

BONDINGS

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Church “got to answer” for teaching that “empowers the homophobic bully”

By Mada Jurado
NovenaNews.com
June 30, 2020

The Church has “got to answer” for its teaching on gays that “empowers the homophobic bully,” a former Irish president has insisted.

Mary McAleese, who served two terms as Irish president between 1997 and 2011 and has since received a doctorate in canon law from Rome’s Pontifical Gregorian University, hit out at the Church’s doctrine on homosexuality in a podcast to mark last weekend’s Dublin Pride celebrations.

“The Church’s teaching on homosexuality is ignorant, it is unreconstructive in the life of science, it’s sad to say. It has never been looked at in the light of the new sciences and it’s not only a pity, it’s worse than that,” McAleese deplored.

The now-Chancellor of Trinity College Dublin took aim especially at the language in the Catechism, which among other things describes homosexual acts as “acts of grave depravity” that “do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity,” adding “under no circumstances can they be approved.”

But McAleese clapped back, arguing

“the Church describes homosexual acts as intrinsically evil. I would regard the Church’s teaching as disorderly and intrinsically evil. Why is it intrinsically evil? Because it conduces to homophobia.”

“Look at the language that is used – ‘the homosexuality is disordered.’ Who wants to believe that their God-given nature is disordered?” McAleese asked.

“That homosexual acts, how they express their love in a loving relationship, for example... that that is regarded as intrinsically evil. I don’t think so,” she added.

The former politician and canon law expert explained that the Church’s language wounds not only gay people and their families – especially gay believers seeking acceptance in Catholicism – but also provides further licence to demean and discriminate against them as well.

“That language of evil and disordered trickles down into the thinking and it empowers the homophobe, it empowers the homophobic bully. It gives him or her permission to be homophobic and I think the Church has got to answer that,” McAleese insisted.

McAleese praised “certain bishops, particularly in Germany” as well as “certain cardinals” whom she said have



Mary McAleese

been “champions” in terms of forging a more positive outreach on the part of the Church to the LGBT community, and in that sense have been “the green shoots of a future open debate” regarding Catholic doctrine and homosexuality.

However, she added that there is only one man who can really make a difference in terms of the Church’s approach to gays: Pope Francis, who moreover is dragging his feet on the issue.

“A lot of people will say ‘Oh wasn’t

it wonderful when he said who am I to judge,” McAleese observed of the pontiff’s famous 2013 remark on gays who “seek God and [have] good will,” in which he also referred to another teaching in the Catechism that homosexuals should never be marginalised but instead must be integrated into society.

“Well I was not at all impressed by that,” McAleese admitted, “I was angered by it because he does judge. He is the supreme judge of the Church. He is the legislator, he is the judge.”

“If there is something wrong with the law, the only way it can be changed in the Church is if he changes it,” McAleese pleaded with the Pope.

“He is the person who presides over the law that uses these awful phrases ‘intrinsically evil, intrinsically disordered,’ he presides over that. He cannot have it both ways but there is a long tradition in the Church of having it both ways,” she lamented.

McAleese has been involved in the gay rights movement ever since the 1970s, when she was a legal advisor for the Campaign for Homosexual Law Reform that finally succeeded in having homosexuality decriminalised in Ireland in 1993. †

“If gay couple lives with faithfulness, can’t we say relationship is blessed by God?”

By Robert Shine
Bondings 2.0
NewWaysMinistry.org/blog
April 16, 2020

Another leading German bishop has endorsed church blessings for same-gender couples, suggesting that the church needs to work to change people’s understanding that it only speaks in a condemning way when it comes to sexuality.

Bishop Georg Bätzing of Limburg made his comments in a recent interview with *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, a leading German daily newspaper. (Novena News reported about the interview in an English language news story.) Asked about the church’s future, Bätzing said it was problematic that many people “regard the Church’s moral teachings as a prohibitive morality,” and especially on questions of sexuality. “I’d like to change that,” said the bishop, “without developing a completely new teaching.”



Bishop Georg Bätzing

More specifically, Bätzing, who was recently elected head of the German Bishops’ Conference, identified church blessings for same-gender couples and married priests as two areas where such changes could take place:

“On the first question – that of the Church’s concern for homosexuals – ‘for a long time in moral theology we’ve said that, if it’s true love that lives commitment and faithfulness, we must recognise it,’ the bishop explained, stressing that ‘if people decide for themselves how they live, can’t we tell them that their relationship is blessed by God?’”

Last year, the Diocese of Limburg under the bishop’s leadership began a process to discuss such blessings. Bätzing has repeatedly encouraged the church to “bridge the gap” between church teaching and people’s lived realities. At a session of the German church’s Synodal Way process earlier this year, the bishop suggested that bridging this gap could include “widening, opening, and changing this teaching” in conversation with science. Bätzing’s words carry additional weight given he heads the Synodal Way’s working group on sexual morality.

A number of German church leaders

have spoken favorably about church blessings for same-gender couples, including the previous head of the country’s episcopal conference, Cardinal Reinhard Marx who earlier this year reversed his 2018 position against such blessings. Bishop Franz-Josef Bode of Osnabrück has affirmed such blessings at least three times, once in 2018, once in 2019, and once last year. Also offering an endorsement last year was Bishop Dieter Geerlings, auxiliary bishop emeritus for the Diocese of Münster, who reaffirmed his existing support. That country’s lay-run Central Committee of German Catholics formally endorsed such blessings last year, but had informally done so regarding same-gender blessings back in 2015.

The Catholic Church in Germany continues to be the leader in finding ways to affirm LGBTQ people and relationships. †

Italian cardinal calls for better spiritual guidance for gays, lesbians

By Claire Giangravé
ReligionNews.com
May 26, 2020

VATICAN CITY (RNS) — Now more than ever, the Catholic Church has begun to address how to minister to members of the LGBT community, especially when it comes to spiritual guidance. Following in Pope Francis’ footsteps, an Italian archbishop invited Catholics to look at gays and lesbians “as God looks at them.”

“When communities will truly begin to look at people as God looks at them, then homosexual people — and everybody else — will begin to feel, naturally, a part of the ecclesial community,” said Cardinal Matteo Maria Zuppi, the archbishop of the northern Italian town of Bologna, in the preface of a newly released book.

The book, “Church and Homosexuality: An Inquiry in Light of Pope Francis’ Magisterium,” was written by Luciano Moia, the chief editor at the monthly magazine on family published by the Italian Bishops’ Conference. The book is hitting the shelves this week in Italy.

The Catholic Church considers gay

and lesbian relationships as “intrinsically disordered” and does not recognize marriage between two people of the same sex. But starting with his famous quote “Who am I to judge?” in 2013, Pope Francis has promoted a more inclusive stance toward homosexuality in the Catholic Church. In his 2016 document on the family, “Amoris Laetitia” (the Joy of Love), Francis called for the need to come alongside members of the LGBT community, a position he has reiterated several times since.

In the preface of his book, Moia interviews the archbishop on how to best put in practice Pope Francis’ appeals to offer spiritual guidance and welcome members of the LGBT community.

“The Pope, and the Church with him, isn’t interested in leading people to follow external rules,” Zuppi said. “His interest is in helping people do the will of God; meaning to enter a personal relationship with God and hear from him the appropriate Word for each life.”

Catholic communities, he said, often fail in listening to the needs of people from different walks of life. He voiced the need to not define a person based on a single characteristic.

“We mustn’t relativize the law,” he said, “but make it relevant to the concrete person, with their own peculiarities.”

When asked about creating spiritual guidance programs tailored specifically to members of the LGBT community, Zuppi said it’s more important to have a “specific outlook on people,” regardless of their characteristics.

“As Christians we must look at the person as a child of God, meaning with the full right to receive, feel and experience the love of God just as any other child of God,” he said.

