestorm of media attention here for the past ten days since news broke that their daughters would no longer be welcome at the Sacred Heart of Jesus parish school because their mothers are lesbians.

Local media have been covering the story seemingly around the clock. Television crews have come to the school. Articles, letters to the editors, and opinion pieces, including one by Denver Archbishop Charles Chaput in support of the expulsion, have appeared. Protesters have shown up outside the church with banners calling shame on parishioners.

Police have been called in to patrol the school grounds for the safety of the children. Division has emerged within the parish though many Catholics – and others – here ask themselves how this could possibly have occurred in their progressive, welcoming community.

Referred to as "the mothers" by those who do not know the couple and by those who do and want to protect their identities, the women have avoided all media contacts and interviews – until now. They also asked that they not be photographed.

I sat down with the women, both professional physicians, in the living room of their home here, walls covered with framed photographs of their five-year-old and three-year-old daughters. As we spoke for more than an hour, a

long haired dog playfully rolled on the living room carpet before us.

The couple explained they agreed to speak with NCR because they wanted to clear up misconceptions in the media and specifically wanted Catholics to better understand their situation.

The women, members of the Sacred Heart parish, describe themselves as practicing Catholics eager to raise their children in the faith of their parents and grandparents. They say they attend Mass weekly at the parish with their children and continue to believe Sacred Heart of Jesus school, which includes a preschool and kindergarten through eighth grade, excels in education and Catholic formation.

The women, meanwhile, said they have been overwhelmed by the media

coverage and by the support they have received by friends and family. They said they are not political activists and have no agenda other than providing for the safety of their children. For this reason they asked not to be identified by name.

Following is their story, as they told it together. For the sake of the report I distinguish between them, when necessary, using the names Mary and Martha.

"People are making assumptions about us that are flat wrong, completely wrong, and we felt it was time to clear up some of these misconceptions," Mary said as we began the interview.

From the time they first enrolled at Sacred Heart three years back they never hid the fact that they are a lesbian couple,

*Continued on page 6*

## Robert Carter, Priest and Gay Activist, Dies at 82

By Dennis Hevesi  
New York Times  
March 16, 2010

The Rev. Robert Carter, who in the early 1970s was one of the first Roman Catholic priests in the country to declare publicly that he was gay and who helped found the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, died on Feb. 22 in the Bronx. He was 82.

His death, at a Jesuit health care facility, was confirmed by the Rev. Thomas R. Slon, executive assistant to the provincial of the New York Province of the Society of Jesus.

Father Carter's coming out was a very public one. In October 1973, Dr. Howard J. Brown, a former New York City health services administrator, announced that he was gay and that he was forming a civil rights organization for homosexual men and women. Then called the National Gay Task Force, it later became the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

An article about the group in The New York Times said: "A number of homosexual and lesbian organizations were represented on the board. One member was the Rev. Robert Carter, a Jesuit priest and professor of historical theology."

Soon afterward he was visited by a sub-provincial of the Jesuit order. "It seems that they were afraid I had had a psychotic break or something," Father Carter wrote in an unpublished memoir.

Although there were calls for his expulsion by irate "Jesuits, parents and alumni of our schools," Father Carter continued, he was not disciplined. In those days, the church and the Jesuit order were somewhat more accepting of gay people.

The church continues to hold that while homosexual attraction is "disordered," gay people who are celibate are not inherently sinful. In 2005, however, the Vatican issued a document saying the church would not admit to a seminary or ordain "those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture.'"

Father Carter helped found the New York chapter of DignityUSA, a support group for gay Catholics. In 1972, with the



(L to R) Fathers Dan McCarthy, Bernard Lynch, John McNeill, and Robert Carter lead Dignity in New York's gay pride march in the early 1980s. (Courtesy: Brendan Fay)

Rev. John McNeill, he hosted the first meeting of the chapter at the Jesuit chapel on West 98th Street in Manhattan.

"I refer to him as the heart of Dignity," Father McNeill, the author of "The Church and the Homosexual" (Beacon, 1976), said in an interview. "I was doing all the writing, but he was on the front line, meeting with people, counseling people."

When the Catholic authorities said Dignity could not meet on church property, Father Carter celebrated Mass in apartments all around Manhattan. He led blessing ceremonies for gay couples. He testified in support of the gay rights law proposed by Mayor Edward I. Koch before it was passed by the City Council in 1986. He urged Dignity to march in gay pride parades and marched himself, in his clerical collar.

Although he was a classics scholar, he was also a trained social worker who counseled gay priests and hundreds of lay Catholics. "As I sought to reconcile being gay and Catholic," Brendan Fay, a longtime gay rights activist, said in an interview, "Bob Carter helped me move from self-hate to self-acceptance and then to a place of gay activism. He was like a Catholic Harvey Milk."

Robert Earl Carter was born in Chicago on July 27, 1927, the son of Earl and Ila Grace Smith Carter. His father managed several music stores. He is survived by his sister, Nancy Glader of Prospect Heights, Ill.

Father Carter's parents were Protestants who worshiped in a series of denominations as he grew up. Then, at the

University of Chicago, he read James Joyce's semiautobiographical "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man." It introduced him, he wrote, to "the centrality of Catholicism in the history of Western civilization."

He graduated in June 1946 and the next day was received into the Catholic Church. Three years later, he completed a master's degree in Greek studies at his alma mater, and in 1953 he received his doctorate there. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1954 and was ordained in 1963.

Father Carter went on to earn a master's degree in social work from Columbia in 1981. By 1985 he was counseling AIDS patients at Lincoln Hospital in the Bronx; he later became a supervisor of the outpatient AIDS program at the Bellevue Hospital Center in Manhattan.

For him, there was no contradiction between homosexuality and Christianity.

In his memoir, Father Carter wrote: "Since Jesus had table fellowship with social outcasts and sinners, those rejected by the religious establishment of his time, I consider myself to have been most fully a Jesuit, a 'companion of Jesus,' when I came out publicly as a gay man, one of the social rejects of my time. It was only by our coming out that society's negative stereotypes would be overcome and we would gain social acceptance." †

## Newark Archbishop questions plan for Seton Hall University gay marriage class

By Kelly Heyboer  
New Jersey Star-Ledger  
May 3, 2010

Seton Hall University's governing board is debating whether to cancel a course on gay marriage after Newark Archbishop John J. Myers said the class conflicts with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

The course is scheduled to begin next fall for upperclassmen in any major on the South Orange campus, university officials said. It is designed to explore the controversial issue without advocating for either side.

