

BANDINGS

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Why do so many Catholics support marriage equality? Blame the Catholic imagination

By **Jamie Manson**
The National Catholic Reporter
October 8, 2012

In late September, Archbishop John J. Myers of Newark, N.J., upped the ante in the hierarchy's culture war against LGBT civil rights by declaring that those who support marriage equality should refrain from receiving the Eucharist. With somewhere between 52 percent and 72 percent of Catholics in this country supporting same-sex marriage, a lot of people are going to be turned away hungry from the altar.

Myers articulated his position in a 16-page letter on marriage. Not surprisingly, most of the document reads as an argument against same-sex relationships rather than a pastoral letter that offers counsel on the many challenges that plague heterosexual marriages.

Myers' also calls on "Catholic politicians who serve the common good" to "defend the truth about marriage against those who would try to deconstruct or radically alter its meaning." This, too, may prove an uphill battle for the bishops since, as I have written previously in *NCR*, the marriage equality movement has been advanced to a good extent by Catholic politicians. Many of the governors -- including Andrew Cuomo in New York, Martin O'Malley in Maryland and Christine Gregoire in Washington state -- who have signed marriage equality bills into law are Catholic.

Since multiple studies and surveys have confirmed that more Catholics agree with marriage equality than the overall population and history has already demonstrated that Catholics have played a key role in passing same-sex marriage legislation, I've often wondered whether there is a connection behind the Catholic theological tradition and this particular issue.

I don't think this phenomenon is evidence of increased secularization among Catholics. Cuomo, O'Malley and Gregoire, for example, all claim their faith is an important part of their identities. Nor do I think it is simply the result

of Catholics having been raised in a justice-oriented tradition. The answer to why so many Catholics support marriage equality lies, I believe, in understanding the Catholic imagination.

In his book *The Catholic Imagination*, Fr. Andrew Greeley writes, "Catholics see the Holy lurking in creation. As Catholics, we find our houses and our world haunted by a sense that the objects, events and persons of daily life are revelations of grace."

The Catholic imagination, or "Catholic sacramental view of the world," as my mentor Margaret Farley calls it, has its roots in the Catholic understanding of the relationship between grace and nature.

In Catholic theology, grace perfects nature. Yes, human beings are a mess, and we're born into a very messy world. But because we are created by God and because everything God creates is good, there is intrinsic goodness in us. God offers us countless opportunities of grace to help us transform ourselves and to redeem us.

Catholics believe the finite is capable of the infinite. This is why Greeley says objects, events and persons all have the capability to reveal God's grace to us. That grace can come in our experiences of love, forgiveness, compassion, justice, sacrifice, but also in the midst of suffering, brokenness and desolation.

It is the Catholic imagination that gave Dorothy Day the vision to see a prostitute with advanced syphilis as Jesus Christ on her doorstep.

It's Catholic sacramental view of the world that allowed Pierre Teilhard de Chardin to see that "Christ has a cosmic body that extends throughout the uni-

verse."

It is the Catholic theological tradition that made Thomas Merton see, in the middle of a Louisville, Ky., shopping center, that he was so in love with all of the people buzzing around him that he longed to tell them that "they are all walking around shining like the sun."

Those with a sacramental view of the world find it challenging to separate the sacred from the profane in this world. The theological ideas that support the Catholic imagination were articulated during the Reformation period as a response to the increasingly influential theology of John Calvin and other reformers.

Calvin's understanding of grace and nature was radically different from the Catholic tradition. He believed human beings are totally depraved and enslaved to sin. God saves

human beings *in spite* of who they are, not because of any intrinsic goodness or merit that they have. Calvin believed God predestines who will and who will not be saved. In order to be redeemed, the human being had to completely die to the old, irredeemable self.

Calvinism still pervades the evangelical tradition and has helped shape the evangelical position on homosexuality. Given Calvin's theological understanding of the human person as being wholly depraved and irredeemable, it's easier to understand why evangelicals can justify their belief that no good can come out of a same-sex relationship.

But the affirming nature of the Catholic view of the human person and the core Catholic belief that all finite things are capable of the infinite makes the Roman Catholic position on LGBT persons and same-sex relationships much more problematic. (And it makes the alliances that some Roman Catholic bishops have

formed with many anti-gay evangelical pastors all the more troubling.)

Of course, the Roman Catholic Church bases its teaching on homosexuality on its interpretation of natural law, arguing that all sex acts must take place within the state of marriage and must have the potential to procreate.

But the Catholic imagination sees God everywhere, believes that God reveals Godself in all things and understands God can work through any human being or human relationship. By insisting that genital complementarity is an absolute requirement for marriage, the hierarchy places limits on God's power to work within all of the relationships of all God's beloved children.

Those who possess a sacramental view of the world often realize that any human person or relationship that brings love, mercy, forgiveness, kindness, generosity or faithfulness into the world is a sign of God's grace. Perhaps this is the reason so many Catholics defend marriage equality: They have recognized these graces can come forth as much through same-sex couples as heterosexual couples. Those who have a Catholic imagination recognize that a couple's ability to enter into a marriage commitment is not contingent on their anatomies, but on the depth, strength and fruitfulness of their bond.

Given their sacramental view of the world, it is little wonder that so many Catholics dissent from the bishops' disparaging characterization of LGBT persons and same-sex relationships. The hierarchy's position simply does not do justice to the power of the Catholic imagination.

So there is a deep irony in Archbishop Myers' demand that Catholics who support marriage equality should refrain from the sacrament of the Eucharist. Because it is precisely the Catholic sacramental view of the world that helps us to see the goodness and holiness that can come from LGBT persons and same-sex unions ✦



Jamie Manson

Minnesota gay-marriage supporter denied confirmation

By **The Associated Press**
The San Francisco Chronicle
November 15, 2012

BARNESVILLE, Minn.— A teenager who posted his support for same-sex marriage online has been denied a Catholic rite of passage at his northwestern Minnesota church, his family said.

Shana Cihak said her 17-year-old son, Lennon, wasn't allowed to be confirmed at Assumption Church in Barnesville last month after posting a Facebook picture of himself with a political sign he altered to oppose the marriage amendment on Minnesota's ballot. Voters on Nov. 6 rejected the constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage.

Assumption Rev. Gary LaMoine told *The Associated Press* Thursday that the teen was not denied confirmation but declined to explain, calling it an "internal and pastoral" matter.

"Some people chose to run out into the public and put it out in the media," LaMoine told the AP, adding that he was

consulting with the Catholic Diocese of Crookston about the issue.

Shana Cihak tells *The Forum* (<http://tinyurl.com/bkqjleu>) she was called into a private conversation with the priest after the Facebook photo was posted and was told her son wouldn't be allowed to complete confirmation. Lennon has gone to church every week and volunteered around the community in preparation for his confirmation this year, Shana Cihak said.

Lennon said other students in his confirmation class "liked" the photo on Facebook, but they were still allowed to be confirmed.

"I just thought it was wrong to single him out,"



Lennon Cihak holds up the sign Wednesday, Nov. 14, 2012, that he photographed and posted on his Facebook page and was ultimately denied taking part in his Catholic Church confirmation about three weeks ago in Barnesville, Minn. Photo: The Forum, Dave Wallis / AP

his mother said.

Her husband, Doug Cihak, said the family is not allowed to participate in Communion at Assumption. He insisted that he's not mad at LaMoine, explaining that the priest is just a "messenger" of the church.

Lennon said the experience hasn't altered his faith.

"I don't want the church to be put down. I don't want the Catholic religion to be put down," he said. "It's just the way the priest has things running. He's so strict. He won't loosen up about things."