Regardless of the Catholic Church’s position on homosexuality, Zuppi specified that the doctrine distinguishes between sexual orientation and homosexual acts.

“What we cannot ‘welcome’ is the sin expressed in an act,” he said. “Sexual orientation – which nobody ‘chooses’ – isn’t necessarily an act. Also, it’s not separable from the identity of the person; by welcoming a person we cannot overlook their (sexual) orientation.”

Finally, the archbishop warned that even if an individual leads a lifestyle that is not approved of by the Catholic



Cardinal Matteo Zuppi
(Francis DeBernardo Photograph)

Church, this cannot mean that the person is not to be welcomed. At least, Jesus didn’t think so.

“If Jesus had this criterion, he would have required the conversion of Zacchaeus,” Zuppi said, referring to the sinner and tax collector in the Gospel of Luke. “Before accompanying the Samaritan to the adoration of God in Spirit and Truth, he would have asked her to regularize her marital situation. ... Did Jesus act this way?” †

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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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What I Wish I Could Tell My Students

By Anonymus

Bondings 2.0

NewWaysMinistry.org/blog

April 27, 2020

Last year, I sat as a queer campus minister in a breakout session at a conference for LGBTQ students from Catholic universities, and I marveled at the strength, courage, and grace these students display in their daily lives. One student posed a question along these lines: "Where are all the queer campus ministers? Why aren't they standing up to administration when queer students are targeted or excluded?"

I shrunk into my chair, fidgeting. My knee began bouncing up and down involuntarily as it always does when I'm anxious. I looked around the room at my colleagues from other schools—some of whom I knew to be allies, others I knew to be "family." The room sat quietly for a minute, as shame and indignation simultaneously washed over me—and very likely many of my colleagues.

The awkward silence was broken by a brave participant who invited the workshop members to think more justly about the situation. The reality is that queer campus ministers are often themselves targeted, excluded, and marginalized. We often walk on eggshells, carefully calculating with whom we can be honest, what we say in public, and how we interact with students—especially LGBTQ students.

Students at the conference assumed that because they attend schools where justice and inclusion are central to the educational mission, that campus ministers should be free to live their lives openly and courageously. My colleague explained that because of our roles in direct ministry in Catholic institutions, that is not the case. While we wholeheartedly support LGBTQ students' struggle for full inclusion, safe space, and affirmation of their identity, full-throated support would call attention to us, leaving us exposed and vulnerable to the power brokers at universities: donors, some clergy, bishops, and even external community members who feel it is their duty to police Catholic spaces. And these figures often do not want us in active ministry.

I have replayed that conference interaction—both the student's disappointment and my colleague's careful, raw response—as I read about LGBTQ employees losing their jobs at Catholic schools, including a campus minister forced to resign from a Jesuit university. I experience that internal struggle between wanting to stand up and scream my support for my queer colleagues and students, on the one hand, and sinking into my chair, wishing to toe the line and blend in with my straight colleagues, on the other.

That internal grappling has brought to the surface a few things I wish I could tell my students.

To my LGBTQ students who are courageous enough to live openly and honestly about their identities and who participate in Campus Ministry activities, I see you, I support you, and I very truly love you. To those of you who have found your place in the world and on campus, your courage and your hunger for justice inspire me. When I think back to my college days and remember the scared, closeted, angry person I was, I am amazed at the grace with which you all move through life. Every one of you offers a beautiful light to this campus, and even in the darker moments living in the shadows here, I, too, carry that light. You are my hope for a future in which the Church lives up to its mission as the Body of Christ by welcoming, accepting, loving, and offering the fullness of life to every person.

To those LGBTQ students who are skeptical of Campus Ministry, I see you, too. I love you, too. And, truly, I get it. Though our offices proudly display "safe space" decals, talk and symbols are cheap. That decal does

not erase the Church's history of oppression of our community. Please know that no one in Campus Ministry would be anything but affirming and supportive of you. Our primary responsibility as employees of the university is to support you, and we are happy to fulfill that duty. I promise to continue to hold myself and my colleagues accountable to the hurt and exclusion perpetuated in the past, and work ever harder to ensure all are welcome in our physical and spiritual space.

To those who are not ready to come out (like I was in college), or who can only come out to the safest of people, know that there are allies all around our Catholic campus. Queer faculty and staff inhabit many academic and administrative departments, and they are ready to be mentors and role models. And there are allies, too. In my own journey, finding a straight professor and a straight campus minister who were allies were a huge part of my coming out process. Even though queer campus ministers aren't able to advertise our mentorship, we are here to support you the best we can.

To the LGBTQ students who, like the student at the conference, are disappointed by my silence, I hear you, too. Please know how much it truly pains me to have to keep myself quiet and go back into the closet to stay employed. But also know that as part of living my vocation, I am trying to shift the paradigm and to challenge the system in subtle ways. And please know that my fear about being out at work is not imagined or delusional. Even as closeted as I am at work, I have been called homophobic

slurs by students, coworkers, and supervisors. I have been targeted and even threatened by supervisors and administrators because of my sexuality. At the same time, I have been excluded from queer spaces and shamed by LGBTQ coworkers for not being out. Living as a queer Catholic Campus Minister, but not being fully accepted in either space, is not easy.

Finally, to the students who out of fear, ignorance, upbringing, or outside pressure do not believe I belong in ministry or that your LGBTQ peers do not belong in the Church: Please know that my life is not a difference of opinion or theological ambiguity. I belong here. We belong here. I invite you to listen to LGBTQ Catholics to hear how they feel, what they've experienced, how they have felt the same unconditional love of God in their lives that you have felt, and how hurtful homophobic rhetoric in the Church can feel. Know that the lives of LGBTQ people everywhere, including those in the Church, are not a thought experiment for you to theorize about or debate. Christ's commandment to love one another as you love yourself is neither a theory nor open to interpretation. Love your LGBTQ brothers and sisters as you love yourself. If you need to learn how to love yourself first, we in Campus Ministry are here to love and support you through that journey. And yes, just as I have learned to love myself, I love you, too.

In ministry, I have had the gift of getting to know countless young Catholics (and people of many beliefs) who take their faith seriously. These young people have displayed sincere understanding of our Catholic fundamentals: to love unconditionally as Jesus loved, to show preference to the poor and marginalized as God does, and to courageously follow their consciences in pursuit of this mission as our ancestors have done. Most of the students I have met recognize that discrimination LGBTQ Catholics face is unjust, and they do not stand for it. Their allyship, combined with the fearlessness of LGBTQ Catholics who refuse to be excluded from their spiritual home, will mean a different future for the Church—one in which *all* are welcome. Until that time, I will continue to share the same message to all students I have shared throughout my career: God loves you and so do I. ✦



Are You Ready to Take the Next Steps?

Do you want to help your parish become more welcoming of LGBTQ people and don't know where to begin?

Has your parish already begun to welcome LGBTQ people but it's now time to develop that welcome in new ways?

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Next Steps: Developing Catholic LGBTQ Parish Ministry**

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New Austrian Bishops' head open to rethink doctrine on homosexuality

He also commissioned newly published book on gay blessings

By Cameron Doody
NovenaNews.com
June 17, 2020

Archbishop of Salzburg Franz Lackner, elected June 16 as the new President of the Austrian Bishops' Conference in a plenary assembly in Mariazell, said in a 2014 interview on the occasion of moving to his current archdiocese that "celibacy is not the ideal type of sexuality."

Franciscan Lackner, 64 next month, was asked specifically in that interview whether the Church should be more open to women and gays and finally "enter into the 21st century."

Archbishop Lackner replied that "we already are [open]. Pope Francis has already said a great deal on these subjects."

On the question of the Church's relationship to gays specifically, Lackner said: "I have friends who are homosexual. We do not discriminate against anyone. We're not allowed to do that. If that happened, we would have to apologise and change that. But you have to allow a community of faith to say that the ideal type of lived sexuality is not homosexuality. The ideal type is also not celibate life. Pope Francis said well: 'Who am I to judge?' I don't judge."