Myers said news that Seton Hall students will be studying gay marriage "troubles me greatly."

In a statement, the archbishop said the church teaches that marriage should only be between a man and a woman.

"This proposed course seeks to promote as legitimate a train of thought that is contrary to what the Church teaches. As a result, the course is not in synch with Catholic teaching," Myers said. "Consequently, the board of trustees of Seton Hall have asked the board of regents to investigate the matter of this pro-

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# BONDINGS

Summer 2010

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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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## Catholic gay rights groups purchase ads Pages protest student ejections from Sacred Heart of Jesus school

By **Samantha Abernethy**

*Associated Press*  
March 12, 2010

Gay rights groups said they have purchased full-page advertisements opposing a Boulder Catholic school's decision to eject two children because their parents are a lesbian couple.

DignityUSA, a gay rights group of Roman Catholics, and other groups are advertising in Sunday's *Camera* newspaper in Boulder and *The Denver Post*, saying the school's decision is hurtful and damages the fabric of the community.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus school in Boulder told the parents that one of the children could complete kindergarten and the other could finish preschool, but neither could stay at the school after that.

"As Catholics, it is deeply hurtful to see the Archdiocese of Denver forcibly remove children from their educational programs to send a message of rejection and exclusion to those children's parents," the advertisement reads.

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput supports the school's decision. In a column posted on a church Web site Wednesday, Chaput said it's a "painful situation" but the decision is in line with church beliefs. A March 5 statement from the diocese said that by living in discord with Catholic teaching, the parents choose by their actions to disqualify their children from enrollment.

The policy is not limited to or directed at homosexuals, said Denver archdiocese spokeswoman Jeanette De-

Melo. There have been other issues with parents and individuals in "discord with Catholic teaching" that did not involve homosexuality, she said.

The Rev. William Breslin, pastor at Sacred Heart of Jesus School, wrote in a blog that the church teachings are more important than the cultural interpretation of tolerance. Allowing the students to attend the school would put them in a tough position, he wrote.

"If a child of gay parents comes to our school, and we teach that gay marriage is against the will of God, then the child will think that we are saying their parents are bad," Breslin wrote.

The Sacred Heart school policy states it expects students and their parents to agree with church beliefs, including those forbidding sex between anyone other than married, heterosexual couples.

"As a private school, that is their right under the law. But that doesn't make it the right thing to do," the advertisement reads.

Jeff Stone, spokesman for DignityUSA, said he wants to know if children are being taught about same-sex relationships at that age. The Sacred Heart school teaches students from pre-kindergarten to eighth grade.

"Is that what he's saying? Is that what's going to go on after they leave? I think that's something that many Catholics would disagree with," he said.

Other organizations sponsoring the advertisements include Call To Action, New Ways Ministry and Fortunate Families. †

## From the gay and lesbian alumni/ae of Notre Dame

*What Father Jenkins' refusal means*

By **Liam Dacey**

May 7, 2010

As another academic year comes to a close for students, it is always interesting to look back at how GLBT issues on campus have progressed. This year in particular was a turbulent time, with a homophobic comic strip published in *The Observer*, 200 student and faculty member marching for GLBT rights, and another failed attempt by students at gaining approval for a GLBT club.

One other small incident occurred that I feel should not go untold. In the past, GALA-ND/SMC officers have had the opportunity to meet with the current university president to discuss GLBT issues on campus. During the 90s, for instance, GALA-ND/SMC officers met with then-president Monk Malloy. I personally met with Monk Malloy in 2004 after the first Queer Film Festival.

However, Father Jenkins has yet to meet with GALA-ND/SMC. After he became president in 2005, I immediately reached out to Father Jenkins to discuss the Queer Film Festival. At the time, he said he was "too busy" and directed me to meet with his advisors (which I did). Flash forward to 2008 and 2009, where GALA-ND/SMC again reached out to Father Jenkins for a meeting to no avail. This time he referred us to Dolly Duffy, the Associate Executive Director of the Alumni Association. While our meeting with Dolly was productive in terms of alumni interaction, she was not at liberty to discuss GLBT issues

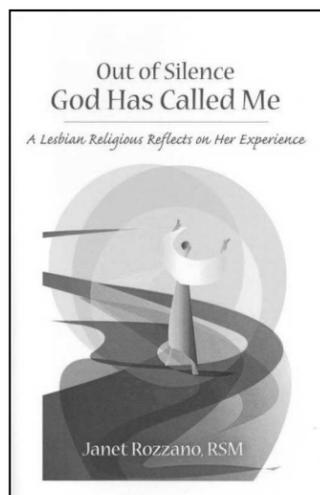
on campus with current students.

This past year, we made yet another attempt to meet Father Jenkins. While we let him know that we could work around his schedule, he still turned down our request. This time his reasoning was that the "did not directly meet with alumni groups." He again referred us to Dolly Duffy, however we felt that another meeting with her was not warranted.

While I highly doubt that Father Jenkins does not meet with other alumni groups, that is besides the point. What matters is this: by not meeting with us, Father Jenkins is sending a similar message to GALA-ND/SMC as his administration does to the campus community - we don't see you as equal. When there is not an approved student group or equal protection from discrimination and harassment, then students are not being legitimized as full members of Notre Dame. Similarly, when the officers of GALA-ND/SMC are not viewed as "important" enough to get 30 minutes of Father Jenkins' time, we are also not being treated as equals.

Many at Notre Dame have suggested that perhaps Father Jenkins is just too "tired" from all the heat he has taken over President Obama's visit a year ago. They say he needs a break from controversy. Imagine if this was the same approach that Obama himself took when it came to difficult issues. If Father Jenkins is afraid to stand up for what is right and just, then what exactly is his job? †

## Out of Silence God Had Called Me



**A Lesbian Religious Reflects on Her Experience**  
By **Janet Rozzano, RSM**

**Out of Silence God Has Called Me** is a must read for all women religious, leaders of congregations of women religious and their vocation and formation personnel.

Never before in such a comprehensive yet succinct manner has a writer told her story of the journey and self discovery as a lesbian within a religious life commitment. The book is a small but powerful and moving read.

This booklet can be used to break open conversation on important issues such as sexual orientation, respect for diversity and honoring the journey of each member of religious communities.

**Booklet is available through New Ways Ministry  
\$3.00 per copy (includes shipping)**

# Archdiocese distances self from school ruling

By Lisa Wangness  
Boston.com  
May 13, 2010

The Archdiocese of Boston said yesterday that administrators of a small Catholic elementary school in Hingham were not following archdiocesan policy when they rescinded admission of a prospective student after learning that his parents are lesbians.