Shana Cihak said she was confirmed at the same church, but doesn't plan to return to Assumption. ✦

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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Bishops and Vatican React to Marriage Equality Electoral Victories

By Francis DeBernardo

Bondings 2.0

NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com

November 10, 2012

It is understandable that certain Catholic bishops would be disappointed in Tuesday's ballot victories for marriage equality in Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, and Washington State. All the bishops in those particular states were vocal in trying to defeat marriage equality initiatives.

In **Maine**, Bishop Richard Malone attempted to be reconciliatory in his statement following the vote. While noting that he was "disappointed" in the outcome, he also showed some awareness that Catholics who supported marriage equality did so out of a sense of justice, though he disagreed with their motivation:

"I trust that those who voted for such a radical change did so out of concern for our brothers and sisters who struggle with same-sex attraction. Respect and acceptance of all people regardless of sexual orientation is not a point of controversy. It is a teaching of the Church, but so is the authentic meaning and definition of marriage. That is why the Catholic Church will continue its commitment to work for the basic human rights to which all people are entitled, while remaining devoted to preserving and strengthening the precious gift of marriage."

Although Bishop Malone needs to learn that not all gay and lesbian people "struggle" with their sexuality—indeed, many see it as a gift from God and celebrate it as such—it is commendable that in this statement he reaffirms his dedication to human rights. In **Maryland**, Archbishop William Lori responded to the vote for marriage equality in his state by continuing to speak as if the campaign were still ongoing, instead of a settled affair. In *The Catholic Review*, the archdiocesan newspaper, quotes from Archbishop Lori's response:

"I think that vote will prove not to have been for the common good of our state," Archbishop Lori said. . . .

"The election results on same-sex marriage should serve as a 'wake up call' for Catholics," Archbishop Lori said, demonstrating 'our need to redouble our efforts to defend marriage, to preach about what marriage is, and to help people understand it as a unique relationship that does not discriminate against anyone, but is for the good of children and for the good of our society.'"

Lori's comments differed greatly from those of Ryan Sattler, a Catholic layman who was profiled by *The National Catholic Reporter* for his work on marriage equality in the state, and who was sought for his reaction to the election's outcome. Sattler stated simply:

"On Election Day, Maryland voters chose justice. They chose equality. They chose love."

Similarly, Karin Quimby, deputy faith director of Marylanders for Marriage Equality, praised the work of Maryland Catholics like Sattler:

"I think the work of Catholics on Question 6 here in Maryland shows that the social justice teaching in the Catholic church is alive and well. Lay leaders did a great job at the grassroots level, making their voices heard, and their fellow Catholics responded. Catholics clearly believe, very strongly, that every person has dignity, every person should be treated fairly, and every person deserves the same rights."

In **Minnesota**, the Archdiocese of St. Paul, led by Archbishop John Nienstedt, also emphasized the idea that it is time to move forward from the rancor of debate:

"Although the defeat of the amendment is a very serious concern to us, it will not deter us from continuing to serve this community and the whole state in pursuit of the common good."

Father Michael Tegeder, who publicly opposed Archbishop Nienstedt during the marriage debate, called for the Ordinary's resignation in a letter to the *Star Tribune*:

"As a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, I would ask our archbishop, John Nienstedt, to prayerfully consider stepping down from his office. It would be healing for our state and our church and would

show some magnanimity on his part. His misguided crusade to change our Constitution, spending more than a million dollars and, more importantly, much goodwill, has been rejected. Elections have consequences."

In **Washington State**, Archbishop Peter Sartain of Seattle also seemed prepared to continue the debate about marriage. In a statement, he said:

"I am disappointed that so many voters failed to recognize marriage between a man and a woman as the natural institution for the permanent, faithful covenant of love for a couple, for bringing children into the world, and for nurturing and educating those children. This change in civil law is not in the best interest of children or society."

More joyous in response was Washington State's Catholic Governor Christine Gregoire, who had signed the marriage equality legislation into law. The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* quoted her reaction to the vote:

"Washington has made history and I couldn't be prouder," said Gregoire. "Voters stood up for what is right and what is just and said that all Washington families are equal under the law . . ."

"This is a day history will look back on as a turning point for equality. It is a day I will look back on as Washington state leading the nation. And it is a day that I will carry with me forever."

Commenting on all four successful votes, Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of San Francisco, who is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, also seemed intent on putting a negative spin on the outcomes in his statement:

"Yesterday, November 6, was a disappointing day for marriage, as the effort to preserve the unique meaning of marriage in the law lost by only a narrow margin in four states, even though vastly outspent by those who promote the redefinition of marriage.

"The meaning of marriage, though, cannot be redefined because it lies within our very nature. No matter what policy, law or judicial decision is put into place, marriage is the only institution that unites a man and a woman to each other and to any children born of their union. It is either this, or it is nothing at all. In view of the fact that every child has a mother and a father, our society either respects the basic right of every child to be raised by his or her mother and father together and so supports the true and unique meaning of marriage for the good of children, or it does not. In a society marked by increasing poverty and family fragmentation, marriage needs to be strengthened, promoted, and defended, not redefined. I hope and pray that political leaders, judges, and all people will seek to honor this foundational and common sense truth of marriage."

In *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican's newspaper, tried to place the Catholic hierarchy's position in a positive cast, even in the face of such resounding defeats. A *Religion News Service* story offers the following summary:

"You could say that the church, on this level, is bound to lose," writes [Lucetta] Scaraffia. "But this is not the case."

"According to the historian, the church's fight on moral issues such as gay marriage and abortion has drawn support and admiration' from many non-Catholics.

"By opposing legislation allowing gay couples to adopt in the United Kingdom or fighting the birth control mandate in the U.S., the church 'made it clear for everyone that this is not about progress' but about 'the loss of one of the founding freedoms of the modern State, religious liberty.'"

In all these cases, where Catholics have been working on both sides of the marriage question, it will be incumbent on the local bishops to work toward reconciling these factions in the church so that there are no lingering senses of animosity or alienation. This will be particularly important where the bishops have been particularly politically involved on the marriage question, and thus have risked alienating marriage equality supporters. Now that the electorates have spoken for justice and equality, the work of reconciliation must begin in earnest. ✦

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It's like a little bit of *Bondings* every day!

Maryland Catholic fights for legal recognition of same-sex marriage

By Nicole Soojung Callahan
The National Catholic Reporter
November 5, 2012

Baltimore—Ryan Sattler, 68, thinks about his sister Mary every day. The youngest of four siblings, Mary was "the darling" of their close-knit Catholic family. She was barely a teenager when she told Ryan's wife, Joan, and later Ryan himself, that she was gay. It was difficult for Mary's parents to accept at first, but Ryan says their "fierce love" for her helped them overcome their initial shock and disappointment.

Ryan worried about his sister, who never seemed entirely happy. He overheard her lying about nonexistent boyfriends, even while living with her partner.

"She was afraid people wouldn't accept her as she was. She couldn't be herself," he said.

When her long-term relationship ended, Mary felt she had nothing -- not the heterosexual life she'd been lying about and not the life she was building with her partner. She began drinking heavily and taking pills, and shut out her family's repeated offers to help. Five years ago, she took her own life.

