

What Jesus Would Say to a Lesbian Couple

Ratzinger's
Disordered
Thoughts on
Homosexuality

Revised expanded version
Nonviolent Resistance
to the Christian Taliban

Aaron Milavec

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Preface

I have been preparing to write this book for over forty-eight years. Now, with the grace of God, I have the leisure time and the essential background experience to complete the task to which I have been called.

My purpose in writing is to offer ordinary Christians and experienced pastors a way of coming to grips with the heart-breaking divisions and monumental uncertainty and confusion that exist among our bishops and among our family members and among the followers of Jesus regarding the question of same-sex marriages.

My hope is that thoughtful and discerning Christians might feel “less crazy” and “less fearful” simply because they have honest questions and want honest answers. So, my dear reader, I fully expect that you will feel stronger and more secure, not only in your faith in God and in your own spiritual journey, but also in your capacity to speak your truth to power and to join with Pope Francis and lesbian couples everywhere in promoting a just, transparent, and compassionate dialogue on a heartfelt issue that is important to us all.

Peace and joy in the journey that you are about to undertake,
Aaron Milavec, BS, STB, ThD

“There is no avoiding the challenge and the obligation of discernment;
“blind obedience,” i.e., uncritical submission to power, is neither discernment nor obedience.”

~ Sandra Schneiders, IHM, STD

"There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice,
but there must never be a time
when we fail to protest."

~ Eli Wiesel

Introduction

My exposition of this very sensitive topic will be divided into five chapters. This “enhanced version” of my original book adds two additional chapters that explore nonviolent confrontation as an effective way to follow Jesus in responding to the menacing Christian Taliban in our midst.

Ch1 Early experiences and how my mind has changed

I begin with my personal experience because, when everything is said and done, my concrete encounters with homosexuals massively impact how I register their place in society and in the churches. In this, there is no neutral starting point for me or for anyone else. No matter how many degrees one has earned or how many ordinations that one has experienced, no one can escape their personal experiential base. Anyone denying this is not sufficiently self-aware and cannot be trusted.

Ch2 How the bible and Cardinal Ratzinger treat and mistreat homosexuals

Next I will introduce you to Matthew Vines’ marvelous skill and disarming authenticity in probing the limits of using the bible to discover God’s view on homosexuality. Immediately thereafter I will unravel the dangerous flaws found in Cardinal Ratzinger’s arguments against same-sex marriages. This section will unmask the hidden fallacies found in the Catholic and evangelical Protestant claims to have found God’s point of view.

Ch3 How John J. McNeill, Pope Francis, and the US Supreme Court will save our future

Finally, I will use case studies to expose how current authoritarian approaches serves to destroy communities and to defeat the very goals that their exponents hope to achieve. I borrow from John McNeill, Pope Francis, and the US Supreme Court healthy points of departure that enable Christian communities to reaffirm the wisdom of Jesus and to bind up the wounds of all our children. I even offer a healing balm to bitter opponents.

Ch4 Nonviolent Resistance to the Christian Taliban

As I circulated my first three chapters, I heard from readers who were disgusted with the intimidation and firings surrounding those who support same-sex marriages. They are, in some instances, angry as hell and are ready to take some action to fight against the menace of the fundamentalists. For them, this chapter was written.

Ch5 Jesus’ Response to Fundamentalism

Our struggle against fundamentalism needs all the help we can get from Jesus. When the Gospels are explored, it is clear that homosexuality and same-sex marriages do not show up. However, what one does discover is that Jesus did confront Jewish fundamentalists in his day; hence, we have much to learn from Jesus’ own nonviolent resistance.

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Ch1 Past -- Early experiences and how my mind has changed

**I have observed the misery of my people . . . ;
I have heard their cry. . . .
Indeed, I know their sufferings,
and I have come down to deliver them (Exod 3:7f).**

Would Jesus be keen to meet homosexuals?

