

# BONDINGS

Vol. 30, No. 3

A Publication of New Ways Ministry

Fall 2010

## Bishop Matthew Clark: 'All Are Beloved Children of God'

By Bishop Matthew Clark  
*The Catholic Courier*  
Rochester, New York  
July 2, 2010

Almost a dozen years ago now, I wrote a pastoral letter in which I recounted a story told by retired Bishop John Snyder, who then was bishop of St. Augustine, Fla. Bishop Snyder recalled a private meeting he had had with Pope John Paul II in which the bishop detailed his plans to start a ministry to gay and lesbian people.

After outlining this new ministry, he asked the Holy Father for his opinion and advice, not wanting to do anything which would compromise the teaching of the church. After a moment to think, the saintly pope replied, "We all need redeeming, don't we?"

I have been reminded of this story recently, and the compassionate wisdom of the Holy Father, because of what I perceive is an increasing polarization in our society over issues involving gay and lesbian people, especially as it pertains to same-sex marriage, a debate in which the Catholic Church has weighed in strongly.

While dialogue and debate are always helpful, I am worried that, increasingly, the public discussion has degenerated in many cases into name-calling and condemnation or, even worse, acts of hate and malice. Frankly, I am saddened by how easily we can draw lines in the sand over these issues and fall into the trap of grouping, classifying and herding individuals, thus dehumanizing and even demonizing them.

I will not dwell here on the well-known teaching of the Catholic Church opposing same-sex marriage. It is a teaching the church has made clear, and one I understand theologically and uphold faithfully as bishop. At the same

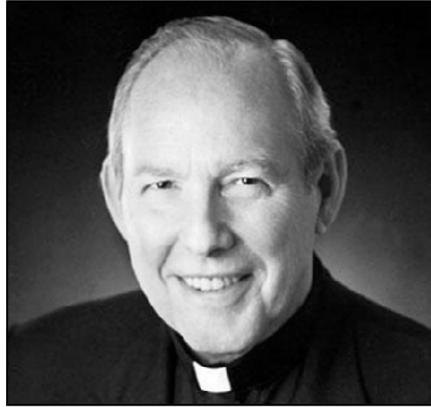
time, I lament that the "don'ts" of our teaching too often drown out the "do's." I lament that the *full* teaching of the church as it concerns gay and lesbian people is either too little known, too often left unspoken or, in some cases, deliberately ignored.

Put simply, what I fear are getting lost in all of the lobbying and labeling going on these days are Catholic teachings that call us to love, respect and care for our sisters and brothers who are gay or lesbian. Rather than condemn, judge or discriminate against them, we are called to recognize that they, like all of us, are created and loved absolutely by a compassionate, merciful God.

We are reminded of this mandate in the U.S. bishops' statement "Always Our Children," which notes that "the teachings of the Church make it clear that the fundamental human rights of homosexual persons must be defended and that all of us must strive to eliminate any form of injustice, oppression, or violence against them. ... It is not sufficient only to avoid unjust discrimination. Homosexual persons 'must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity' (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2358)."

Yet it is just that "respect, compassion and sensitivity" described by the catechism that I feel has become obscured. I would hope we could strive to work at this with more vigor as church, balancing our need to uphold our firm beliefs about such things as marriage with more compassion and less judgment.

Over the years, I have heard and seen firsthand the pain felt by gay and lesbian men and women and their families. In conversations I have had with them, they speak of their anguish, feelings of loneliness and abandonment, of not feeling welcome in our churches, feeling con-



Bishop Matthew Clark

stantly under scrutiny. I have heard their parents and loved ones describe with a sense of fear, guilt, shame and utter sadness the unkind reaction of neighbors and friends -- their fellow Catholics and fellow Christians -- to their gay children. They speak of their own sense of being torn between church teachings and their love for their children. I have heard as well from many priests who want to reach out to gay and lesbian people as the church asks them to do, but feel caught in the crossfire of current debate and division.

I wish it were not so. In all of these conversations, I have told them -- and I repeat again now -- that we must love these children of God with a heart worthy of Christ. I am reminded of the words in "Always Our Children": "You are always my child. Nothing can ever change that. You also are a child of God, gifted and called for a purpose in God's design."

In our own diocese, I have been proud of the work of the Catholic Gay and Lesbian Family Ministry, which advocates for and facilitates pastoral care in our diocese and its parishes for gay, les-

bian, bisexual and transgendered people and their families.

This ministry is guided by the words of the 1976 U.S. bishops' letter "To Live in Christ Jesus," which states that "they have a right to respect, friendship and justice. They should have an active role in the Christian community."

Catholic Gay and Lesbian Family Ministry has worked with many of our parishes to develop a loving outreach ministry, one that encourages pastoral leaders to create a climate of welcome through bulletin items; inclusion of gay and lesbian people in discussions of diversity; sensitivity to language in liturgies and homilies; and encouragement of dialogue, education and affirmation of families. If you are interested in finding out more about this work or need some help and guidance, you can contact CGLFM through [www.dor.org](http://www.dor.org) (click on More Catholic Links) or by calling 585-303-8605.

This ministry, while very important, is not in itself sufficient to the work that must be done to ensure our church is a loving and welcoming one. To achieve that end, every one of us -- every pastoral leader and minister, every church official, every person in the pews -- must practice what we preach, avoiding any sense of oppression or discrimination.

It will take every one of us if we are to avoid adding to the dangerous division and labeling of people we know can only hurt our society.

I think the concluding words of "Always Our Children" say it well:

"To our homosexual brothers and sisters ... we stretch out our hands and invite you to do the same. We are called to become one body, one spirit in Christ. We need one another if we are to 'grow in every way into him who is the head,

*(Continued on page 10)*

## Equally Blessed Unites Catholic Voices for Equality and Justice

WASHINGTON, DC., September 30, 2010—Four longstanding Catholic organizations announced today that they have formed Equally Blessed, a coalition of faithful Catholics who support full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people both in the church and in civil society.

"As Catholics, we believe that all human beings are beloved children of God," said Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry, an Equally Blessed member. "We are called to do our part in bringing about justice in the church and the world, and Equally Blessed will allow us to do that together."

The coalition also includes Call To Action, DignityUSA and Fortunate Families. Together the four groups have spent a combined 112 years working on behalf of LGBT people and their families.

"Equally Blessed proclaims what most U.S. Catholics already believe," said Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of DignityUSA. "The laws of our land and the policies of our church should mandate fairness, justice and equality for all."

Leaders of Equally Blessed said they decided to work together in the wake of several recent civil and church situations that demonstrate the need for a faithful pro-equality Catholic voice:



The Knights of Columbus have mounted an expensive campaign to oppose gay marriage in Minnesota, where it has become a gubernatorial campaign issue.

Catholic dioceses spent extensively to overturn legalized same-sex marriage in Maine last year.

In the Archdiocese of Denver last spring, Archbishop Charles Chaput sanctioned the expulsion of a lesbian couple's daughter from a Catholic school.

In Washington DC, Archbishop

Donald Wuerl has recently withheld health benefits from the spouses of newly-hired heterosexual employees so that he could legally withhold such benefits from the spouses of gay or lesbian employees.

"A growing community of faithful Catholics believes that everyone, including LGBT people, are affirmed and welcomed in our church, and these unjust actions do not speak for us," said Nicole Sotelo, coordinator of Call To Action's JustChurch program. "We are called to

follow the teachings of Jesus who welcomed everyone and challenged religious leaders when they fell short of that ideal."

"In the wake of these injustices, we particularly urge straight Catholic allies to raise their voices against discrimination that targets our children, our friends, and our communities," said Mary Ellen Lopata, co-founder of Fortunate Families, a ministry for Catholic parents with LGBT children. "The Gospel compels us to spread its message of love for all the children of God." ✚

# 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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## Minnesotan seeks to creatively reuse Catholic church's anti-gay marriage DVDs

By **Andy Birkey**[www.minnesotaindependent.com](http://www.minnesotaindependent.com)

September 24, 2010

With over a million anti-gay marriage DVDs hitting the mailboxes of Minnesota Catholics in the weeks leading up to Election Day, there's been no shortage of ideas for what to do with them. OutFront Minnesota says that recipients should mark them "return to the sender" and drop them back in the mail to the Catholic diocese which sent them, while others have suggested leaving them in the collection plate at Sunday services. But Minneapolis artist Lucinda Naylor is encouraging Minnesotans to send her the DVD so that she can create an art project to counter the discriminatory message carried by the DVDs with one of "creativity and hope."

"I'm an artist who has been doing a lot of work for Catholic churches over the past 15 years, so coming up with an artistic way to deal with the DVDs was my immediate first response," said Naylor of the 14-minute created by the national Knights of Columbus and distributed by Catholic bishops in Minnesota. "I feel that the archbishop is particularly bent in regard to this issue of same-sex marriage."

Lucinda is asking anyone who receives a DVD from the Catholic church to send them to her for an art project. "I have ideas, but it really depends on how many DVDs I get. I'd love to make a large sculpture — probably something rather flame or water like—since both are important Catholic symbols of the Holy Spirit," she told the Minnesota Independent.

Naylor says that earlier this year, several of her friends, mostly mothers of gay children, wrote to the archbishop asking him to "open his heart" on the issue of homosexuality, but, she says, "these people received back form letters that called into question their very salvation!"

"This alone made me want to act."

She also said the focus of the election in November should be about justice issues like education, health care and jobs. "The whole gay thing seems to be [Archbishop John] Neinstedt's personal vendetta and a red herring taking us away from the real important issues."

"I wanted to respond with creativity and hope for an inclusive world rather than with anger and hate. I mean somebody's got to break that cycle... and it's a Christian's job to do it."

Naylor has created a Facebook group to organize the DVD collecting, which will be done in front of churches and at drop boxes at supportive businesses. †

## The "art" of Minnesota anti-gay marriage DVDs?

By **Bryan Cones**[uscatholic.org/blog](http://uscatholic.org/blog)

September 27, 2010

The (now former) artist-in-residence at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis has cooked up what she sees as a creative response to DVDs opposing gay marriage being sent to the Catholics of Minnesota by the state's bishops: art. Although Lucinda Naylor hasn't decided what she will make—it depends on how many DVDs she gets.

"I'd love to make a large sculpture—probably something rather flame or water like—since both are important Catholic symbols of the Holy Spirit," she told the Minnesota Independent. Her work-in-progress has already cost her a third of her income after she was suspended from the Basilica for her plan. Naylor has created a Facebook page to promote DVD collection.