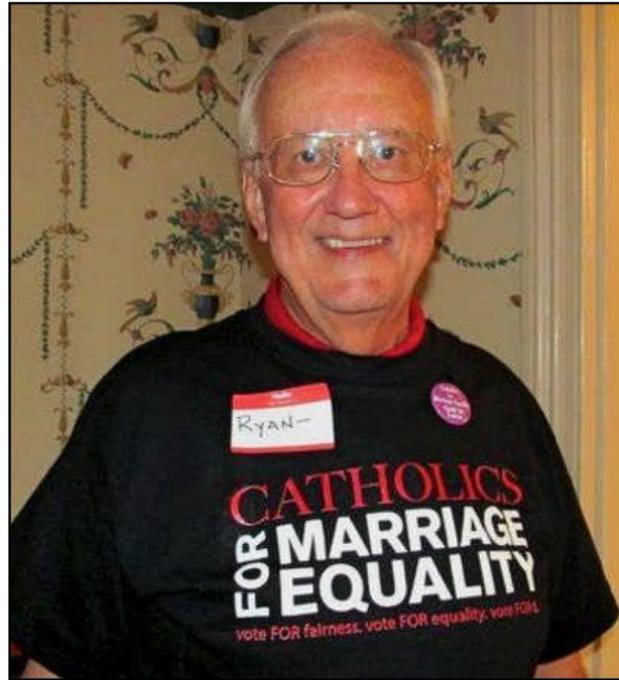
There are many reasons why Ryan supports Maryland's ballot referendum on marriage equality. But first and foremost, there is Mary.

"Watching my sister live two lives and then losing her like that makes me want other people to have a life that is better than hers was," he said. "An open life, a life without shame, a life of love and fullness."

The Civil Marriage Protection Act of 2012 passed the Maryland General Assembly in February and was signed into law by Gov. Martin O'Malley on March 1, but opponents gathered enough signatures to force a referendum. Maryland voters will decide the fate of same-sex marriage Tuesday.

Ryan has spent the last several months speaking at events throughout the state, volunteering at phone banks, emphasizing the law's strong protections for

churches and religious organizations, and urging fellow Catholics to vote for Question 6. His commitment to progressive causes is deeply rooted in his faith. He



Ryan Sattler

and Joan worked for racial integration in Milwaukee with their Catholic community, protested the Vietnam War alongside priests from Marquette University, and helped establish a local food pantry and an anti-racist organization in York, Pa., before their move to Maryland three years ago.

"Ryan is a good, faithful Catholic," said Fr. Joe Muth, his pastor at St. Matthew Catholic Church in Baltimore. "He and others have tried to encourage thoughtful discussion about same-sex marriage at our parish. People want to talk about their beliefs and seek truth with compassion -- it's not necessarily healthy to shut down those conversations."

Question 6 will not pass without significant support from Catholics, who represent approximately a quarter of Maryland voters. Ryan said he believes the support is there; he cites a recent Pew

Research poll in which 58 percent of Catholics said same-sex marriage should be legal.

"Catholics know that we have a duty to seek justice for everyone, that it is wrong to treat anyone as a second-class citizen because of their sexual orientation," he said. "When we, as Catholics, go into the voting booth, having formed our consciences through prayer and study and openness to the Spirit, many of us are going to vote for justice and equality."

Three hundred Baltimore Catholics signed a pledge, published in the *Baltimore Sun* on Friday, to vote for Question 6.

Ryan estimated that there are more than 1,000 Catholics statewide working to pass the referendum. According to Karin Quimby, deputy faith director of Mary-

landers for Marriage Equality, Ryan and other Catholic lay leaders have been "very effective" at the regional level.

"Catholics like Ryan are active in this campaign because of their faith," she said. "They have a deep need to speak out about justice and equality."

Ryan often wears a "Catholics for Marriage Equality" T-shirt or button and has given away dozens of each to Catholics who stop him to talk about Question 6. One woman he spoke with recently told him of her internal struggle.

"She said, 'I love my church, I respect the bishops, but my daughter is in a relationship with a wonderful woman. They want to adopt a child, start a family.' This is a highly personal issue for people -- many Catholic parents I talk to feel that the church has pushed their gay sons and daughters away," Ryan said.

He said he does not expect the church hierarchy to soften its position

anytime soon. Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore has repeatedly urged his flock to vote against Question 6, so that -- as Lori explained in a *Catholic Review* column Sept. 20 -- "marriage as it has been known for centuries will remain as God intended." The archbishop of Newark, John Myers, recently stated that Catholics should not present themselves for Communion if they support same-sex marriage.

Ryan said many people have asked him why he is still Catholic, given the bishops' staunch opposition to same-sex marriage.

"The church has given me God's love, God's true presence," he said. "When I receive the Eucharist, I'm not thinking about the bishops. I receive the body and blood of Jesus, who loves me and welcomes all people to his table -- the same Jesus who is asking me to do what I can to feed the hungry, help the poor, love my neighbors. I know that I need a relationship with him and that I need to share his love with others. That's why I'm Catholic."

In a *Baltimore Sun* poll last month, 49 percent of respondents said they supported Question 6; 39 percent remained opposed. In another *Sun* poll last week, that 10-point lead had vanished. What will Ryan do if Question 6 is defeated?

"I'll be heartbroken if, when given the opportunity to love, we choose discrimination -- especially if a majority of Catholics do," he said. Regardless of the outcome, Ryan knows there will be a need for healing: "We'll have to continue working to break down the walls that divide people on this issue."

Ryan said he wishes his sister could have experienced the kind of lasting happiness he and his wife have known -- the same love he believes committed lesbian and gay couples share.

"I'll always wish that I could have helped Mary more," he said. "But I know that she will be with me when I vote." ✦

[Editor's Note: Ryan Sattler is a member of New Ways Ministry's Advisory Board.]

Knights of Columbus key contributor against same-sex marriage

By Joshua McElwee
The National Catholic Reporter
October 19, 2012

The Knights of Columbus, the U.S. Catholic fraternal organization known for its wide-ranging charitable work and parish fish fries, has been a significant contributor to political efforts opposing same-sex marriage across the country, according to a study commissioned by a coalition of Catholic groups that support same-sex marriage.

Since 2005, the Knights of Columbus has provided "\$6.25 million directly to anti-marriage equality efforts" and has additionally provided about \$9.6 million "for broader efforts ... to discriminate against gay or lesbian couples in the name of religious freedom," says the report, released Thursday.

Earlier this year, a coalition called Equally Blessed commissioned a study of the Knights' tax filings, annual statements and other public documents between 2005 and 2012. The result is a 37-page report, "The Strong Right Arm of the Bishops: The Knights of Columbus and Anti-Marriage Equality Funding."

Since 2005, several million dollars have gone from the Knights directly to organizations involved with state ballot initiatives on same-sex marriage, says the coalition, which is made up of Catholic groups Call To Action, DignityUSA, Fortunate Families, and New Ways Ministry.

The report also states that the

Knights have yet to file their 2011 tax return because they asked for an extension of the April deadline, so the total sum for donations could be higher.

While many of the findings detailed in Thursday's report have been reported previously, the report for the first time lays out the Knights' contributions on the state level in a way that indicates how the organization has dedicated its resources to the effort over the better part of the last decade. Where possible, *NCR* has verified the figures in the report.

The Knights have also donated more than \$1.1 million to the U.S. bishops' Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, which was first announced in 2008 as an ad hoc "joined effort" between the Knights and the bishops' conference, the report states.

Among other findings in the report, verified through public records:

The Knights' first public donations to efforts to oppose same-sex marriage noted in the report came in 2005, when it directed \$100,000 through the Kansas

City, Kan., archdiocese to a corporation supporting a Kansas state constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage, according to the group's tax filings and political donation records. According to those records, the \$100,000 accounted for over 74 percent of the total raised by



Members of the Knights of Columbus carry American flags during the National Columbus Memorial Centennial Celebration outside Union Station in Washington in 2010.

the main group supporting the measure, which passed by a 70 percent margin.