Archbishop Franz Lackner

Given that doctrine sees homosexuality as an "inclination" that is "objectively disordered" – as the Catechism puts it – the Church calls homosexuals to live lives of strict chastity.

Regarding the Church's relationship to women – and specifically whether the Church should admit women to the

priesthood – Lackner defended the traditional veto on female priests but said that the 'no' to their ordination was actually an advantage to them.

"I as a priest should not preach what I believe, but the teaching of the Church," the archbishop explained, adding: "I must never strike out on my own like a layman. Or like pastoral care workers who get close to people. Sacramental service is a distant service. Women are close to life. Spiritual accompaniment is something that laypeople can do better."

Even if Lackner is a defender of the Church's 'no' to women's ordination on the basis of a supposed tradition against it, he did admit in 2017 that "if Jesus came into the world today, I would say to him, 'Take the women to the priesthood.' But there is also an injustice on the other side: celibacy. So a priest must live without woman."

The precise details of Lackner's thought on priestly celibacy and women in the Church apart, where the Salzburg archbishop appears more determined to innovate is in the field of official Church blessings for gay couples.

Austrian priest theologian Ewald Volgger presented last month a new co-authored volume entitled *The Benediction of Same-Sex Partnerships* which

argues that the Church should "recognise" the "sacramental character" of gay love.

"By blessing homosexual relationships," the Church would "show an appreciation for this relationship," and would "symbolically express the love of God for man," was how Volgger summed up the content of the volume.

When asked the reason why he and theologian colleagues had written the book, Volgger replied: "Because the Austrian liturgical commission, chaired by Archbishop Lackner of Salzburg, asked us to deal with this question."

Before he was appointed to Salzburg in 2013, Lackner was auxiliary bishop of the diocese of Graz-Seckau from 2002.

In his younger years he began training as an electrician, before abandoning that trade to become a UN peacekeeper in Cyprus in 1978 and 1979, where he found his vocation and later ended up joining the Franciscans in 1984.

Lackner – who has also been professor of Metaphysics at the Cistercian Philosophical-Theological University at Heiligenkreuz – succeeds as Austrian Bishops' President Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, the Archbishop of Vienna, who has served in the role for the past 22 years. Lackner's new deputy is Manfred Scheuer, the Bishop of Linz. †

Discrimination and Degradation Are Parts of SCOTUS Decision on "Ministers"

By Lisa Fullam
Bondings 2.0
NewWaysMinistry.org/blog
July 14, 2020

The Supreme Court decision in the two recent religious employment discrimination cases (*Our Lady of Guadalupe School v. Morrissey-Berru* and *St. James School v. Biel*) sides with those who would fire their employees for reasons of illness, disability, age, sexual orientation or identity, or, conceivably, any of the other protections provided to workers by civil law. It was just last month that the Court decided that LGBTQ Americans are due civil rights protection under Title VII, and almost immediately the reach of that case was limited by the "ministerial exception" in these cases. This broad decision, allowing religious institutions enormous latitude in deciding who counts as a minister, lets institutions to duck civil rights laws in the name of religious freedom.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' amicus brief supporting the schools is grounded in religious liberty, but is developed into a ringing endorsement of the role of laypeople as ministers in the Church:

"The Church [sic] has emphasized that the laity must not be viewed as mere 'collaborators' with the clergy, but as people who are really 'co-responsible' for the Church's being and acting." (Message of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI on the Occasion of the Sixth Ordinary Assembly of the International Forum of Catholic Action (Aug. 10, 2012).) The Church exhorts the laity to 'share the pastoral decisions of the dioceses and parishes, ... creating ... communion with priests for a lively ministerial and missionary community.' (Ibid.)"

You'd think this affirmation would be good news. Lay people in ministry have long been calling for greater recognition of their work in and for the Church as ministry. As of 2015, the number of lay ecclesial ministers in parish ministry (which is steadily growing) exceeded the number of priests (which is shrinking), for the first time. In Catholic schools, the role of laity as teachers is striking: as of 2016, there are 146,367 professional staff teaching in Catholic schools; only 2.6% are religious or clergy (only 0.6% are clergy). Welcoming lay people into true co-responsibility in the works of the Church should work to dissolve the stark boundary between the ordained and non-ordained that fosters toxic clericalism.

But that's not why these cases were

litigated. One of the plaintiffs in this decision was fired after her diagnosis of breast cancer was revealed; the other worker was fired after many years of employment in the school, and she claimed age discrimination as the basis for her termination. The ministerial exception allows Catholic institutions to treat its employees in ways that civil society has deemed immoral and illegal.

Let me be clear—it is reasonable for churches to establish criteria for those who minister in their names. Neither of the two teachers named had any of the advanced theological training regarded as essential by seminaries since the Counter-Reformation. Since both were women, they would have been shooed away from most seminaries if they claimed a call to priesthood. They were not ministers in the sense that they were authorized religious authorities in the Catholic Church.

Indeed, many teachers in Catholic schools are non-Catholic or non-Christian. In these cases, neither of the teachers was commissioned in any way beyond being hired to teach. The vast majority of their work was teaching secular subjects, not religion. (Neither of the schools in this case requires even its religion teachers to be Catholic, for that matter.) As Justice Sonia Sotomayor put it in her dissent:

"Even if the teachers were not Catholic, and even if they were forbidden to participate in the church's sacramental worship, they would nonetheless be



Justice Sonia Sotomayor

'ministers' of the Catholic faith simply because of their supervisory role over students in a religious school. That stretches the law and logic past their breaking points." Further, to call people "ministers" who have no meaningful theological training or any explicit authorization—or even a necessary connection to the Church at all—degrades the notion of the term at a time when lay ministry is in sore need of greater magisterial appreciation, and is increasingly the face of ministry in the Church.

It is also true that teachers of all subjects are important bearers of a Catholic institution's charism. The question of what counts as Catholic identity is a

(Continued on page 6)

New Ways Ministry Affirms That Black Lives Matter

In response to the recent national and global responses to racial injustice, the New Ways Ministry staff and board reflected on organizational engagement with anti-racist work and with the movement for Black lives.

New Ways Ministry has released the following statement as one step in a long journey.

The killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks and many other Black people this spring are tragic and unjust. New Ways Ministry affirms that Black Lives Matter, and we call on all of our supporters and friends to do the same. Our Catholic mission of working for justice for LGBTQ people calls us to speak out for all LGBTQ people, and to seek liberation for every oppressed person. We cannot be satisfied with eradicating injustice towards LGBTQ people while racial injustice thrives and spreads unchecked. As Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., said: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

As Catholics, we are called by our faith to be actively anti-racist in support of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities. We are particularly concerned with the lives of transgender People of Color whose lives and well-being are constantly and disproportionately endangered by racism, white privilege, and transphobia.

We recognize, too, that it was queer Black women who propelled Black Lives Matter into our consciousness as a nation, just as it was BIPOC transgender women who initiated the LGBTQ liberation movement at Stonewall in 1969.

