

BANDINGS

Vol. 38 No. 1

A Publication of New Ways Ministry

Winter 2018-19

No, homosexuality is not a risk factor for the sexual abuse of children

By Thomas G. Plante
AmericaMagazine.org
October 22, 2018

Many people believe that homosexuality is the root cause of sexual abuse by clergy in the Catholic Church since about 80 percent of the known victims have been male. This has led some church leaders to suggest that banning homosexual men from the priesthood could prevent future victimization of children in the church. While it may be understandable that some believe this, it is simply not true. You really have to know something about the psychopathology of sex offenders and pedophiles to understand this issue more clearly.

No one would suggest banning heterosexual men from the priesthood if the majority of clergy abuse victims were young girls. That would seem absurd. This is because many see heterosexuality as normal and controllable while believing that homosexuality is abnormal, dysfunctional and a psychiatric illness. As such, it is often falsely believed that men with homosexual orientations cannot be trusted around male children and that

their sexual impulse control is poor. But the research data on this topic makes clear that sexual orientation alone is not a risk factor for pedophilia or for committing sexual crimes against children or teens or anyone. Sexual orientation by itself is irrelevant to child sexual abuse behavior or risks.

So why are so many of the clergy sexual abuse victims male? A study from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in 2011 informs us that most of the clergy sexual offenders were “situational generalists” or men who simply abused victims to whom they had access and with whom they had the opportunity to develop trust. In the Catholic Church,

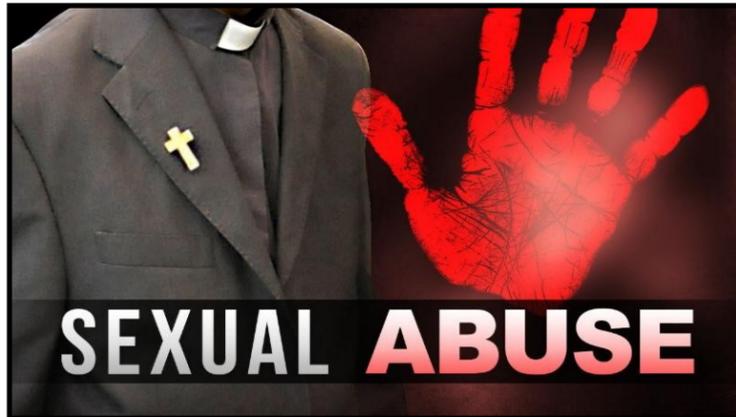
these individuals tended to be boys. If Father wanted to have private time with an altar boy or perhaps take a boy off on a camping trip or to a baseball game back in the 20th century, no one would have thought much of it. Boys were trusted

some, like most clerical sex offenders in the church, select those with whom they have access and trust.

The behavior and psychopathology of sex offenders is complex, but there is a large amount of quality research to help us better understand their behavior, with established best practices for evaluating and treating them for their dysfunction. Best practices are also available for child protection by better managing the environment where children are involved with adults—within church activities as well as in schools, youth sports, music and theater programs, and other extracurricular youth activities. Being aware and thoughtful about this well-established research and these recommended best practices in child protection will help keep children safe.

Inappropriately blaming or victimizing homosexual men, within or outside of the church, does not keep children safe or solve clergy sexual abuse problems. Regardless of sexual orientation or the vows of priestly celibacy or even marital vows, only a small percentage of people seek sexual activity with children and teens, and the vast majority of them are heterosexual, married and noncelibate laypersons who tend to exploit members of their own family. The false and distracting focus on homosexuality is not relevant to keeping children safe within the Catholic Church. †

Thomas G. Plante is the Augustin Cardinal Bea, S.J., University Professor and professor of psychology at Santa Clara University and an adjunct clinical professor of psychiatry at Stanford University School of Medicine. He has worked clinically and academically in the area of clerical sexual abuse for 30 years.



with priests. But most of the clergy sex offenders during the last half of the 20th century, according to the John Jay Report, viewed themselves as more likely to be heterosexual than as homosexual.

The psychopathology of pedophiles suggests that the risk factors for this psychiatric illness include impulse control problems, brain injury, poor peer relationships, antisocial personality, a lack of nonsexual intimate connections with others, alcohol and substance abuse, and a history of sexual victimization. Sexual orientation is not a risk factor at all. Furthermore, there are many different kinds of sex offenders who often have multiple pathways to victimization and different targets of their predatory desires. For example, some prefer to target young children while others target teens. Some ideally prefer to have adult peer sexual partners, but due to their inability to negotiate mature adult intimate relationships, select minors as a substitute, especially when under significant stress. And

Quote to Note

The following is an excerpt from a *National Catholic Reporter* essay by Father Peter Daly, entitled “Clerical cronyism and secrecy shielded McCarrick and others,” dated October 22, 018

“Some archconservative Catholics in the U.S. are saying that [Cardinal Theodore] McCarrick was protected by some sort of ‘gay clique’ in the hierarchy. This is utter nonsense. If there is anything that is not talked about honestly by clerics, it is their sex lives. Clerics hide behind the mask of presumed celibacy. I doubt that McCarrick or [Scotland’s Cardinal Keith] O’Brien even admitted to themselves that they were gay. . .

“Both McCarrick and O’Brien hid behind public homophobia. In their public lives, they were vocal opponents of gay rights and gay marriage. McCarrick opposed gay marriage in Maryland and the District of Columbia. He also opposed giving health insurance to gay couples employed by the archdiocese. Like O’Brien, he may have felt that his anti-gay public positions insulated him from rumors about his private life.”

Believe It Or Not, I Became A Catholic Because Of Gay Pride

By Caitlin Weaver
The Huffington Post
August 29, 2018

I became Catholic because of gay pride.

My husband and I were recently married, and we were building a life together in a new city after his company moved us from New York City to Georgia. I was not looking for church to be a part of that new life. He was raised Catholic, and while not particularly devout, was clear that if we had children they would be raised Catholic. I was less than excited about this. I associated the Catholic Church with droning, dull services and the general oppression of women and other marginalized groups. High on the list of things I can’t stand are boredom and patriarchy.

I was not godless by any means. While not raised in a particular denomination, I got to know God later in life in church basements through a 12-step program after my first marriage fell prey to my ex-husband’s drug and alcohol abuse. I even began attending Sunday services in the East Village with a sober friend of mine and her wife. It was a progressive, non-denominational church with a congregation that ranged from aging, reformed punk rockers to a rainbow of young families to tough, downtown lesbians. There was a heavily tattooed pastor, an amazing band and the kind of slick visuals you’d see at a TED Talk or a Radiohead show.

When things got serious with my future husband, I would sometimes attend Mass with him. He lived and attend-

ed church smack in the middle of the Broadway theater district in New York City. Listening to the choir was like having a free ticket to a professional concert, but beyond that, I found Mass to be clinical and impersonal.

I was also uneasy about the lack of diversity I saw around me — a stark contrast to the throngs of New Yorkers with whom I rode the subway each morning. Nothing about the experience moved me, and if I was going to go to church, it was because I wanted to fill up on grace, not simply to check a box on God’s report card.

When we moved to a new city in the South the problem temporarily solved itself. We were churchless. On weekends, there were so many other important things to do to get settled into our new life — farmers markets, shopping for furniture, figuring out which brunch spot made the best Bloody Mary. No time to look for a church!

Plus, I had a nagging feeling that if we hadn’t found a Catholic church in New York City that felt inclusive enough for me, there was no way that was happening in the South. I told my husband I couldn’t see myself embracing any place that didn’t openly welcome my gay and lesbian friends.

A friend told me about her newly formed non-denominational church, which sounded a lot like my East Village joint back in New York. She talked about the band and the hip, young pastor who

lit a fire in you with his words. I told my husband all about it one day as we walked through the Gay Pride Festival in the park near our house. Then I spotted a booth with a banner for that very church. “There it is!” I said excitedly. “And



Caitlin Weaver in front of Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Atlanta, Georgia.

they’re handing out organic popsicles!”

We talked for a few minutes with the people at the booth and left with a glossy folder of information and some killer popsicles.

“What did you think?” I asked my husband.

He shrugged. “It seems cool. But they’re not Catholic.”

“Well then, *where are the Catholics?*” Annoyed, I flung my arms out toward the booths of Methodists, Lutherans, Episcopalians and synagogues.

He was silent as we rounded the corner.

“Heyyyy girl!”

And there they were. Decked out in rainbow T-shirts, the members of Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, a downtown Atlanta Catholic church, waved and smiled at us. We had a warm power chat, and they sent us off with bedazzled fridge magnets, T-shirts and our promise to check out Mass the next day. The church was only 2 miles from our house.

The next morning, we parked on an empty street in the hollowed out downtown neighborhood known mostly for its homeless shelters and decrepit government buildings. The church soared proudly upward in the midst of the decay. Inside, we encountered a packed house and a dull roar of pleasantries as people hugged and greeted each other in the pews. Nearly half the congregation wore rainbow T-shirts emblazoned with the name of the church. In the still-informally segregated South, it was the most mixed group I had seen — people of every race, young and old, gay and straight. Our pew alone felt like a New York City subway car (minus the smell).