Spokesman Terry Donilon said the archdiocese has no prohibition against same-sex couples sending their children to Catholic schools.

"We want kids to come to Catholic schools," he said.

St. Paul Elementary School admitted an 8-year-old boy earlier this year but recently withdrew the acceptance after learning that his parents are lesbians, the archdiocese confirmed yesterday. Donilon said the archdiocese would have no further comment until it had finished reviewing the matter and speaking with all parties involved.

The Rev. James Rafferty, pastor of St. Paul parish, and Cynthia Duggan, the school's principal, did not respond to requests for an interview yesterday afternoon. Lisa Lipsett, an adviser to the school's PTO Executive Committee, referred all questions to the archdiocese.

The decision incensed state Representative Garrett J. Bradley, a Democrat from Hingham who grew up in St. Paul parish.

"These parents thought enough of St. Paul's to want to send their child there; St. Paul's thought enough of their child to admit him. For the school to then discriminate against him and withdraw his acceptance because of his parents' sexual orientation is not only inappropriate, but mind-blowing," he said in a phone interview last night. "Shame on St. Paul's, and shame on us as a community if we allow it."

Christine Smith, chairwoman of the Hingham School Committee and a St. Paul's parishioner, said last night that she would have no immediate comment because she did not know enough about the school's decision.

Although Catholic schools integrate church teachings into their curriculum and

ethos, they also accept students of any religious background, as well as children whose parents are divorced, even though the church forbids divorce and remarriage.

In Boulder, Colo., in March, a Catholic school refused to allow a student in prekindergarten to reenroll after discovering the child's parents were lesbians. Denver Archbishop Charles J. Chaput defended the decision, writing in the Denver Catholic Register newspaper that the church does not condemn gays and lesbians or their children, but does define marriage as a heterosexual union. He said families with other views "have other, excellent options for education."

Attorney Shawn Gaylord, public policy director for the New York-based Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, an advocacy group for gay students, said the Massachusetts law barring discrimination in schools based on sexual orientation applies only to public schools.

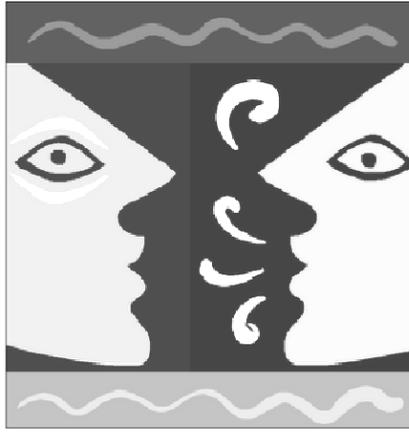
But that does not mean St. Paul's made the right decision, said Eliza Byard, executive director of the group.

"There's one family being singled out when I would venture to guess that there are other families [in the school] living in discord of the [teachings of the] Catholic Church," Byard said.

The Boston Archdiocese has been aggressively recruiting students as it seeks to

strengthen the struggling network of Catholic schools. On Tuesday, leaders of the Campaign for Catholic Schools trumpeted a pair of \$1 million corporate donations, which brought them closer to their \$85 million goal for consolidating and rebuilding schools in Brockton, Gloucester, Dorchester, Mattapan, and South Boston.

The Associated Press, which first reported the story yesterday, said the Hingham student's parents had planned to send him to third grade in the fall.



## 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  
*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, 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:* LeMoyne College  
*Queens:* St. John's University

One of the boy's mothers, who was granted anonymity because of their concerns that publicity would harm their child, told the AP they knew of the church's opposition to homosexual relationships but wrote both their names on the admission forms.

"We weren't hiding," she said.

Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of DignityUSA, a Boston-based advocacy group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Catholics, said that the St. Paul case was not isolated and that she receives three to four calls a year from parents across the country in similar situations.

Duddy-Burke said she was pleased to hear the archdiocese has no official policy excluding children of same-sex couples from Catholic schools, but she would like to see church officials go further and include a nondiscrimination statement that covers sexual orientation in each school's handbook.

In any case, she said, gay and lesbian parents considering Catholic schools for their children often face a dilemma over whether the merits of the school outweigh the possibility their child may hear messages about the church's teachings on homosexuality and gay marriage that could be painful. †

## Next Steps

### Developing Catholic Lesbian/Gay Ministry

A weekend workshop/retreat  
for all interested  
in lesbian/gay ministry

**October 29-31, 2010**

La Salette Retreat Center  
Attleboro, Massachusetts  
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This weekend of prayer, presentations, dialogue, and planning is designed to assist those seeking ways to include lesbian/gay people and issues in their home parishes, schools, or other ministerial settings.

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## United Kingdom

## A welcoming Church

*Paul Donovan speaks to Martin Pendergast and Maria Exall about what it means to be a gay or lesbian Catholic, and why the Church's teachings on social justice and Catholic inclusivity are attracting more Christians to join*

By Paul Donovan

*Justice Magazine—United Kingdom*  
March/April 2010

Martin Pendergast has been a repeat victim of homophobic attacks. In 1986 he was stabbed in the back with a pen knife, escaping when surrounded by a group of youths aged 12-18. "It just missed my kidney," Martin said. "It was only later that the police suggested it might have had a homophobic intent. Then when he moved house with his partner, stickers from a fascist group appeared on the railings opposite declaring "Kill a Queer".

A couple of years ago, he was attacked in the doorway of his house. "I was karate-kicked, resulting in a broken jaw, four broken ribs and damage to my eye and mouth, needing surgery."

He learned from police that DNA from the assailant matched with other attacks on gay men.

The threat of violence is something which gay and lesbian people have had to live with on a daily basis. Maria Exall has not suffered any physical attack, but has endured name calling in the street from time to time.

She recalled how gay and lesbian people can become targets, once it is known that they are living in an area.

Research shows an under-reporting of homophobic crime, though the police now take such attacks very seriously.

"There have been increases in homophobic violence, especially from groups

of young people," said Martin, who has noticed the role that girls often play in bullying. "It is a sign of something else going on, of young people's disenfranchisement resulting in aggression against anyone thought to be different."

They both referred to research finding an increase in homophobic bullying going on in schools, although Martin said he had seen some excellent work going on in Catholic schools to promote inclusiveness amongst staff and pupils.

A national trade union official, Maria said it had taken 20 years of work to get homophobic bullying in the workplace recognised and taken seriously in the union movement. In terms of the Church, Martin and Maria said they saw the question of how gay and lesbian people are treated as an issue of social justice as much as one of personal sexual ethics.