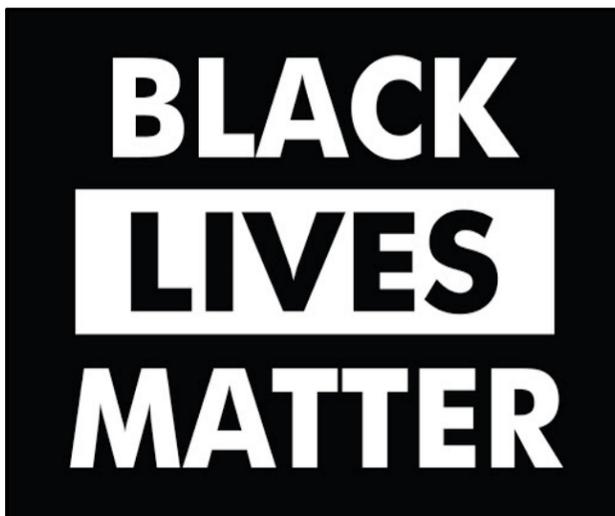
The recent killings have energized the Black Lives Matter movement because the lives of Black people killed this spring are but the latest in a long

line of Black deaths, often at the hands of police officers, which white people shamefully too often ignored. The recent deaths and the protests that have arisen in their wake are calling our nation to a reckoning, long overdue. While the individuals who kill Black people are responsible for their deaths, all white people must take responsibility, too. One of the first things white people must do is listen to the stories and experience of their Black neighbors. The culture of white supremacy and racist systems in the United States and elsewhere are not autonomous forces, but ones which are sustained by the decisions, actions, and lifestyles of white people, who are the beneficiaries of these unequal systems of power because of white privilege.

Neither in its origins in a slaveholding society or in its current actions is our Catholic Church innocent. Rather, we as Catholics are called to address how the very institutions and structures that we hold dear as Catholics participate in injustice, and to allow BIPOC Catholics' experiences lead us toward lament, repentance, and conversion."

Racism and white privilege have made Black lives expendable for centuries. This needs to end. In this historical moment, we declare unequivocally that Black Lives Matter. We at New Ways Ministry commit to examining our lives, listening intently to BIPOC voices as our guides, repenting of our complicity, and working towards Black liberation as an integral aspect of our work for LGBTQ equality. †

—New Ways Ministry Board and Staff, July 2, 2020



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LGBTQ-friendly Catholic Parishes & Communities

Below is a list of known LGBTQ-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 LGBTQ Catholics, please let us know. Tell us if this welcome is because of a support program, spirituality group, mission statement, participation in LGBTQ community events, or involvement with parents. For links to many of these parishes' websites, go to www.NewWaysMinistry.org/resources/parishes.

To recommend a community for the list, please email info@newwaysministry.org or call 301-277-5674. Parishes are listed first and intentional Eucharistic communities follow. If you learn that any of the places on this list are no longer LGBTQ-friendly, please inform us of that, too.

PARISHES

Alabama

Decatur: Annunciation of the Lord
Montgomery: St. Bede

Arizona

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

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. Anthony Claret, St. Paul Newman Center
Goleta: St. Mark Univ. Parish
Hawthorne: St. Joseph (Spanish)
Hayward: All Saints
Huntington Beach: Sts. Simon and Jude
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
Orangevale: Divine Savior
Palm Springs: St. Theresa, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Solitude
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
Woodland Hills: St. Mel

Colorado

Arvada: Spirit of Christ
Avon: St. Edward
Colorado Springs: Sacred Heart,

Our Lady of the Pines
Denver: St. Dominic, Christ the King, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, St. Ignatius Loyola
Lafayette: Immaculate Conception
Lakewood: St. Bernadette
Littleton: Light of the World, St. Frances Cabrini

Connecticut

Guilford: St. George's
Hartford: St. Patrick-St. Anthony
New Haven: St. Thomas More Chapel

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
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
Franklin: St. Rose of Lima
Indianapolis: St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Gabriel the Archangel, St. Pius X

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, Our Lady of Lourdes

Louisiana

New Orleans: St. Augustine

Maine

Portland: Sacred Heart-St. Dominic, Our Lady of Hope
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
Brimfield: St. Christopher
Buzzard's Bay: St. Margaret's/St. Mary's
East Longmeadow: St. Michael
Littleton: St. Anne-St. Catherine
Medford: Catholic Community at Tufts University
Monson: St. Patrick
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, Ss. Peter and Paul
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

Missouri

Kansas City: Guardian Angels, Holy Family, St. James, St. Francis Xavier
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, St. John Parish (Creighton University)

Nevada

Las Vegas: Christ the King, Guardian Angel Cathedral

New Hampshire

Merrimack: St. John Neumann
Pelham: St. Patrick

New Jersey

Cherry Hill: Christ Our Light
Clifton: St. Philip the Apostle
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
River Edge: St. Peter the Apostle
South Plainfield: Sacred Heart
Tinton Falls: St. Anselm
Turnersville: Sts. Peter and Paul

New Mexico

Albuquerque: Holy Family, San Felipe de Neri
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
Centerville: St. Leonard
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

Oklahoma

Tulsa: St. Jerome

Oregon

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

Pennsylvania

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

Rhode Island

Providence: St. Raymond
Warwick: Sts. Rose & Clement
Wickford: St. Bernard

(Continued on page 5)



LGBTQ-friendly Catholic Parishes & Communities (continued)

(Continued from page 4)

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 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, 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, Our Lady of Lourdes
Wauwatosa: St. Pius X

Outside the U.S.

Canada

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

England

Bristol: St. Nicholas of Tolentino
London: Church of the Immaculate

Conception (Farm Street Church, Mayfair)
York: Bar Convent (Middlesborough Diocese LGBT+ Ministry)

Northern Ireland

Belfast: Clonard Monastery Parish

South Africa

Johannesburg: Holy Trinity

INTENTIONAL EUCHARISTIC COMMUNITIES

Arizona

Scottsdale: Franciscan Renewal Center

California

Bermuda Dunes: St. Clare of Assisi
Pleasanton: Catholic Community of Pleasanton
San Diego: Mary Magdalene Catholic Community
San Francisco: Dignity/San Francisco

District of Columbia

Communitas, Dignity/Washington

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 Spirituality Center

Kalamazoo: Lambda Catholic

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
McLean: PAX Community

Washington

Lacey: Holy Wisdom Inclusive Catholic Community

Wisconsin

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

Outside the U.S.

Ireland

Dublin: Orlagh in the City

Korea

Seoul: Alpha Omega Community

LGBTQ-friendly Catholic Colleges and Universities

Below is a list of known LGBTQ-friendly Catholic colleges and universities, that is, those Catholic institutions that have some type of LGBTQ student group, support group, ally group, program, or policy. If you are aware of such a college that is known as welcoming to LGBTQ people, please contact New Ways Ministry. Phone: 301-277-5674; Email: info@newwaysministry.org.



Alabama <i>Mobile:</i> Spring Hill College	St. Mary's College, Univ. of Notre Dame	St. Louis University	<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 University <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
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>Ranchos 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	Iowa <i>Davenport:</i> St. Ambrose University <i>Dubuque:</i> Loras College, Clarke University	Montana <i>Helena:</i> Carroll College	Rhode Island <i>Newport:</i> Salve Regina University <i>Providence:</i> Providence College
Colorado <i>Denver:</i> Regis University	Kentucky <i>Louisville:</i> Spalding University, Bellarmine University	Nebraska <i>Omaha:</i> Creighton University	Texas <i>Austin:</i> Saint Edward's University <i>San Antonio:</i> University of the Incarnate Word, Our Lady of the Lake University, St. Mary's University
Connecticut <i>Fairfield:</i> Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University <i>New Haven:</i> Albertus Magnus College <i>West Hartford:</i> Saint Joseph College	Louisiana <i>New Orleans:</i> Loyola University	New Hampshire <i>Manchester:</i> St. Anselm College <i>Nashua:</i> Rivier College	Vermont <i>Colchester:</i> Saint Michael's College
District of Columbia Georgetown University, Trinity University	Maryland <i>Baltimore:</i> Notre Dame of Maryland University, Loyola University of Maryland	New Jersey <i>Caldwell:</i> Caldwell College <i>Jersey City:</i> St. Peter's College <i>Newark:</i> Seton Hall School of Law	Washington <i>Lacey:</i> St. Martin's University <i>Seattle:</i> Seattle University <i>Spokane:</i> Gonzaga University
Florida <i>Miami Gardens:</i> St. Thomas University <i>Miami Shores:</i> Barry University	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	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	West Virginia <i>Wheeling:</i> Wheeling Jesuit University
Hawaii <i>Honolulu:</i> Chaminade University	Michigan <i>Detroit:</i> University of Detroit Mercy, Marygrove College <i>Grand Rapids:</i> Aquinas College	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	Wisconsin <i>De Pere:</i> St. Norbert College <i>Madison:</i> Edgewood College <i>Milwaukee:</i> Alverno College, Cardinal Stritch University, Marquette University
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	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	Oregon <i>Marylhurst:</i> Marylhurst University <i>Portland:</i> University of Portland	Outside the U.S.
Indiana <i>Hammond:</i> Calumet College <i>Notre Dame:</i> Holy Cross College,	Missouri <i>Kansas City:</i> Avila University, Rockhurst University <i>St. Louis:</i> Fontbonne University, Maryville University,	Pennsylvania <i>Cresson:</i> Mount Aloysius College	Canada <i>Toronto:</i> Regis College