Naylor said she decided on the project after hearing that Catholic mothers of gay children had written Minneapolis Archbishop John Nienstedt to ask him to "open his heart" on the issue of homosexuality only to receive "form letters that called

into question their very salvation," according to Naylor. (I've heard from other Catholic parents of GLBT children that they got much the same response from their bishops.)

This is the very definition of unintended consequences. I don't know what sending out these kinds of DVDs is really going to accomplish—I'd be surprised if any Minnesota Catholic was unaware of church teaching regarding gay marriage, and I doubt anyone is going to bother to pop in a DVD so the Knights of Columbus can tell them what they already know. And Nienstedt is unfortunately looking brazenly partisan, since the only anti-gay marriage candidate for governor is the Republican. I don't even think you have to support gay marriage to think this wasn't a good idea.

As for Naylor's suspension: It's important to think before you hire an artist, especially since they have a tendency to actually make art that challenges us to rethink our priorities. Besides, regardless of what you think of the content, most of those DVDs will end up in a landfill anyway. Naylor might as well make something beautiful out of them. †

## Catholic group petitions Boston Archdiocese

By **Hannah Clay Wareham**[Baywindows.com](http://Baywindows.com)

June 1, 2010

Catholics United, a social justice group, delivered a petition bearing more than 5,000 signatures to the Boston Archdiocese Braintree offices May 27 asking that it allow the children of same-sex couples to be admitted to Catholic schools.

"We want Cardinal O'Malley to know that many Catholics believe all children are worthy of a Catholic education," said Catholics United member Joe Betz. "It's not right to deny a young person these benefits because the Church does not recognize his parents' relationship."

The petition was delivered following the exclusion of an 8-year-old boy from Hingham's St. Paul Elementary, a Roman Catholic Diocese school, after it was discovered that his parents are lesbians. He had previously been admitted, but one of his mothers was told during a conference call with parish priest Rev. James Rafferty and principal Cynthia Duggan that her son would not be allowed to matriculate because his parents' relationship is "in discord" with church teachings.

Boston Archbishop Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley on May 19 defended Rafferty's actions, saying in a blog post that the priest had "made a decision based on an assessment of what he felt would be in the best interest of the child. I have great admiration for Fr. Rafferty; he has my full confidence and support."

Members of Catholics United are hopeful that the peti-

tion will urge the Archdiocese to commit firmly to a policy of equality and inclusion. "Catholic schools have a long-standing tradition of accepting all children, including those of non-Christian parents and those whose parents' lifestyles conflict with Church teachings in other ways," said Phil George, who delivered the signatures along with Betz and Larry Kessler. "We fear that discrimination against children of same-sex couples creates the appearance that it's more important to score political points than allow equal access to a Catholic education."

Theologians have joined local LGBT advocacy groups in voicing their displeasure at the boy's exclusion. "I am astonished and disappointed that a Christian school would disallow the child of a lesbian couple to matriculate," said Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean of the Boston University School of Theology and Professor of Theology and Education. "When a child qualifies and is accepted in a school, only to be rejected because of the parents' sexual orientation, the action is a fierce show of exclusion and a contradiction to the Gospel of Christ to which the Church witnesses. It is also a damaging witness to the other children and parents in the school, reinforcing a judgmental culture, rather than a compassionate one."

Following the boy's exclusion, superintendent Mary Grassa O'Neill spoke with one of the parents and "offered to help enroll her child in another Catholic school in the archdiocese."

"We believe that every parent who wishes to send their child to a Catholic school should have the opportunity to pursue that dream," O'Neill said. †

# The U.S. Catholic Bishops Rebuke Theologians' Book Over Views on Homosexuality

By Daniel Burke  
huffingtonpost.com  
September 26, 2010

The U.S. Catholic bishops have issued a rare public rebuke of two Roman Catholic theologians, saying their 2008 book on sexual ethics marks a "radical departure" from church teaching and could be "harmful to one's moral and spiritual life."

"The Sexual Person: Toward a New Catholic Anthropology," challenges established Catholic orthodoxy on homosexuality, artificial insemination, and premarital sex, the bishops said in a statement released on Wednesday (Sept. 22).

The book was written by Todd Salzman, chairman of the theology department at Creighton University, a Jesuit school in Omaha, Neb., and Michael Lawler, also a theologian and a former dean of the university's graduate school who retired in 2005.

The bishops proposed no punitive actions against Creighton or the theologians; instead, their committee on doctrine issued a detailed 24-page rebuttal of the arguments in "The Sexual Person."

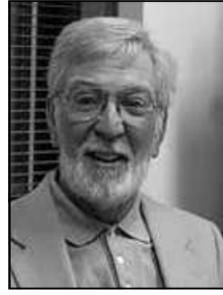
"The committee decided that the most effective way to address the problem presented by the book was to prepare a statement on the problematic characteristics of its methodology," the bishops said.



Todd Salzman

The bishops' review of "The Sexual Person," was prompted by a request from the former and current archbishops of Omaha. In 2007, former Omaha Archbishop Elden Curtiss censured Lawler and Salzman for writing articles that "argue for the moral legitimacy of some homosexual acts," according to Curtiss.

After reviewing "The Sexual Person," the bishops' doctrine committee said the book poses "the pastoral danger that readers of the book could be confused or misled, especially since the book proposes ways of living a Christian life that do not accord with the teaching of the Church and the Christian tradition."



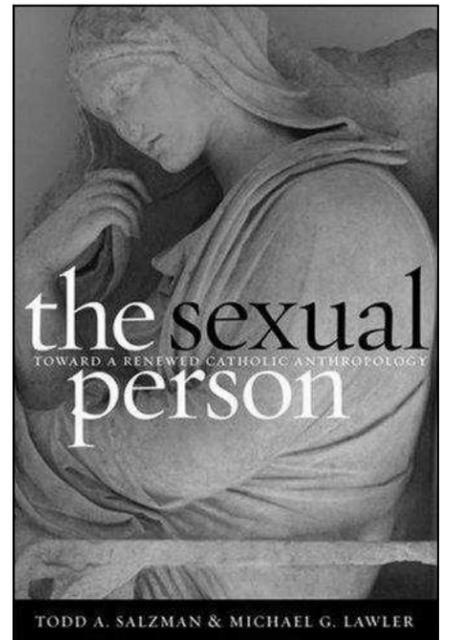
Michael Lawler

Salzman and Lawler were not immediately available for comment. According to the bishops, the theologians openly sought to undermine the arguments from Scripture and natural law that provide the foundation for the church's prohibition on homosexual acts. Understanding of homosexuality has changed drastically from Bible times, and "nature" is always viewed through subjective lenses, Lawler and Salzman argue, according to the bishops.

In a statement, Creighton University said it is "fully committed to the Catholic tradition" and "accepts as authoritative the statement of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Doctrine." The university added that it "presents to its students as Catholic doctrine only that which is deemed to be true doctrine."

But Creighton also said that it "is mindful of its obligation to honor the

academic freedom of individual faculty members," and quoted a 2008 address by Pope Benedict XVI that affirmed the "great value" of such freedom. †



## Catholics for Equality group launched to motivate political action

By Chuck Colbert  
Bay Area Reporter  
Boston, Massachusetts  
September 23, 2010

The voice of Catholic Church hierarchy from Maine to California is shrill but clear: Oppose all LGBT equality, especially same-sex marriage.

And yet support for full LGBT equality – even same-sex marriage – among Roman Catholics in the pews

seems to be on the rise, according to recent public opinion polling.

So what's a pro-equality Catholic supposed to do?

Get active and be political with a new national organization that seeks to mobilize "the more than 62 percent of Catholics who support freedoms for all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity," according to a news release from Catholics for Equality based in Washington, D.C.

During a conference call on Tuesday, September 14 that launched the new group organizers acknowledged it won't be easy.

"We don't have the capacity to use the church halls" or parish bulletins to organize, said founding board member Father Joseph Palacios, a sociologist, adjunct professor of sociology at Georgetown University, and priest of the Los Angeles Archdiocese. Palacios, who is Latino, also identifies as a celibate

gay man. He was active in marriage equality work in Washington, D.C. last year through Catholics United for Marriage Equality, which he organized.

Instead, Catholics for Equality is relying on "a state of the art website and a strategic use of social media" – including a soon-to-be-rolled-out smartphone app – to provide as board member Aniello Alito said, "American Catholics with role models, facts, and tips on how to have a family discussion, how to challenge misinformation in our parishes, and how to ensure as Catholics their voices are heard."

Initially, Catholics for Equality plans to rely on the power of social media.

"We've built our website so that every page a supporter views, every time a user takes action, he can share that with friends on Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Gmail, and other popular social networks and services," explained Alito. "Our main goal from now until the end of the year focuses on encouraging and providing support for Catholic families, parishes, and communities to have honest and rational discussions about LGBT equality."

Catholics for Equality has received assistance from several national LGBT organizations, including Dignity, a group for LGBT Catholics, and the Human Rights Campaign.

HRC spokesman Fred Sainz said that the organization lent Catholics for Equality meeting space and "supported some of their start-up costs at less than \$10,000."

A former HRC staffer, Phil Attey is presently the unpaid acting executive director for Catholics for Equality.

A specific way to facilitate conversation, Catholics for Equality suggests, is for supporters to host parish brunches or coffee hours in homes and restaurants where "people-in-the-pew" Catholics, what organizers call the "moveable middle," can hear from community and parish leaders and supporters of LGBT equality.

In Maine, for example, Religious Coalition Against Discrimination has obtained a grant to set up conversations among parishioners, meeting in small groups after Mass during coffee hour.

(Continued on page 10)

## Nun speaks about ministering to gay, lesbian community during Boulder visit

By Amy Bounds  
The Boulder Camera  
June 6, 2010

Sister Jeannine Gramick was ordered by the Vatican to stop ministering to gay and lesbian Catholics, but the outspoken nun didn't listen.

Despite threats of excommunication, she continued to support gays and lesbians who felt ostracized, and to advocate for change, Gramick said during a talk Sunday at the Boulder Public Library.

"What God calls us to do is to be true to who we are," Gramick said. "We're never going to be happy unless we're true to who we are deep inside."

The free program, organized by Boulder Pride, PFLAG Boulder County and Bent Lens Cinema, was a response to a controversial decision earlier this year by a Boulder Catholic school to no longer allow the children of a lesbian couple to attend.