The priest, a genial Santa Claus type, spoke passionately about Jesus’ love for *all* people. He closed by reminding those who planned to march in the Pride parade after church to wear their T-shirts and noting that the next LGBTQ church potluck was taking place next Friday. The choir nearly blew the roof off with a rousing spiritual that had everyone clapping and dancing in the pews. As the Mass ended, the priest and the

(Continued on page 6)

BONDINGS

Winter 2018-19

Vol. 38, No. 1

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

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

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

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San Diego gay church worker resigns after months of harassment

By Dan Morris-Young
The National Catholic Reporter
October 19, 2018

SAN DIEGO — The pastoral associate of a San Diego parish in the heart of the city's well-known gay-friendly Hillcrest neighborhood has submitted his resignation "out of fear for my family and myself."

In an Oct. 19 email to friends and associates, Aaron Bianco, who submitted his resignation to Bishop Robert McElroy, said he had "endured physical and emotional violence from groups like *Church Militant* and *LifeSite News* for the past year and a half." The harassment included slashed tires, death threats, attacks outside Mass, and "hundreds of letters, phone calls and emails."

The harassment increased "to another level" overnight Oct. 14-15, he added, when assailants "broke into the office/rectory" of St. John the Evangelist Parish "and spray-painted 'no fags' on the conference room wall."

The "final straw," he said, was an Oct. 17 internet posting of "pictures of my family, including a photo of my deceased mother" and revealing "where I live."

Headlined "Bp. McElroy Defends Diocesan Employee in Same-Sex 'Marriage,'" a Lepanto Institute-generated narrative was posted Oct. 17 on its website and also carried online by *LifeSite News*.

The account focused largely on "Bianco's pro-homosexual activism," Bianco's "sodomitical 'marriage,'" and

McElroy's support for Bianco and LGBT ministry.

McElroy and Bianco have been the target of a previous *LifeSite News* article.

In his Oct. 19 email, Bianco said he is considering "hiring legal counsel to stop the slander against me."

Self-described as "a research and education organization dedicated to the defense of the Catholic Church against assaults from without as well as from within," the Lepanto Institute launched an online petition asking McElroy to fire Bianco.

Both the FBI and the San Diego Police Department are investigating the St. John the Evangelist break-in.

FBI Special Agent Jeanne Schnese, who is assigned to the parish case, told NCR on Oct. 19 that the federal agency "has a one-voice policy" and that she had referred NCR requests for information to the FBI San Diego media coordinator.

Bianco told NCR that law enforcement officials had provided him with a form to file for a concealed weapon permit and that he had filed it.

In an Oct. 17 media statement about "the vandalism at the parish St. John the Evangelist in Hillcrest and the social media attacks against one of its staff members," McElroy condemned the vandalism as "vile and repre-

hensible" and pledged "solidarity with the staff and community of St. John's Parish at this moment."

"The hatred that lies behind them constitutes a dark and vicious corner in the life of our Church that every member of the Catholic community must reject," he stated.

Bianco's email reported he had submitted his resignation during an Oct. 18 meeting with McElroy.

"He has always stood behind me 100%," he added. "I am always thankful for his steadfastness to keeping the LGBT Ministry going at St. John's, even though he also has been disparaged by these hate groups."

Bianco emailed that he plans to address the parish community this Sunday at the 6 p.m. Mass, his only planned public appearance before his resignation takes effect Oct. 31.

Writing that he "will not back down from confronting such evil in our Church," Bianco said he intends "to

work on a larger scale to make sure groups like this do not make their way into the lives of everyday Catholics."

Meanwhile, the San Diego Diocese has been in the midst of eight "listening sessions" with McElroy about the church sexual abuse crisis, the sessions staged across the see of 1.3 million Catholics that runs the length of California's border with Mexico.

According to multiple sources, questions about a homosexual man in a same-sex marriage being a primary administrator at a diocesan parish were raised at all the gatherings.

At the seventh session on Oct. 18 at St. Gabriel Parish

in Poway, McElroy received a scattering of boos when he said, "If the church eliminated all the employees who are not living out the teachings of the church in its fullness, we would be employing only angels."

More than 300 attended the Poway session, packing the parish hall. Each of the meetings has drawn overflow crowds.

At nearly every meeting, security personnel have had to escort someone from the room for disruptive behavior.

At Poway, a man was forcibly removed after he stood and began shouting questions at McElroy. Crowd noise drowned the questions.

NCR sent inquiries to the Lepanto Institute and *LifeSite News* by email. No immediate response was received from *LifeSite*.

"Someone who is in a same-sex 'marriage' has no more business working in leadership roles in the Catholic Church than does a satanist. Let's be clear, same-sex 'marriage' is a satanic mockery of the sacrament of Holy Matrimony, and those engaged in such abominable behavior should never have been hired to begin with," a spokesman from the Institute told NCR in an email. †



Aaron Bianco

If gay priests, religious can't be celibate, they should leave, pope says

By Cindy Wooden
National Catholic Reporter
December 3, 2018

The Catholic Church has been slow to recognize the presence of homosexual men in the priesthood, which is why superiors must exercise care in helping gay candidates prepare for a life of celibacy or leave the seminary, Pope Francis said.

"Homosexuality is a very serious matter, which must be discerned adequately from the beginning with candidates, if it is the case. We must be demanding," the pope told Claretian Fr. Fernando Prado in the new book-interview, "The Strength of Vocation: Consecrated Life Today."

Excerpts of the pope's interview with Prado, which was conducted in August, were printed in newspapers Dec. 1 ahead of the book's release.

In 2013, Francis had told reporters, "If someone is gay and is searching for the Lord and has goodwill, then who am I to judge him?"

Some media outlets contrasted that remark with what Francis told Prado, even though Francis made it clear in the new interview that he was talking about homosexual

activity among priests and religious who make vows of chastity and celibacy.

"In consecrated life or that of the priesthood, there is no place for this type of affection," the pope said. "For that reason, the church recommends that persons with this deep-seated tendency not be accepted for ministry or consecrated life."

"Homosexual priests, religious men and women should be urged to live celibacy wholly and, especially, to be perfectly responsible, trying to never create scandal in their communities or for the holy people of God by living a double life," the pope said. "It would be better if they left the ministry or consecrated life rather than live a double life."

Francis told Prado that today "in our societies it seems that homosexuality is fashionable, and this mentality has in a way also influenced the life of the church."

Seminary and religious formation programs, he said, must be updated to take the issue seriously, help seminarians and aspirants understand themselves and the obligations of celibacy, promote maturity and enable discernment about whether a candidate is ready and able to live a celibate life. †

Synod on Youth's Final Report Is a Mixed Bag on LGBT Issues

By Francis DeBernardo

Bondings 2.0
NewWaysMinistry.org
October 28, 2018

The Vatican's Synod on Youth has issued its final report, and its comments on LGBT issues are a mixed bag. The section that responds to LGBT topics is section 150. The document was only released in Italian. Each section was voted on individually. A 2/3rds majority was needed for a section to be included in the final document.

If the 2015 synod on the family is any sort of standard, official versions in other languages will not be available for a while. The following is the official English translation of section 150 [released on January 10, 2019]. My commentary follows the text.

There are questions about the body, affectivity and sexuality that require deeper anthropological, theological and pastoral study, in whatever forms and at whatever level seems most appropriate, from local to universal. Among the questions that emerge are those regarding the difference and harmony between male and female identity and sexual inclinations. In this regard, the Synod stresses that God loves every person and the Church does the same, renewing her commitment against all discrimination and violence on sexual grounds. Equally, she reiterates the key anthropological relevance of the difference and reciprocity between men and women and believes it to be reductionist to define personal identity on the sole basis of the person's "sexual orientation" (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the pastoral care of homosexual persons, 1 October 1986, 16).

Many Christian communities already offer journeys of accompaniment in faith for homosexual persons: the Synod recommends that such initiatives be supported. In these journeys, people are helped to read their own history; to adhere with freedom and responsibility to their baptismal calling; to recognize the desire to belong and contribute to the life of the community; to discern the best ways of realizing this. Thus, all young people, without exception, are helped to integrate the sexual dimension of their personality more and more fully, as they grow in the quality of their relationships and move towards the gift of self.

The fact that the Vatican's synod on youth has issued a final report that calls for "a deeper anthropological, theological and pastoral elaboration" of sexuality and affectivity is an important step forward for the Catholic Church in regard to LGBT issues. The statement acknowledges that the church still has a lot to learn about sexuality. If the study of these topics is done with open minds and hearts, there is potential for great transformation in the church.

The call for more parishes to provide accompaniment to lesbian and gay people is also a positive. The words describing accompaniment seem carefully chosen to allow for wide interpretation. During the synod, a request was made to include a statement calling lesbian and gay people to "conversion," a word used often in church discourse to mean celibacy. That language did not make it into the final document. Instead the pastoral recommendations allow for great latitude of welcome and accompaniment based on the individual person and the local pastoral community and ministers.

The document also contains a strong condemnation of discrimination and violence against lesbian and gay people—an important message to bishops who have sometimes implicitly and explicitly supported LGBT criminalization laws with severe punishments. Catholic support for these laws must end.

The document has some problematic elements, too. It reinforces the prohibition of same-sex relationships, though it does so in a way that has been typical of Pope Francis: it does not use condemnatory language, but instead it endorses the heterosexual model as ideal.