They are frustrated that, in many instances, it is often reduced to discussions about personal sexual practices.

Sexual orientation has only come up for detailed discussion in the Church in the last 30 years, largely because of the 1976 Declaration on Human Ethics, authorised by Pope Paul VI.



Martin Pendergast (Photo: Bernie Keating)

Martin recalled that when he studied theology in Rome in the late 1960s, the topic was hardly covered.

"Our own bishops in 1979 put out pastoral care guidelines saying that like heterosexuality, homosexual orientation was morally neutral and it was a question of how people lived it out," said Martin.

Maria said she did not agree with the view of some Christians who portray homosexuality as some kind of 'secular disease'.

The question for Martin and Maria is working out ethics with integrity and they believe that the rich tradition of the Catholic Church in relation to diversity issues make it a place where such issues can best be worked out reasonably.

Martin said that within the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement (LGCN), people have been drawn to join the Catholic Church after being struck by its teachings, its main attraction being its inclusive nature.

"People are responding to the bigger message that the Catholic Church offers about integral human development," he added.

"It is about being part of community and does not all come down to

sexuality."

He suggested that the hierarchy in England and Wales had been enlightened over the years with the way in which it had dealt with the issues.

It was 10 years ago that lesbian and gay Catholics started up a monthly Mass which was initially held at a Catholic convent and then at St Anne's Anglican Church in Soho, London.

The numbers grew from an initial 30 to 40 and the Masses started to be celebrated twice a month.

Then, three years ago, after a consultation process, the Masses moved to the Church of the Assumption in Warwick Street, Soho.

"Now 100 to 120 people come on a regular basis with new people attending every time," said Martin.

He estimated that 250 to 300 different people were among regular attendees.

"People of different ethnic minorities, ages, backgrounds and sexualities all come along," said Martin, who believes the Vatican is looking at the model as one that could be potentially used in other parts of the world where there is a more aggressive attitude toward the lesbian and gay community.

Martin is also pleased that some of the protests outside the Church appear to have tailed off over recent months.

The organisers of the Masses have received plaudits from many people, with one senior priest in Westminster telling Martin that he would have walked away from the Church years ago if he had been subjected to the type of abuse the lesbian and gay community had.

"The mature way though, is to engage, not just walk away," said Martin.

Both Martin and Maria are keen that people from non-faith backgrounds come to see the inclusive and tolerant nature of the Catholic Church.

It is all too easy for those outside the Church to pick on some of the more reactionary, ill-informed comments and accuse all people of faith of being homophobic.

But the need to build bridges is vital, and the sight of lesbian and gay people being more at ease in the Church should be a cause for celebration.

It is a sign of confidence in what the Church believes, and its ability to operate in a genuinely diverse way across humanity. †

†

## Scotland

## Catholic bishops urge followers not to vote for gay-friendly candidates

By Staff Writer

*PinkNews.co.uk*  
April 22, 2010

Catholic bishops in Scotland are urging followers not to vote for candidates who support gay equality, abortion rights and assisted suicide.

A message which will be circulated to all Catholic parishes in Scotland urges voters to "vote with your faith to protect human life; to support marriage and the family; to protect religious freedom; to protect Catholic education".

The message, titled "Make Your Faith Count!" calls on voters to reject candidates who supported civil partnerships or the ban on Catholic adoption agencies being allowed to reject gay couples.

It says the church cannot tell voters who to vote for but urges them to vote for the candidate who "best represents the values we, like our parents and grandparents before us, hold dear".

The message said: "The political choices we face today are not the choices your parents and grandparents faced. They would never have voted for any candidate who refused to protect unborn human life, who supported experimentation on human embryos, or planned to assist unfortunate people to commit suicide.

"They would never have voted for a candidate who would undermine marriage and family in the way that has happened in recent years with cross-party support. They would never have voted for candi-

dates who rejoiced in same sex unions. They would never have voted for candidates who would stop the church offering adoption services. They would never have voted for candidates who were clearly hostile to the values they held dear.

"As Catholics we know the importance of protecting every human life and of the value that married family life gives to society. These values were once widely shared but times have changed. Many of those standing for election, of whatever party, do not share our basic principles and values.

"That is why we say to you: when you vote, make your faith count. Vote with your faith to protect human life; to support marriage and the family; to protect religious freedom; to protect Catholic education. Vote with your faith, and uphold the right of conscience and religious freedom."

Cardinal Keith O'Brien, president of the Bishops' Conference said: "It is crucially important that apathy is not allowed to win in this election, I hope Catholic voters will make the cross count by quizzing their candidates on the important moral matters which affect us and that they use the resources which the Bishops' Conference."

The church has also sent a questionnaire to all candidates asking them their views on religious freedom, the family and whether "alternative relationships" can be considered equal to marriage. †

## Peru

## Gay organizations protest the Catholic church in Lima, Peru

By Isabel Guerra

*LivinginPeru.com*  
April 26, 2010

Several Peruvian gay and lesbian organizations protested in front of the Apostolic Nunciature to Peru, expressing their disagreement with the recent declarations of some Vatican spokespersons, who related pederasty with homosexuality.

The sit-in was organized by the Peruvian Network of Transgender, Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals, and reunited some 100 activists in front of the Nun-

ciature's building, located in the Limenian district of Jesus Maria.

The protestors were carrying signs and shouting mottos against child abuse and against Vatican Secretary Tarcisio Bertone's recent declarations, linking pederasty and child abuse to homosexuality.

"Pedophilia is a crime, homosexuality is not," they yelled.

Some Catholic organizations were also present, rejecting this protest, saying prayers and shouting their own mottos. They feared the protestors might attack the building, like during similar previous protests in Argentina and Chile. †

# Vatican enmeshed in gay sex allegations

By Rachel Donadio  
New York Times  
March 3, 2010

A singer in an elite Vatican choir and a jailed Italian public works executive who served as a papal usher were let go by the Vatican this week amid allegations that they were involved in what prosecutors believe was an organized network of gay prostitution, Italian news media reported.

Ghinedu Ehiem, a Nigerian who sang in a choir that performs at St. Peter's Basilica, was dismissed after the center-left daily newspaper La Repubblica reported Wednesday that he had procured men, including seminarians, for Angelo Balducci, a former member of the board of Italy's public works department who was arrested and jailed last month on corruption charges.