Boulder's Sacred Heart of Jesus parish school told the couple that their children, one in kindergarten and one in preschool, couldn't re-enroll. Many Sacred Heart parents spoke out against the church's decision, which was upheld by Denver Archbishop Charles J. Chaput.

"The community is still needing to heal," said Carrie Van Heyst, a Sacred Heart parent who protested the decision. "We saw (the talk) as an opportunity to do that."

Before Gramick's talk, the audience



Sister Jeannine Gramick, SL

watched "In Good Conscience," a documentary on her work. Gramick, a sister of Loretto who lives in Washington, D.C., is described as a "most unlikely rebel."

She was investigated by the office of Cardinal Joseph Alois Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, and ordered by the Vatican in 1999 to shut down her ministry to the gay and lesbian community.

"It's 10 years later and I'm still in this ministry," she said. "People have power over us only if we give them that

power."

When asked why she's continued with the Catholic faith, she said it's the best way to push for change on the church's official views.

"I do love the church, and I don't want to be embarrassed by it," she said.

Though the stance of top church leaders on homosexuality hasn't sof-

"What God calls us to do is to be true to who we are. We're never going to be happy unless we're true to who we are deep inside."

– Sr Jeannine Gramick

tened, she said, many more Catholics now embrace lesbian and gay parishioners.

"There's been tremendous change in the grassroots church, the true church," she said.

Kimberly Rose, who lives in Longmont, said Gramick's talk resonated with her -- a lesbian who's Catholic and hoping for a reconciliation with the church.

"It's great what she's doing," Rose said. †

## Seattle U. Prof, Marquette Settle Over Rescinded Job Offer

By Jack Broom  
Seattle Times  
June 10.,2010

A Seattle University professor has reached an agreement with Marquette University, which abruptly rescinded a job offer to her last month, a move that had triggered speculation that the Milwaukee, Wis., university objected to the lesbian scholar's published works on gender and sexual orientation.

Terms of the resolution between Marquette and SU professor Jodi O'Brien were not disclosed. But in a statement to the media, O'Brien said she hopes the agreement will lead to "a legacy of community betterment [at Marquette], including research and education regarding issues of gender and sexuality."

Marquette officials had denied that O'Brien's sexual orientation or the quality of her published work were factors in the Jesuit university's decision to rescind its offer to her to become dean of its Helen Way Klingler College of Arts and Sciences.

At the time the job offer was revoked, a Marquette spokeswoman said officials at the Jesuit university were concerned about some of O'Brien's published writings "relating to Catholic mission and identity."

In a news release Wednesday, Marquette's president, the Rev. Robert A. Wild, S.J., said: "We deeply regret the upset and unwanted attention that we caused this outstanding teacher and scholar, and we are grateful for the graciousness with which she has handled



Jodi O'Brien

this matter in the weeks since the decision was announced."

Wild said his decision to rescind O'Brien's contract reflected his judgment for the university on her writing as it pertained to the university's mission and identity.

"To be sure, the university recognizes that, as is true of many judgment calls, different individuals and institutions could reasonably reach a different conclusion," Wild said.

O'Brien, in her statement, said her goal was reaching an accord that would be "responsive and respectful to the members of the Marquette community and the Milwaukee area residents who have shown such tremendous support for me. †"

## On Boston College Campus: 'A Call for Reconciliation'

By The Heights Editorial Board  
Bcheights.com  
Boston College  
October 7, 2010

This past week, five young GLBTQ Americans committed suicide after being tormented by their peers. Pernicious Internet bullying took us back to the days of Matthew Shepard, except this time, the abusers didn't even have to be physically present. A brutal and callous disregard for the feelings and privacy of others ultimately became oppressive enough for these students to enact violence upon themselves.

The time for the discussion around GLBTQ issues to move forward is now. We feel that Boston College, as a Jesuit liberal arts university, is an ideal location for the discussion to be reinvigorated. As the years have gone on, the debate has become polarized, politicized, and abstruse. This debate is ultimately about real people, something political arguments forget. We have forgotten what it means for the debate to play out in the lives of individuals we know walking around here on our campus.

What does it mean to identify as both GLBTQ and Catholic? How can an institution preach a gospel of love and, at

the same time, ignore the fact that rhetoric that does not support GLBTQ persons often ends up harming them? Must all Catholic GLBTQ persons be prescribed

The Church can no longer choose to speak abstractly about this reality in the lives of Catholics.

lives of celibacy and renunciation, never fully allowed to be a full participant in society?

Not all individuals who identify as GLBTQ on campus are Catholic. We empathize with students who were raised Catholic but who have been driven out by homophobic attitudes. The Church

has to realize that its intolerance may deter people who do not identify as GLBTQ, as well.

Our society's debate over the issue of GLBTQ rights has always been political, but it has also always been religious. While the Catholic Church may not be the most nimble and tractable of organizations, it has always been deeply concerned with the lives of its members. *Lex orandi, lex credendi*, an old saying goes – the law of prayer is the law of belief. The Church has to face the fact that there are thousands, maybe millions of Catholics out there praying for some real discussion about the deeply personal struggle in their souls. This is, perhaps, the great theological question of our time, and BC, if it aspires to be a leader in the Catholic world, should explore ways to submit the question to rigorous examination.

The Catholic Church has one of the world's greatest religious-intellectual traditions. Faith and reason sometimes make a tenuous pair, but for thousands of years people in the Church have found ways to wed the two. We hope that at BC, intellectuals of all sexual orientations may come together and work toward fostering discussions about the intersections of faith, love, and sexuality.

GLBTQ rights are a matter of mind and emotion. The Catholic mother or father who has always been staunchly against gay marriage may have something new to pray over when their son falls in love with another man. What does the Church have to say to these people? It seems that doctrine may tell us one thing – that the Church opposes homosexual unions – but the lives of Catholic people tell us another. *Lex orandi, lex credendi*.

The Church can no longer choose to speak abstractly about this reality in the lives of Catholics. There are persons on this campus who choose to continue to practice the Roman Catholic faith despite the Church's unwillingness to address the condition of their sexuality. BC needs to become a place where the tangled knot of Catholic moral theology on GLBTQ issues can be unraveled and debated by intelligent, thinking believers.

We, like all who have heard of the tragedies of the past month, are shocked. What we wonder is whether or not we can use the special nature of the place we are in to say something helpful. No one can know what drove these young people to take their lives. What we hope is to find new ways to speak to those who are most in need. †

## Rejection of gay rights group detrimental to St. Edward's campus

Editorial  
Hilltopviewsonline.com  
St Edward's University  
Austin, Texas  
September 7, 2010

Approximately 35 non-profit organizations are scheduled to participate in the upcoming St. Edward's University non-profit internship fair, but each group is in danger of being overshadowed by the one that will not be there.

The university recently rejected a request from Equality Texas to participate in the Sept. 15 fair. The group's stated goal is to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation by lobbying the Texas legislature on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender issues. In an e-mail, St. Edward's notified the group that they were at odds with the university's Catholic principles, and therefore not allowed to be at the fair.

The university claims that allowing Equality Texas to be on campus to recruit student interns would be an endorsement of the group's beliefs. Meanwhile, the career planning website Hilltop Careers features internships with the offices of pro-choice state politicians, like state Rep. Valinda Bolton, D-Austin, and Harris Media LLC, a political consulting

firm that works for candidates who support the death penalty like Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell. Advertising these jobs is not an endorsement of pro-choice or pro-death penalty beliefs, but an avenue for students to become politically engaged.

A critical goal that St. Edward's sets for students is that they "learn to think." This motto does not refer to base indoctrination. Rather, it means that St. Edward's seeks to equip students with the necessary mental tools to solve problems—social, occupational, moral or otherwise—on their own. Having provided students with the ability to think critically and reasonably, the university should trust that they can make their own decisions.

Thus, students should be allowed to freely choose whether they agree with practices like gay marriage, and also to freely choose whether or not they want to intern for an organization that advocates for it.

The remainder of the university's explanation was equally troubling. When the university incorrectly identified Equality Texas as a for-profit organization, it appeared to be having a knee-jerk reaction rather than a fact-based response. The university's lack of knowl-

edge about Equality Texas suggests that it did not take the necessary time to evaluate the organization's purpose and value.

Moreover, the university's decision to turn away Equality Texas is at odds with the very mission statement that St. Edward's claims to be defending. The



university has long prided itself on being a welcoming place for students, faculty, staff and guests of all beliefs, backgrounds, faiths and ethnicities. This commitment is a central part of the university's mission statement, and sexual orientation is just as much an element of diversity as economic or ethnic background.

The university seemed to agree with this interpretation of diversity when it

took the initiative of sponsoring a LGBT student organization called Pride. However, St. Edward's now appears to be back-tracking regarding which types of diversity it considers acceptable.

Throughout the years, the university has endeavored to give the concepts of inter-faith dialogue and global understanding their due attention in curriculum and on-campus events. This practice has not required the university to sacrifice the Catholic character central to the campus. Instead, the university embraces the opportunity to learn about other cultures as part of the overriding Catholic belief in the dignity and value of all human life.

If the university is open to discussions of topics that have traditionally been at odds with the stance of the Catholic Church, it should be willing to take on the issue of sexuality in the same manner. Issues of sexual orientation deserve the same respect with which the university has treated issues of diversity in culture and faith.

Ultimately, shutting out groups like Equality Texas is akin to trying to win an argument by refusing to have one. A university should be a place where debate and differences are encouraged, not stifled. †

# Controversial Seton Hall University Gay Marriage Course Will Be Offered as Scheduled

*Despite objections from Newark Archbishop John J. Myers, Seton Hall University will offer an undergraduate seminar course called "The Politics of Gay Marriage."*

By **Jeff Diamant**  
and **Kelly Heyboer**  
*New Jersey Star Ledger*  
Newark, New Jersey  
August 26, 2010

It appears Seton Hall University will offer a controversial course on gay marriage over the objections of Newark Archbishop John J. Myers, according to the professor scheduled to teach the class.

The undergraduate seminar course — called "The Politics of Gay Marriage" — is to begin Tuesday with about two dozen students, said W. King Mott, an associate professor of political science.

"The class is happening. I've never heard that it wasn't," said Mott, who has sent the syllabus to the enrolled students.

Last spring, Myers said he was troubled the Catholic university was offering a class that "seeks to promote as legitimate a train of thought that is contrary to what the church teaches." Myers, who serves as a member of the Seton Hall Board of Regents, called on the South Orange university to reconsider offering the class.