Priest's public letter supports Dignity Detroit in wake of bishop's ban

By Peter Feuerherd
National Catholic Reporter
March 26, 2020

Even as no one in the Detroit Archdiocese is attending public Mass because of the coronavirus crisis, church officials there have announced that members of Dignity, a support group for LGBT Catholics, will no longer celebrate Catholic liturgy together, even when the health crisis fades.

But that mandate will have to contend with the plans of Fr. Victor Clore, pastor of Christ the King Church in Detroit, who said in a public letter that he will continue to offer Mass for the group when the opportunity arises.

Clore, a priest for 54 years, said that denying access to Dignity is akin to Catholic parishes in the 1960s who denied admission to African Americans, a time when he protested exclusion.

In a letter mailed March 19 to archdiocesan priests and deacons, Clore defended Dignity's ministry and called upon church leaders to extend their welcome to all.

"It naturally occurs, in all cultures, that a small but significant number of human persons have same-sex attraction. It is not a disease or a freak of nature. Same-sex love is their natural way for intimate sexual embrace," Clore wrote.

"Some love involves genital sexual expression; other loving experiences do not — friendship, professional care such as nursing, teaching, ministry, etc. Nevertheless, we are sexual persons; our sexuality is a part of our identity, and sexual overtones are a dynamic in every relationship," he wrote.

Clore, a teacher of spiritual direction, cautioned church leaders "to be aware of emotional and erotic impulses to avoid getting entangled in imprudent, unethical, even illegal liaisons. Moreover, if we repress our sexuality, trying to be *asexual*, we risk breaching sexual boundaries, as happened in many sex-abuse cases."

Dignity has been a Detroit fixture for more than four decades. It currently meets at the campus chapel of Marygrove College, formerly operated by the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Frank D'Amore, director of Dignity Detroit, said that the group has gathered for Mass at Marygrove for more than two decades and, before that, at a parish church in Detroit. He said that despite the archdiocesan mandate, the group will continue.

"We're not having liturgy because of the virus. But we are alive and well," he told NCR.

He said Dignity Detroit will continue to meet once the health crisis allows meetings, and the group will accept offers from priests, including Clore, to celebrate Mass. Dignity Detroit has 66 members, with a little more than half of those attending the Sunday Mass.

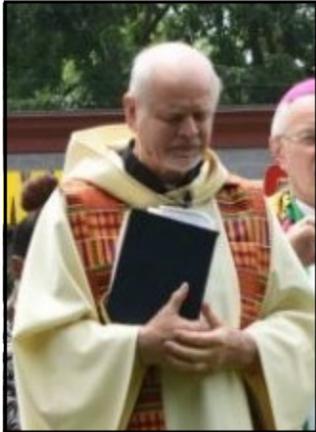
The Detroit case is similar to other examples around the country where Dignity has been pushed out of church facilities, said Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of the national Dignity office.

"There are few experiences as devastating as being kicked out of your family home and being told you are not worthy of being fed," said Duddy-Burke. "That is what has happened to Dignity members all across the country. Yet we have persisted in sustaining communities that are graciously hosted by other denominations and have found ways to continue to celebrate the sacraments of our church. We will do that in Detroit, if necessary, and will not allow church leaders to deny LGBTQ Catholics our human right to our faith."

Church leaders need a more expansive view of human sexuality, said Clore. "My main point is that human nature is different in nature than animals copulating," he told NCR. "It's all about how humans love each other." But the archdiocese maintains that Dignity, open to all LGBTQ Catholics, including those who do not accept church teaching that they abstain from sexual activity, needs to be called out on its lack of adherence to church teaching. Auxiliary Bishop

Gerard Battersby, in a March 9 letter to priests and deacons in the archdiocese, urged them not to offer Mass for Dignity but to support Courage, a group for gay Catholics that promotes chastity. The archdiocese is led by Archbishop Allen Vigneron.

"As we endeavor to provide a culture of empathy and understanding throughout the Archdiocese according to the light of the Gospel, it is essential that the Church not seem to condone Dignity Detroit's competing vision for growth in holiness. While elements of that vision, such as Dignity Detroit's outreach to the poor, are commendable, the organization's rejection of the Church's teaching on chastity is incompatible with the path of sanctification on which Christ bids his Church to travel and is at odds with the important work of the Courage and Encourage apostolates," Battersby wrote.



Father Victor Clore

Discrimination/Degradation: 'Ministers'

(Continued from page 3)

fiercely contended one in Catholic school circles: some hew closely to enforcing ecclesial rules and regulations, while others emphasize social justice and an inclusive vision of care for all students. But these cases weren't about Catholic identity in any usual sense since illness and age, the alleged forms of discrimination, have nothing to do with issues of faith and morals.

These cases were brought in part to set in judicial stone aspects of religious employers' powers over their employees. What is sad is the side the Catholic leadership backed in these cases. The grand tradition of a preferential option for the poor, of turning a special eye to the needs of the less powerful which is manifested over and over in Catholic Social Teaching, was negated in these cases.

It's not the first time, of course—the Catholic hierarchy's collusions with the powerful in large matters and small across history are too numerous to count—and cozying up to power usually winds up costing the Catholic Church

credibility as a force for social justice in the world.

So in siding with the schools, the Court sided with the powerful against the sick, the elderly, or any of the other categories of people a Catholic school might call "ministers" in order to be able to discard them. And as we know too well at New Ways Ministry, one of the battles in Catholic schools involves teachers' contracts that specifically call teachers "ministers" in order to be able to fire them if they are found to be LGBTQ (especially if they marry) or LGBTQ allies.

So, while LGBTQ people have been regarded as due the basic Title VII protection from capricious employment discrimination, this more recent decision emphasizes that LGBTQ teachers are not protected in Catholic institutions that cynically call them "ministers." 1

Lisa Fullam teaches moral theology at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University, California.

Battersby's letter came after Courage representatives spoke to archdiocesan clergy and others at Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit. He wrote that Courage represents church teaching, while Dignity is opposed to calling LGBT people to chaste lifestyles. The move to expel Dignity and welcome Courage, he said, is part of the archdiocese's wider emphasis on evangelization.

"We seek to leave no one behind in our missionary transformation and to help everyone entrusted to our care find salvation," wrote Battersby.

In a statement to NCR, Clore in part reassured the archbishop. "He doesn't have to worry about me preaching heresy

from the pulpit," he said.

"I don't see a need to preach about sex from the pulpit," he noted, emphasizing that he focuses on the Sunday readings.

He described the effort to expel Dignity from the archdiocese as part of a "witchhunt."

In his letter to his fellow priests and deacons, Clore suggested that the archbishop order clergy in the archdiocese to be welcoming to all, and not be suspicious of gay people who come to the church.