After his arrest, Mr. Balducci was removed from his Vatican post in The Gentlemen of His Holiness, an elite group of ushers who serve at the Apostolic Palace when visiting dignitaries meet the pope, the ANSA news agency reported Thursday, citing Vatican sources.

The reports emerged as part of a sweeping investigation into corruption in the awarding of public works contracts by Italy's Civil Protection Agency. Mr. Balducci, a consultant to the Vatican on major construction projects, is one of four people to be jailed in the inquiry, which has dealt a serious blow to the well-respected director of the Civil Protection Agency, Guido Bertolaso.

In wiretapped phone conversations leaked to the news media, people with business before the agency are heard

organizing parties for Mr. Bertolaso, complete with beautiful young women believed to be to his liking. Mr. Bertolaso is under investigation but has not been charged with a crime.

But nothing quite compares to the reports of a gay prostitution ring that emerged this week. Citing a police document drawing on intercepted phone conversations, La Repubblica reported Wednesday that Mr. Ehiem procured men for Mr. Balducci. In one conversation, the paper quotes Mr. Balducci as asking Mr. Ehiem, "At what time does he have to return to the seminary?"

Over more than a year of taped conversations, Mr. Ehiem described the physiques of various men to Mr. Balducci. "I have a situation from Naples," Mr. Ehiem says in one conversation, according to La Repubblica. "I have a situation from Cuba," he says in another, continuing with "a German

who just arrived from Germany," "two black guys," "the soccer player" and "the dancer for the RAI" state broadcaster.

It was not immediately possible to reach Mr. Ehiem's lawyer. Mr. Ehiem, who the Vatican said was not a member of any religious order, told Panorama magazine that he had met Mr. Balducci through an Italian friend who had worked as an escort, ANSA reported Thursday. Mr. Ehiem accused magistrates of "ruining his life," it added.

Mr. Balducci, who is married, has said he is innocent of the corruption charges. His lawyer, Franco Coppi, who successfully defended a former prime minister, Giulio Andreotti, against charges of Mafia dealings, told the news agency that it was "shameful" for newspapers to publish conversations unrelated to the investigation. He added that he and Mr. Balducci had "laughed" when they learned of the sex allegations. †

## Vatican slammed for blaming gay priests in pedophile scandal

By Staff Writer  
Agence France-Press  
April 14, 2010

The child sex abuse scandal scorching the Catholic Church worsened Tuesday with lawmakers, doctors and gay activists slamming an attempt by the Vatican to shift the blame for the pedophilia to homosexual priests.

Comments by Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Vatican's secretary of state, during a visit to Chile on Monday triggered the indignation by saying homosexuality, not celibacy among the clergy, was at fault.

"Many psychologists, many psychiatrists have demonstrated there exists no relationship between celibacy and pedophilia," Bertone told a Santiago news conference.

"But many others have demonstrated, and have told me recently, that there is a link between homosexuality and pedophilia. This is true, this is the problem," he said.

The comments immediately threw fuel on the scandal that is threatening to engulf Pope Benedict XVI, by prompting outrage Tuesday in Chile and in Italy.

"I would like to see the scientific studies he said he has, because I don't share this evaluation... I have the impression that he is wrong on this point," said a Chilean senator who helped draft anti-pedophile laws, Patricio Walker.

"This linking is wrong. Celibacy does more damage to a human being than homosexuality, which is a freely made choice," a communist deputy, Hugo Gutierrez, told AFP. "I'm shocked by these words from a senior dignitary of the Church."

A medical specialist at the University of Chile, Tamara Galleguillos, added that "it's not possible to think there's a direct link between homosexuality and pedophilia."

She explained that her work in Chile's forensic service showed homosexual pedophiles were no more likely to commit their crimes than heterosexual pedophiles.

Rolando Jimenez, head of Chile's Movement for Homosexual Integration and Liberation, called on Bertone "to show us any scientific, rigorous, serious and religiously independent study that



Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone

supports this allegation."

In Rome, the head of Italian gay rights group Gaylib, Enrico Oliari, called it "worrying that the foreign minister of a state that occupies the heart of the Italian capital would use arguments that are considered passe even in the Third World."

Aurelio Mancuso, former president of a larger Italian gay rights association Arcigay, said: "The truth is that Bertone is clumsily trying to shift attention to homosexuality and away from the focus on new crimes against children that emerge every day."

...Bertone's controversial statement came as the Vatican tried to step up its damage control on the scandal.

The leadership of the Catholic Church has repeatedly tried to dismiss as media exaggerations the tide of recent claims in Austria, Germany, Ireland and the United States that predator priests were given protection from prosecution by their hierarchy.

Pope Benedict himself has faced allegations that he failed to take action against pedophile priests, both as head of the Vatican's top doctrinal and morals enforcer and earlier as the Munich archbishop.

The Holy See this week used its mouthpiece newspaper to praise its handling of past pedophile cases as "exemplary," and on Monday it posted guidelines on handling new cases on its official website. †

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## Newark Archbishop questions plan for Seton Hall University gay marriage class

Continued from page 1

posed course and to take whatever action is required under the law to protect the Catholicity of this university."

As archbishop, Myers does not have the authority to cancel a class. But the conservative archbishop serves as chairman of Seton Hall's board of trustees and president of the school's board of regents, the governing body that oversees academic issues.

Larry Robinson, Seton Hall's vice provost, said the course was approved by both the political science department and the dean's office.

"The initial review at the departmental level and at the dean's level suggests that the course is not an advocacy course ... but a 'special topics' course to objectively examine a significant current public policy issue," Robinson said. "Thus, we fully anticipate that the Catholic position on same-sex marriage will be explored."

W. King Mott, the Seton Hall associate professor of political science scheduled to teach the course, told *The Setonian*, the campus newspaper, he didn't think it was unusual for a Catholic university to offer a class on an issue the church does not support.

"The best schools offer controversial classes," Mott told the *Setonian* in a story published earlier this week. "The class is not about advocacy, but about studying the issue from an academic perspective. It's about awareness."

Mott, who is gay, has clashed with the church and university officials before. In 2005, he was demoted from his post as associate dean of Seton Hall's College of Arts and Sciences after his letter challenging the church's view on homosexuality was published in *The Star-Ledger*.

School officials objected to Mott signing the letter with his Seton Hall title, causing confusion about whether he was speaking on behalf of the university. The letter said the church unfairly scapegoats gay men for the clergy sex abuse scandal.

Faculty members protested Mott's demotion, arguing school officials violated his academic freedom when they punished him for writing a letter. But Seton Hall's provost upheld the demotion and Mott, who has tenure, remained on campus as a prominent professor.