In June, a dozen members of the board of regents' Mission and Identity Committee began meeting behind closed doors to evaluate the course and make a recommendation. The showdown between the university's academic and religious sides drew national attention from gay rights, education and Catholic groups.

Tuesday, Seton Hall officials declined to discuss the dispute. University spokesman Thomas White refused to confirm or deny the class will go on as scheduled.

However, the course appears in Seton

Hall's online schedule of classes and has been assigned a meeting time and a room in Jubilee Hall in the center of campus. The website also lists several texts students are required to purchase for the class, including "What's Love Got To Do With It?: The Case for Same-Sex Marriage," a book by state Sens. Raymond Lesniak (D-Union) and Loretta Weinberg (D-Bergen).

James Goodness, a spokesman for the Newark archbishop, said he had not heard of any final decision on the class. But Myers continues to believe the gay marriage course is "not in sync with Catholic teaching," Goodness said.

The syllabus for the class says the course will focus on gay marriage as a contemporary political idea and may bring guest speakers to campus to share their personal stories.

"This point of view does not dismiss those that hold a religious belief; all perspectives are welcome in this discussion," the syllabus says.

Mott, one of the few openly gay professors at Seton Hall, came up with the idea for the elective class for upper-

classmen. He said students will explore the social and political issues surrounding the gay marriage debate without advocating for either side.

"This is a considerable public policy question and there's opposition," Mott said. "But I would hope that at a university there would be understanding that there's always going to be some opposition."

Mott has clashed with Seton Hall officials over gay rights issues in the past. In 2005, he was demoted from his post as associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences after The Star-Ledger printed his letter challenging the church's view on homosexuality.

But Mott said he was never pressured by his academic colleagues to cancel the gay marriage class after the archbishop raised objections. "This has never been a problem for the academy,"



W. King Mott

Mott said. "It's been a problem for, it seems, some people outside of it."

Seton Hall, founded in 1856 by a Catholic bishop, has had several internal clashes over religious and political issues in recent years. The university was forced to move a 1998 awards ceremony honoring Gov. Christie Whitman off campus after some complained her support of abortion rights was against Catholic teaching. Seton Hall's law school also feuded with church officials in 2004 when it gave awards to two judges who had ruled in favor of abortion rights.

The current controversy comes as Seton Hall is searching for a new leader to replace Monsignor Robert Sheeran, who stepped down this summer. The school abandoned its year-long hunt for a new president in June after two priest finalists dropped out of the running. Former Seton Hall Provost A. Gabriel Esteban will serve as interim president for the next year as the university restarts its presidential search. †

## 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!



## Friends of gays: Catholics, men

By **Jonathan Capehart**  
*Voices.washingtonpost.com/postpartisan*  
June 7, 2010

A new Gallup poll on American attitudes on homosexuality shows they are improving in stunning and dramatic ways.

For the first time, a majority of Americans (52%) view gay and lesbian relationships as morally acceptable. Men (53%) are more accepting than women (51%). Young men and women, ages 18 to 49, are especially okay with such relationships, 62% and 59%, respectively. Hence, "whatever, dude." But the statistic that jumped out at me was the view of Catholics.

While the Catholic Church fights any and all efforts to recognize gay and lesbian relationships (the battle between the District of Columbia and the archdiocese over same-sex marriage comes to mind), its flock is overwhelmingly supportive. In May 2006, just 46% thought those relationships were "morally acceptable." Four years later, a whopping 62% shared that view. That 16-point jump is 10 points greater than the jump among Protestants (6) and "other non-Christian (7). What's also interesting is that Catholics' growing acceptance of homosexual relationships is greater than that of Protestants. In May 2006, there was a 10-point gap (36% for Protestants and 46% for Catholics). Today, the gap is 20%.

So, the evolving views of Catholics and men are leading the way to greater acceptance of gay and lesbian relationships. Wonders never cease. †

### 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:* 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

### 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

# Pope & U.K. Catholic Hierarchy in Major Clash Over Gay Marriage

By Kilian Melloy  
Edgeboston.com  
September 15, 2010

As the Pope prepares for a historic visit to Britain, a Catholic cleric there has expressed sympathetic sentiments with gays and lesbians who find the church staunchly opposed to their right to have a family life.

Anti-gay religious site LifeSiteNews reported on Sept. 14 that the U.K.'s leading Catholic cleric, Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster, spoke of gay Catholics as being in a "difficult" place because while the church does not condemn gays as being sinful for their sexual desires, it does condemn as "inherently evil" any expression of sexuality between two individuals of the same gender. The church also condemns sex outside of marriage, but insists that marriage should not be granted to same-sex couples.



Archbishop Nichols

Nichols commented on that when asked whether the church might, at some future date, come to embrace same-sex families. "There is in the Book of Nature an inherent connection between human

sexuality and procreation; and those two things cannot ultimately be totally separate," Nichols said, echoing language used by the Catholic Church in condemning same-sex families. The church teaches that the correctness of heterosexual marriage is a matter of "natural law," but also essentially denies that there is a place in nature for homosexual pair-bonding. However, Nichols added, "People who are of a homosexual orientation say: 'Well, hang on a minute. How is the Book of Nature written in me?'"

Nichols also acknowledged, obliquely, that even heterosexual couples fall short of the church's requirements with regard to human sexuality and family issues. Among other things, the church condemns divorce and birth control. "That tradition says human sexuality is for an expression of total self-giving in fidelity in a way that is open to the creation of new life," explained Nichols. "Now, that's tough, that's a high ideal. I'm not

sure many people have ever observed it in its totality, but it doesn't mean to say it has no sense."

Nichols also opined that the church's characterization of same-sex physical affection as "sinful" was a "misguided" attempt to shepherd its followers. "Fear is never a good motivation," the archbishop opined. "The whole point of the Catholic journey is that it is a journey, and we try to hold together high ideals and understanding. That is the same for people who struggle in whatever way with their sexuality. It's an aim."

LifeSiteNews reported that the archbishop's comments drew fire from Catholic conservatives, who were quick to say that his failure to hew strictly to the church's teachings endangered children, though no details on Nichols' comments posed a threat to the young were offered. †

## Was Cardinal John Henry Newman Gay?

By Barbara Bradley Hagerty  
Www.npr.org  
September 17, 2010

On Sunday, Pope Benedict XVI will beatify John Henry Newman, bringing the 19th century British cardinal one step closer to sainthood.

Newman was a prolific writer and towering intellectual who converted from the Anglican Church to Catholicism — but one part of his life is something of a mystery.

Born in 1801, Newman had many religious incarnations. He began his faith as an evangelical, then studied at Oxford and became an Anglican priest. Continuing at Oxford, he was drawn to beliefs and worship of the Catholic Church, and he led other like-minded Anglicans in the orthodox "Oxford Movement."

When he finally converted to Catholicism in 1845, his star rose quickly, as he became a priest and later a cardinal. Today, Newman is considered one of the great teachers of Christianity, having written some 60 works of philosophy and theology, novels, hymns and poetry.

"Many people feel his life is similar to the life of St. Augustine, and St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure," says the Rev. Martin Moran, who oversees hundreds of Newman Houses — centers for Catholic students on non-Catholic

universities. "These were saints that maybe had a past, embraced the Catholic faith, and were also great intellectuals."

Moran says Newman is a role model for young Catholics wrestling with their faith. He remained loyal to Rome but still questioned some church doctrines, including papal infallibility.

"He was on the edge, you know?" Moran says. "Many times he crossed the line a little bit."

Now some believe Newman may have come close to the line — if not in actions, then in orientation.

"It's not unreasonable to think he might have been homosexual," says the Rev. James Martin, a Jesuit priest and author of *My Life with the Saints*. "His letters and his comments on the death of one of his close friends are quite provocative."

That friend was Ambrose St. John, a fellow convert and Catholic priest. Newman described St. John as "my earthly light." The two men were inseparable; they lived together for 32 years. According to John Cornwell, author of a forthcoming biography called *Newman's Unquiet Grave*, St. John helped Newman with his scholarship, translations and more.

"Even doing things like packing his bags before he went away, making sure he was taking his medicine, making sure he kept dental appointments, that sort of



Cardinal Newman

thing," Cornwell says. "So it was almost like a wife, but without the marital bed."

When St. John died in 1875, Newman was devastated. "I have always thought no bereavement was equal to that of a husband's or a wife's," he wrote, "but I feel it difficult to believe that anyone's sorrow can be greater than mine."

Just before his own death, Newman made a strongly worded request — not once but three times — that he be buried in the same grave with his lifelong friend.

But Cornwell says if the two men had feelings, they didn't act on them.

"Having read all of those letters, all 32 volumes of them, I can't find any clear

evidence of a sexual physical relationship," he says.

Questions about Newman's sexuality became widely publicized two years ago. When it was clear Newman was on the path to sainthood, the Catholic Church ordered the cardinal's body to be exhumed and moved to a grander resting place in Birmingham Oratory church. Cornwell says the church sometimes relocates bodies so they're more accessible.

But Martin, like many others, wonders if there's another motive.

"Certainly the idea of pilgrims coming to the grave and seeing John Henry Newman on the tombstone and above him, Ambrose St. John, was certain to raise eyebrows," he says.

That is especially true now, when the Vatican has ordered that gay men cannot enter the priesthood. Martin has no doubt that there are plenty of gay saints, which is acceptable under church doctrine.

"It is church teaching that a gay person can be holy, and a gay person can be a saint," he says. "And it's only a matter of time before the church recognizes one publicly."

But in Newman's case, there are too many questions that are unlikely to be answered to make any public pronouncements. †

## Caught in the crossfire: bishops and LGBT policy

By Nicole Sotelo  
Ncronline.org  
June. 10, 2010

Two weeks ago the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops sent a letter to congress stating their opposition to ENDA, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. The bill would provide people of all sexual orientations with equal protection in the workplace, similar to what the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did for people of all races. Despite the bill's religious exemption clause, the bishops are still opposing it and effectively promoting discrimination not only against fellow Catholics but against ordinary citizens.

Over the last six months, the bishops have taken extraordinary measures to ensure that fundamental rights are withheld from people based on their sexual orientation. Having already limited the ability of Catholics to receive certain sacraments depending on one's sexual orientation, the bishops have now expanded their focus to restricting people from receiving equal treatment not only

in the church, but in health care, education, and the workplace.

And the bishops' battle does not just affect people who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. History tells us that when the rights of a minority group are trampled, that the majority suffer, as well. Less than 50 years ago, bans against interracial marriage not only hurt people of color, but also hurt whites by telling them whom they could, or could not, marry.