The idea that they felt it important to say that "it is reductive to define a person's identity solely on the basis of their 'sexual orientation'" is also a problem. It implies that lesbian and gay people place too much emphasis on identifying by their sexuality. This idea is erroneous in that hardly any lesbian or gay people define their identity solely on their orientation. Asking to be called a "gay Catholic" does not mean that the person thinks of themselves only in terms of sexuality, just as asking to be called a "young Catholic" doesn't equate identity solely with

age, nor does "American Catholic" mean that nationality is a defining characteristic. These are simply descriptive words. Implying that sexual orientation dominates an individual's personality is not only demeaning, but also it reveals more about the church hierarchy's poor understanding of lesbian and gay people than it does about lesbian and gay people themselves.

The report uses "inclinations" to



Youth auditors cheering at synod's closing session.

describe non-heterosexual sexual activity. This term reduces lesbian and gay love and sexuality to base desires for sexual activity. Not only is it a derogatory word, but also it shows a complete ignorance of the affective lives of lesbian and gay people. Its continued use in church documents is not only an embarrassment, but also is harmful.

That the synod report would not use the ordinary terms "lesbian," "gay," "bisexual" is surprising given the pope's own use of the word "gay." Such a small gesture in language would have meant a great deal to people. Additionally, no mention of transgender individuals was made—a glaring omission since transgender people are among the most abused and oppressed people in LGBT communities around the globe.

These problems remind us that there is still much work to be done for LGBT justice and equality in the church. In fact, the section that contained the most comprehensive analysis of lesbian and gay issues received the most "no" votes, and it made it to the required 2/3rds majority by only two votes. (A "no" vote may not indicate opposition to LGBT issues; it could indicate disagreement with some

of the negative elements in the that section.)

The power of this synod lies not in its product, though, but in its process. It was an unprecedented gathering of church leaders with youth representatives from around the globe, and unlike other synods, it gave a stronger role to the voices of the lay participants. Regardless of the outcome, it appears that a true dialogue took place—and we hope it will be replicated.

The synod could have been greatly improved if LGBT youth would have been allowed to speak for themselves, as youth with other compelling issues did. During press briefings, bishops continually spoke about how moved they were by personal youth testimonies on migration and war that allowed the bishops to put human faces to abstract or unknown situations. How important it would have been for them to hear directly from LGBT youth about their lives of faith and their experiences of church! The bishops missed a great opportunity for their own education.

The themes of listening and accompaniment emerged as the dominant topics of the meeting. Bishop participants promised to bring the process of the synod back to their home dioceses and to encourage other bishops to institute similar practices. If they do not do so, their words will sound like empty political campaign promises. By placing emphasis on welcome and accompaniment, the church is placing the LGBT discussion on the personal and local levels—good places for real discussion to take place.

Listening and pastoral accompaniment have potential for changing the hearts and minds of pastoral ministers and church leaders. Depending on how listening and accompaniment are implemented, these tools can help the church better understand and appreciate the sacredness of LGBT lives and loves. If listening is implemented in the way Pope Francis has recommended, as a theological tool where one listens and allows one's heart to be touched by new truths, the Catholic Church can begin to be transformed.

The synod's success will be judged not by what it has accomplished to this date, but by its impact on shaping a more dialogical and relational church for the future. ✦

Vatican changes course, reinstates Jesuit head of German university

By Christa Pongratz-Lippit

La Croix
Montrouge, France
November 19, 2018

The Vatican has reversed a decision made earlier this year and has confirmed that a Jesuit theologian who voiced positive views on homosexuality and the ordination of women deacons may begin a third term as head of a prestigious university in Germany.

Father Arturo Sosa, general superior of the Society of Jesus, announced on Nov. 15 that Father Ansgar Wucherpfennig has been reinstated "with immediate effect" as rector of the Jesuit-run Sankt Georgen Graduate School of Philosophy and Theology at Frankfurt am Main, an institute Father Sosa oversees as Grand Chancellor.

The move breaks an impasse dating from last June when the Congregation for Catholic Education privately informed the Jesuit general that it would not be renewing its canonically required *confirmatio* (approval) of Father Wucherpfennig.

That decision was finally made public in October, provoking protests among theologians and some bishops in Germany.

But the congregation apparently reconsidered in the past few weeks after Father Wucherpfennig promised to uphold Church teaching.

In a declaration to Father Sosa, the

52-year-old rector committed himself, as a religious and a priest, to upholding the Church's authentic Magisterium, presenting it "completely and comprehensively" and making it clear in the future when his critiques of the teaching are only his own personal opinion.

The priest said that as a Christian and theologian he hopes church teaching on homosexuality and women's roles in the Church would

develop and become more open.

Father Sosa said he forwarded Wucherpfennig's declaration to the Congregation for Education and added that the rector would now publish the results of his research on both issues "in loyal and creative continuity with fundamental church doctrine."

Bishop Georg Bätzing, head of Limburg diocese where Sankt Georgen is located and a supporter of Wucherpfennig, said he was greatly relieved by the resolution.

"Together with many others, I hoped for and expected this decision (on the part of the Vatican)," the 57-year-old



Fr. Ansgar Wucherpfennig, SJ

bishop said in a statement to the graduate school.

Father Johannes Siebner, the Jesuit provincial superior in Germany, echoed those sentiments. "I am deeply grateful for the widespread support that Father Wucherpfennig and the Sankt Georgen School have experienced in recent weeks," Siebner said in a statement the Jesuit college published on its website along with a photo of the 57-year-old pro-

vincial proudly displaying the *confirmatio* from Rome.

"Rome has obviously shown discernment and reacted to the many inter-church character references declaring Father Wucherpfennig an irreproachable priest," said Peter Lückemeier, chairman of the "Friends of Sankt Georgen."

The association, which was founded in 1972 and counts some 450 members, supports Sankt Georgen and helps to finance its projects.

Father Wucherpfennig was asked if he was forced to recant in order to be reinstated in his post.

"No, I did not recant," he said on Nov. 17 in a long interview for the German Church's website *katholische.de*.

"My declaration was addressed to the Jesuit superior general, Father Arturo Sosa, who then passed it on to the Vatican," the priest said.

"I declared that (in my lectures) on the question of the diaconate for women and the moral judgement of homosexuality I take the relevant church teaching into consideration and convey it correctly and fairly, but I also pose my own questions on both topics and discuss them with my students," he said.

"Moreover, as a Christian and an academic scholar, I also expressed my hope that church teaching on both these points would change and develop. That, in my opinion, is not recanting but belongs to the business of science — namely, to present our opinions correctly first before questioning or criticizing them," Wucherpfennig explained.

He said Father Sosa had asked him to do further research on both topics and to develop the Church's teaching "in creative loyalty." The rector said he believed homosexuality was connected to the general subject of "identity and sexuality," an issue he will be lecturing on next term.

Father Wucherpfennig said he plans to continue doing research on the historical-critical exegesis of St. Paul's Letters and possibly write a book on women deacons. ✦

Reflections on Two L.G.B.T. Questions at the Synod

By Rev. James Martin, SJ
America
 October 12, 2018

Questions about L.G.B.T. issues are being discussed at the Synod of Bishops on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment, currently underway in Rome, mainly because young people today are increasingly interested in questions about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. For many young people, L.G.B.T. people are their brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, friends and neighbors—and sometimes themselves. This is reflected in the synod's working document, which stated, "[S]ome LGBT youth... wish to benefit from greater closeness and experience greater care from the Church."

In some parts of the church, this may be considered primarily a "Western" concern. But the ethnic diversity of the L.G.B.T. community in the West, in part because some have sought refuge or asylum there because of their sexuality, demonstrates how the treatment of L.G.B.T. people is an issue for the global church. Moreover, increasing numbers of Catholics worldwide identify as L.G.B.T.

As a result, a few questions about L.G.B.T. people face the delegates at the synod. According to participants, discussions so far have centered on two ques-

tions, both about *nomenclature*: First, can the synod use the term "L.G.B.T." in its documents? Second, can the synod acknowledge that gay couples can form a "family"? How might we approach those questions—while not challenging the church's teaching on homosexuality or its opposition to same-sex marriage?

First, can the synod use the term "L.G.B.T." in its documents?

Let me suggest three reasons why "L.G.B.T." can be used in synod documents.

1. *Naming L.G.B.T. people what they ask to be named is part of the "respect" called for by the Catechism of the Catholic Church.*

This may be the most important reason to use the common term "L.G.B.T." Referring to L.G.B.T. people with the name that most now use for themselves is part of the "respect" called for by the Catechism (No. 2358). To take another example, contemporary usage avoids the term "Negro" and instead opts for "African-American" or "Black," which reflects what this group prefers. Refusing to call a group by the name that most in the group prefer borders on disrespect. L.G.B.T. youth, who are often harassed, bullied and "called names" are especially attentive to disrespectful language.

Furthermore, if the church uses terms that are dated, unknown, overly

clinical or considered disrespectful or even offensive (as "same-sex attracted" is with most L.G.B.T. people), the church risks preventing real dialogue with the group. And if the church cannot engage in dialogue, then it cannot do theology properly—a path contrary to the Second Vatican Council's invitation to be a church *in the modern world* ("Gaudium et Spes"). Thus, acknowledging this common term, especially for young L.G.B.T. people, is both respectful and helpful theologically.