To this I would have to say a resounding "NO" if homosexuality is to be associated with a dozen unsavory encounters that I had with homosexuals as a teen. I have removed the descriptions of these encounters and put them in a footnote so as not to unsettle you, my reader, excessively.¹ These early experiences deeply disturbed and repulsed me. Thus, I would have to say a resounding "NO--I very much doubt that Jesus would be at all comfortable with this!"

Had my experience of homosexuals been arrested at this point, I would have turned into a rabid anti-homosexual. I might have joined movement intent upon driving known homosexuals out of my neighborhood. I might even have joined a gang of "concerned citizens" who prowled the back streets of my hometown in hopes of coming upon some unfortunate queer who would be taught a lesson that s/he would never forget. . . .

I thank God, however, that my experiences did not stop at this point and that I went on to have three very significant positive experiences of homosexuals that set me on a path to become their advocate rather than their sworn enemy. Some people never have any significant positive experience and, as a consequence, they spend the whole of their life locked into homophobia.

A Troubled Teen Asking for Help

A teenager (I'll call him Jim) came to me in 1966 asking for my guidance since he was tormented by the idea that he might be gay. This was a courageous act on his part. For years, he had been frozen in fear. I was the first person that was able to partially relieve his fear. I knew that teenagers sometimes feel a fleeting sexual attraction to friends of the same sex--but this passes. I also knew that some psychologists theorized that a domineering mother who fails to emotionally bond with her son can inhibit normal bonding with all women later in life. Jim had such a domineering mother. I have since discovered that such psychological theories are

faulty and that the disposition toward same-sex unions appears to be genetically determined such that most boys with domineering mothers do effectively overcome their past experience and move into a passionate and lasting bonding with a woman later in life.

An Extended Interview with a Lesbian Couple

My second encounter took place two years later, in 1968, when I was doing graduate studies in the hotbed of social experimentation in Berkeley, California. In the context of a course, *Human Sexuality*, the professor invited a lesbian couple who were just five years older than me to come in and talk about their experience of growing up, of dating boys, of discovering that they were "abnormal," and then, in the course of time, wrestling with the many factors common and unique to two people moving into a deep friendship and then a committed union. I thank God that I had this very positive experience at a time when I was still only mildly hostile toward homosexuality. Here are some of the ideas that gripped my imagination due to this encounter:

1. This ninety minute encounter persuaded me that most homosexuals are not scratching messages on bathroom walls or answering ads for sexual encounters; it persuaded me that most homosexuals are confused, afraid, and feel very much "out of step" with the rest of their companions which they would describe as "normal" in so far as they embody the "norm" as far as sexual attraction is concerned.
2. Prior to this encounter, I was persuaded that a "normal" person could spot a "queer" a mile away. All one had to look for was effeminate attitudes or gestures in boys or the absence of femininity in girls. But here, with these two attractive women, there was nothing about the way they dressed, moved, or behaved that allowed me to even get a hint that they identified themselves as lesbians. They had to tell me, or else I would never have known. Hence, this encounter enabled me to challenge and to give up a stereotype that was dangerous and demeaning.
3. Thirdly, this experience opened up a whole new world that had been hitherto "closed to me." I was now talking and listening across the boundaries. I was now hearing how these two women had moved from "trying desperately to fit in"² with patterns of flirting and dating exhibited by their friends. Then, after years of frustration with themselves in being unable to develop a deep, emotional bond with a male that would confirm that they were "normal," they slowly came to the frightening realization that they were "queer." This destroyed any positive self-image that was left to them. Now they hated who they were.
4. Fourthly, there was the "ecstatic realization" that there were others out there like themselves who might welcome an intimate relationship with a lesbian. After many trials and errors, they both each

found each other and, for the first time, became surprised that another human being could cherish them to the core of their being. Mutual love thrived on ushering a self-acceptance and self-surrender that exceeded human understanding.