Similarly, the bishops scorched earth policy against people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender burns heterosexuals as well.

Here is just a sampling of examples from the last three months:

Most recently, Bishop John Wester of Salt Lake City, chairman of the bishops' conference committee on migration, issued a statement on behalf of the bishops in support of comprehensive immigration reform, but only for heterosexuals. The bishops have urged congress to strip the equal protection provision from the legislation so that bi-national families with homosexual partners will not be offered the same path to citizenship.

Knowing that the bishops were willing to kill health care reform over one issue, one wonders if they would go the same distance on immigration reform, ultimately ensuring that nobody -- heterosexual or homosexual alike -- benefited from the reforms.

Two months ago, Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver approved of a priest who removed two children from a local Catholic school because their parents were lesbian, affecting not just the parents, but their children and the entire school body.

Three months ago, Archbishop Donald Wuerl defended Washington, DC's Catholic Charities' decision to remove spousal health benefits from all future employees so as not to inadvertently provide health coverage to partners who may be homosexual. In doing so, both homosexual and heterosexual spouses will go without health care benefits.

What is true in war is true in politics: When there is crossfire, it may not just be your enemies who are caught in the line of fire. In the bishops' struggle to maintain heterosexual supremacy, everyone is being wounded. †

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# Stand by for Marriage Equality in Catholic Rhode Island

By Terence Weldon  
Queering-the-church.com  
August 19, 2010

In New England, just two of the six states do not yet have marriage equality – Maine, where gay marriage was passed by the legislature before being disappointingly overturned, and Rhode Island. I would expect that to change next year, after a new governor is elected in November.

The two factors most commonly quoted as reasons for the failure to secure gay marriage have been the implacable opposition of the current governor Don Carcieri, and the high proportion of Catholic voters. (At 46%, this is the highest in the US). However, a new state level poll confirms what has become apparent at the national level. Sup-

port for marriage equality has grown, local Catholics support gay marriage – and support has grown faster among Catholics than among other groups.

It shows, for the first time, a convincing majority of Rhode Island voters supporting equality," said David Walker, vice president of Greenberg Quinlan and Rosner Research, a Democratic polling firm based in Washington, D.C., that conducted the poll in July.

"Marriage equality is inevitable," Walker said. "The question is not whether, but when."

The trend mirrors that at the national level, Walker said, pointing to a CNN/Opinion Research Corporation poll released last week that found that 52 percent of respondents favored same-sex marriages.

The poll, with a sample size of 500

registered voters and a margin of error of plus or minus 4.4 percentage points, found overall support for same-sex marriage in Rhode Island had grown 10 points since 2008 while opposition dropped 6 points.

The increase among those who identified themselves as Roman Catholic was higher, at 12 points.

When pollsters clarified the question pertained to civil marriages and that church and state would remain separate, 66 percent said they would favor legalizing same-sex marriage, with 28 percent saying they opposed it. Among those who identified themselves as Catholics, 63 percent said they would favor it, 32 percent said they oppose it.

There are effectively twice as many Catholics who support equality, as those who oppose it – providing their are suit-

able assurances that it applies only to civil marriage, and on the separation of church and state. Bishop Tobin is on a losing battle.

Politicians are addicted to reading the public mood. With two thirds of Rhode Islanders now saying they approve of legal recognition of same sex marriages, and a convincing majority of Catholics agreeing, the will be very few state legislators next year who would want to resume their previous opposition – and the smoke screen that so many of the voters are Catholic will be blown away by the knowledge that local Catholics seem to put Catholic commitment to justice ahead of blind obedience to Bishops and patently flawed Vatican body theology. †

# Catholic Church using lawsuit to intimidate fired teacher

By Susan Greene  
Denverpost.com  
October 12, 2010

Intolerance isn't news in the Denver Archdiocese.

This time, the story's about intimidation.

The church fired Toni Talarico last spring for being a lesbian. Now, in a stunning attempt to strong-arm her, it's suing her for protesting.

"Why would the almighty Catholic Church sue somebody simply for having stood up and said it violated her rights?" asks her lawyer, David Lane. "Does Go-

liath really need to go out and squish resistance to its homophobia?"

I've written about Talarico, who spent 28 years teaching theology at Guardian Angels Catholic Church in north Denver. She's beloved for her work making Catholic sacraments meaningful to generations of kids and adults.

She kept quiet about her sexual orientation, although parishioners welcomed her and her longtime partners as part of their community.

Single again last spring, she posted an ad seeking female companionship.

"I am looking for a relationship, but not right away," read her Match.com

posting. "There is time to make sure we are right for each other."

The Rev. Lawrence Kaiser confronted her about the posting and fired her without severance or benefits. He told parishioners at Guardian Angels that she had left to pursue other opportunities.

Talarico knew her orientation ran counter to Catholic teachings but had told herself that she was leading a good life and being true to her God.

She also knew the law is on the church's side. She decided against suing, aware the church has the right to fire theology teachers for religious reasons.

Still, she wanted to speak out. She filed a complaint with the Colorado Civil Rights Division as her way of criticizing church policies and saying she felt wronged.

The Archdiocese, in response, sued her, charging that she "has involved the Colorado Division of Civil Rights in a matter that exceeds the agency's jurisdiction."

Which begs the question of why, if it's so afraid the state will interfere, it didn't sue the agency instead.

The lawsuit sends a chilling message: It will cost you loads of money and time in court to stand up against the church.

"While professing its gratitude to priests, religious men and women, and

the laity who by their evangelical self-dedication are devoted to the noble work of education and of schools of every type and level, (the Church) exhorts them to persevere generously in the work they have undertaken and, imbuing their students with the spirit of Christ . . .," it wrote, quoting Vatican II, in its lawsuit.

In other words, Talarico's gayness was like cooties; it could have rubbed off on her students.

No one questions the legal right (if not the moral one) to fire her on free speech grounds. But suing her for protesting is spiteful and hypocritical given that the First Amendment also guarantees a right to petition the government for redress.

"The Catholic Church is trying to use the court system to crush her for exercising her rights under the First Amendment," Lane says.

Talarico has been cleaning houses since she was fired and continues holding Bible study for loyal parishioners at her home each week.

It's a matter of interpretation who picked this fight. Where it's heading is clear:

"A counter-claim for malicious prosecution and abuse of process," says Lane, who relishes the fight. †

## Financial Report for New Ways Ministry July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010

Revenues	Amount	% of Total
Contributions	\$ 76,386.88	26.6
Grants	\$123,345.00	43.1
Interest and Dividends	\$ 7,929.90	2.8
Programs	\$ 31,989.90	11.2
Publications	\$ 665.09	.2
Other	\$ 46,188.37	16.1
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$286,295.04</b>	<b>100</b>
Expenses		
<b>Programs</b>		
Training Weekends	\$ 17,676.29	8.3
Church Personnel Retreat	\$ 8416.94	3.9
Networking Project	\$ 12,299.52	5.8
Catholic Parents Network	\$ 7,879.51	3.7
Womanjourney Weavings	\$ 14,530.79	6.8
Spirituality/Sexuality Publications	\$ 2,943.77	1.4
Bondings	\$ 14,926.41	7.0
CMI Retreat	\$ 8,689.51	4.1
Former Priests/Religious Retreat	\$ 5,908.81	2.8
Bridge Building Award	\$ 23,750.68	11.1
Marriage Equality	\$ 68,158.00	31.9
<b>Management</b>	<b>\$ 24,667.34</b>	<b>11.6</b>
<b>Fundraising</b>	<b>\$ 3,468.51</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$213,316.07</b>	<b>100</b>
Fund Balance, beginning of year	\$368,909.89	
Excess for year	\$ 73,178.97	
Other changes in net assets	\$ 3,971.07	
Fund balances, end of year*	\$446,059.93	

\*Approximately \$346,000 of the current fund balance represents a reserve for nineteen months operational expenses. The fund balance also includes land, building, and equipment assets of approximately \$100,000.



## Kameny, McNeill Honored

Danny Ingram (center), representing the American Veterans for Equal Rights, the oldest and largest GLBT veterans service organization, presented the Leonard Matlovich Distinguished Service Award to veteran activist, Dr. Frank Kameny (left), and distinguished Catholic moral theologian, Rev. John McNeill (right), on June 11, 2010 as part of Pride month in Washington, DC.

# Gay Catholic Ministry and Straight Pride

By Michele Somerville  
Huffingtonpost.com  
July 1, 2010

Gay Pride weekend in New York City just passed, and I write this on the 41st anniversary of the Stonewall riots. Two weeks ago, we celebrated Gay Pride in Brooklyn with a fair and a parade on a sunny Saturday in June.

For the fourth year in a row, my Roman Catholic parish had a table at the fair and I was scheduled to "woman" our table. I arrived a little early to find the two women in our Gay Ministry finishing their shift. The table was surrounded by toddler gear. I surveyed the diaper bags, teething toys, baby wipes, board books, bears and sippy cups, remembering the wonders, thrills and trials of life with toddlers (I had three children in four years!).

I asked the two gay moms how things were going, and braced myself for the answer. We expect to catch flak. It tends to fly at us from two opposing directions: from Catholics who accept Church teaching and therefore view homosexuality is a disorder, and from those who believe gay people who stay in a church ruled by self-hating homosexuals in miters are sexual identity traitors.

A reader of my essay "Sex and the City of God" wrote the following in the Huffington Post comment field in response to my speculation on what might happen if every gay Catholic abandoned the Church for a month:

"If every gay church worker, closeted or otherwise -- music directors, nuns, priests, and lay ministers -- were to call in sick for a month, Or just quit the RCC and join a church that respects them."

"Devon Texas" has a point, but like many women who remain in a church governed by misogynists, many gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people believe they are part of a church that that can be healed -- a church that belongs as much to them as to any of its members. While it is true that the Church hierarchy does not respect homosexuals, many gay men and women know that the people of the Church -- who are the Church -- do, for the most part, respect them.

Though we on the Gay Ministry team at my parish are committed to affecting change (growth) from within, we know it's slow going. Roman Catholic Church leadership is somewhat diplomatic in its hateful disposition toward gay people, but unlike fundamentalist Christian leadership, Catholic teaching does not deem homosexuality an "abomination." Perhaps because so much of Church leadership is gay, the hierarchy does not bother with the vicious, backwards and fallacious notion that homosexuality can be cured.

Technically speaking, every Roman Catholic church in the world welcomes gay people to the altar, so long as they do not have sex lives. Like many Catholics who refuse to be complicit in the hierarchy's penchant for using the Eucharist as a cudgel, GLBT Catholics often disregard doctrine on the matter of being gay.