The Knights' donations to groups opposing same-sex marriage totaled at least \$2.28 million in 2008, according to an annual report attributed to the group's national leader, Carl Anderson. Included in those donations were about \$1.1 million in support of a California ballot measure known as Proposition 8 that outlawed same-sex marriage in the state

after it had been allowed by the state's Supreme Court; and \$515,000 to the National Organization for Marriage, the main political group supporting the proposition. While Proposition 8 passed in 2008 by about 52 percent, it was ruled to violate the U.S. Constitution's right to due process in federal district court in 2010, a ruling a federal appeals court upheld in 2012. Other donations from the Knights that year went to efforts to oppose same-sex marriage in Connecticut (\$275,000), Arizona (\$100,000) and Florida (\$200,000).

In 2009, the Knights again donated about \$1.43 million to the National Organization for Marriage and donated \$418,000 to the U.S. bishops' committee ad hoc committee, according to that year's annual report.

In 2010, the Knights donated almost \$750,000 to groups fighting same-sex marriage measures, including a reported \$722,150 to the U.S. bishops' ad hoc committee, according to tax filings.

In 2012, the group has given at least \$100,000 to the Minnesota Catholic Conference's fund to fight a ballot measure in that state, which is also on the ballot this November. According to public records, the Knights' donations are the second largest to the fund after a \$650,000 donation by the St. Paul and Minneapolis archdiocese.

According to public records, the Knights have also given at least \$250,000 apiece to two organizations

(Continued on page 5)

The Dignity of Recognition: On Using the Word 'Queer'

By Tom Beaudoin
In All Things blog
AmericaMagazine.org
October 7, 2012

Over the course of teaching college for the past dozen years, and through my own many missteps, I have come to see it as a basic rule of decency that as much as possible, people should be called whatever they prefer to be called. I have seen this rule of thumb proven helpful in many kinds of conversations across substantial differences.

For example, I have seen it in dialogues between baptized Catholics who are at different points on the theological/political spectrum, where one needs to refer to the other as s/he would wish to be called -- surrendering epithets like "conservative Catholic" or "cafeteria Catholic" in favor of simply "Catholic," or whatever one's conversation partner prefers.

I have seen this act of decency make

a difference in dialogues about abortion, where people are not allowed to refer to each other with appellations like "anti-life" or "anti-choice," but need to use the term that the other would use to describe her/himself.

And I have seen it often in the classroom, where it is important to let people define whether they would like to be called "Deacon," "Sister," "Father," "Brother," "Doctor," "Professor" -- or something else.

Of course, in a great many cases, letting adults specify the way they want to be addressed is not only a matter of decency, but also of dignity. This is especially the case where a part of oneself, or even something like one's entire being, has not been acknowledged in situations where it mattered, and where people could have done differently.

So it was that I received word that a community of students where I teach, at Fordham, recently announced some good news about the dignity of recogni-

tion. This week, the Rainbow Alliance announced that discussions with administrators had led to the official acceptance of the word "Queer" as a legitimate designation for groups at the university. The announcement, from the students, is here. If you read it, you can see that a range of student groups were involved in advocating for this development.

The word "queer," which began as a form of hateful speech against persons deemed to be outside heterosexual norms/practices, and who were therefore deemed "abnormal," has been appropriated by many LGBT-identified persons, and allies, as a positive term.

As a positive term, it has many meanings, including naming a whole area of academic thought/research that has emerged in the last two decades, queer theory, and which has proven influential in many fields--including religious studies, and, to a lesser extent, theology.

Among many other meanings, queer means the dignity of speaking for one's own identity and desires outside the expectations and constraints of what presents itself in many areas of life as the obligation to be (or become) "straight." This often quiet revolution is happening in uneven, but sure, ways across Catholic college and university life in the USA. I support and am proud of these Fordham students and of Fordham administrators for opening up a new stage of recognition regarding realities that are, to be sure, needful of naming, but about which much more is at stake than only names.

Are there places in your life/work/church situation where there is room for improvement about what people are called? It can be a learning process for everyone, especially for those whose cultural/religious privilege has allowed them to be called what they would like most of the time, and who are free to call others what they think is best, without rejoinder.

✦

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.



Alabama

Mobile: Spring Hill College

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

Oakland: Holy Names University

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

Joliet: University of St. Francis

River Forest: Dominican University in Illinois

Romeoville: Lewis University

Indiana

Notre Dame: Holy Cross College, St.

Mary's College, University of Notre Dame

Iowa

Davenport: St. Ambrose University

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,

Chestnut Hill: Boston College

Chicopee: Elms 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

Manchester: St. Anselm College

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

Brooklyn and Patchogue:

St. Joseph College

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: St. John Fisher College

St. Bonaventure: St. Bonaventure

University

Sparkill: St. Thomas Aquinas College

Syracuse: LeMoyn College

Queens: St. John's University

Ohio

Cincinnati: Xavier University

Cleveland Heights: John Carroll University

Dayton: University of Dayton

Pepper Pike: Ursuline College

South Euclid: Notre Dame College

Sylvania: Lourdes College

Oregon

Marylhurst: Marylhurst University

Portland: University of Portland

Pennsylvania

Cresson: Mount Aloysius College

Dallas: Misericordia University

Erie: Mercyhurst College

Greensburg: Seton Hill University

Philadelphia: Chestnut Hill College,

LaSalle University, St. Joseph's

University

Pittsburgh: Carlow University,

Duquesne University

Radnor: Cabrini College

Reading: Alvernia University

Scranton: Marywood University

Villanova: Villanova University

Rhode Island

Newport: Salve Regina University

Providence: Providence College

Texas

Austin: Saint Edward's University

San Antonio: University of the Incarnate

Word, Our Lady of the Lake

University

Vermont

Colchester: Saint Michael's College

Washington

Lacey: St. Martin's College

Seattle: Seattle University

Spokane: Gonzaga University

West Virginia

Wheeling: Wheeling Jesuit University

Wisconsin

De Pere: St. Norbert College

Madison: Edgewood College

Milwaukee: Alverno College,

Cardinal Stritch University,

Marquette University

Canada

Toronto: Regis College

Stonehill amends non-discrimination policy

By Justin Graeber

Taunton Daily Gazette

Taunton, Massachusetts

September 24, 2012

EASTON —Stonehill College has reversed a long-standing policy and added sexual orientation to its non-discrimination policy, something students say has been 15 years in the making.

Stonehill's Board of Trustees voted Friday to add the language to its policy alongside things like race and gender and religion. There was a small caveat, however, that the college would not be asked to do anything contrary to the beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church.

"The subject was raised by students and employees who have deep and abiding concerns on this issue," Stonehill President Fr. Mark Cregan said in a letter to the college community, adding that the board sought outside counsel on the issue.

"Please know that I endeavor to lead Stonehill as a just and compassionate community and believe that this change has further emphasized that we are a community that is welcoming of all persons," Cregan wrote.

Students have been advocating for the change for about 15 years, but interest in the issue grew over the last year or so. Last spring, on the backs of a national video campaign called "It Gets Better," in which celebrities recorded personal messages to gay teens struggling with their identity, a number of Catholic colleges, including Stonehill and Notre Dame, put their own spin on the message. A video titled "It Has to Get Better" depicted students and faculty imploring the Board of Trustees to make the change. There was also an online petition and a Facebook page.

"Social media was instrumental throughout this process," said junior Sean Borger. "It shows non-threatening demonstrations can work."

For the students, the issue was always one of equality and fairness.

"The whole Stonehill campus is happy today," said senior Amanda Macchi. "We care about everyone being equal and safe and protected."

Students said there is still more work to be done in terms of tolerance of GLBT lifestyles on campus, but they welcomed Friday's decision.