2. *Using "L.G.B.T. Catholics" includes them in the church.*

Some have argued that using that term separates L.G.B.T. people from the rest of the church. But this argument is not made with other groups in the church. There are many other groups who are regularly identified by a particular characteristic—young adult Catholics, Latin-American Catholics, elderly Catholics, Catholic parents—and few suggest that such an identification divides them from the church. It simply identifies them as constitutive members of the Body of Christ and reminds us of the rich diversity in the church (1 Cor 12:20). In particular, L.G.B.T. youth want to feel a part of the church. This is a sign of diversity not division.

3. *Using "L.G.B.T. Catholics" does not connote acceptance of an ideology.*

When people describe themselves as L.G.B.T., it does not mean that they consider their sexuality or identity the dominant trait of their personhood, any more than people who refer to themselves as "Italian Catholics" or "elderly Catholics" consider this the dominant trait. Using the term does not mean that being L.G.B.T. is the most important part of who they are. Overall, using an adjective is not equivalent to defining a person or group in terms of one characteristic.

Likewise, the term does not constitute a declaration of support for a political ideology or theological position. For example, when a young person identifies as "gay" or "lesbian," he or she is simply expressing a part of who he or she is, not making a claim about any controversial issues. In fact, L.G.B.T. persons embrace a wide spectrum of social, political, economic worldviews and commitments.

For all these reasons, I would suggest that the synod can use the commonly accepted term "L.G.B.T."

Second, can the synod acknowledge that gay couples can form a "family"?

Again, let me suggest three reasons why, without challenging the church's opposition to same-sex marriage, it may make sense for the synod to use this nomenclature.

(Continued on page 5)



PARISHES

Alabama

Decatur: Annunciation of the Lord
Montgomery: St. Bede

Arizona

Chandler: St. Andrew
Glendale: St. Thomas More
Mesa: St. Bridget
Phoenix: St. Benedict
Scottsdale: St. Patrick
Tucson: St. Cyril of Alexandria,
 Ss. Peter and Paul, St. Pius X,
 Our Mother of Sorrows, St. Odilia

California

Baldwin Park: St. John the Baptist
Berkeley: Holy Spirit Parish
Burney: St. Francis of Assisi
Carlsbad: St. Patrick
Camarillo: Padre Serra Parish
Claremont: Our Lady of Assumption
El Cajon: St. Luke
Encino: Our Lady of Grace
Escondido: St. Timothy
Fremont: St. Joseph-Mission San Jose
Fresno: St. Paul Catholic Newman Center
Goleta: St. Mark Univ. Parish
Hawthorne: St. Joseph (Spanish)
Hayward: All Saints
La Puente: St. Martha
Lemon Grove: St. John of the Cross
Long Beach: St. Matthew, Our Lady of Refuge
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, St. Anselm
North Hollywood: St. Jane Frances de Chantal, St. Patrick
Oakland: Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Columba, St. Jarleth
Oceanside: St. Thomas More
Orange: Holy Family Cathedral

Palm Springs: St. Theresa
Pasadena: Assumption of the B.V.M.
Redondo: St. Lawrence Martyr
Redwood City: St. Matthias
Ross: St. Anselm
Sacramento: St. Francis of Assisi
San Carlos: St. Charles
San Diego: Ascension, St. John the Evangelist, St. Jude Shrine, Catholic Community of UC San Diego
San Dimas: Holy Name of Mary
San Francisco: Most Holy Redeemer, Old St. Mary Cathedral, St. Agnes, St. Dominic, St. Ignatius, St. Teresa of Avila
San Jose: St. Julie Billiart,
San Luis Obispo: Mission San Luis
San Ramon: St. Joan of Arc
San Raphael: Church of San Raphael & Mission San Raphael Arcangel
Santa Barbara: OL of Guadalupe
Santa Cruz: Holy Cross
Santa Monica: St. Monica
Spring Valley: Santa Sophia
Stanford: Catholic Community at Stanford University
South Pasadena: Holy Family
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: Sacred Heart
Denver: St. Dominic, Christ the King, Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Lafayette: Immaculate Conception
Lakewood: St. Bernadette
Littleton: Light of the World, St. Frances Cabrini

Connecticut

Guilford: St. George's
Hartford: St. Patrick-St. Anthony

Delaware

North Wilmington: Holy Child
Wilmington: St. Joseph, Sacred Heart Oratory

District of Columbia

Holy Trinity, St. Matthew Cathedral

Florida

Cocoa Beach: Our Savior
Daytona Beach: Our Lady of Lourdes
Flagler Beach: Santa Maria del Mar
Ft. Lauderdale: Blessed Sacrament, St. Anthony, St. Maurice
Key West: Basilica of St. Mary Star of the Sea
St. Petersburg: Holy Cross
Tampa: Sacred Heart

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 Lourdes, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Old St. Patrick
Clarendon Hills: Notre Dame
Country Club Hills: St. Emeric
Evanston: St. Nicholas
Inverness: Holy Family
Johnston City: St. Paul
Morton Grove: St. Martha
Oak Park: Ascension, St. Catherine of Sienna-St. Lucy, St. Giles
Schaumburg: St. Marcelline

Indiana

Dyer: St. Maria Goretti
Indianapolis: St. Thomas Aquinas

Iowa

Coralville: St. Thomas More
Des Moines: Holy Trinity

Kentucky

Lexington: Historic St. Paul Church, St. Peter Claver
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. Ignatius, St. Matthew, St. Vincent dePaul
Columbia: St. John the Evangelist
Gaithersburg: St. Rose of Lima
Hagerstown: St. Ann
Severn: St. Bernadette

Massachusetts

Amherst: Newman Catholic Center of UMass
Boston: St. Joseph, Paulist Center, St. Anthony Shrine, St. Cecilia
Buzzard's Bay: St. Margaret's/St. Mary's
East Longmeadow: St. Michael
Medford: Catholic Community at Tufts University
Newton: St. Ignatius
Provincetown: St. Peter
Sharon: Our Lady of Sorrows
Springfield: Sacred Heart
Whitinsville: St. Patrick

Michigan

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

Minnesota

Minneapolis: St. Frances Cabrini, St. Joan of Arc
St. Paul: St. Thomas More

(Continued on page 5)

LGBT-friendly Catholic Parishes & Communities

Below is a list of known LGBT-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 welcomes LGBT Catholics, please let us know. Tell us if this welcome is because of a support program, spirituality group, mission statement, participation in LGBT community events, or involvement with parents. **To add your faith community to our list, please contact New Ways Ministry at info@newwaysministry.org or call 301-277-5674.** Parishes are listed first and intentional Eucharistic communities follow. For links to many of these parishes' websites, go to www.NewWaysMinistry.org

Reflections on Two L.G.B.T. Questions at the Synod

(Continued from page 4)

1. *There are many ways to be a "family."*

Given the vast cultural difference in the world, there are many types of families, in addition to the nuclear family of the mother, father and children. And, historically, there have also been different kinds of families—in the Bible, for example, families came in many shapes and sizes.

Today, families are not always constituted solely by marriage but also by other bonds of love and kinship—for example, a single mother and her child; a divorced man and his adopted child; a remarried and divorced couple with children; a common-law couple with children; a grandparent, aunt or uncle raising grandchildren, nieces or nephews; a legal guardian living with his or her ward; multiple generations of adults living with siblings and cousins; and an extended family of brothers and sisters whose parents are deceased. Perhaps most common of all, at least in the West, are increasing numbers of children born to unmarried couples (men and women). Each group, though in a non-traditional setting, would consider themselves a family.

The church may not approve of some of these situations, but it nonetheless refers to them as families. It uses the term and has used the term in the synod,

widely and colloquially. Perhaps even some synod delegates hail from non-traditional families, but they most likely refer to their own "family." Pastors, too, recognize that families are far more complex than we can imagine. In these same ways, gay couples can form families and are deserving of the term.

2. *Gay couples are "families" in both the legal and emotional sense.*

The church is opposed to same-sex marriage. But increasingly, gay couples are recognized by civil authorities as families. Civil courts in many countries regard same-sex couples as legally families and in other countries as having *affinitas* (kinship). Thus, they are families in the legal sense.

These families are also a place where love resides—in care for one another, care for children, care for aging

parents, care for the larger community—just as love resides in traditional families. Many gay couples also heroically adopt

the most disadvantaged and marginalized children. Such families provide a measure of social stability in the world and add to the flourishing of society as they support others in community and contribute to the common good. Overall, if the church desires to address the contemporary world effectively it must consider using the terms by which the world understands itself. And, again, for the church to deny this may prevent dialogue with these many kinds of families.