He currently serves as the chairman of the faculty senate and as one of 12 members of the search committee looking for Seton Hall's next president. †

# Children denied Catholic schooling, lesbian couple speaks out

Continued from page 1

they said. "We decided for a number of reasons to send our children to Sacred Heart School," Mary said. "We have loved it there. Our children were thriving there. When we first enrolled our daughter in pre-school we told the school administrators our daughter had two moms. We asked if this was going to be a problem. We said that if it was going to be a problem we could go else where. We were very open and they said it would not be a problem."

The women said they never made a "big issue" of their family situation. "We have never flaunted it or pushed any political agenda at the school at all," Mary continued. "The parents know; the teachers know. We've sat with the kindergarten teachers and have talked with them. Never over a three year period we never had any indication that it would be a problem at all. We found it to be a very accepting environment for our child."

All seemed quite natural until a it came time for next year's enrollment a couple weeks back, Martha recalled.

"I went in to turn in our daughter's kindergarten application and was called into the principal's office. That's when, she said, she got "blind sided."

"She sat me down and told me we were no longer accepted here any more. She said it was not going to be a good fit for our child and that she would encourage us to look elsewhere," Martha went on, explaining the principal said she was worried there could be confusion when the teachers teach about the family unit.

"Her main point was she was concerned about our child, about her well-being. She never came out and said we were not welcomed to stay. But she pretty much told us it was time for us to move on."

That evening the women discussed what was said adding they were upset and so they decided they wanted clarification because the principal had stopped short of saying their daughter could not enroll, just that it would not be wise to do so.

Mary said she called the principal and asked for clarification. She recalls asking: "Are you just worried about how this is going to be for my child because of the church's stance on homosexuality?" She said she told the principal that if that was the case the women could handle it. I told her we did not expect any accommodations for our children based on our family situation. She then asked directly: "Are you telling us we are not allowed?"

At that point, Mary said, the principal replied that she needed to call the archdiocese. The next day, with the principal and the pastor of Sacred Heart parish, Fr. William Breslin, on the line, the women were told that their daughters could stay one more year in school and after that they would be out.

What changed?

The women say they don't know. They said they were told that the issue had

been thoroughly discussed by the parish administrators. Yet the women said they never heard of any complaints about their children being in the school from teachers or parents.

"At first we were conflicted about what the right response would be," Mary said. "We knew there was potential for this to become a big deal. But we felt it would be in our children's best interest to simply focus on finding other educa-



tional opportunities for them."

"We did not feel then and we still don't feel now that pushing the church to change its mind would be in our children's best interests. We don't want our children to become targets in a place where they were not welcome. So we decided to meet with Father Bill and send a letter to the archbishop and we would leave it at that."

They women said they were "personally hurt, personally upset," but decided it was time "to move on."

But that was not the end. It turned out to be only the beginning. Following the decision the parish administrators told the school teachers and as best the women can reconstruct one of the teachers contacted a local television news channel. Word of the decision was soon flashed on local television and the story appeared the next morning in the Daily Camera.

"Within hours it was out to the entire community," Martha said. "The parents knew; it was the talk of the parking lot. This started on a Monday and by Thursday when I went to drop off our children I had people I didn't even know coming up to me and hugging me with tears in their eyes. We hadn't told any of them. It was spreading like wildfire. And it didn't come from us."

The women said there have been surprises along the way. One of the biggest was the amount of support they

quickly received from parents at Sacred Heart school. "We have been around for years but just didn't think much about it and didn't think that it would be such an issue for so many," Mary said. "It meant a lot coming from this group of people."

Was this somehow about making a point on gay issues?

"People have suggested that we put our children in the school to make a political point or that we are fighting

children in the Catholic faith and we said we would and we have really tried to live up to that commitment," Martha said. "We take them to church every week. We switched to the Sacred Heart parish when our kids starting going to the school. We signed up and our money goes into the basket every week. Our kids go to Sunday school. We are making the effort."

Part of the disappointment for the women is that they feel the Catholic church is now not fulfilling its part of the promise to provide all the support it can in the raising of the children as Catholics.

Said Mary: "We are trying to live up to the promises we make to raise our kids as Catholics and now the church we made the promise to is sort of undermining our attempts to do so." They said they were shocked when a local priest suggested they raise their children as Episcopalians.

After being told their children could not continue into the elementary school, the women said they spoke with Sacred Heart pastor, Fr. Breslin, and were told they could continue to come to church and that their children could come to CCD classes. They then asked what was the difference between CCD education and school education. "Isn't the doctrine the same?" they asked. They felt Breslin was not able to provide an understandable answer.

They say they are also troubled because behind the decision to forbid their children from going to the elementary school is a presumption about their personal lives and that no one ever asked them about what it means for them to live as a couple.

"No one has every asked us if we are celibates. How do they know we are not upholding official church teachings?" Mary asked. Meanwhile, other parish parents, they say, have been coming to them saying they are not upholding church teachings. Some have noted they are divorced and remarried without a church blessing. Others say they are practicing birth control methods contrary to church teachings.

Said Martha: "The frustrating argument for me is that our priest and archbishop are saying we are openly living in disagreement with the doctrine of the church. They are saying people who are divorced are not as open, but everyone knows they are divorced. They imply that we are flaunting our relationship. That is the last thing we do. We go to church as family. We never show any affection for each other in church. We are very private. But that's how the archdiocese is seeing it." . . .

One point that the women wanted me to know and report is that they are not part of any gay movement. They are not activists. "You have never seen us at protests or marching in parades. We never intended to pave the way for gays in the Catholic church. We just wanted to be a normal family." . . .

"All through this we have decided that we are not going to let our hearts be filled with anger and disgust and hatred. We decided we are just going to move on, take care of our family and we are going to be fine. The family is going to be fine and maybe bringing this out to the forefront of people's minds is going to have some positive effect. You can't let it drag you down."

Later, the women said they were working on a press statement and wanted to be sure I knew its last sentence so that I could report it. The sentence reads: "We will continue to raise our children with strong Catholic values and hold faith that through our actions, we are doing our part to create a more loving, inclusive world." †

this battle and making our children political footballs. This is not the case," Martha insisted. "You are the first person we have talked to. We haven't spoken to any of the reporters who have wanted to speak with us. We value our privacy."