"If every parish is doing that there would be no need for Dignity to meet," he told NCR. ✦

We can (and should) do better by our Catholic LGBT school teachers

By Luke Janicki
America
June 23, 3030

As a gay Catholic teacher, I have spent much of my life in a precarious balance. Growing up in a Catholic family, going to Catholic schools, I know what it is like to balance my deep-seated values as a practicing Catholic with the dictates of being a discerning gay person in potentially averse environments. And now the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that LGBT workers are protected by laws against sexual discrimination, throwing the stance of U.S. bishops against the legal protection of LGBT workers at religious institutions into sharper relief.

According to New Ways Ministry, more than 100 educators in Catholic schools across the country have been removed since 2007 due to knowledge of their same-sex relationships. In February, two of my faculty colleagues at Kennedy Catholic High School in Burien, Wash., were asked to resign after their same-sex partnerships were brought to the attention of our administration.

These dismissals are traumatizing for a school community regardless of whether one believes they are necessary. For the staff, it is a painful moment of realizing too late that catechesis is what we had been hoping for all along. Students receive a blunt lesson in what God's justice looks like when no mercy accompanies it. . . .

Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Seattle responded to the resignations of my colleagues with a public statement in which he said, "Pastors and church leaders need to be clear about the church's teaching, while at the same time refraining from making judgments, taking into consideration the complexity of people's lived situations." Archbishop Etienne also listened to our staff during a pastoral visit in February and wrote us a sincere letter committing to assembling a task force "to look at how we apply universal church teaching locally" and to "examine how we remain faithful to our mission in a dramatically changing world." An outside facilitator has already been selected. Talks will begin in the fall.

Employees at Catholic schools nationwide are required to sign a morality clause, often known as a ministerial covenant. It briefly states that we will adhere to church teaching and morality, though its implementation and enforcement are generally left unexplained. The covenant will take center stage in the work of the Seattle task force. The three charges that guide the mission of the task force are: (1) to study and discuss church teaching and tradition as it relates to sexuality and moral development; (2) to analyze the opinions of archdiocesan stakeholders (including students, families, alumni and the staff of archdiocesan schools) regarding the ministerial covenant; and (3) to

recommend to the archbishop an informed approach to the ministerial covenant that respects the first two goals.

You can imagine the questions. Some Catholics wonder why being openly LGBT is the predilect offense to the covenant when other practices the church declares morally objectionable, such as using contraceptives, being divorced or missing Mass on Sunday, do not provoke the same scrutiny. Non-Catholics on staff wonder how the covenant even legally applies to them. (The covenant may also seem odd to the roughly 17 percent of Catholic school students nationwide who come from non-Catholic families.) Private battles of conscience brim to the surface for staffers who know that a punishment leveled at LGBT colleagues could just as easily have been applied to themselves. . . .

My greatest hope for the task force is that its members recognize that this is bigger than employee contracts. This is about vocations. This is about deciding who gets to be what. . . .

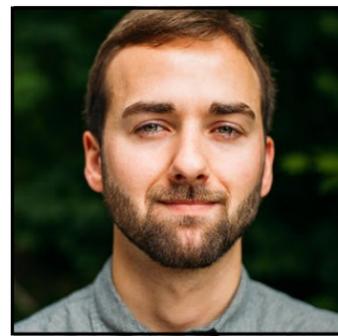
Some may still say there is no such thing as a "gay Catholic," that the phrase is incongruous. To that, I cite Article 6 of the Catechism, Paragraph 2332, which I have had bookmarked since I was a kid. It states that "sexuality affects all aspects of the human person in the unity of his body and soul. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to love and to procreate, and in a more general way the aptitude for forming bonds in communion with others." In short, my sexuality is entirely integrated with my personality,

my whole self. It cannot be isolated, removed and examined as though it were a dispensable part. In his response letter to our school community after the pastoral session, Archbishop Etienne wrote that "hearing first-hand the hurt, frustration and confusion was both helpful and challenging." I have been holding him to that challenge and I will continue to do so—even though I am losing count of how many

times I have gotten my hopes up over language such as this only to be let down. That's okay.

In the Archdiocese of Seattle, we will begin dialogue in the fall to help make our Catholic schools charitable workplaces and engaged learning environments. I urge you to join us by asking your bishops to do the same.

First, let us pause the practice of removing gay faculty to initiate a search for understanding. The next steps will become clear, and possibilities include: coordinating task force recommendations nationally; asking the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to recognize the harm of the recurring LGBT faculty removal decisions; unifying schools by standardizing the catechetical certifications and morality clause disparities that systemically divide them; and seeking to address exclusionary language in the church that enables any current injustice or breakdown in God's work. ✦



Luke Janicki

What the church is doing to welcome Latino LGBT Catholics

By J.D. Long-García

America

June 12, 2020

[Excerpts from an article which can be found at www.americamagazine.org/faith/2020/06/12/what-church-doing-welcome-latino-lgbt-catholics]

A young woman waited at the back of the parish hall after a Spanish-language presentation at St. Clare's Church in Santa Clarita, Calif. Javier and Martha Plascencia had just finished their talk about the need for families to be welcoming toward gay and lesbian Catholics.

The woman paced a little and seemed reluctant to come forward, Mr. Plascencia recalls. The couple were packing up their materials when she finally approached them.

"I wish you would have come here two weeks ago," she said. "Maybe then my friend wouldn't have killed herself."

That woman's friend is one reason Catholic groups in cities like Los Angeles, San Antonio and New York are trying to overcome stigmas surrounding homosexuality within the Latin American community. While the acceptance of LGBT individuals among both Latinos and the general U.S. population has grown significantly over the last 10 years, according to the Pew Research Center, other studies suggest that young Latinos face additional stressors coming from both ethnic and sexual identities.

For example, Latinos may be especially uncomfortable with the prospect of becoming estranged from their families as a result of coming out. There also may be differences among families from different Latin American countries and cultures. Catholic ministries across the country are trying to help Latino LGBT Catholics and their families understand each other by working at this intersection of faith, culture and sexuality.

Latinos in the United States—most of whom were born here—made up nearly 18 percent of the country's population in 2015, according to the Pew Research Center. Though growth has slowed in recent years, Latinos continue to be the largest ethnic minority in the United States, and about half of the community is Catholic. Among Latino Catholics, 70 percent supported nondiscrimination

protections for LGBT people, and 65 percent favored the legalization of same-sex marriage, according to a 2018 poll by the Public Religion Research Institute. But there remained a generation gap, with 77 percent of Latino Catholics between 18 and 29 supporting the legalization of same-sex marriage but only 42 percent of those over 65.

The Plascencias were instrumental in establishing the Always Our Children outreach program in the Los Angeles Archdiocese, an initiative that took its name from the U.S. bishops' 1997 let-



Martha and Javier Plascencia

ter to "parents of homosexual children."

In 2011, the couple started traveling to a few parishes a month to give talks in both English and Spanish.

"We were able to bring a message of love and acceptance to people with different sexual orientations—and to their parents," Mr. Plascencia says. "There's no doubt in my mind that this ministry has saved lives. By going around like itinerant messengers, this ministry has brought people together."

Their son, Xavier, came out to them 15 years ago, when he was 29. Mr. and Ms. Plascencia say they were very accepting.

"I told him, 'You are my flesh and blood and I carried you. How could I not accept you?'" Ms. Plascencia recalls, with tears. Both parents regret that their son did not come out earlier.

Mr. and Ms. Plascencia also used to host support groups in their living room, finding that many people felt more comfortable there than in church. Mr. Plascencia explained that people are often afraid or ashamed to be seen going into a

room at church designated for a meeting for LGBT Catholics. But all sorts of people would come to their home—nuns, priests and parents as well as gay and lesbian Catholics. For a while, they were apparently the only Spanish-language LGBT support group in the archdiocese.

"Our social reality has changed, and it requires the church to respond in a way that is responsible and welcoming of the individual," says Eddie De León, a Claretian priest who is chair of the department of spirituality and pastoral ministry at Chicago Theological Union.