3. *Gay couples have children who need spiritual care — as members of families."*

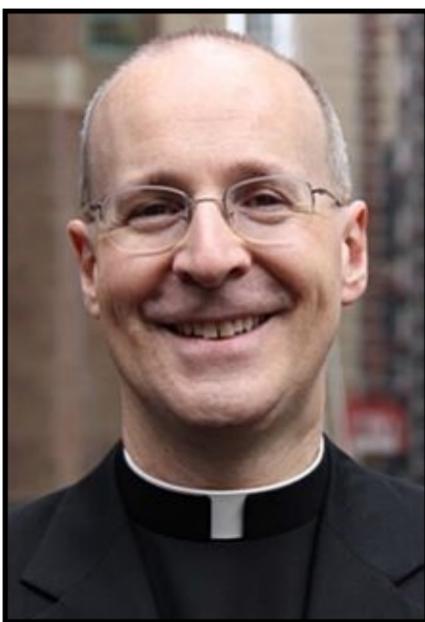
The church's opposition to same-sex marriage is clear. But even though they

are married without the church's approval, gay parents do many of the same things that other parents do: love their children, provide for their upbringing and strive to help them become the persons God desires for them to be.

They also desire for their children to be part of the church. Thus, gay couples have their children baptized, bring them to Mass, teach them to pray, enroll them in religious education classes, rejoice at their reception of the sacraments and, overall, desire for their children the treasury of the church's graces. This is the clear fruit of faith, the grace of God at work in the hearts of these parents.

Even in situations where L.G.B.T. Catholics have felt wounded by the church, many still want to raise their children in the faith—an unmistakable sign of God's grace. This is a powerful source of life for the Body of Christ, and it is important for the church to recognize and affirm this. Children of these couples also naturally see themselves as part of a family. To argue otherwise risks making these children and young people feel excluded from their church.

The family has often been called the "little church," where children first learn about God and about love. Thus, perhaps the best reason for using the term family for these couples and their children is that they are a locus of love. ✚



Fr. James Martin, SJ

(Continued from page 4)

Missouri
Kansas City: Guardian Angels, Holy Family, 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
Hoboken: Our Lady of Grace
Keyport: St. Joseph
Lawrenceville: St. Ann
Long Beach Island: St. Francis of Assisi
Maplewood: St. Joseph
Monmouth: Precious Blood
Pompton Lakes: St. Mary
South Plainfield: Sacred Heart
Tinton Falls: St. Anselm
Turnersville: Sts. Peter and Paul

New Mexico
Albuquerque: Holy Family,
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
Buffalo: St. Joseph University Parish
Deer Park: Ss. Cyril and Methodius
East Islip: St. Mary
Elmira: St. Mary
Fairport: Church of the Assumption
Henrietta: Good Shepherd
Ithaca: St. Catherine of Siena
Manhattan: Ascension, Blessed Sacrament, Holy Name of Jesus, St. Francis deSales, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Francis Xavier, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Paul the Apostle
Pittsford: Church of Transfiguration
Rochester: Blessed Sacrament, St. Mary (Downtown), St. Monica

Saratoga Springs: St. Peter
Schenectady: St. Luke
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
West Islip: Our Lady of Lourdes
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, St. Francis de Sales
Cleveland: Blessed Trinity, St. Malachi, St. Martha
Columbus: St. Thomas More Newman Center, St. Francis of Assisi
Fairlawn: St. Hilary
Mentor: St. John Vianney
University Heights: Church of Gesu
Westlake: St. Ladislav
Wooster: St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception

Oregon
Beaverton: Spirit of Grace
Portland: St. Andrew, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Phillip Neri, Downtown Chapel (St. Vincent de Paul)

Pennsylvania
Danville: St. Joseph
Latrobe: St. Vincent Basilica
Philadelphia: Old St. Joseph, Old St. Mary, St. John the Evangelist, St. Vincent DePaul
Wilksburg: St. James

Rhode Island
Providence: St. Raymond
Wickford: St. Bernard

Tennessee
Memphis: St. Patrick, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Texas
Austin: Univ. of Texas Catholic Center
Colleyville: Good Shepherd
Dallas: Holy Trinity
El Paso: All Saints
Houston: St. Anne, St. Teresa
Odessa: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
Plano: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Virginia
Arlington: Our Lady Queen of Peace
Glen Allen: St. Michael the Archangel
Mechanicsville: Church of the Redeemer
Richmond: Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Sacred Heart Parish
Roanoke: St. Gerard
Triangle: St. Francis
Virginia Beach: St. Nicholas

Washington
Seattle: Christ Our Hope, St. Benedict, St. James Cathedral, St. Joseph, Prince of Peace Newman Center, St. Mary's
Spokane: St. Aloysius
Tacoma: St. Leo

Wisconsin
Fond du Lac: Holy Family
Madison: Our Lady Queen of Peace
Menomonee Falls: Good Shepherd
Milwaukee: St. Bernadette, Good Shepherd, Prince of Peace, Trinity-Guadalupe
Wauwatosa: St. Pius X



Canada
Montreal: Holy Cross, Saint-Pierre-Apôté,
Ottawa: St. Joseph
Toronto: Our Lady of Lourdes

England
London: Church of the Immaculate Conception (Mayfair)

INTENTIONAL EUCHARISTIC COMMUNITIES

Arizona
Scottsdale: Franciscan Renewal Center

California
Orange: Koinonia
Pleasanton: Catholic Community of Pleasanton
San Diego: Mary Magdalene Catholic Community

District of Columbia
 Communitas

Florida
Tampa: Franciscan Center

Iowa
Coralville: Full Circle Small Faith Community

Maryland
Baltimore, Annapolis, Thurmont: Living Water Inclusive Catholic Community
Greenbelt: Greenbelt Catholic Community

Michigan
Grand Rapids: Marywood

Kalamazoo: Lambda Catholics

Minnesota
Minneapolis: Spirit of St. Stephen's Catholic Community

Ohio
 Dayton: Living Beatitudes Community

Oregon
Portland: Journey and Koinonia Catholic Community

Pennsylvania
Drexel Hill: St. Mary Magdalene Community
Pittsburgh: Dignity//Pittsburgh

Virginia
Arlington: NOVA Catholic Community

Washington
Lacey: Holy Wisdom Inclusive Catholic Community

Wisconsin
Madison: Holy Wisdom Monastery
Milwaukee: Mary of Magdala, Apostle to the Apostles

Chicago priest who burned rainbow banner removed from church

By **Ese Olumhense**
The Chicago Tribune
 September 22, 2018

Days after it was revealed that the Rev. Paul Kalchik of Avondale's Resurrection Catholic Church burned a rainbow banner that once hung in the church, Cardinal Blase Cupich, archbishop of Chicago, has removed him from his role as head of the North Side church.

"For some weeks now, I have become increasingly concerned about a number of issues at Resurrection Parish," read a letter, signed by Cupich, to parishioners and staff at the church. "It has become clear to me that Fr. Kalchik must take time away from the parish to receive pastoral support so his needs can be assessed."

Monsignor James Kaczorowski, pastor of Queen of Angels parish, was appointed administrator of Resurrection Parish, effective Friday evening, according to the notice.

"I do not take this step lightly," Cupich continued. "Rather, I act out of concern for Fr. Kalchik's welfare and that of the people of Resurrection Parish. I have a responsibility to be supportive of our priests when they have difficulties, but I also have a duty to ensure that those who serve our faithful are fully able to minister to them in the way the Church expects."

Anne Maselli, a spokeswoman for the archdiocese, said the move was not connected to Kalchik's decision to destroy the banner, a move criticized by some in the community who called it an anti-gay hate crime.

"He is taking some time away from the parish," Maselli said in an email Saturday. "This has been in the works for some time and is not directly due to the flag burning."

Calls to Kalchik at the church on Saturday were not returned. His answering machine was full, a recorded message said.

The priest, who has said he was a

victim of sexual abuse by a Chicago-area priest as a seminarian, has insisted that he does not hate the gay community.

"I'm about as much of a 'gay basher' as Mother Teresa of Calcutta," the 56-year-old said in an interview with the *Tribune* on Friday. "Love the sinner, hate the sin — that's as harsh as I get."

The church, in its bulletin this week, said Kalchik has received many threats.

On Friday, Kalchik said he has had to have police escort him from the church to his home, out of fear he may be attacked. Earlier in the week, he said an intruder tried to break into the church.

Police did confirm that they were dispatched to the 3000 block of North Francisco Avenue just before 9 p.m. Monday because of a report of an open door. Officers checked and cleared the area, but no report was filed, police said.

It's not immediately known whether Cupich's decision to remove Kalchik is final, or whether Kalchik will be reinstated at the Avondale church. It is also not known what other issues the Archdiocese

of Chicago was concerned about, or what role, if any, Kalchik will play in the church.

Ald. Deb Mell, 33rd, was among those demanding the priest be fired earlier this week. On Wednesday, she organized a small protest of the banner's torching outside the church. Those assembled carried rainbow flags and other signs bearing the message "Hate Has No Home here."

Another protest was held at the church Saturday afternoon. Members of the Northwest Side Coalition Against Racism and Hate, which organized the demonstration, said the event lasted only an hour, before it was revealed by someone who came out of the church that Kalchik had been removed.

"Having him remain in a leadership position would be an affront to the LGBT community," said Al Grippe, 40, a member of the group. "It was a clear act of hate, and he was rightfully removed." ✦

Animosity, attacks against LGBT Catholics create 'toxic atmosphere'

By **Heidi Schlumpf**
National Catholic Reporter
 November 2, 2018

In the more than quarter-century that Francis DeBernardo has been involved in LGBT ministry, only twice have protesters shown up to his organization's events for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender Catholics — and both times it was only one person.