"I've never felt prouder to be a Stonehill student," said junior Kristen Bailey. "It was a great day." ✦

Notre Dame Releases Pastoral Plan for LGBTQ Students

By Bob Shine

Bondings 2.0

NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com
December 7, 2012

The University of Notre Dame released a plan yesterday that addresses the pastoral concerns of LGBTQ community members after concluding a five-month review by the administration, and decades-long movement by students, most recently under the 4 to 5 Movement and Progressive Student Alliance.

The plan, titled "Beloved Friends and Allies: A Pastoral Plan for the Support and Holistic Development of GLBTQ and Heterosexual Students at the University of Notre Dame," will enact three major changes on campus to further education about and support for those who identify as LGBTQ. The University explained these changes in a press release.

Foremost, a student organization will be established under the advisement of University administrators to program around relevant topics and provide peer-to-peer support. Students at Notre Dame have long requested recognition of a gay-straight alliance group, and an application by the 4 to 5 Movement last spring prompted University president, Fr. John Jenkins to commission the review.

In addition, an advisory committee of students, faculty, and staff will replace the present Core Council with the intent of guiding the administration, particularly the Vice President of Student Affairs, on how best to respond to LGBTQ students in their questions, concerns, and desires.

The student organization and the advisory committee will be overseen by a full-time staff member focused on educating the campus, promoting dialogue, and acting as a liaison between LGBTQ students and existing campus resources.

Reception by the Notre Dame community is generally positive after a collaborative review process, as reported by the *South Bend Tribune*:

"Karl Abad, an openly gay Notre

Dame senior, welcomes the decision...

"Students here are ready for a change, but the climate didn't encourage open discussion," Abad said. The new student organization will encourage and support honest discussion of issues related to sexuality, he said...

"He praised the efforts of Erin Hoffmann Harding, who in August became Notre Dame's vice president for student affairs, for moving the discussions forward. 'Throughout this process, she's been in constant dialogue with other administrators and knows what students need,' he said."

administrators and knows what students need,' he said."

In an extensive interview with campus newspaper, *The Observer*, Vice President of Student Affairs Erin Hoffman Harding described the administration's approach to the review.

The interview is worth reading in its entirety for

those interested in the intricacies of LGBT movements at Catholic campuses, but specifically on process. She mentioned three elements: consultation with Church teaching in keeping with Catholic mission; extensive student consultation, including nearly four dozen meetings with Hoffman Harding alone; and external benchmarking, particularly of Catholic institutions, for what they provide students identifying as LGBT.

Fr. Jenkins spoke in the same interview in broader themes about the harmony, timeliness, and progress of this decision:

"If you avoid controversy, you don't do anything, controversy's ok. But I think if people look carefully at what we're doing and really in a thoughtful way evaluate it, I think thoughtful people will see that makes sense, it makes sense for a Catholic university like Notre Dame to provide such structures to serve their students effectively..."

"It really is about building a community. As Erin said, we're not there. We should never feel we've got this down. It's rather we're always trying to improve and it's my responsibility and Erin's responsibility to work on this, but

it's everybody's responsibility. And I hope that people take this as Erin said a sign of hope. Let's make it a better community. Let's work together to make it a better community, more inclusive, more welcoming, more supportive."

Fr. Jenkins recognizes, even if slightly late, that the support and embrace of LGBT students on Catholic campuses is a demand placed on colleges and universities by the Catholic faith they profess, not the students themselves.

The formation of strong communities where all find their place in the pursuit of education and growth is a noble goal consistent with a long-standing intellectual tradition in the Church.

New Ways Ministry applauds the progress made at the University of Notre Dame, and further applauds the acknowledgement that this is a forward step and not an end point in addressing the needs of LGBT persons. †



New Ways Ministry Financial Statement

July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012

Statement of Revenue and Expenses

Revenue	Total	% of Total
Contributions	\$ 93,382	39.2
Grants	31,285	13.1
Investments	7,349	3.1
Programs	88,529	37.1
Publications	1,386	.6
Rent	15,818	6.6
Other	740	.3
Total Revenue	\$ 238,492	100.0

Expenses	Total	% of Total
Contributions	\$ 2,380	.9
Salaries and benefits	112,830	44.2
Telephone, equipment, supplies	2,647	1.0
Postage and printing	30,761	12.1
Occupancy	7,350	2.9
Travel and conferences	69,305	27.2
Depreciation	4,618	1.8
Fees and payroll taxes	6,024	2.4
Staff Dev., library, PR, consultation	19,300	7.6
Total expenses	\$ 255,215	100.1

Fund balance, beginning of year	499,625
Excess for year	-16,723
Other changes in net assets	-22,378
Fund balance, end of year	460,524

*\$318,769 of the current fund balance is restricted for a specific project and for employee retirement. The fund balance also includes land, building, and equipment assets of approximately \$88,000. Approximately \$54,000 of the current fund balance represents a reserve for 3 months operational expenses

Knights of Columbus key contributor against same-sex marriage

(Continued from page 3)

opposing same-sex marriage in Washington state and Maryland, where the matter is also on the ballot in November.

The Equally Blessed group criticizes the Knights' donations to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops as "essentially untraceable."

"Since the USCCB is part of the Catholic Church and does not have to report its charitable contributions, money given to the USCCB's anti-marriage equality efforts is essentially untraceable unless it shows up in specific state-level reporting requirements," the report states.

"This is especially important because it makes it difficult to ascertain how much the church has invested in influencing voters in Washington, Maryland, Maine and Minnesota, where marriage equality-related initiatives are on the ballot in November 2012," the report says.

One tax lawyer noted for his work on nonprofit tax law told *NCR* it is unclear whether the Knights' donations might affect their status as a tax-exempt organization. The Knights' national organization, which reported total assets of some \$16.9 billion in 2010, is classified as a "fraternal beneficiary society" by the

Internal Revenue Service.

"There's not much guidance on what it means to be a fraternal organization and what activities are appropriate and in what amounts," said Marcus Owens, a former employee of the exempt organizations division at the IRS who is now a lawyer for the Washington-based Caplin & Drysdale law firm, which Owens said has represented the Knights in the past.

The lack of guidance on the matter, Owens said, suggests the IRS would judge political contributions by whether the "purpose of the particular political act was somehow related to the interests of the members of the fraternal organization" and whether the political activity "didn't swallow all of the activities of the organization."

The IRS, however, could also decide that a tax could apply on the organization's political contributions, Owens said. In that case, he said, the tax would be assessed on either the organization's net investment income for the appropriate filing year or the amount spent on the political activity, whichever was lesser.

"Let's say that the Knights give \$10 million in one year," Owens said. "They'd be taxed at the corporate income tax rates for that \$10 million as a politi-

cal gift."

According to the report and public records, the Knights also made significant contributions between 2006-2010 to a number of right-leaning advocacy groups.

Some of the largest contributions during that period -- totaling at least \$1.2 million, according to tax filings -- went to the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, a nonprofit law firm known for its efforts to spearhead legal challenges to the Obama administration's mandate requiring health insurance providers to cover contraceptive services.

The U.S. bishops' conference also has ties to the Becket Fund. Its associate general secretary and general counsel, Anthony Picarello Jr., previously worked at the fund for seven years before joining the conference in 2007.

In a statement to the media Thursday, the Knights of Columbus responded to the Equally Blessed report by saying its funding of measures to oppose same-sex marriage represents a small fraction of its spending.

"The Knights of Columbus supports Catholic Social Teaching and the bishops of the Catholic Church, and some resources have long been dedicated to pro-

moting that teaching on moral issues," the statement says.

"This report mentions \$6.2 million donated by the Knights over the past seven years, during which time we also donated more than \$1 billion to charitable causes, with more than \$225 million of that coming from our Supreme Office."