Both of the moms were born and raised Catholics. Mary went to Catholic schools from pre-school through 12th grade. Martha went to Notre Dame. Mary's mother taught in a Catholic school system for 25 years. Martha's aunt was a Catholic school teacher for decades. "We have a lot of history with the Catholic school system. It is what we are familiar with. It is what we are comfortable with. We value what a Catholic education can do for our kids," Martha said.

As for Sacred Heart, the women say it has been good place for their children's education. They say they appreciate the moral foundation the teachers have provided. They say they support the character of Catholic education. They say it is very important to them that their children be provided with religious education. "We want our kids to learn about religion. We feel religion is really important. And they love it. They love God. They love their school. They love their friends. They love their teachers," Mary said. . . .

...Mary and Martha each gave birth to one of the children. Legally each has joint custody of both children. The women are not legally married. They have lived in Colorado for nearly a decade and Colorado does not allow gay marriages.

Each of the children was baptized by local priests, one who is in a neighboring parish and another who has been reassigned outside the area. The baptisms followed by months the publication of a 2006 statement issued by the U.S. bishops offering guidelines to ministers and parents of gay and lesbian children. The outlines suggest baptism for children of gays and lesbians, the women say, as long as there is a reasonable assumption that the children will be raised as Catholics.

"They asked if we would raise our

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## 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.

### Alabama

*Montgomery:* St. Bede

### Arizona

*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  
*Encino:* Our Lady of Grace  
*Escondido:* St. Timothy  
*Fremont:* St. Joseph - Mission San Jose  
*Goleta:* St. Mark Univ. Parish  
*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, Koinoia  
*Pleasanton:* Catholic Community of Pleasanton  
*Sacramento:* St. Francis of Assisi  
*San Carlos:* St. Charles  
*San Diego:* 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 Barbara:* OL of Guadalupe  
*Santa Clara:* GALA  
*Santa Cruz:* Holy Cross  
*Santa Monica:* St. Monica  
*Simi Valley:* St. Rose of Lima  
*Spring Valley:* Santa Sophia  
*Valinda:* St. Martha  
*Vernon:* Holy Angels Church of the Deaf  
*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

*Highlands Ranch:* Pax Christi  
*Littleton:* Light of the World, St. Frances Cabrini

### 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, Sacred Heart, Christ the King

### 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, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Old St. Patrick  
*Clarendon Hills:* Notre Dame  
*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  
*Greenbelt:* Catholic Community of Greenbelt  
*Hagerstown:* St. Ann  
*Severn:* St. Bernadette

### Massachusetts

*Boston:* Paulist Center, St. Anthony Shrine, St. Cecilia  
*East Longmeadow:* St. Michael  
*Newton:* St. Ignatius  
*Sharon:* Our Lady of Sorrows  
*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. Joseph:* St. Francis Xavier  
*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  
*Maplewood:* St. Joseph  
*Tinton 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, Church of the Ascension, St. Francis of Assisi  
*Melville:* St. Elizabeth  
*Pittsford:* Church of the Transfiguration  
*Rochester:* Blessed Sacrament, St. Mary (Downtown), St. Monica  
*Syracuse:* 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

*Beaverton:* Mission of the Atonement  
*Portland:* Journey and Koinonia Catholic Community, St. Andrew, St. Phillip Neri, Downtown Chapel (St. Vincent de Paul)

### Pennsylvania

*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  
*Triangle:* St. Francis  
*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  
*Menomonee Falls:* Good Shepherd  
*Milwaukee:* Good Shepherd, Prince of Peace, Trinity-Guadalupe

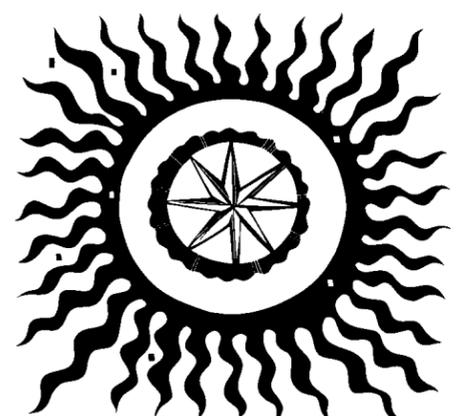
### Canada

*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.**



# Hingham, Same-Sex Marriage, and Life Issues

By James Martin, SJ  
America Magazine blog  
May 17, 2010

Hingham is an affluent town on Boston's monied "South Shore," whose Main Street, dotted with handsome white-clapboard houses, was called by Eleanor Roosevelt the prettiest street in the country. How do I know this? Because my first spiritual director, a Bostonian "by birth and by choice," when driving the novices to a vacation house owned by Boston College Jesuit Community in nearby Cohasset, always used to retell this tidbit—every time we drove through the town. "Did I ever tell you what Eleanor Roosevelt said about this street?" Yes, we would say wearily, but we would enjoy hearing him retell it with pride, nonetheless. At Christmastime, he would then invariably say, all the houses, by mutual agreement, set out white Christmas lights in their windows—rather than the (apparently) tackier multicolored ones. Hingham is an attractive town.

Recently, however, Hingham has been the focus of some not-so-attractive goings-on.

In the Catholic parish of St. Paul, the Rev. James Rafferty, the pastor, decided that an eight-year-old boy could not attend St. Paul's parochial school because his parents are lesbians. David Gibson at Politics Daily, provided a helpful overview of what quickly became a controversial decision. The case echoed the one in Boulder, Colorado, in which Archbishop Charles Chaput upheld the decision of a local parish to similarly reject a young girl whose parents were lesbians. "If parents don't respect the beliefs of the Church, or live in a manner that openly rejects those beliefs, then partnering with those parents becomes very difficult, if not impossible," Chaput said. In Hingham, the couple was told that their union was "in discord with the teachings of the Catholic church." "I'm accustomed to discrimination, I suppose, at my age and my experience as a gay woman," the mother told the AP. "But I didn't expect it against my child."

But the Archdiocese of Boston is handling this matter quite differently—that is, more wisely—than Denver did. Dr. Mary Grassa O'Neill, the superintendent of Catholic schools, issued a statement in which she declared (with the approval of Cardinal Sean O'Malley, I am told by a good source) the following:

The Archdiocese does not prohibit

children of same sex parents from attending Catholic schools. We will work in the coming weeks to develop a policy to eliminate any misunderstandings in the future.

Since the issue involving St. Paul School in Hingham was brought to our attention on Tuesday of this week, we have met with the pastor and principal to learn more about their decision. Earlier today I contacted the student's parent and expressed my concern for the welfare of her child. I offered to help enroll her child in another Catholic school in the Archdiocese. She was gracious and appreciative of the suggestion and indicated that she would look forward to considering some other Catholic schools that would welcome her child for the next academic year.