5. Fifthly, I came to realize that, even given the healing power of love, this lesbian couple still had disagreements, they sometimes hurt each other, and they occasionally felt pangs of jealousy--the whole host of human experiences that any cross-sex friendship or marriage partner encounters.
6. Sixthly, in the months following this encounter, I realized how tragically mistaken it was for the hierarchy of my church to imagine and to presume that they could accurately judge what was lawful before God and what were the appropriate life-style choices for lesbian couples. Deeply listened to these two women made me feel humble and utterly unable to offer them any sound guidance whatsoever. Anyone who arrives at this position knows first-hand how inappropriate and dangerous it would be to rush forward and propose "solutions" for this couple.

Invitation to a Lesbian Vow Ceremony

I now jump ahead twenty years. Two women in my parish that were very well known to me (let me call them Martha and Mary) approached me and invited me to join with a dozen others at their home and witness "the vows of permanent friendship" that they intended to pledge to each other. They asked me not to publicize this event since it was for them very private and they felt that it would only have the effect of unsettling other members of their faith community.

My mind raced ahead to the time that Jesus was invited to heal the son/servant of a Roman officer in the occupying army. Undoubtedly Jesus did not agree with the brutality associated with Roman occupation; yet, since Jewish elders commended him saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he built us our synagogue" (Luke 7:5), he went. He went not to approve the Roman occupation but to respond to an authentic human need. He may have received flack for it later; yet, Jesus was accustomed to disapproval and didn't act to garnish applause.

My mind also raced ahead to the time that a menstruating woman came up behind Jesus and touched the tassels of his cloak. According to the Jewish tradition, menstruation was no light matter. Leviticus makes it clear that a woman in this condition cannot circulate in society and cannot offer a sacrifice in the temple. Even for men, any man deliberately having sexual relations with a menstruating woman was delivered over to death (Lev 18:19; 20:18).

Yet, Jesus appears to have regarded menstruation much differently. Maybe his own parents, Mary and Joseph, already had a private opinion whereby they judged that the needs of others allowed them to override the

rule of menstrual impurity. Mary, for instance, may have visited a sick friend during her period "because she needed her" and was quite confident "that God would have understood." In any case, Jesus does not upbraid the woman and use this occasion as a teachable moment to enforce the importance of God's commandments regarding menstrual impurity. Seemingly unexpectedly, healing power flows from him and he congratulates the woman saying, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace" (Luke 8:48 and par.). This was not just an ordinary menstrual flow, to be sure. She had been afflicted with an unregulated spotting for the last twelve years.

So, prompted by these thoughts, I accepted the invitation of Martha and Mary. When I arrived at their home, the couple greeted me warmly. I met others who were invited. Most were already known to me. Their rite was very simple. They emphasized that they were not thinking of "marriage" but of a "permanent partnership." They also mentioned that they were living in dangerous times wherein they could be easily punished for what they were now doing; yet, it seemed to them that there should at least be a few whom they trusted who could witness to who they were and to who they intended to be for each other. Accordingly, they joined hands and faced each other and promised an exclusive friendship and fidelity in sickness and in health for the rest of their lives. They then exchanged rings as "a visible sign" of their permanent partnership.

During the rite, I imagined the same fear and foreboding which Christians of the early centuries might have felt when they gathered together to witness marriages between free persons and slaves--a situation which was punishable by death according to Roman Law. The early Christians felt that, within the community, the distinction between "Jew and Gentile, freeborn and slave" (Col 3:11, Gal 3:28) had been abolished by Christ. Therefore, in their determination to serve God rather than men (Acts 3), they decided to witness and honor such marriages which, in the eyes of Roman law, were proscribed.

I can also think back upon those instances in which White Christians were secretly married to African-American slaves (or former slaves) at a time when such inter-racial marriages were strictly proscribed. The irony of this situation is that a White Christian master might have free and unchecked sexual access to his female slaves which was sanctioned by civil law and tolerated by his church; yet, he might not marry someone who had even a 1/20 of Negroid ancestry.