The report on the Knights was issued the same day a federal appeals court in Manhattan, N.Y., struck down the federal ban on same-sex marriage, making it the second appeals court this year to reject the contested Defense of Marriage Act.

That act, signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1996, denies federal recognition of same-sex marriages and allows states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages conducted in other states.

Thursday's decision by the Manhattan federal court, which follows a decision by a federal appeals court in Boston, sets the stage for the U.S. Supreme Court to take up the matter in the next year.

The Equally Blessed report was funded by contributions from the coalition's four organizations, the Human Rights Campaign and several individual donors, according to a press release. †

Day of remembrance honors transgender persons killed for their spiritual journeys

By James and Evelyn Whitehead
The National Catholic Reporter
November 19, 2012

On Tuesday, November 20th, a day of remembrance will be held for transgender persons throughout the world who have been killed in the last year. In Chicago, Denver, Tucson, Ariz., New Orleans and many other U.S. cities, candlelight vigils are planned, during which a litany of names of those who have died violent deaths will be sounded. (See the celebration's website for a further listing of cities and schedules of ceremonies.)

It is fitting that Catholics join in this celebration. November is the month in which we honor All Saints and All Souls, remembering those who have gone before us. Another claim on the Catholic community is the church's commitment to social justice. The violence against transgender persons -- including bullying of children, the adult experiences of discrimination at work, physical intimidation and even murder -- cries out for protest from a faith community that would witness to peace and justice. But there are obstacles as well. On many sexual and gender issues, official church statements do not always contribute to social healing.

The words of Genesis, "male and female God made them," have often been interpreted as the foundation of theories of sexual dimorphism: Human nature was constructed in two and only two genders. Religious authorities reinforce this gender dichotomy as both theological doctrine and moral mandate.

Yet human experience records a dazzling diversity in God's creation, registered in humanity as well. When we find ourselves confused or even bewildered by the questions surrounding gender diversity, it is useful to recall that bewilderment sometimes serves virtuous purposes. As one historian of religion writes, bewilderment may "correct the inclination to unwarranted certainty." Our bewilderment, at first so unsettling, may serve as a portal to humility and open us to God's extravagance so generously on display throughout the world. St. Paul spoke of this diversity in bodily terms: "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it" (1 Corinthians 12:27). He counsels us that those most vulnerable members are to be cared for with the greatest respect; he reminds us that if one member suffers, all members suffer. And, in a conviction that has special relevance for transgender Christians, "No members can say to another, we do not need you."

We are more aware today that gender and anatomy are not the same. The first formation of gender takes place before we are born, under the influence of prenatal hormones that influence the fetal brain. While we are afloat in our mother's womb, our tiny bodies and brains are awash in these hormones. Powerful chemicals prompt the gradual development of male or female genitalia, as well as inscribing a sense of gender identity in the brain. Most often, the baby's anatomy will match the brain's sense of gender identity. But not always. Most transsexuals as early as childhood experience a powerful and enduring dissonance between the gender their bodies display and their interior sense of themselves as woman or man. For many, the search for gender integrity will entail a long and painful struggle. Spiritual health depends on a sorting out of this disconnect and moving toward a harmony in their experience of gender identity.

More and more Christian communities are becoming aware that the transition the transgender person faces is, in fact, a spiritual journey. The United Methodist Church has published a valuable guide,

"Made in God's Image." In it, they write, "We understand our gender diversity to be a gift of God, intended to add to the rich variety of human experience and perspective," and "the problem is not in being different, but in living in a fearful, condemning world."

A Lutheran parish in San Francisco has created a renaming ritual to celebrate the completion of a transgender person's transition and welcome the person into the community. In doing so, this gathering is following our tradition of renaming individuals (Jacob in Genesis 32; Paul in the New Testament) who have come through life-transforming changes.

A Catholic sister has developed Trans Awareness Evening to introduce more of the faithful to the challenges and hopes of transgender members of the body of Christ. She also offers simple ceremonies of blessing for persons preparing for gender-confirming surgery. In her spiritual direction with transgender

persons themselves, she invites them to pray Psalm 139: "It is you who formed my inmost parts. You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." In the

midst of such prayers, transgender hearts, long abused by social and religious rejection, begin to heal.

Such ministries are responding to the Christian heritage of a community of faith as both sanctuary and sacrament. In medieval times, the church building often served as sanctuary to protect the life of fugitives; today, churches might renew this ministry of welcome and protection of transgender members.

Hilary Howes, a Catholic transsexual, writes in *Conscience* magazine: "I hope that Catholics would look at the body of scientific and medical evidence to develop a loving acceptance of those of us with this variation." She adds, "I understand that my journey, though personal, touches that which is universal about gender for everyone ... looking at everything as us and them, black and

white, male or female, is limiting and dangerous. Ultimately, welcoming the mystery of diversity in God's plan is the healing for our church for which I most hope."

In the broader US culture, a process of appreciating the experience of transgender lives is under way. Film director Lana Wachowski ("Cloud Atlas") talks openly of beginning life as Larry before transitioning to Lana. Transgender young adults find their transitions less fraught by years of denial and fearful pretending. This new generation is opening the way to a richer appreciation of God's creation. Listening to their experience, the larger community comes more easily to affirm Paul's judgment: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male or female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

But even as these encouraging changes take place, it behooves us to pause in respect for those transgender members of our community who have been victims of violence. So we gather in solidarity and in prayer on Tuesday. ✦

[James and Evelyn Whitehead have long been associated with the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University Chicago. A major focus of their teaching and writing is the vital links between sexuality and spirituality. Currently, they are examining the experience of transgender adults and the pastoral responses of communities of faith.]



Catholic VP Joe Biden says transgender discrimination 'civil rights issue of our time'

By Donovan Slack
Politica.com
October 30, 2012

Vice President Joe Biden, leaving an Obama campaign office in Sarasota, singled one woman out because she had beautiful eyes, the pool reporter noted:

She said something ...at first inaudible to pool, to which VP responded was the "civil rights issue of our time"

Pool later asked the woman, Linda Carragher Bourne of Sarasota about the exchange. She said her daughter was Miss Trans New England and asked if he would help them.

"A lot of my friends are being



Vice President Joe Biden

killed, and they don't have the civil rights yet. These guys are gonna make it happen," she told the pool.

Biden has long been a vocal advocate for LGBT rights -- most memorably getting out "a little bit over his skies," as President Obama put it -- when Biden endorsed same sex marriage before the president did earlier this year.

The vice president met with LGBT leaders at his Washington, D.C., home last month, including transgender advocates, according to the Easton Patch. The Obama-Biden administration was the first to send a representative to a transgender conference. ✦

Dismissed gay rights teacher considers legal action

By Paul Harper
The New Zealand Herald
Auckland, New Zealand
October 1, 2012

A Northland science teacher who was dismissed after he supported a gay rights protest at the Catholic school is considering legal action.

Nigel Studdart was dismissed from Pompallier Catholic College in Whangarei last month after supporting a demonstration at the school which involved students wearing rainbow ribbons or armbands to show their support for gay marriage.

It came after the school's principal Richard Stanton wrote comments in the school newsletter in August opposing The Marriage (Definition of Marriage) Amendment Bill, which has passed its first reading in Parliament.

Mr. Studdart told Radio New Zealand's *Morning Report* programme he will be meeting with the secondary school teachers' union, the PPTA, this week to discuss his options.

"I think there has definitely been a serious injustice done here, an injustice to the students, in terms of the loss of their learning and time that is critical before their NCEA exams, so I'll try and



Nigel Studdart

mediate that as much as I can by doing some tutorials for them, but it just doesn't make up for that seven weeks I would have been in the classroom," he said.