The Boston Globe has quoted Cardinal O'Malley, in a letter on behalf of the Catholic Schools Foundation, as saying, "We believe a policy that denies admission to students in such a manner . . . is at odds with our values as a Foundation . . . and ultimately with Gospel teaching." (The letter came from the Foundation, which O'Malley chairs.) The quote was highlighted in a column entitled "Good call by the archdiocese." (When was the last time you saw that in the Boston Globe?)

Full disclosure: I greatly admire Cardinal O'Malley. To me, he is a wise, generous and pastoral priest and bishop. So you'll have to take my comments with that in mind. Nonetheless, even if I weren't an admirer, I would admire the archdiocese's decision here.

One oddity, though: the archdiocese seems to be saying that it doesn't have any power to influence the parish, or the pastor, in Hingham. That's odd, to say the least. Why couldn't they have simply asked the pastor to accept the child into the parish school? If this had been something regarding a liturgical abuse—say, something against the rubrics of the Mass—I doubt there would have been such leniency. That is, I doubt that the archdiocese would have recommended

that a parishioner complaining about a serious liturgical abuse move to another parish. Rather, the archdiocese would have most likely exercised the authority that it has over any of its parishes.

Overall, though, the archdiocese has taken a wise and pastoral approach to a question that will increasingly face Catholic schools where children come

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from all sorts of marriages and unions. Does one punish a child for what the child's parents have done? Jesus seemed to have answered that question a long time ago, when he was asked, "Lord, who sinned, this man or his parents, the he was born blind?" (John 9).

The archdiocese's decision is not only pastoral, but sensible—even practical. For how can one adequately determine if the parents of a child agree with all of Catholic teaching? Or even "respect the beliefs" of the church? Many of the parents in parochial schools in the U.S. aren't even Catholic. How many of them are divorced and remarried? How many believe in everything that the church teaches on important mat-

ters? How many even *know* what the church teaches on important matters? Likewise, how many funerals of less-than-devout Catholics are celebrated? How many couples with little interest in the faith are married in Catholic churches?

Singling out children of same-sex couples smacks of targeting one particular group.

The Boston decision also stands in contrast to the increasingly heated language coming from church leaders on the topic of same-sex marriage. Pope Benedict XVI's comments last week in Fatima, Portugal, in which he stated that abortion and same-sex marriage were "some of today's most insidious and dangerous threats" to the common good seemed oddly discordant. The equation of abortion, something that clearly is about a threat to life, with same-sex marriage, which no matter how you look at it, does not mean that anyone is going to die, is unhelpful at best. A good friend of mine, who is gay, recently resigned from a position at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, where he said, with great dismay, that "abortionssamesexmarriage" had become one polysyllabic word among some of his bosses.

Why has same-sex marriage been equated with abortion? Are they really equivalent "threats" to life? If you're looking for a life issue with stakes as high as abortion, why not something that *actually threatens* life? Like war? Or the death penalty? Or the kind of poverty and destitution that lead to death? Why aren't "abortion and war" the most "insidious and dangerous" threats to the common good? Or "war and the death penalty"? Or "war and poverty"? The great danger is that this increasingly popular equation will seem to many as having less to do with moral equivalency and more to do with a simple dislike, or even a hatred, of gays and lesbians. †

## Fight poverty and homelessness, not gay marriage

By Michael A. Jones  
GayRights.Change.org  
March 24, 2010

Looking to fight poverty and homelessness in Maine? Don't expect any funding from the Catholic Diocese, unless you can pass their litmus test. It's a pretty simple test, really, though it has nothing to do with your ability, passion or commitment to fighting homelessness or ending poverty. Nope, instead it has to do with whether you or your organization supports same-sex marriage. If you do, goodbye funding.

That's what one anti-poverty organization is finding out the hard way this week. Preble Street is the name of the group, and the program that's being stripped of its funding from the Catholic Church is its Homeless Voices for Justice program. Why? One reason: Preble Street decided to take sides last year when Maine was debating a ballot measure over whether to support marriage equality. They chose equality for gays and lesbians, and well, we all know where the Catholic Church (and its millions of dollars) sided.

Now, as Maine Today reports, Preble Street will lose grant money that it received from the Catholic Church's Campaign for Human Development as punishment. But really, it's not necessarily Preble Street that's being punished.

It's Maine's homeless population and people struggling with economic hardship that are being punished.

This is not the first time that the institutional Catholic Church has thrown a population under the proverbial bus because of marriage equality. Exhibit A comes from Washington, D.C. where earlier this year Catholic Charities ended their foster care and adoption work, because they didn't want to place children with gay and lesbian families. Now it looks like those struggling most in the country -- people dealing with homelessness or poverty -- are joining children and families under that bus.

Thankfully, there's an authentic Catholic voice fighting back. Catholics for Marriage Equality, has begun a campaign to try and raise money to support Preble Street and the Homeless Voices for Justice program, in order to replace the money that the institutional Catholic Church is taking away from the organization. As one of their co-founders, Anne Underwood, told Maine Today, her group wants to fall back on Catholic principles of taking care of your neighbor, not abandoning them because of political disagreements.

"This is petty vindictiveness," Underwood said. "After the election is over, suddenly the money is revoked from poor people because of a political opinion held by the bishop." †

## Statement of Dr. Mary Grassa O'Neill Secretary for Education & Superintendent of Catholic Schools

Archdiocese of Boston  
May 13, 2010

"The Archdiocese of Boston is committed to providing quality Catholic education, grounded in academic excellence and the teachings of the Catholic Church, to the students at all of our schools. We believe that every parent who wishes to send their child to a Catholic school should have the opportunity to pursue that dream. Our schools welcome children based on their parent's understanding that the teachings of the Church are an important component of the curriculum and are part of the students' educational experience. The Archdiocese does not prohibit children of same sex parents from attending Catholic schools. We will work in the coming weeks to develop a policy to eliminate any misunderstandings in the future.

Since the issue involving St. Paul School in Hingham was brought to our attention on Tuesday of this week, we have met with the pastor and principal to learn more about their decision. Earlier today I contacted the student's parent and expressed my concern for the welfare of her child. I offered to help enroll her child in another Catholic school in the Archdiocese. She was gracious and appreciative of the suggestion and indicated that she would look forward to considering some other Catholic schools that would welcome her child for the next academic year.

Academic rigor, faith formation, Gospel values, strong character development, respect, and support are hallmarks of our schools." †