During the rite, I also thought of the medieval rites sanctioned by the church whereby two men pledged eternal friendship to each other using appropriate words and symbols.³ This is a seldom encountered and, more often than not, seldom understood page in the history of Catholicism.

Jesus, himself, was heavily criticized for keeping bad company. During a dinner party at the house of Simon, the Pharisee is thinking, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him" (Luke 7:39). Likewise, it was supposed that he had a general reputation as

“a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners” (Luke 7:34). Even his disciples were remembered to have criticized Jesus when he was found speaking to a Samaritan woman at the well: They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking to her?" (John 4:27)

In any case, following upon the texts cited above, I can easily imagine that Jesus would have accepted to witness the "vows of permanent friendship" which Martha and Mary exchanged and, then, when he arrived home, he might even be grilled by his own disciples on this matter. What might Jesus say to their challenge to him?

Lost Sayings of Jesus

Now Jesus and his disciples entered a village and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. As he entered, Martha warmly embraced and kissed her beloved sister, Mary. Jesus said to them, “I admire you and your love for each another.”

“Mary is my true life-long companion,” Martha explained, “And we joyously embrace each other without any thought or need of a man.”

“This is well,” the Lord said, “for the Creator has wonderfully made you and blessed you with the singular love that binds two women into one flesh.” And, embracing them with his blessing, he joyfully reclined with them at table.

Now some of his disciples were scandalized at this and later asked him privately, “How can you tolerate this? No women can be fruitful and multiply without a man!”

“You have little understanding,” Jesus said to them. “Have you not observed that many a man joins himself to his wife while, at the same time, he kills her soul with the indifference or the cruelty in his heart? Behold, these two daughters of Abraham have wondrously opened their souls to each other, and they have become abundantly fruitful in the recesses of their hearts. I say to you, therefore, the Lord will surely invite women such as these to take the best places in the banquet which is to come while many men claiming to be fruitful will be cast outside where they will weep and gnash their teeth.”

And a man in the crowd shouted out, “Blessed are you men for you have freed yourselves from the snares of beautiful women and from the bother of raising children.”

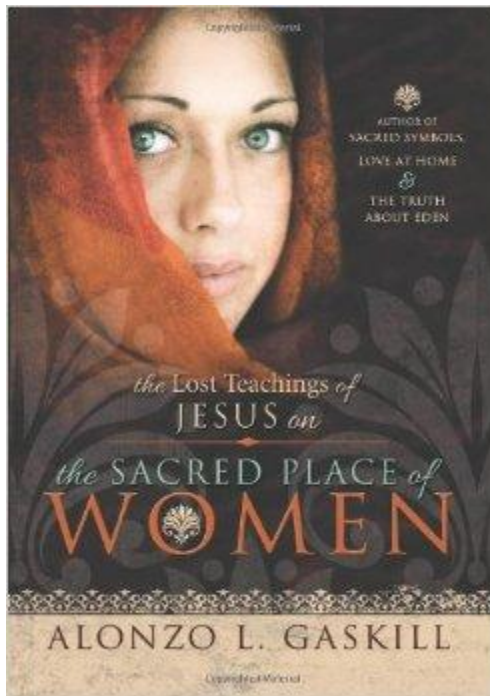
“More blessed,” called back Jesus with a playful laugh, “is the man whose heart has been totally captivated by the love of a woman such that he thoroughly enjoys surrendering himself to her and playing with her children.”

Later, when they were alone, his disciples peppered him with questions, and he taught everything to them plainly saying: “Where men are gathered together, you will frequently hear men boast how they have subdued a woman without themselves having been subdued. Do not be taken in by such talk! The soul of a man is lost to himself and to God as well if he cannot reveal himself entirely to the woman he loves. Only in

the arms of a woman where the tears of his brokenness and tears of his joy mix will a true man find the balm necessary for the healing of his soul.”⁴

“And to what mistakes are women prone?” asked Suzanna, his most reflective disciple.