"What I find is there is often confusion, hurt, lack of understanding," Father De León says. "All of us are children of God, and this is a sanctity of life issue. The bottom line is to offer hospitality and invite them in. And once they arrive, you listen."

It is 2019, and Carlos Alarcón, an Oblate priest, is speaking about LGBT ministry in Spanish during the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress, an annual convention that draws tens of thousands of Catholics. Catechists, parents and youth ministers pack the room for an often contentious dialogue, especially during the question-and-answer period. Father Alarcón reads from different parts of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

"This is what you have heard," Father Alarcón says, referring to a couple of paragraphs from the catechism, including No. 2357, which describes homosexual acts as "contrary to the natural law." These acts are not open to "the gift of life" and are not to be approved, according to the catechism.

"This is what you have not heard," he says, reading part of the paragraph that follows in the catechism: "They must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided."

The priest has a long history with LGBT Catholics. After he entered the seminary, his brother came out to him.

Later, his sister came out.

"I've been really privileged because people approach me," he said. "What can I say as a priest representing the church? What can I say to these people so they can find a loving God, a merciful God, a forgiving God? I pray a lot so that God gives me the right words."

Over the years, Father Alarcón has established support groups at parishes and spoken about accepting LGBT Catholics during homilies. He invites parishioners to reach out to him if they want to talk more about it.

A man in his 70s once reached out to him to talk. "He told me his beautiful story about discovering he was gay when he was 13," Father Alarcón tells me in the rectory of St. Ferdinand Church in San Fernando, Calif. "He didn't know what to do about it because all his life he's been gay [and had never told anyone]. He felt so bad. All those years, he never dared to talk about it because he was so scared."

The intersection of faith, family and culture is central to Ismael Ruiz's work with LGBT Catholics in San Francisco, including a young adult group in the Castro, long known as a gay neighborhood. A number of Latino participants say they moved to the area to be away from families that rejected them. Mr. Ruiz, who teaches religious studies at Sacred Heart High School in the city, says a number of his students from Latino and Filipino backgrounds struggle with the issue.

The Latino men he works with retain a devotional spirituality, he says. They pray the rosary, take part in processions, venerate Our Lady of Guadalupe and attend many Spanish-language celebrations with Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone.

"They retain their identity as Latinos and as Catholics, but their relationships with their families are often broken because their families don't feel [that their two identities] fit together," Mr. Ruiz says. Latinos tend to stay close to their families, he says, so losing contact is hard.

"We need to understand that there are a lot of church teachings: social justice, love of neighbor. [Catholics] have a tool called conscience that helps them to decide what to do," Mr. Ruiz says. "There are honest Catholics, Hispanic or not, who are trying to be good, queer Catholics." †

How a Son and Daughter Responded to a Gay Dad Coming Out

By Mark Clark

Bondings 2.0

NewWaysMinistry.org/blog

June 21, 2020

On this Father's Day, some 34 years after the death of my own father, I reflect on my two amazing children, who were the best enablers I could hope for when I came out as a gay man.

My marriage ended for reasons having nothing to do with my sexual orientation. In fact, I was not even fully aware that I was a gay man when we parted ways after more than 15 years of married life. It gradually dawned on me that I was not the straight man I had been simulating all my life.

As improbable as it may seem, my Catholic upbringing and schooling had little to do with why I held back well into my fifties. The hostility of bishops and many other clerics was off-putting to be sure. Yet those negative, sometimes cruel, rebuffs from the leaders of my native church had been baked into my psyche from an early age with hardly any conscious notice.

What did matter to me, quite a bit, were the feelings of my family members. As years passed in my newly single life, one or another sibling would try to be helpful in setting me up on blind dates. Sparks never flew, and from those trial runs, so to speak, I confirmed my misgivings about wanting to find another partner of the opposite sex.

My greatest apprehension during this time was if my kids, Sean, then 24, and Rachel, then 17, could deal with their father being gay. Both Sean and

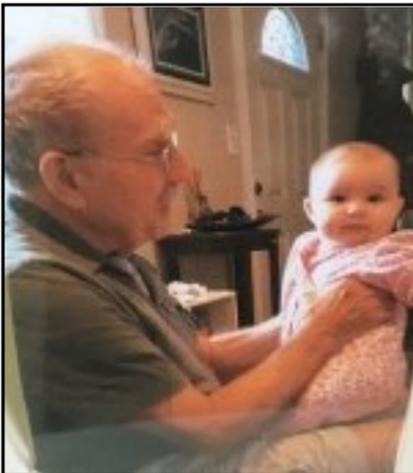
Rachel are highly motivated, extraordinarily bright, attractive, creative people. Sean took up magic at the age of seven and quickly became proficient. Rachel displayed a gift for dance that was recognized by amateur and professional instructors over many years. The last thing I would wish on them was being the cause of trauma in their lives.

I would obsess over the thought of how I would have reacted if my father had dropped on me and my six siblings that he was gay. That would have been life altering. I reasoned that telling my children I'm gay would surely stun them like dropping a pallet of bricks on them. Would they break down? Express resentment or anger?

Unfortunately, I had plenty of time to stew over this. For one thing, I was determined that they would hear about it only directly from me. I was also intent on not burdening Rachel, who was still in high school, until at least she had graduated. High schoolers have plenty of life challenges to cope with without my adding one of this magnitude. So, to make sure that I would be the one to tell them, I had to keep my secret from my siblings, siblings-in-law, nieces and

nephews and, of course, my ex-wife.

Fast forward a few years. I was now at a point of having the one sibling to whom I had let my secret slip to pledge secrecy. The next phase of my plan was to speak in person to the other five and their spouses. I managed these steps without a hitch. Then I was left with my son, his wife, and my daughter, just out of high school. My son and daughter-in-law joined me for dinner at my house. Afterward, I told them I had something to share with them, and we sat around the table. It was one of the tensest moments of my life, although I had



Mark Clark with his granddaughter, Lyla

tried to conceal my anxiety, and I hadn't hinted that what I was going to say was cause for dismay. Both were affirming and supportive, bless their hearts. When I raised the issue of telling my daughter, they suggested that I do so in their presence to make it more comfortable for her. This proposal turned out to be presciently helpful.

When the four of us were together I told Rachel that I had something to tell her that I hoped would not be upsetting. I told her "I am gay," and described a bit of what I had been going through the

last few years. I included describing my sadness at breaking up with a male partner the year before. After I stopped, she started to tear up. I wondered if I had made a terrible mistake. No. She was upset, she said, because of the news of the break-up I had related. She recalled my being sad at just about that time. She now realized why I was feeling low back then.

Being a gay father has meant many things to me, including becoming a grandfather four times. I am one of a growing number of gay men with children. The experience of fatherhood is a privilege that I treasure. I will always cherish moments like when Sean and I held our breath together while he glued a fragile crosspiece onto a balsa wood bridge for an "Odyssey of the Mind" project. I love the memory of picking out Rachel as she entered the stage for a pre-school dance recital.

But nothing gives me greater satisfaction than the pride and dignity of having two children as positive about my sexual orientation as mine are. Part of the reason for their affirmative response is no doubt owing to their being mature enough to process the revelation. But I also think they are two very special and especially sensitive persons.

I say that, of course, with no bias whatsoever. †

Mark Clark is a retired journalist who is a regular volunteer at New Ways Ministry, a member of Dignity/Washington, and the Board treasurer of BHT Foundation

Theologian explains the truth about the 'boogeyman' of 'gender ideology'

Fr. Daniel Horan, OFM
The National Catholic Reporter
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Often over the course of two millennia, when church teaching has come up against developments about the human person and in the natural sciences, there have been those who rallied to decry such humanistic advances as "heretical," "threatening," "unfounded," or "against the natural law."

History has witnessed this in terms of the Catholic Church's resistance to recognizing the full humanity of Indigenous people, to rejecting the abject immorality of chattel slavery, and to embracing the universal human right of religious liberty, just to name three examples of the church's institutional sinfulness and its slow course to correction.