A year ago I wrote a bit about my work in Gay Ministry in an essay called "Born Again Catholic in Brooklyn" which appeared in the New York Times online. The following remark appeared in the comment field:

"Still it's different to admire the courage of a lesbian nun, but not be one. Try being gay in the church rather than being supportive of their ministry. It's a less comfortable and viable position. More like worshiping in a hate crime."

(This comment was signed 'Eileen Myles.' Poet Eileen Myles -- if this commenter and she are one and the same -- is a superb, well-known lesbian poet raised in the Church, which seems important to

note here.) Not being gay, I can't know what it is to be gay in the Church. But I am not in "their" ministry -- I'm in "our" ministry. We call it a ministry for "gay Catholics and their families"; I helped to build it, and I am needed in it because heterosexuals have a role in helping this change along. Furthermore, I think women and gay men and women are linked as victims of the hierarchy's bigotry in a way I find slightly comparable to the way "Suffragettes" were connected to Abolitionists. The two causes weren't identical, obviously, but there was psychological, political and spiritual overlap which inspired mutual support.

Am I "worshiping in a hate crime?" I don't believe so. But I'm never sure. I do know that each December 1st, for three years running, some guy who

It must be very difficult and require great courage, even now, for gay couples to "start families," and the half dozen or so gay parents I know are some of the most careful and gifted parents I know. I don't mean to suggest that heterosexual couples fall short, but that, as in so much else, the degree of difficulty which accompanies working for a treasure makes it all the more precious. Gay parents, out of necessity, are more attentive to teaching children about prejudice and may be less likely to be enamored of conformity. Gay parents have no choice but to teach their children about the relationship between principle and prejudice. For gay parents, it is not a lesson that is easily postponed.

That some parishes (not mine!) decline to fully accept these children -- and



rarely sets foot in a church has approached me at the end of our annual World AIDS Day Interfaith Memorial Service to tell me how grateful he is for the opportunity to remember friends he lost to AIDS in a house of worship. I suspect that some of the partners of the guys in our ministry might agree with Ms. Myles, but I don't believe we are "worshiping in a hate crime." I think we are worshiping next door to a hate crime, trying to improve the neighborhood.

What I am sure about, too, is that anti-gay bigotry in the secular world is fueled by anti-gay bigotry in the clerical world, and I think anyone who works to oppose homophobia in any religious setting is engaging in both secular advocacy and -- pardon the pun -- God's work.

Father's Day happened a little over a week ago. I concentrated in praying, this year, for a friend who is waiting with his partner to finalize an adoption. This couple (two men) has been trying for long time. They've endured crushing disappointment, but this pair of fathers-to-be strikes me as men put on this earth to be dads. I notice that parents who overcome extraordinary obstacles in building their families often become extraordinary parents. I am thinking chiefly about what I see in parents who have triumphed over the legal and emotional vicissitudes of adoption, but this would seem to apply to those who have had difficulty becoming parents, too. Often these parents, who worked extra hard to become parents, seem more all the more grateful and all the more conscious.

their parents -- disgusts me, but more and more parishes are realizing that they must accept them (If not for the right reasons, then for the wrong one: cash). I'm optimistic. I think it is these children and their gay parents who will change the Church for the better.

My work teaching high school English for two years and college writing for a decade brought me into contact with many young gay men and lesbians in their late teens and early twenties. Because autobiographical writing generally finds its way into all freshman writing

curricula, it's not unusual for a freshman English instructor to read highly personal work written by students. I've read a few dozen compositions by gay men through the years, in which they describe the struggles with living in/coming out of "the closet." I always had trouble squaring the hopelessness and self-loathing I saw in these narratives with the talent, warmth, wit, charm and beauty I saw in the

authors of these tales of danger, whose accounts of running away, being beaten by parents for 'coming out,' voyaging into the depths of substance abuse, and entering destructive sexual encounters taught me how dangerous both homophobia and being gay are. Escape was always the recurring motif, and suicide fantasies and scenarios were so prevalent that I came view them as mainstays of gay college guy subculture. It was through reading accounts written by undergrads double-teamed by gay-bashing faith and family that I first came to see that people die of homophobia.

In "Catholicspeak" I might say I "consecrate" my gay ministry work to my brother Scott who came out at 40, died at 45, and loved the Church for most of his life. Even though my "Irish twin" Scott, was 13 months younger than I, he was, in so many ways, the father I never had. He convinced me that I was enchanting, defended my honor, and championed my work. His life was marred by depression and substance abuse which were intensified (or brought about) by the hopelessness and strain of having to live a lie.

When Scott came out to me, I wasn't surprised, but I was shocked that he hadn't done so sooner. For all of our conscious lives he knew me to be supportive of gay people. I felt an overwhelming sense of relief when he "came out"; I celebrated it. He didn't have to hide who he was anymore. When I asked him why he hadn't come out to me earlier, he responded with a common answer. "I couldn't come out to myself."

The "love the sinner hate the sin" take on homosexuality, which the teaching authorities of a more than a few religions (including my own) espouse, is untenable. Being gay is not a sin. And when Church leaders exclude gay couples from having their children baptized, or deny gay people the sacraments, the Church degrades these people in their entirety.

Thus, I believe, they assail the mystical Body of Christ of which gay and straight people are equally part.

I knew a man who, shortly after coming out to his family, felt that he had been blessed with full acceptance by each family member and planned a visit with his out-of-town brother and his family. At the last minute, the straight brother called the gay brother and asked that the boyfriend stay at the hotel, explaining that his wife and he were not yet "ready to explain homosexuality" to their young children.

"This," the gay brother said later, "is why gay people don't come out."

This injury not only damaged the relationship between the two men, but it profaned the sacred nature of the brave and life-affirming action of coming out. This kind of transgression is usually committed out of ignorance, sexual dysfunction or fear -- not malice -- and this manner of response is certainly not limited to Christians. A few years ago, I attended a wedding of two women, which the father of one of the brides had refused to attend. In this case, religion appeared not to play a role. The bigotry was secular. But secular homophobia has its origins and roots in religion.

The father-to-be I mentioned earlier told me that he encountered resistance when he informed his devout Catholic mother that he would soon become a parent. Then he showed the future grandmother a photo of the baby who might soon become her grandchild. The mother and son put a face on it. Really, one might say, they put God's face on it - acceptance soon followed. This, I believe is how it should go.

I observed my own children at the Brooklyn Gay Pride street fair as they slalomed ahead of us through the crowds, slurping lemonades, eating grilled corn on the cob, checking out the t-shirt tents and Italian sausage booths. They were unfazed by the preponderance of same-sex couples holding hands, and all smooching was "disgusting" or "mushy" -- regardless of the gender of the "old people" (anyone over 22) doing the osculating. If the kids craned to stare, it was the girls noting a transgendered beauty, guilty of the "fashion don't" of being overdressed for a day in the park. For them it was a sunny June day, and another Brooklyn street fair. For their parents, it was a day to luxuriate a bit in our "straight pride." ✦

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# International News

## Canada

### Church reconciles with gay altar server

#### **Bishop of Peterborough preaches tolerance to divided parish**

By Yvonne Berg  
The Toronto Star  
June 6, 2010

COBOURG — As the organ backed a spirited choir, a gay man carried the Eucharist down the aisle of a troubled church to the altar — an altar at which he can no longer serve.

It was a sign of reconciliation between a celibate but openly gay man, and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough, which he had earlier taken to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal over allegations that his rights were trampled by a bishop and 12 parishioners whose actions, he said, led to his removal from his voluntary role as an altar server at St. Michael's Parish of Cobourg.

Moments earlier during Sunday's Mass, James Corcoran, the 51-year old former altar server, sat among those same 12 elderly men and women as they listened to the Bishop of Peterborough preach of the virtues of tolerance.

"Nobody has the right to humiliate or slander their brother and sister," Bishop Nicola De Angelis told the parishioners, some of whom are still calling for the transfer of their priest, Father Allan Hood, to another church over the whole Corcoran affair.

It was a homily that seemed to address the "hateful and discriminatory will" and "distaste towards homosexuality" that, Corcoran alleged in his complaint, was rampant among the 12 men and women who objected to his presence at the altar.

"We are all equal in our dignity, but different in our roles," decreed the Bishop.

"Great in society is the one who is capable to respect the dignity of each person regardless of our differences in language. Regardless of the colour of our skin . . . regardless of our sex or sexual orientation."

"You can turn the other cheek . . . this is the teaching of the church," De Angelis told the attentive congregation.

The bishop's homily came a week after he announced that he and Corcoran had resolved the human rights dispute at a meeting at the bishop's Peterborough office. Corcoran has subsequently withdrawn his complaint to the tribunal.

Neither party will speak publicly about what led to the reconciliation.

Corcoran, who owns a high-end spa near this small town of 18,500 people, launched his complaint in June 2009, two months after he and his same-sex partner of 20 years were removed from their positions as altar servers at the church.

Corcoran and his partner are not married.

Corcoran's complaint indicated that he became an altar server in December 2008 at the request of Hood, St. Michael's resident pastor.

"I enthusiastically agreed to serve as I had been feeling a recent renewal of a strong, life long calling to a vocation in the Catholic Church," Corcoran wrote in his complaint.

But in a subsequent meeting four months later with Hood, the priest "was clearly agitated and under duress," Corcoran said in his complaint.

"He told me that a group of 12 parishioners had been conducting a letter-writing campaign to the Bishop objecting to many of the changes Father Hood had implemented since taking over St. Michael's parish in the summer of 2008.

"In their most recent letter to the Bishop this group had threatened to go public with their complaints if the Bishop did not remove the two gay servers from the altar," the complaint noted, adding: "In their letters the group has tried to establish that I am married to my same-sex partner, that I am an active homosexual leading an openly homosexual lifestyle and they implied that I may be in a relationship with Father Hood."

"Based on the group's letter, the Bishop told Father Hood to inform me that I was no longer to serve on the altar."

Corcoran, who continued to attend Mass every week after being removed



Bishop Nicola De Angelis and Jim Corcoran, a former altar server at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Cobourg, in conversation Sunday following Mass.

from his altar role, said he feared he and his mother were being seen "as outcasts who have been chastised by the bishop, for no reason other than the way that I was born and live my life."

In their response to the complaint, the 12 parishioners said they became aware that Hood had knowingly appointed "two homosexual men" as altar servers in April 2009.