“You, my dear Suzanna,” replied Jesus “must speak of these mysteries to me so that I can learn them from you. **The Son of Man has come to reveal all things, yet, even the Son of Man cannot know all things unless he listens deeply to the experiences of women.**” And Jesus said this quite openly because he knew in his heart that some of the men following him secretly despised the inner life of women.



How much wrong we do to God and his grace
when we speak of sins being punished by his judgment
before we speak of their being forgiven by his mercy.

~~Pope Francis

Ch2 Present -- How the bible and Cardinal Ratzinger treat and mistreat homosexuals [See <https://payhip.com/b/QM9P>]

Jim McGarry's Open Letter to the Student Protestors in San Francisco

By way of closing this chapter, I want to reproduce here the whole of Jim McGarry's Open Letter. Notice that he begins with his experience. Notice also that he is calm, firm, and decisive. Notice that he validates the students' experience. This is key! Then he invites the irate protestors to be nonviolent peacemakers as they offer unflinching support to those scarred by Ratzinger's hate-language.

The Great Reversal

An open letter to students from concerned parents

Decades before you were born, we, your parents, grew up in Catholic and other schools where no one was "out." We heard the term "fag" thrown around classrooms and hallways with casual cruelty. There was overt bullying and brazen gossip based on perceived sexual orientation. There was occasional violence. There was loneliness and even despair among our peers who knew they were "different." There were suicides as well as descent into slower forms of self-destruction. There was anger smoldering beneath the surface among those who knew they would never be accepted. Our teachers and school leaders? Silent or worse [complicit?].

You young students, our sons, and daughters, in Catholic Schools in the last decade have grown up with a new reality. You have peers "out of the closet," and you see that their human dignity is not diminished by their sexual orientation, and you indeed celebrate your unity undergirding the differences. You also have peers whose families are led by gay or lesbian parents; you visit them, they welcome you into their homes, you see their full humanity flowering in their families. Some of you live in such families, newly protected by laws recognizing civil same sex marriage. You may know a classmate who was conceived by in vitro fertilization. You do not see the circumstances of his or her conception as changing in any way the inheritance as a child of God. You include them in your circles without question. This is new, this is a blessed change.

There is no going back.

However, the language currently proposed by the Archbishop for your faculty's handbook, in which active homosexuals, including those in marriages no matter how loving, are labeled "gravely evil"—that language is what is now repulsive to you. What a reversal! Stay faithful to your new perception—and thank the current generation of teachers who have helped inform your consciences and boldly inspired you to believe that human dignity is indivisible. Stand with them, and start by learning more about human beings from all the disciplines you study, and most especially from your study of the

Gospel of love, from the God who liberates slaves and all those oppressed, from the Spirit that stands with the truth of Church teaching based on the saving presence of God's grace and mercy in our lives.

Beware that your resistance to this handbook language does not get lost in anger or in a judgmental grudge against the Archbishop. We believe in loving even our opponents. We also know that God is God and we are human and we make mistakes. Believe in conversion, the turning of hearts and minds. As the Gospels exhort us: Be the salt of the earth, the light unto the world. Search for the pearl of great price and cherish it. Continue to put your arms around those of your peers who are most vulnerable to those and all hateful words, bring them close, wrap them in layers of protection and reassurance. They need and deserve your loving embrace.⁵

Get involved!

Jim McGarry

Parent and former religious studies teacher in the Archdiocese

Appendix 1: The US Bishops' Statement, "Always our Children"

Parental Protectiveness and Pride

Homosexual persons often experience discrimination and acts of violence in our society. As a parent, you naturally want to shield your children from harm, regardless of their age. You may still insist: "You are always my child; nothing can ever change that. You are also a child of God, gifted and called for a purpose in God's design."