Mr. Studdart said he would "absolutely" like to return to the school.

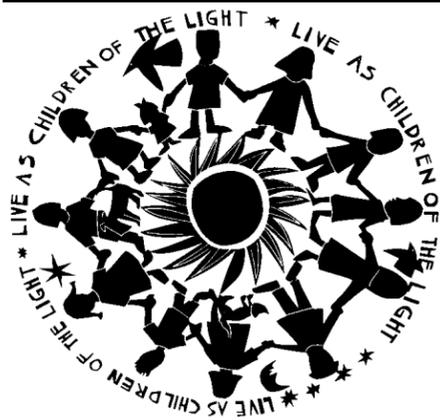
"I love those students to bits, they've been absolutely fantastic to me, I have a great relationship with them, I have a great relationship with the rest of the staff. The issue here seems to be the principal and decisions that he made really."

Mr. Studdart said he asked Mr. Stanton to withdraw his comments in the newsletter the day after he wrote it, but the principal has stood by what he wrote.

"It has offended church leaders, it has offended an awful lot of parents and offended a lot of students."

He said his point with the principal was not about gay marriage, but with gay parents and gay students.

Mr. Studdart said he had a good reputation in Whangarei for his teaching and if he did not return to Pompallier he hoped he would be able to teach at another school. ✦



PARISHES

Alabama

Decatur: Annunciation of the Lord
Montgomery: St. Bede

Arizona

Chandler: St. Andrew
Glendale: St. Thomas More
Mesa: St. Bridget
Phoenix: St. Matthew
Scottsdale: St. Patrick
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. Agatha, St. Paul the Apostle
North Hollywood: St. Jane Frances de
Chantal, St. Patrick
Oakland: Our Lady of Lourdes
Oceanside: St. Thomas More
Orange: Holy Family Cathedral
Pasadena: Assumption of the B.V.M.
Ross: St. Anselm
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 Raphael: Church of San Raphael &
Mission San Raphael Arcangel
Santa Barbara: OL of Guadalupe
Santa Cruz: Holy Cross
Santa Monica: St. Monica
Simi Valley: St. Rose of Lima
Spring Valley: Santa Sophia
Stanford: Catholic Community at Stanford
University
South Pasadena: Holy Familhy
Valinda: St. Martha
Vernon: Holy Angels Catholic 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
Genessee: St. Frances Cabrini Shrine
Highlands Ranch: Pax Christi
Littleton: Light of the World,
St Frances Cabrini

Gay-friendly Catholic Parishes & Communities

Below is a list of known "gay-friendly" Catholic parishes and intentional Eucharistic communities. Thank you for helping us add to this growing list! If you are aware of a parish or community that is known as welcoming to lesbian/gay Catholics, 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. Parishes are listed first and intentional Eucharistic communities follow. For links to many of these parishes' websites, go to www.NewWaysMinistry.org/

Connecticut

Hartford: St. Patrick-St. Anthony

Delaware

North Wilmington: Holy Child
Wilmington: St. Joseph

District of Columbia

Holy Trinity, St. Aloysius,
St. Matthew Cathedral

Florida

Cocoa Beach: Our Savior
Daytona Beach: Our Lady of Lourdes
Ft. Lauderdale: St. Anthony,
St. Maurice
Naples: St. John the Evangelist
St. Petersburg: Holy Cross
Tampa: Sacred Heart, Christ the King

Georgia

Atlanta: Shrine of the Immaculate
Conception

Idaho

Boise: St. Mary

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
Johnston City: St. Paul
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

Coralville: 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. 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
Provincetown: St. Peter
Sharon: Our Lady of Sorrows
Springfield: Sacred Heart

Michigan

Ann Arbor: St. Mary Student Parish
Detroit: St. Leo, Christ the King
St. Ignace: St. Ignatius Loyola
Westland: Ss. Simon and Jude

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

Lawrenceville: St. Ann
Long Beach Island: St. Francis of
Assisi
Maplewood: St. Joseph
Tinton Falls: St. Anselm

New Mexico

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

New York

Albany: St. Vincent DePaul
Baldwinsville: St. Augustine
Bellmore: St. Barnabas the Apostle
Bellport: Mary Immaculate
Binghamton: St. Francis of Assisi
Brooklyn: St. Andrew the Apostle,
St. Boniface, St. Athanasius,
St. Augustine, Immaculate Heart of-
Mary
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
Pittsford: Church of the
Transfiguration
Rochester: Blessed Sacrament,
St. Mary (Downtown), St. Monica
Syracuse: St. Lucy, All Saints
Utica: Our Lady of Mount Carmel,
Historic Old St. John's
Wading River: St. John the Baptist
Wantagh: 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
Fairlawn: St. Hilary
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: St. Andrew, St. Francis of As-
sisi, 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

Rhode Island

Providence: St. Francis Chapel,
St. Mary's
Wickford: St. Bernard

Tennessee

Memphis: Cathedral of the
Immaculate Conception

Texas

Colleyville: Good Shepherd
Dallas: Holy Trinity
El Paso: All Saints
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

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

Wisconsin

Madison: Our Lady Queen of Peace,
Menomonee Falls: Good Shepherd
Milwaukee: Good Shepherd,
Prince of Peace, Trinity-Guadalupe

Canada

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

England

London: Our Lady of the
Assumption & St. Gregory

INTENTIONAL EUCHARISTIC COMMUNITIES

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Scottsdale: Franciscan Renewal
Center

California

Orange: Koinonia
Pleasanton: Catholic Community of
Pleasanton

District of Columbia

Communitas

Florida

Tampa: Franciscan Center

Maryland

Greenbelt: Greenbelt Catholic
Community

Michigan

Grand Rapids: Marywood
Kalamazoo: Lambda Catholics

Minnesota

Minneapolis: Spirit of St. Stephen's Catho-
lic Community

Oregon

Portland: Journey and Koinonia
Catholic Community

Washington

Olympia: Holy Wisdom Inclusive
Catholic Community

Wisconsin

Madison: Holy Wisdom Monastery

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The connections between coming out and Vatican II

By Francis DeBernardo

Bondings 2.0

NewWaysMinistryBlog.wordpress.com

October 11, 2012

Today is special for two reasons. For the LGBT community in the United States, it is National Coming Out Day. For the Catholic community worldwide, it is the 50th anniversary of the opening of Vatican II. Just a coincidence?

Well, probably, but there's something interesting about this coincidence. National Coming Out Day is a time to celebrate the "coming out" process for sexual and gender minorities: that coming to awareness, acceptance, and announcement of their true identities.

Five decades ago, the Catholic Church embarked on a project of pastoral and theological reform at the Second Vatican Council which was, in one respect, a coming out process: an emergence from calcified traditions into a liberating recognition of its true identity. When Pope John XXIII announced the

Council, he said he wanted to open some windows in the church. In the process, it seems, he also opened some closet doors.

But the connection between these two celebrations is even more cohesive than the metaphors described above. In one respect, the movement for LGBT liberation, equality, and justice in the Catholic Church is a direct result of Vatican II. The Council's reform of theology, its updating of scriptural interpretations, its openness to scientific knowledge, its invitation for participation by the laity, its clarion call to work for justice in the world and the church—all these things were part of the 1960s Catholic zeitgeist which resulted



Vatican II

in a burgeoning movement to be involved with, and work for justice for, LGBT people.

It's no accident that both two of the oldest Catholic ministries to LGBT people—Dignity and New Ways Ministry—emerged from this era and as a direct result of priests and religious following the call of Vatican II. Similarly, it would have been unimaginable that John McNeill's theological groundbreaking work, *The Church and the Homosexual*, could have been written before the Council. And let's not forget the important contributions of liberation and feminist theologies which flowered because of Vatican

II, both of which have had a direct positive impact on the Catholic LGBT movement.