"(We) understood that the Catholic Church had a policy that only Catholics in good standing, living in accordance with canonical law, were permitted to participate in the liturgy," the 12 parishioners wrote to the tribunal.

The 12 denied ever insinuating that Corcoran may have been in a relationship with Hood and rejected the allegations that they threatened the bishop with a public scandal.

They also said they did not call for the removal of the men as altar servers, but merely raised their concerns in a letter to the bishop.

In that letter, the 12 parishioners described "a groundswell of discontent" and "a state of disillusionment and parishioner unrest" within their parish.

"Our fear is that this information that is floating around will find its way to the media and the last thing St. Michael's parishioners need is another scandal in our paper," the parishioners wrote.

The 12 also indicated the church was sending a conflicting message to its flock, who had previously been urged to lobby the government against legalizing same sex marriages — only to suddenly learn that a same sex couple was serving on their altar.

Corcoran had asked that each of the 12 parishioners named in his complaint make a \$20,000 contribution to a charity of his choice "as a deterrent to each of them from slandering the reputation and trampling on the human rights of others."

He also asked that the Bishop publicly restore his role as a server at St. Michael's and preach a special homily at the church on the "consequences of practicing discrimination and the slanderous spreading of rumours, hate and innuendo."

Though Corcoran will not be restored to the altar, the bishop's homily touched on many of the points requested by Corcoran.

There is no martyr to this story, except perhaps, for Hood, whose presiding over St. Michael's is still resented by members of the parish — and who continue to ask De Angelis to have the priest removed from their church.

None of the 12 will elaborate on the reasons why they want Hood removed.

Some parishioners say they still stand by their signatures on a petition sent to De Angelis in April 2009, stating: "We are of the very firm opinion that St. Michael's Parish cannot return to a position of Christian peace and tranquility without the transfer of Father Hood to another area."

Following Sunday's Mass, De Angelis said he hoped the parishioners of St. Michael's would be able to "turn the page and reconcile" with their priest, just as Corcoran has reconciled with the church. But, the bishop concedes, he doesn't know how that part of the story will end. †

## Argentina

### Catholic Church Rallies Against Argentina Gay Bill

Agence-France Press  
July 12, 2010

BUENOS AIRES — The Catholic Church in Argentina has stepped up its offensive against a gay marriage proposal, using Sunday Mass to urge its faithful to protest before Congress on the eve of a decisive Senate vote.

The Latin American country, where 91 percent of the population says it is Catholic, could become the first nation in the region to pass a law legalizing marriage between same-sex couples if the Senate adopts the bill before it on Wednesday.

The measure, which would grant the same rights to homosexual couples as heterosexual ones, cleared a first hurdle on May 5 in the lower chamber, but the Senate is gearing for a tougher battle.

During Sunday Mass, church officials read a message from Buenos Aires Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio in which he

urged the faithful to protest Tuesday in front of Congress.

The bishops of La Pampa, a central province, published a document in which they defended a family model "with a mom and a dad, naturally endowed with the remarkable wealth of fertility."

Politicians are very divided on the subject and a Senate panel adopted an alternative project last week for civil unions that would bar gay couples from adopting, but the measure was not taken by the full chamber.

Argentines Alex Freyre and Jose Maria Di Bello were the first homosexuals to get married in Latin America, during a ceremony on December 28. Six other lesbian and gay couples did the same. But a legal battle soon followed.

Judges tried to annul the gay marriages but the married couples have appealed the rulings every time, vowing to go all the way to the Supreme Court, if necessary. †

## Austria

### Cardinal supports gay relationships

Catholicculture.org  
May 10, 2010

Cardinal Christoph Schönborn of Vienna has told a group of journalists that Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the former Vatican Secretary of State, had "deeply wronged" the victims of sexual abuse by downplaying the importance of the issue.

During his session with Austrian newspaper reporters, Cardinal Schönborn made several other noteworthy comments:

On homosexual couples, the cardinal said that an enduring same-sex union is preferable to a series of encounters, telling the journalists that "a stable relation-

ship is certainly better than if someone simply indulges in promiscuity."

Regarding Catholics who divorce and remarry, the cardinal said the Church might need to reconsider the idea that they should not receive Communion, pointing out that "many people don't even marry at all any longer."

Cardinal Schönborn argued that the Roman Curia is "urgently in need of reform," and said that Pope Benedict is working carefully toward that goal.

Cardinal Schönborn himself is one of the most influential prelates in Europe. A former student of then-Professor Ratzinger, he was the chairman of the bishops' committee that edited the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. †

# Gay member of Catholic nonprofit told he cannot be president

By Jesse Bogan and Tim Townsend  
St. Louis Today  
August 14, 2010

Jeffrey Goldone, who has been a vice president on the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of St. Louis board of directors for five years, was nominated for president in May. He accepted the nomination but was dropped from the running several weeks later.

"I was told that I could not run for president because my living relationship goes against Catholic moral teaching," which could bring 'shame and embarrassment' to the society, Goldone wrote in a Aug. 2 letter addressed to "fellow Vincentians."

Goldone has been in a relationship with his partner for 20 years.

"We are truly blessed by God to have each other and to have Jesus Christ in our lives. How could we be the source of 'shame and embarrassment?'" he wrote.

Goldone's letter includes a request to sign a petition saying an "injustice has been done" and asking for the group's rules to be modified. He asks recipients to "encourage your conference members, your family, friends, neighbors and fellow parishioners to sign the petition too."

The petition is to be sent to local and national Vincentian leaders and to St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson.

"We believe that active gay men and women bring a multitude of talents and abilities to our society that are to be shared with all, especially those who are in need," the petition reads.

The petition quotes the rules as saying, "Vincentians oppose discrimination

of all kinds and work to change the attitudes of those who view the weak or those who are different with prejudice, fear or scorn, attitudes which gravely wound the dignity of others."

On the other hand, a section of the rules states that the "Society recognizes the right and duty of the diocesan bishop to confirm that none of its activities is contrary to Catholic faith or morals."

Goldone, when contacted by the Post-Dispatch, said the rules are "in conflict with each other, and I want them to be within agreement of each other."

Goldone took his concerns to Carlson and met with him.

Ronald Guz, the outgoing board president, said the organization didn't make the decision, but rather "the Catholic church did" in its teachings.

The group's executive director, Zip Rzeppa, wrote in an e-mail: "We serve all people without discrimination. And please note we are not discriminating against Jeff Goldone, a man who has done much good. He disqualified himself for the position of president by choosing to live a lifestyle of illicit sexual union, which falls outside the teachings of the Catholic Church, and outside the qualifications of the Society's international Rule."

Rzeppa added that the vetting process is different for president because the position holds so much authority, like the power to appoint other board members.

Carlson, in a statement to the Post-Dispatch, said: "The Society of St. Vincent de Paul has a regulation that members running for president live a life according to church teaching. I clarified what church teaching is in the matter of homosexuality."

The catechism of the Roman Catholic Church labels homosexual acts as "acts of grave depravity" and "intrinsically disordered" because they "close the sexual act to the gift of life."

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul of St. Louis is part of a lay organization that spans 140 countries. Its national headquarters is in St. Louis. The organization is affiliated with the Congregation of the Mission, a Catholic order founded by St.

Vincent de Paul and commonly called the Vincentians.

The St. Louis group raised \$10 million in contributions between 2004 and 2008, according to public records. Its board members are volunteers. As a vice president, Goldone helps with organizational decisions and helps ensure it meets its mission of serving the poor.

**"If the organization  
is truly a Christian  
organization, it  
must not  
discriminate  
against anyone."**

Goldone said he never intended for his situation to become public and wanted to keep it within the organization.

"I don't want to jeopardize the fundraising abilities to do their mission," he said. "It's going to hurt them, and I don't want that to happen."

He said he mailed the letter to the Vincentian leaders at 141 Catholic churches in the area and to many members of his parish. In all, Goldone said, he mailed the letter to about 250 people.

Goldstone points out that he has volunteered countless hours and helped raise money for the last several years. His petition argues that it is "inexcusable" that he was allowed to serve as vice president and in other roles, yet be denied the chance to serve as board president because of his lifestyle.

"If the organization is truly a Christian organization, it must not discriminate against anyone," the petition says. †

## Support group for homosexuals moves talk after church concerns

By Susan Olp  
The Gazette  
Billings, Montana  
April 7, 2010

When the group, Always Our Children, a support group for parents of gays and lesbians, slated its April 6 open house, it assumed it could hold the gathering at St. Pius X Parish in Billings.

That's where the organization has its monthly meetings. Spokeswoman Debbie Schenk didn't have a reason to believe it would change for the special April gathering.

The difference this time was Always Our Children invited speaker Bill Konigsberg, a gay man who lives with his partner, Chuck, in Billings, to share the story of his journey as a gay sports-writer and author.

A week before the event, the group learned it would not be able to meet at the Catholic church.

"We were told we could not have it there because of the mention of Chuck being Bill's partner, and that it promoted and condoned same-sex marriage," Schenk said.

The e-mail came from Bishop Michael Warfel, head of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings. It was sent after a March 27 Gazette article previewing the talk, and the diocese got several questions about it.

"I received a number of inquiries from Catholics who were confused about the presentation and who was sponsoring it," Warfel said Wednesday.

The bishop said it appeared "as if there was some confusion about St. Pius sponsoring it, and, explicitly, the diocese."

"And there was some question about a conflict with Catholic teaching on homosexuality," Warfel said. "So I asked that it be moved to another site in order to eliminate confusion."

According to Catholic teachings, homosexual people should be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. But they are called to chastity, and homosexual desires that are acted upon are considered sinful.

Always Our Children, a nondenominational group, doesn't have a church affiliation. It was founded in 2000 as a



Bill Konigsberg

support and educational group for gays, lesbians, transgenders and bisexuals, their families and friends who felt alienated from churches because of issues related to sexuality.

The event was intended to be an open forum for people who wanted to know more about the group, as well as for those who have questions, concerns and fears about the GLBT lifestyle.

Schenk said the 60 people who attended the open house instead met at Mayflower Congregational Church.

"We want to give a generous thank you to Mayflower Church for letting us come there," Schenk said.

At the same time, she thanked St. Pius for allowing the support group to gather there from its inception.

"We don't want to bash the Catholic Church," she said. "Father Steve over at St. Pius has always been more than gracious in allowing us to have our meetings there."

Schenk said those who met Tuesday night, didn't dwell on the reactions that required them to move the meeting.