There are two important things to keep in mind as you try to sort out your feelings. First, listen to them. They can contain clues that lead to a fuller discovery of God's will for you. Second, because some feelings can be confusing or conflicting, it is not necessary to act upon all of them. Acknowledging them may be sufficient, but it may also be necessary to talk about your feelings. Do not expect that all tensions can or will be resolved. The Christian life is a journey marked by perseverance and prayer. It is a path leading from where we are to where we know God is calling us.

Accepting Your Child

How can you best express your love—itself a reflection of God's unconditional love—for your child? At least two things are necessary.

First, don't break off contact; don't reject your child. A shocking number of homosexual youth end up on the streets because of rejection by their families. This, and other external pressures, can place young people at a greater risk for self-destructive behaviors like substance abuse and suicide.

Your child may need you and the family now more than ever. He or she is still the same person. This child, who has always been God's gift to you, may now be the cause of another gift: your family becoming more honest, respectful, and supportive. Yes, your love can be tested by this reality, but it can also grow stronger through your struggle to respond lovingly.

The second way to communicate love is to seek appropriate help for your child and for yourself. If your son or daughter is an adolescent, it is possible that he or she may be displaying traits which cause you

anxiety such as what the child is choosing to read or view in the media, intense friendships, and other such observable characteristics and tendencies. What is called for on the part of parents is an approach which does not presume that your child has developed a homosexual orientation, and which will help you maintain a loving relationship while you provide support, information, encouragement, and moral guidance. Parents must always be vigilant about their children's behavior and exercise responsible interventions when necessary. . . .

All in all, it is essential to recall one basic truth. God loves every person as a unique individual. Sexual identity helps to define the unique persons we are, and one component of our sexual identity is sexual orientation. Thus, our total personhood is more encompassing than sexual orientation. Human beings see the appearance, but the Lord looks into the heart (cf. 1 Sam 16:7).

God does not love someone any less simply because he or she is homosexual. God's love is always and everywhere offered to those who are open to receiving it. St. Paul's words offer great hope:

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8:38-39)⁶

The teaching of the church makes it clear that the fundamental human rights of homosexual persons must be defended and that all of us must strive to eliminate any form of injustice, oppression, or violence against them. It is not sufficient only to avoid unjust discrimination.... Nothing in the Bible or in Catholic teaching can be used to justify prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes and behaviors. Always Our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers, NCCB Committee on Marriage and Family, Third Printing, Revised, June 1998

Appendix 2: Surveys of Catholic Views on Homosexuality

A 2007 Pew survey of [the religious landscape in America](#) found that among Catholics who had left the church, the abuse crisis ranked low on the list of reasons -- well behind church teachings on homosexuality, the role of women, abortion, and contraception.

In 2003 fewer than 35% of American Catholics supported [same-sex marriage](#). However, a report by the [Public Religion Research Institute](#) on the situation in 2013 found that during that decade support for same-sex marriage has risen 22 percentage points among Catholics to 57%: 58% among white Catholics, 56% among Hispanic, with white Catholics more likely to offer "strong" support. Among Catholics who were regular churchgoers, 50% supported, 45% opposed. ^{[208][209]}

A 2011 report by the same organization found that 73% of American Catholics favored anti-discrimination laws, 63% supported the right of gay people to serve openly in the military, and 60% favored allowing same-sex couples to adopt children. The report also found Catholics to be more critical than other religious groups about how their church is handling the issue ^{[35][205]}

In June 2015, data from Pew Research suggested that 66% of American Catholics think it is acceptable for children to be brought up by with gay parents. More generally, 70% thought it acceptable for a gay couple to cohabit. Less than half believed that homosexuality should be regarded as a sin (44% of Catholics compared to 62% of Protestants); and a majority would like the church to be more flexible toward those who are in same-sex relationships, including the right to have marriages recognized. ^[210]