Today we are seeing a similar dynamic play out in real time as it deleteriously affects LGBTQ people in the church and broader society. The phrase "gender ideology" has become a rallying cry for such discrimination and defense of inexcusably outdated anthropological foundations. In certain Catholic contexts, recourse to "gender ideology" is placed in opposition to what is presented as a static, universal, Aristotelian-Thomistic anthropology, which is understood to be immutable and divinely revealed.

However, the real problematic ideology at work today is the uncritical promotion of 13th century pseudo-science and ancient philosophical theories that, while interesting and influential, are no longer sufficient to account for important developments in human knowledge and experience since the Middle Ages.

The phrase "gender ideology" is used in both religious and secular contexts, but I am most interested in how it is deployed in Catholic circles to cause grave harm to people already made vulnerable in an unjust society. The most recent and visible invocation of this phrase by a Vatican office occurred last June when the "Congregation for Catholic Education" issued a document decrying the rise of "gender ideology" and cautioning Catholic educational institutions against succumbing to what it characterized as "nothing more than a confused concept of freedom in the realm of

feelings and wants."

But as University of Chicago law professor Mary Anne Case notes in a recent scholarly article titled "Transformations in the Vatican's War on 'Gender Ideology,'" the Vatican, in its capacity as a non-governmental agency and a religious institution, has for decades sought to discredit LGBTQ rights movements and influence developments in secular law globally. . . .

Case explains, "Pope Francis's popularity and appeal beyond traditional conservatives, as well as his highlighting of trans[gender] issues in particular, has



allowed the specific language of opposition to 'gender ideology' and the rhetorical and pseudo-scholarly apparatus associated with it finally to begin to take root in the United States," which explains the recent rise in the phrase's usage. This trend is notable in light of the recent Supreme Court decision, which extends workplace protections to LGBTQ people under Title VII of the U.S. Civil Rights Act, because the U.S. bishops' conference statement on the ruling alludes to themes frequently associated with so-called "gender ideology."

Among the many troubling aspects of this derogatory phrase and the agenda it represents is the ambiguity of the term itself. There are no two sources that agree on what *precisely* "gender ideology" means, and Case explains that "the multiplicity and variety [of definitions and genealogies] also indicate how very little actual scholarly work Catholic so-

called experts on gender theory have done concerning the origins and parameters of the theories they deplore." In other words, it is demonstrably clear that those who invoke "gender ideology" generally don't know what they are talking about. Such folks would do well to listen to leading scholars on the subjects of sex and gender, like Judith Butler of University of California, Berkeley, instead of attacking her and other experts.

That the term itself is unclear apart from signaling the deprecatory agenda of its users should be reason enough for people of faith to reject it and the pro-

sued a clear warning against "spiritual worldliness," which included an admonition against those with "an ostentatious preoccupation for the liturgy, for doctrine and for the Church's prestige, but without any concern that the Gospel have a real impact on God's faithful people and the concrete needs of the present time. In this way, the life of the Church turns into a museum piece or something which is the property of a select few."

The irony here is that the presentation of a nearly eight centuries-old understanding of the human person that is somehow complete in itself apart from whatever we might learn about humanity or the world subsequently is exactly the reduction of the faith to a "museum piece." Such an artifact may be appealing and worth study, but it says very little about reality as we understand it today.

Finally, one of the common refrains issued by pastoral leaders that condemn "gender ideology" and level harsh criticism of LGBTQ persons and their allies is that they are doing so from a position of pastoral concern and Christian love. . . .

Call it what you like, but such claims appear tantamount to a physically or emotionally abusive parent, spouse, or partner claiming that their violence is grounded in a place of "tough love." In the end, it's still simply abuse.

The time is long overdue to reject specious arguments like those that undergird the right-wing political and ecclesial agendas promoting the boogeyman of "gender ideology." As we continue to learn more from natural and social sciences about the wondrous diversity of God's creation, including the manifold experiences and identities within the human family, all members of the church — but especially those entrusted with leadership — must approach such new understandings with humility. This requires being open to experiences and narratives that are perhaps unlike one's own in a spirit of true dialogue, and this will demand a willingness on the part of the hearer to be changed in heart and mind. †

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Let's Have Gay and Lesbian Couples Lead Catholic Pre-Cana Programs

By Cristina Traina
Bondings 2.0
NewWaysMinistry.org/blog
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Catholic same-sex partners might be the ideal leaders of the US Catholic Church's Pre-Cana programs for straight engaged couples. Why so? As historian Stephanie Coontz wrote in *The New York Times* recently, "many different-sex couples would have happier and more satisfying marriages if they took a few lessons from their same-sex counterparts."

As Coontz shows, "sharing domestic tasks has become an increasingly important component of marital stability, and lack of sharing an increasingly powerful predictor of conflict." And heterosexual couples don't tend to share tasks as well as gay and lesbian couples do. It turns out that mid-twentieth-century gender roles still follow straight people into marriage—if not initially, once children arrive. Psychologist Darcy Lockman cites recent data showing that in heterosexual marriages both men and women tend to feel household labor and childcare are appropriately divided if the husband does half as much as the wife.

Unsurprisingly, as Coontz notes, women in heterosexual marriages are the most stressed group among all married people. And that stress is correlated with poor relationships. 41 percent of women who do all the dishes say their marriages are in trouble, for instance.

By contrast, same-sex couples don't slide into gender-stereotyped housekeeping and childcare roles because they can't. The distinction between "men's" and "women's" work is pointless. Their

children grow up seeing changing the oil in the car and folding the laundry as equally women's work, or making dinner and fixing the lawnmower as equally men's work.

Intriguingly, same-sex couples are also more likely to split particular tasks rather than slip into ruts. And they also spend more child-focused time with their



children than straight parents do.

Perhaps most unexpectedly, same-sex couples handle conflict differently than straight couples. Coontz writes, "John Gottman and Robert Levenson found that gays and lesbians who discussed a disagreement with their partner did so in less belligerent, domineering and fearful ways than different-sex individuals. . . . Same-sex couples used more affection and humor while discussing their disagreements, became less agitated and calmed down more quickly

afterward than different-sex couples.

"Even in ordinary daily interactions, people in same-sex unions use more positive methods of influencing a partner. . . than individuals in different-sex partnerships, offering encouragement and praise rather than criticism, lectures or appeals to guilt."

Why did the same-sex couples in the

studies embrace this healthier style of disagreement? "Possibly because they did not bring the same history of power inequalities to the table," Coontz says.

To be sure, the Catholic Church teaches that the historical power inequalities of sexism are evil. In his letter on marriage, Pope Francis laments "the excesses of patriarchal cultures," celebrating instead "the equal dignity of men and women." Even Pope John Paul II insisted on gender equality in marriage. But Coontz's research suggests how the

popes' insistence on the different "charisms" of "masculinity" and "femininity" can sabotage their official support for equality, and how same-sex couples can show us the way.

Coontz does leave some important questions unanswered. For instance, why do children of gay couples receive 20 minutes more focused attention per day than children of lesbian couples? Is men's greater earning power (which may translate to working fewer hours) a factor? Clearly the world's unequal esteem for men and women has an impact even in gay and lesbian homes.

But the larger truth still stands: Overall, heterosexual marriage is still burdened by mutually reinforcing, destructive personal habits and social inequalities—otherwise known as sin. If the Catholic Church really wants mutually respectful, egalitarian marriages, same-sex couples are the most consistent models out there. How about it, Pre-Cana directors?

The irony stands, too. If the Catholic Church wants to break the grip that sexism and injustice still have on heterosexual marriage, the LGBTQ community is ready with a model that comes closer to Pope John Paul II's and Pope Francis's ideal than straight marriages do. And yet gay and lesbian couples are said to be living in sin and are denied the sacrament of marriage. How about it, Pope Francis? †

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