Until this year.

In early October, after several conservative Catholic websites launched an attack on an annual retreat for gay priests, brothers and deacons, the Dominican sisters who run the Siena Retreat Center outside Milwaukee, Wisconsin, had to hire security to keep more than two dozen protesters off the property, also home to the order's elderly sisters.

It's all part of a "toxic atmosphere that has been building up for decades," said DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry, the Catholic LGBT advocacy and educational organization that sponsored the retreat.

Animosity against LGBT Catholics is nothing new, but it seems to be increasing in intensity, perhaps in response to an overall growing acceptance and support for LGBT people in the United States and even by Pope Francis, who famously responded "Who am I to judge?" in response to a question about homosexuality.

But there is plenty of judging still happening, say LGBT activists, theologians and ministers, who believe the decidedly anti-Christian tone of recent threats and attacks mirror a lack of civility in the broader culture.

Fueled by well-funded conservative groups that represent a minority of Catholics but are disproportionately vocal, especially on social media, this "Catholic alt right" also has seized upon this summer's news about sexual abuse in the church to scapegoat gay priests and homosexuality.

These traditionalist Catholics say they are only defending church teaching on homosexuality and calling LGBT people to practice chastity, as was the message from speaker after speaker at the "Authentic Reform" conference sponsored by the Napa Institute earlier this fall.

But conservative Catholics' near-obsession with the issue is concerning to those who support LGBT Catholics.

In San Diego, anti-gay activists have disrupted a series of diocesan listening sessions about sexual abuse and have had to be removed by security. Also in that diocese, a parish worker who is gay resigned after death threats, slashed tires and harassing letters, phone calls and emails. The last straws were a break-in that resulted in homophobic graffiti at the parish and "doxing," or the broadcasting of his private information, including pictures of his family and where he lives.

"Is this how we as a Christian community behave toward those who are different than us?" asked Stan "JR" Zerkowski, executive director of Fortunate Families, a

Catholic organization that tries to build bridges between families, friends and allies of the LGBTQ community and the church.

Zerkowski said the church "has blood on our hands," especially leaders who do not articulate that such attacks are sinful. "It's terrorism, and it's killing the spirit of another," he said.

LGBT people who work for church institutions have long feared for their livelihoods if they are open about their sexual orientation. Since 2007, more

vocacy organization that works for respect and justice for people of all sexual orientations, genders and gender identities.

Fired church employees have no recourse, she said, because so-called "religious liberty" laws legitimize discrimination against LGBT people. For some, the animosity is internalized and can become a life-or-death issue. Studies by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have found that LGBT youth seriously contemplate or

an intolerant church. For example, Chicago and national media gave a platform to a priest who organized a ritual to burn a rainbow flag to signify opposition to homosexuality. When the priest ignored a directive from Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich not to proceed with the burning, he was removed from his parish, igniting a firestorm of support and conspiracy theories online.

But such moves may be having the opposite effect, eliciting sympathy for attacked LGBT Catholics and adding to the growing numbers of Catholics who oppose discrimination against LGBT people.

"I'm seeing the people of God rise up and saying 'This is so ugly, and this is not who we are,'" said Zerkowski, who sees growing acceptance of LGBT people as the "voice of the people expressing the will of the Spirit."

Roughly two thirds of U.S. Catholics favor same-sex marriage, with even larger numbers opposing discrimination against LGBT people in jobs, public accommodations and housing, according to the 2017 "American Values" data from the Public Religion Research Institute.

Growing acceptance also means LGBT Catholics who are attacked are more willing to publicly tell their stories, said Duddy-Burke, who did not go public in 1993 when two death threats — in response to a story about her in the conservative Catholic newspaper the *Wanderer* — forced her to move from her home.

"Many of us expect and have become used to being treated with respect and dignity and being protected in civil society, and we hold the church to at least the same standard," she said. "We want the same from the church that we get in the rest of our lives." ✦



Francis DeBernardo, Stan Zerkowski, Marianne Duddy-Burke

than 80 church workers have lost their jobs in LGBT-related employment disputes, according to New Ways Ministry.

In September, an employee of the Cleveland Diocese was fired after "liking" a picture of a same-sex wedding ceremony and posting photos of a same-sex wedding reception on Facebook. In six dioceses, Catholic school teachers' contracts require them not to support same-sex relationships professionally or personally.

Anti-gay activists comb social media, family obituaries and other online sources to find "evidence" of a Catholic employee's support of LGBT issues, said Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of DignityUSA, a Catholic ad-

attempt suicide at higher rates than heterosexual youth. At least one study has connected higher suicide rates among LGBT youth with increased importance of religion in their lives (unlike for their heterosexual counterparts, for whom religiosity is a protective factor).

Those who speak out in support of LGBT Catholics often face negative push-back, including the cancellation of speaking engagements. Jesuit Fr. James Martin, whose writings simply call for two-way dialogue between the church and LGBT people, has had talks cancelled and faces organized protests at many appearances.

Coverage of these and other stories by mainstream media paint a picture of

I Became A Catholic Because Of Gay Pride

(Continued from page 1)

deacons threw off their robes to reveal their own rainbow T-shirts and marched proudly down the aisle to wild applause.

My husband turned to me, wide-eyed. "I have never in all my life seen anything like this at a Catholic church," he said.

"Great," I replied. "Then this is our Catholic church."

Our church is unique, but it shouldn't be. Like many others, it suffered in the era when people fled cities for the suburbs. Instead of closing its doors, though, it flung them open to serve the community that remained. It became one of the first in the area to minister to those affected by the AIDS epidemic. There were weekly fellowship dinners for the sick and suffering, where the disproportionately impacted LGBTQ community was welcomed by the priests and mem-

bers of the parish. These weekly dinners continued until the mid-'90s, and by then the word was out in the LGBTQ community that there was a place they would be welcomed to receive God's love along with everyone else.

In this (latest) time of horrific scandal in the Catholic Church, it's no wonder that attendance continues to decline. If we truly want to move away from the corrupt and insular church of the past, we need a blueprint of openness and radical hospitality for the future. Many other Catholics share this conviction. Not only are they horrified by the sex abuse charges currently rocking the church, two-thirds of them now support same-sex marriage. Yet, what we often hear from the pulpit and see in the pews does not align with these values. This cognitive dissonance is what keeps the Catholic Church rooted in its tarnished

past.

When I look around my church, however, I see a future I want to be a part of. So although I never wanted to belong to a Catholic church, that's where you'll find me every Sunday. I baptized my son there. I do service there. I have a freaking bumper sticker with the name of our church on my car. I mean, I've been married twice but I've only ever had one bumper sticker, so you know it's serious.

I guess you could say I've become, well, church-y.

This year when I'm marching in the Pride parade with others from my church, I'll likely look around and sadly question the absence of other Catholic churches. I will also be filled with gratitude that, for now, I've found the place for me, where grace abounds and everyone is welcome to it. ✦

Transgender Parish Minister Asks Parishioners to Support Protections

The following text is a letter which appeared in the weekly bulletin of St. Ignatius Loyola parish, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, on October 21, 2018. The author is Michael Sennett, the parish administrator.

Dear Parishioners,

I delivered the below text at a recent interfaith action event for transgender equality, hosted by Temple Israel of Boston. The prayer “Break Open Our Hearts” by Sr. Mary Lou Kownacki, O.S.B., featured in last week’s bulletin letter, was how I introduced my talk.

Prayer. An act of love, of devotion, of unity. Why am I hesitant of something so pure in nature? One of the most frustrating aspects of being a catholic trans man is that people often insist on praying for me, but never with me. On the surface, they may appear well intentioned, and undoubtedly some are sincere. Yet, I know there are folks who pray for me to be subject to discrimination and injustice, to change who I am at the very core of my being. They pray for what they assume to be a choice, a sickness, a disorder. Worship becomes territorial. As I am cast an outcast, my existence is met with resistance. Opponents find comfort in limiting my human rights. In fact, they utilize their hatred to embed fear into society. This hatred and fear mongering is used to validate repeals to our protections, as is the case with Massachusetts Ballot Question 3. Composed in a purposely confusing manner, this measure seeks to roll back public protections for the transgender community.

A no vote would succeed in stripping trans people of our rights, whereas a yes vote would preserve current legislation.

Growing up, my religion and spirituality meant everything to me, and they remain a priority in my life. I consider this a triumph, as many of my family members have parted ways with the

church. When I was a child, I used to reenact the Last Supper with my stuffed animals.

Picture this: a five-year-old walking around in their underwear and sandals, pretending to be Jesus. They do say imitation is the highest form of flattery. Back then I never imagined that my faith would become a battleground. Often, I feel caught between my two communities. These last six years have been a game of tug of war—myself being the rope, pulled in opposite directions. But I am not elastic. There’s only so far you



Michael Sennett

can stretch a short trans man. Yet, I choose to not choose. I exist in both communities without being a contradiction. If anything, my identities enhance each other. The choice I make is to reclaim what it means to be queer and religious in today’s world.