"We used it as a way of saying 'this is just one more proof of the work that needs to be done right here in our community,'" she said. "There were definitely people there who were very stressed about it."

Konigsberg said in regard to such a divisive issue as this one, he'd like to see a healthy dialogue between the two sides.

"How can we expect people to understand each other, how can I expect a person to understand me if they don't know me, and vice versa?" he said. †

## Clark: All are Children of God

(Continued from page 1)

Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, with the proper functioning of each part, brings about the body's growth and builds itself up in love' (Eph. 4:15-16).

"Though at times you may feel discouraged, hurt or angry, do not walk away from your families, from the Christian community, from all those who love you. In you, God's love is revealed. You are always our children."

Peace to all. †

## Catholics for Equality Launched

(Continued from page 3)

"The idea is to bring gay and lesbian couples and straight couples together one-on-one," with the objective of reaching "people not opposed to marriage and LGBT rights, but who are uncertain what that would look like," said board member Anne Underwood.

"We are finding creative ways to have dialogue in places where it is being suppressed," said Attey.

The brunch strategy is brilliant, said founding board member Eugene McMullan of San Francisco.

"It could have been invented in the Bay Area. We love brunch," he added. "And what could be more subversive, since we don't have equal access, while at the same time most of us at the parish level are pro-LGBT and utterly unsympathetic to the erring bishops. And we already have a brunch captain signed up for the parish of the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland, no less, in Oakland Bishop [Salvatore] Cordileone's own backyard."

A doctoral candidate in history at Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, McMullan is the founder and lead organizer for Catholics for Marriage Equality in California (<http://www.jointhecatholicimpact.com>). He serves on the board of the local Dignity chapter and is a parishioner at Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in the Castro.

"It is imperative that we come together against the anti-gay bishops," McMullan said. "We have to do it for ourselves, as a matter of principle, and to save the church we love. The anti-gay, anti-marriage activism of our 'shepherds' is appalling and brings discredit to the Body of Christ, which should be about the Father's business of saving souls and building the kingdom, not obstructing civil rights."

Catholics for Equality is not about church ministry. Rather, its political focus is to channel netroots and grassroots supporters to become active in pro-equality state legislative and ballot measure campaigns.

"We [also] are not a church reform group," said Palacios. "We are not going to handle doctrine. We can't change that. That is the church's thing. We don't even have the illusion that we as Catholics can do that."

Accordingly, he added, "What we are doing is public action and public education on public issues. We are helping the Catholic movable middle rethink their positions. They are a fair-minded people. They want to do the right thing from their American core values and the heritage of Catholic social justice values."

That approach suits California Catholics just fine, said McMullan. "We are a people power, peace and justice church."

For more information, visit [www.catholicsforequality.org](http://www.catholicsforequality.org). †



## 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

*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  
*Carlsbad:* 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:* 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 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  
*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, 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  
*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, St. Pius X

### 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, 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

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

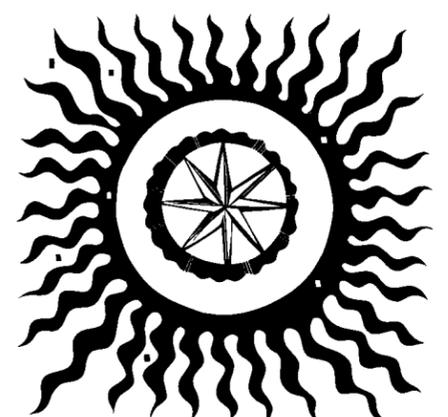
### Canada

*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.**



# The Spiritual Side of Coming Out

By Francis DeBernardo, Marianne Duddy-Burke, Casey Lopata, Nicole Sotelo

*Onfaith.washingtonpost.com*  
October 11, 2010

Today is National Coming Out Day, a day set aside as a special time of reflection and celebration by gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender (GLBT) advocacy groups to highlight the unique perspective of GLBT people in "coming out of the closet" to acknowledge, embrace, and communicate their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Despite the wide diversity of GLBT people in our midst, one common experience is that all have gone through a process of recognizing that their orientation or gender identity differed from what their society was telling them it should be. Engaging in this process of "coming out" has helped many GLBT people to develop personal characteristics such as courage, truth-telling, personal strength, and community-building--all inherently spiritual traits.

Coming out entails an inherently spiritual process that makes National Coming Out Day not only a day for secular GLBT advocates to celebrate, but one for people of faith to honor as well. For many GLBT people, coming out is part of a faith journey. They speak of coming out as enhancing their prayer lives and their relationship with God. Many gain strength from seeing their sexuality and gender not simply as biological factors, but essentially as spiritual ones. In the Catholic community, we have heard many stories from GLBT people who found strength in their coming out processes from stories of the saints who had strong, intimate, and life-sustaining same-sex relationships or whose gender identity transgressed societal norms. (Dressing and acting as a man, St. Joan of Arc served in the French army in the

15th century. Transgender people find strength from her example.)

The spiritual dimension of coming out challenges faith communities to recognize and affirm this experience as an avenue of grace. For the Catholic church, which has such a rich tradition in cere-



mony and ritual, establishing a "rite of coming out" would be a beautiful way to affirm people who have come to this awareness. Indeed, a number of smaller denominations and religious advocacy groups have already developed such rituals.

As with all good and powerful church rituals, a rite of coming out would focus not only on the individual but on the community as well. On the one hand, coming out is a gift that the individual brings to the community. The courage, wisdom, and dependence on God that a

GLBT person experiences can be beneficial to others in the community. On the other hand, coming out is a process that requires the support of the community for the individual.

The story of Lazarus in John 11 resonates with GLBT Christians' coming out experiences. In this story, Jesus visits the home of his friend Lazarus, who has died and been buried in a tomb. When Jesus arrives on the scene, he calls forth Lazarus from the tomb, with the words, "Come out!" Modern GLBT Christians see in this call of Jesus a call to new life that strongly parallels the call that they have experienced in coming to accept their sexual orientation or gender identity. The closet symbolized a kind of death for them. In coming out of the closet, they are answering a God-given call to live a new life.

After Lazarus has emerged from the tomb, Jesus directs the people assembled to "Unbind him and let him go free." It is the responsibility of the assembled community to assist a GLBT person in their experience of new life, just as they would help any other member who has had a life-altering situation, particularly one that might have involved some element of struggle.

In celebrating coming out, a community celebrates the journey of overcoming fear and doubt, of telling the truth in the face of strong opposition, of affirming the goodness of an individual's experience, of learning to rely on the voice of God. Too often religious communities suffer from "groupthink" and a "we've always done it this way" mentality. By celebrating the coming out experience, communities are essentially celebrating the gift of prophecy in their midst.

On this particular coming out day, we are happy to come out announcing the formation of Equally Blessed, a new

Catholic coalition that will work for justice and equality for GLBT people on a broad range of issues both in society and within our church. Our four groups--Call To Action, DignityUSA, Fortunate Families, New Ways Ministry--have a combined history of working for 112 years on these issues, and we have decided to work together to help unbind people and let them go free. We recognize that many Catholics in the pews--GLBT people and heterosexual allies--are now stepping forth bravely to fight injustice in polling booths and in church organizations. We want to help amplify the voices of those who are speaking for justice, as well as assist those who need a little help to "come out" with a prophetic stance.

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National Coming Out Day can be a day when we not only celebrate GLBT people in our midst, but a day when we celebrate the need for all of us as individuals and as religious communities to come out of our closets of fear, secrecy, and shame. It is a time to speak forth boldly what God has taught us from our lives and in our consciences. It is only when we come out of the closet--whatever types of closets that we find ourselves in--that we can live in the light and grow. †

*Francis DeBernardo is the Executive Director of New Ways Ministry. Marianne Duddy-Burke is the Executive Director of DignityUSA. Casey Lopata is a co-founder of Fortunate Families. Nicole Sotelo is JustChurch coordinator for Call To Action. All are founding members of Equally Blessed, a Catholic coalition for justice and equality for LGBT persons in church and society.*

## Gay Marriage Costs Cathedral H.S. Dean Her Job

By Peter Goonan  
*The Republican*  
Springfield, Massachusetts  
September 3, 2010

SPRINGFIELD - The dean of students at Cathedral High School lost her job this week, saying she was pressured to leave after marrying her female partner in August.

Christine M. Judd, who served as athletic director and dean of students, said she is no longer an employee of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield school system after a meeting Wednesday with administrators of the Catholic high school.

The diocese listed her departure as a resignation, but Judd said she is still exploring her legal options.

"I was given a choice of termination or resignation," Judd said. "I'm hurt, but I wish nothing but the best for Cathedral, its students, the parents, the athletic teams, administration and faculty. I bleed purple (the school's color)."

Judd, a Springfield resident, worked for the Catholic school for 12 years, beginning as a science teacher in 1998. She became dean of students six years ago and was given the added duties of athletic director three years ago.

"I married my partner this summer," Judd said, in violation of church doctrine.

"I was hoping that my loyalty, my professionalism the last 12 years would supersede the current hypocrisy that has already been shown with the Diocese of Springfield," Judd said.

Asked to elaborate, Judd said she questions if there are lay people who work for the Catholic diocese who violate church policy by divorcing and remarrying without an annulment, use birth control, have vasectomies or are pro-choice on the issue of abortion.

Same-sex marriage became legal in Massachusetts in 2004.

Mark E. Dupont, a spokesman for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield, said Judd did resign, but declined to respond to her comments, or on the issue of her marriage in August.

"Because it's an employment matter, we are not at liberty to discuss the specifics," Dupont said. Judd said she knows she will find new employment.

She said state law gives her the right to same-sex marriage, but it is not allowed under diocesan policy, leading to her job loss.

"Cathedral had nothing to do with this," Judd said. "This was a diocesan decision. In the end, the timing of this issue really affects the kids. That is where it has the most effect."

Cathedral's website describes Judd as "one of the key members of the faculty and staff who serve as positive role models for the students."

Farrand M. Violette, who is the new football coach at Cathedral, has been named interim athletic director for the rest of this year. "No decision has been announced regarding the dean of students position.," Dupont said. †



## New York parish maintains Gay Pride presence

By Susan Candiotti and Vivienne Foley, *cnn.org*, June 27, 2010

This year, as for the past 12 years or more, parishioners from St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church have marched under their church banner in New York's colorful Gay Pride parade.

But this year, there was a difference.

Their banner was blank, missing the name of the church.

New York's Archbishop Timothy Dolan asked the church's pastor to keep St. Francis' name out of the picture. †