Although Vatican II's documents do not mention homosexuality or transgender topics at all, the spirit of justice and human dignity which infused those texts have had a tremendous effect on why so many Catholics are passionate about working for LGBT equality. We are finally seeing the fruits of Vatican II, as the generation that was raised in its wake are now in their maturity and speaking out for LGBT justice in the church and society.

As those LGBT people who have "come out" know, "coming out" is a continual process that keeps continuing long after everyone knows about your identity. It's the continual process of having the courage to stand for truth, dignity, and equality. Let's pray that on this 50th anniversary of Vatican II, the Catholic Church will continue its "coming out" process begun in 1962, and will learn to live up to its best principles and ideals. †

'A natural & Christian response to welcome . . . different forms of love'

By Fr. Fabio Masi, Fr. Alessandro Santoro, Fr. Giacomo Stinghi, Sister Stefania Baldini

Gionata.org

Florence, Italy

September 2012

The following is an open letter written by three Italian pastoral ministers to the diocesan newspaper in the Archdiocese of Florence. The text was made available by Gionata, a Catholic LGBT organization in Italy:

"The issue of 'Toscana Oggi' dated June 24, 2012 reserved generous space to the topic of homosexuality and heterosexual civil unions with several articles and letters to the Editor, which were critical of the Church's official position on the topic.

We believe that the articles printed in the Diocesan weekly publication (Toscana Oggi) do nothing but repeat existing ecclesiastical positions on homosexuality, without providing any insight on a topic that has been considerably developed and explained in recent years, and which requires more research.

Our letter testifies to the fact that there is diversity of positions regarding this issue today, both in secular thought and in our churches themselves. We, along with various theologians, bishops and Christian laypeople, do not see our viewpoints represented in Toscana Oggi's treatment of this issue through its articles.

What has brought about a radical shift in the understanding of homosexuality has now signaled a very important journey. In the past, homosexuality was considered a 'vice' practiced by 'heterosexual' people searching for alternative forms of pleasure and, as such, it was condemned. But, in this context, one spoke solely of 'homosexual behavior'; only in the last century did people begin to speak of a 'homosexual condition' and not just of 'acts', inducing some to hypothesize that homosexuality was not to be considered a vice, but an 'illness'.

In recent years, a radically different way of understanding homosexuality has emerged and homosexuality has become accepted by nearly everyone in various ways and with different nuances. Homosexuality is now spoken of as a pervasive element of an individual, one that characterizes a person's most profound identity and one that leads them to live their sexuality in a different manner.

It is important for the Church to recognize the progress made in the science of understanding humanity in a positive manner and to refrain from making abso-

lute declarations which she will then have to admit are mistaken, as has happened in the past. These developments lead us to see homosexuality in a new light and to deal with it under a different moral perspective. On this topic, the Bible does not, nor could it, say anything, simply because it was not known, just as it says nothing about ecology or use of the atomic bomb.

In Biblical culture, as in all of antiquity, the idea of a 'homosexual person' is completely absent; only 'behavior' is spoken of, not a 'homosexual orientation'. And it is clear that behavior is condemned not only because it is not procreative, but also because it is linked to violence or religious prostitution.

In this regard, a few notes may be useful on Holy Scripture passages that are often cited to stigmatize homosexual relations. In the New Testament, only Paul calls homosexual relations 'unnatural' (Romans 1:26-27); however, one must consider that he referred not so much to physical aspects, as to homosexuality undermining the accepted social order of the times, when it was woman who, by nature, was to be 'submissive' to man. Our very idea of 'nature' itself has changed since Paul's times: the idea of 'nature' as finished reality no longer corresponds to contemporary understanding.

It has also become quite clear that some Old Testament episodes, which continue to form a basis for condemning homosexuality, actually had a different meaning. In the episode of Sodom (Genesis 19) and a similar one in Gaba (Judges 19), the crime was not so much in homosexuality itself, but in the will to humiliate and refuse a foreigner. On the other hand, the Old Testament offers us some beautiful and very important signals that do not refer to homosexuality explicitly, but that do refer to the journey of maturity that the Jewish people undertook in the respect of marginalized groups and individuals. In this sense, the Bible offers us a wider frame through which we may also place this aspect of life.

God 'chose' the people of Israel so

that, in the midst of other peoples, they might be a sign of His will for justice, that He wants to save all His creation. With an illusion of always being more up to God's mission, within Israel other 'choices' were then made to marginalize groups considered 'impure'. In Deuteronomy, for example, (23:2-9) there is a list of categories of people who are to be excluded from

religious services: eunuchs, bastards and foreigners. However, a journey towards Messianic times is a journey towards inclusion, because Messianic times are for all, as can be read in Isaiah (56:1, 3-5): "Maintain justice and do what is right.... Let no foreigner who is bound to the LORD say, 'The LORD will surely exclude me from his people.' And let no eunuch complain, 'I am only a dry tree.'" For this is what the LORD says: "To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant, to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever."

This overturning of Isaiah is a milestone! Before God, there is no value in the objective nature or of culture that one has: man, woman, homosexual, heterosexual, bastard, foreigner, genius or of lesser intelligence; what counts is doing what is right and maintaining justice, what counts is loving the Lord and our brothers and sisters.

We do not mean to say that Isaiah made any allusion to homosexual people; he could not have, for the reasons we stated earlier. But is this not the light we should see homosexuality in? The Church's mission is to open her arms wide, to include and not to marginalize, to love people rather than to save principles. As the Master said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27)

Leaders in the Catholic Church have several times acknowledged changes several times when they declare that they do not condemn the homosexual person,

but homosexuality, and this is a step forward for them. However, in reality the meaning of this statement is truly incomprehensible! It is like saying to a person with a lame leg: "We have nothing against your 'being lame', as long as you walk straight or sit down!"

Regarding the issue of being procreative or sterile, Jesus said that it is the heart which must be fruitful and Paul says that one joins God's people through faith, not by heredity right. In this sense, who can honestly define themselves fruitful? Who can become judge of their own fruitfulness or that of others? Sterility can befall anyone.

This way of profoundly welcoming the life of each and every human being, this is something we learned from the Church! For disciples of Jesus, it is not so much about defending principles, rigorously guarding them, like angels with a sword of fire before the tree of life; rather, it is about 'looking into' the lives of women and men of our times, in order for them to progress towards fullness. It does not entail being faithful to a God who is known and possessed, but to a God who 'is coming'. Jesus said: "Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you do not know how to interpret this present time?" (Luca 12:56)

It seems to us that it should be from the (Catholic) Church should itself that a new way of understanding homosexuality come, with a sign of welcoming and profound respect for the love felt by people who personally live out this orientation. Two people who love each other are not an attack on society nor are they a betrayal of the Gospel. Scandals should be looked for elsewhere!

Referring partly to these Biblical sources and partly to the human experience we know as we live out every day with these people, we feel that it is a natural and Christian response to welcome these different forms of love in full communion. We feel that they are an integral part of our journey of life and faith, and that with them, as with all others, we can participate in sacramental Communion and community life.

The Book of Wisdom (11:24-26) offers us a wonderful trait of the Creator, who should be the 'light along our way': "For you love all the things that are, and abhor nothing which you have made: for never would you have made anything, if you had hated it. And how could anything have endured, if it had not been your will? or been preserved, if not called by you? But you spare all: for they are yours, O Lord, you lover of souls." †

"For you love all the things that are, and abhor nothing which you have made: for never would you have made anything, if you had hated it. And how could anything have endured, if it had not been your will?"
—Wisdom 11:24-26