In the United States, 40% of transgender people have attempted suicide in their lifetime. Of these individuals, 92% were under the age of 25 at the time of their attempt. 1 in 2 transgender people

are sexually assaulted. These numbers are staggering. Despite our struggle to survive, we are framed as the problem. The recently released ad from the No on 3 campaign relies on the transgender predator trope. However, since the original protections passed in 2016, there has been absolutely no increase in public safety incidents involving public restrooms.

On the contrary, trans people are far more likely to face elevated safety risks than our cisgender peers. This applies to all places of public accommodation, including restaurants and hospitals. It has never been just about bathrooms. It is about our right to exist and thrive as human beings.

I cannot deny that I benefit from privileges that others in the trans community do not. I experience passing privilege, meaning most people would not realize I am a trans man, unless I willingly outed myself. I am white, I come from a loving and supportive family, and I was able to receive a college education. My insurance has fully covered trans related services. However, many of my trans siblings are faced with difficult choices: to be true to themselves may cause rejection from their families and compromise their safety; or having to decide between the cost of tuition

versus hormone therapy and surgeries that can be lifesaving. While I do not experience all of these struggles, I continue to stand in solidarity with those in my community. Like you, I am here today because I seek justice through faith.

In Christianity, it is a commandment to love your neighbor as yourself. When we neglect to fully embrace ourselves, we are not truly or justly living out our faith. Self love is important. Be conscious of your worth, and love yourself. We can also not be genuine followers of

Christ when we deny others. With great difficulty, I strive to place my anger not on the misinformed neighbor who is prepared to learn, but rather on our unfit leaders, who continue to perpetuate the cycle of injustice.

I am imperfect. I sin and I seek forgiveness. I am a human being, a child of God. Neither my identity nor my existence are sinful. I was created in the image of God, and I am no disgrace. If you must hate me, refrain from doing so as a result of who I am; let it be because I put pineapple on my pizza.

Jesus is change—this is why I choose to serve my church. Catholic Social Teaching calls me to advocate for peace through justice.

Without justice, there is no peace. Action begins with faith. We are here because we recognize the dignity of each person, and as faithful people, we are moved to let love determine our actions. Let us continue to transcend boundaries, as we encourage the people of Massachusetts to love the transgender community, and uphold the protections in the name of dignity. Thank you!

Peace,
Michael Sennett,
Parish Administrator



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LGBT-friendly Catholic Colleges and Universities



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

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Alabama
<i>Mobile:</i> Spring Hill College</p> <p>California
<i>Belmont:</i> Notre Dame de Namur University
<i>Goleta:</i> St. Mark’s University
<i>Los Angeles:</i> Loyola Marymount University, Mount Saint Mary’s College
<i>Moraga:</i> St. Mary’s College
<i>Oakland:</i> Holy Names University
<i>Rancho Palos Verde:</i> Marymount College
<i>San Diego:</i> University of San Diego
<i>San Francisco:</i> University of San Francisco
<i>Santa Clara:</i> Santa Clara University</p> <p>Colorado
<i>Denver:</i> Regis University</p> <p>Connecticut
<i>Fairfield:</i> Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University
<i>New Haven:</i> Albertus Magnus College
<i>West Hartford:</i> Saint Joseph College</p> <p>District of Columbia
Georgetown University, Trinity University</p> <p>Florida
<i>Miami Gardens:</i> St. Thomas University
<i>Miami Shores:</i> Barry University</p> <p>Hawaii
<i>Honolulu:</i> Chaminade University</p> <p>Illinois
<i>Chicago:</i> DePaul University, Loyola University, St. Xavier University
<i>Joliet:</i> University of St. Francis
<i>River Forest:</i> Dominican University in Illinois
<i>Romeoville:</i> Lewis University</p> <p>Indiana
<i>Notre Dame:</i> Holy Cross College, St. Mary’s College, Univ. of Notre Dame</p> | <p>Iowa
<i>Davenport:</i> St. Ambrose University
<i>Dubuque:</i> Loras College, Clarke University</p> <p>Kentucky
<i>Louisville:</i> Spalding University, Bellarmine University</p> <p>Louisiana
<i>New Orleans:</i> Loyola University</p> <p>Maryland
<i>Baltimore:</i> Notre Dame of Maryland University, Loyola University of Maryland</p> <p>Massachusetts
<i>Boston:</i> Emmanuel College, Chestnut Hill: Boston College
<i>Chicopee:</i> Elms College
<i>Easton:</i> Stonehill College
<i>North Andover:</i> Merrimack College
<i>Weston:</i> Regis College
<i>Worcester:</i> Assumption College, College of the Holy Cross</p> <p>Michigan
<i>Detroit:</i> University of Detroit Mercy, Marygrove College
<i>Grand Rapids:</i> Aquinas College</p> <p>Minnesota
<i>Collegeville:</i> St. John’s University
<i>Duluth:</i> College of St. Scholastica
<i>Minneapolis:</i> College of St. Catherine
<i>St. Joseph:</i> College of Saint Benedict
<i>St. Paul:</i> St. Thomas University
<i>Winona:</i> St. Mary’s University of Minnesota</p> <p>Missouri
<i>Kansas City:</i> Avila University, Rockhurst University
<i>St. Louis:</i> Fontbonne University, St. Louis University</p> | <p>Montana
<i>Helena:</i> Carroll College</p> <p>Nebraska
<i>Omaha:</i> Creighton University</p> <p>New Hampshire
<i>Manchester:</i> St. Anselm College
<i>Nashua:</i> Rivier College</p> <p>New Jersey
<i>Caldwell:</i> Caldwell College
<i>Jersey City:</i> St. Peter’s College
<i>Newark:</i> Seton Hall School of Law</p> <p>New York
<i>Albany:</i> College of Saint Rose
<i>Brooklyn and Patchogue:</i> St. Joseph’s College
<i>Bronx:</i> Fordham University, Manhattan College
<i>Buffalo:</i> Canisius College
<i>Loudonville:</i> Siena College
<i>New Rochelle:</i> College of New Rochelle, Iona College
<i>Poughkeepsie:</i> Marist College
<i>Rochester:</i> St. John Fisher College
<i>St. Bonaventure:</i> St. Bonaventure Univ.
<i>Sparkill:</i> St. Thomas Aquinas College
<i>Syracuse:</i> LeMoyne College
<i>Queens:</i> St. John’s University</p> <p>Ohio
<i>Cincinnati:</i> Xavier University
<i>Cleveland Heights:</i> John Carroll University
<i>Dayton:</i> University of Dayton
<i>Pepper Pike:</i> Ursuline College
<i>South Euclid:</i> Notre Dame College
<i>Sylvania:</i> Lourdes College</p> <p>Oregon
<i>Marylhurst:</i> Marylhurst University
<i>Portland:</i> University of Portland</p> | <p>Pennsylvania
<i>Cresson:</i> Mount Aloysius College
<i>Dallas:</i> Misericordia University
<i>Erie:</i> Mercyhurst College
<i>Greensburg:</i> Seton Hill University
<i>Immaculata:</i> Immaculata University
<i>Philadelphia:</i> Chestnut Hill College, LaSalle University, St. Joseph’s Univ.
<i>Pittsburgh:</i> Carlow University, Duquesne University
<i>Radnor:</i> Cabrini College
<i>Reading:</i> Alvernia University
<i>Scranton:</i> Marywood University
<i>Villanova:</i> Villanova University</p> <p>Rhode Island
<i>Newport:</i> Salve Regina University
<i>Providence:</i> Providence College</p> <p>Texas
<i>Austin:</i> Saint Edward’s University
<i>San Antonio:</i> University of the Incarnate Word, Our Lady of the Lake Univ.</p> <p>Vermont
<i>Colchester:</i> Saint Michael’s College</p> <p>Washington
<i>Lacey:</i> St. Martin’s College
<i>Seattle:</i> Seattle University
<i>Spokane:</i> Gonzaga University</p> <p>West Virginia
<i>Wheeling:</i> Wheeling Jesuit University</p> <p>Wisconsin
<i>De Pere:</i> St. Norbert College
<i>Madison:</i> Edgewood College
<i>Milwaukee:</i> Alverno College, Cardinal Stritch University, Marquette University</p> <p>Canada
<i>Toronto:</i> Regis College</p> |
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LGBTQ hotline gets Cardinal's blessings

By Deborah Cornelious

The Hindu

Mumbai, India

November 2, 2018

On October 31, Mumbai-born fashion designer Wendell Rodricks approached the Archdiocese of Bombay and sought an audience with Cardinal Oswald Gracias. He had an unusual request to make: could the Cardinal bless his plan to start a hotline to help the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) community, their families and friends and bring them closer to the church?

Cardinal Gracias has long been a progressive figure in the Indian Catholic church, but the outcome of the meeting was overwhelming for Mr. Rodricks. "I was moved to tears when Cardinal Gracias not only gave his total approval and support but also agreed to advise his clergy to be more compassionate and less condemning of the LGBTQ community," he said, in a social media post. "At the end of our meeting, His Eminence placed his hand on my head and blessed me in a special way: 'Christ bless us for the work we are doing for society'. Suffice to say I felt blessed, grateful and immensely joyful. In smog-filled Bombay, my heart felt a rainbow in the sky."

Mr. Rodricks' initiative, which may take off later this month, is a result of feeling condemned by the church while growing up. "I have personally suffered," he said on the phone from Goa. "If [a queer person's] faith goes against

them, it leads to psychological damage because they can't get the acceptance."

The as-of-now untitled social media endeavour aims to create a community not just of queer people but also allies and to prevent isolation and despair. "I will be the public face of this endeavour to establish a hotline to assist LGBTQ and family/friends who need guidance and support to keep the faith," he said.

Two months ago, a five-judge panel led by Chief Justice of India, Dipak Misra, partially dissolved Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, decriminalising sex by consenting homosexual adults. The Catholic Church, however, does not accept intercourse between members of the same sex. In this context, Cardinal Gracias' support for the initiative -- like his stand on many other issues -- is being seen as a step forward. In the past, he has expressed the need for women's inclusion in Catholic leadership, encouraged dialogue on sensitive matters such as same-sex relations and even said Father Franco Mulakkal, the Bishop of the Diocese of Jalandhar, accused of sexual assault by a nun, ought to step down and allow for a thorough investigation.

The spokesperson of the Archdiocese of Bombay, Father Nigel Barrett told *The Hindu*, "The Cardinal has said that we have to be people who are sup-

portive and the church has to be supportive of them. The church has been always welcoming and respectful of all people." But he also reiterated that the church's stance on homosexual relations remains unwavering. "The moral position has



Wendell Rodricks, Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Ruby Almeida

been one that the sexual act between members of the same sex is not endorsed or accepted."

Mr. Rodricks was encouraged to approach the Archdiocese by Ruby Almeida, London-based chairperson of Quest, an endeavour that offers pastoral support to queer Catholics. Ms. Almeida has been working in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer (LGBTIQ) faith sector for over 15 years. "The local group set up in Mumbai will

be working closely with Wendell Rodricks to address the needs of LGBTIQ Catholics initially in Mumbai and Goa," said Ms. Almeida. "We very much hope other [religious] groups can look to us for support to [address] faith amongst the LGBTIQ community which had been overlooked till now."

The response to Mr. Rodricks' initiative among the LGBTQ community has been mixed. Andrew, a 33-year-old communications trainer, finds Mr. Rodricks' exercise futile. A keen participant in Church activities like the choir and lector's group, he was unaffected by the Church's stance on his sexual orientation. "I continued practising my faith and living my life," he says. "I don't see the sense of having [an online presence]. The moment you have an online portal, there will be conflicting opinions and people posting nonsense. If the Church feels we are accepted, they should just say it and that should be more than sufficient."

But 29-year-old Mark, a design professional, is hopeful that Mr. Rodricks' plans will help young queer Catholics like him. "I felt like I was sinning," he says, reminiscing his childhood. "I remember confessing having feelings for another man to a priest and he told me it's okay to feel the attraction but acting on it is a sin." Mark doesn't go to Church any more. "I still have a relationship with God and Jesus but I don't think [being gay] is a sin. I'm not a freak of nature but even freaks of nature were created by God. He's created everything." ✚

The Courage to Be Me: A Theologian Reflects on His Coming Out

By Jason Steidl

Bondings 2.0

NewWaysMinistry.org/blog

September 16, 2018

I first attended a Courage meeting when I was 24 years old and a student in the Master of Theological Studies program at the University of Notre Dame. I heard about the organization from a therapist who belonged to the National Association for Research & Therapy of Homosexuality, a now-discredited group that promotes conversion therapy. After sharing my sexual history with him, he diagnosed me with "same-sex attraction" and prescribed Courage as part of my treatment. There, he suggested, I could find like-minded Catholics to support me in the struggle against my sexuality.

I grew up in a conservative evangelical home in small-town Ohio. We took prohibitions against sex outside of heterosexual marriage as seriously as the green bean casseroles we carried to potlucks. Purity culture was a convenient excuse not to date women my age. I never exactly knew what purity was, but I hated myself when I lost it.

I first noticed my attraction to men in my early teens. Abstinence allowed me to postpone questions about my sexuality until college. I attended Georgetown University where I was active in College Republicans, sang in the choir at a local Baptist Church, was a leader in campus ministry, and majored in theology. Catholic tradition promised answers for all of the questions I had about faith. I fell in love with the liturgy, the Real Presence, and even the saints. At my confirmation in 2009, I professed belief in "all that the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims to be revealed by God."

Catholic teaching repeated what I had come to believe as a teenager: my sexuality was dangerous. The catechism said my desire for sexual intimacy with another man was "intrinsically disordered." As a convert, I believed the stakes were much higher than before. Genital activity with another man, or even myself, became a mortal sin that separated me from God and could send me to Hell. At my first confession, I told the priest that I had hooked up with three men and looked at gay pornography. He told me I was probably a sex addict and

should seek treatment. I thought shame from the experience would keep me from sinning ever again.

I arrived at Notre Dame determined to marry a woman and have a sizeable, contraception-free family. To my friends, I was a traditionalist who looked down on Catholics compromised by the world. I created a profile on catholicmatch.com to find a wife who shared my values. I also discerned about joining the priesthood. Neither path was realistic. God and I knew the pain that was eating me from the inside out. I acted on my desire for sexual intimacy with men. Chat rooms. Bathhouses. Even a short relationship with another student that ended after a couple of weeks. I blamed my Christian faith for my inability to sustain a healthy relationship. I was afraid of who I was. My life disintegrated because my faith seemed so incompatible with my sexuality.

In desperation I sought help from a Catholic psychologist and began to attend Courage meetings. The group was small, with maybe four or five members on a good day. The gatherings were structured like Alcoholics Anonymous with introductions, time for sharing, reading Courage literature, a commitment to "work the steps," and prayer. I was relieved that there were a couple of other young people in the group. One, still in high school, came because of parental directive. Together, we examined our ongoing failures to live up to Church's teaching.

Pseudo-psychology helped explain why our lives were broken. We talked about how we grew up too close to our mothers, had been sexually abused as children, or didn't fit in with the other boys on the playground. It wasn't always true, but we made the narratives fit our lives. The program pathologized our sexuality.

Meetings were at the local Catholic parish and led by the same heterosexual therapist who introduced me to the group. He shared plenty of platitudes, but nothing that helped. Depression was rife in the group, and there was little hope

that life would ever get better. The god I met at Courage was capricious and created me for a lifetime of suffering. My sexuality was my theodicy, a cross to bear with the promise of redemption in the life to come.

Attending these meetings widened the chasm between my faith and my sexuality even more. Repeating Hail Marys, echoing tropes from Courage's outdated psychology, and spending time with others who suffered as much I did from mental health issues did little to bring healing and integration.

Mercifully, time intervened and I graduated from Notre Dame. I returned to Ohio, where I lived a double life as a rule-following Catholic theologian by day and a transgressive gay man by night. My soul was rent in two.

The following year I moved to New York City to begin my PhD in theology. I was determined to find healing and integration. The theology department at Fordham University was full of LGBTQ colleagues, mentors, and friends. They did not tell me I was disordered when I came out to them. My academic community challenged me to consider whether my prior beliefs helped me flourish as the sexual person God created me to be. They did not, so I began to choose LGBTQ-affirming theologies of life.

Recognizing the historical failures of Catholic theology was an important first step. I read how, for example, Church teaching had once supported colonialism and slavery. So, at least on those issues, Church teaching had been wrong. I learned about popes who condemned democracy and cast aspersions on the freedom of religion. The hierarchy messed up. I read the documents of Vatican II. Theologies that we take for granted today were anathema just a couple of generations ago. I came to appreciate how the Church, embedded in history, can change. The Holy Spirit guides believers in every age and ongoing discernment allows the Church to change. Was it possible that Church teaching was wrong about LGBTQ sexuality and gen-

der?

I surrounded myself with affirming Catholic communities.

My parishes—first at St. Francis of Assisi and later at St. Paul the Apostle, both in Manhattan—showed me Jesus' love and embraced my whole person. In queer Catholic circles I saw the gifts that LGBTQ believers bring to the Church. Empathy. Creativity. Loyalty. Humor. I recognized the systematic homophobia and transphobia that had hurt me and so many others. I understood the self-loathing spiritual pathologies of Church leaders who repress their own sexualities and condemn loving same-sex relationships. In these matters, they do not represent Jesus Christ or reflect the God of Christian revelation. "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).

In New York City, I heard stories from survivors of the AIDS epidemic. Partners stayed together until the very end. There was nothing disordered about their love, which came from God. After years of searching, I finally fell in love with another man. The relationship was difficult, but good. I learned what it means to offer myself as gift to another person. I became less selfish and grew more confident into the sexual man God created me to be. Our relationship bore fruit in holiness and opened us up in service to others. Sexual intimacy with my partner reinforced and reflected God's work in my life.

Integrating my faith and sexuality has been an ongoing project. I thank God for the community that sustains me in faith. We belong to a generation that embraces our God-given sexual desire as a gift to the world and to the Church. We are not ashamed of who we are, either as LGBTQ people created in God's image or as active members in the body of faith. Our presence in the Church reflects generations of struggle, and we remain for those yet to come. God is moving in our day, and our lives are a sign of that work. ✚

Jason Steidl, a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Theology at Fordham University and a member of the ministry team for Out at St. Paul, the LGBTQ ministry of St. Paul the Apostle Church in Manhattan.



Jason Steidl