In August 2015, a poll jointly commissioned by the Public Religion Research Institute and the Religion News Service was released suggesting that on issues such as LGBT rights there is "a widening ideological gulf between Catholic leadership and people in the pews", as well as a more progressive attitude among Catholics compared to the US population more generally. 60% of Catholics favor allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry legally, compared to 55% of Americans as a whole. Most Catholics (53%) said they did not believe same-sex marriage violated their religious beliefs. 76% of Catholics also said that they favored laws that would protect LGBT people from discrimination (alongside 70% of Americans overall). Finally, around 65% of Catholics oppose policies which permit business owners the right to refuse service to customers who are LGBT by citing religious concerns (compared to 57% of Americans).

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homosexuality_and_Roman_Catholicism

Appendix 3: Cardinals, Bishops, and Other Catholic Church Leaders Who Have Made Positive Statements about Civil Unions, Same-Gender Relationships, and Marriage Equality

Compiled by Francis DeBernardo, New Ways Ministry

(last updated June 11, 2014)

Since the end of 2011, the Catholic Church has witnessed a growing trend of Catholic leaders speaking out in support of same-gender relationships, civil unions, and marriage equality. These leaders have included members of the hierarchy (pope, cardinals, archbishops, bishops), as well as church leaders in prominent positions (scholars, theologians, pastoral ministers, educators).

Below is a running list of all the cases we have identified when a church leader has spoken out positively in regard to same-gender couples, legal protections, and marriage rights.

The list is organized in chronological order. Under each year, the list is divided into two sections: the first section identifies statements by members of the hierarchy; the second section identifies other church leaders.

This list does not include lay Catholics who are prominent in the secular world (e.g., lawmakers or journalists), but only those people with some sort of canonical (official) relationship to the Catholic Church institution or who are professionally involved in Catholic advocacy for LGBT people.

The links in each citation below will bring a reader to the blog posts concerning this individual or event. Blog posts contain links to primary news sources.

If you know of other cases, and can document them with a news report, please email this information to info@NewWaysMinistry.org.

2011

Statement by Hierarchy

December: [Archbishop Vincent Nichols](#) of Westminster, England, head of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, supported the idea of civil unions, saying "We would want to emphasise that civil partnerships actually provide a structure in which people of the same sex who want a lifelong relationship [and] a lifelong partnership can find their place and protection and legal provision." In a later [explanation of his remarks](#), Nichols re-affirmed his support.

Statement by non-hierarchical church Leader

December: In an essay for *EurekaStreet.com*, [Father Frank Brennan, SJ](#), professor of law at the Public Policy Institute of Australian Catholic University, argued that Catholic members of Australia's parliament should support civil unions for same-sex couples.

2012

Statements by Hierarchy

January: [Bishop Paolo Urso](#) of Ragusa, Italy affirms the idea of civil unions, saying "When two people, even if they're the same sex, decide to live together, it's important for the State to recognize this fact. But it must be called something different from marriage."

March: New Hampshire's Catholic [Diocese of Manchester](#), which opposed marriage equality in the state, came out in support of civil unions as a way to forestall the extension of marriage rights.

March: During New Ways Ministry's Seventh National Symposium in Baltimore, Maryland, Australia's [Bishop Geoffrey Robinson](#) calls for a total re-examination of the church's sexual ethics.

March: [Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini](#) of Milan, Italy, stated in his book, *Credere e Cognoscere (Faith and Understanding)*, that "I do not agree with the positions of those in the Church who takes issue with civil unions."

May: [Cardinal Rainer Maria Woelki](#) of Berlin, Germany, told a major Catholic conference "When two homosexuals take responsibility for one another, if they deal with each other in a faithful and long-term way, then you have to see it in the same way as heterosexual relationships."

December: [Bishop Giuseppe Fiorini Morosini](#) of the Locri-Gerace diocese in Italy has written a letter to his parishes, stating "same-sex couples should have their civil rights recognized." He also added: "However,

same-sex couples are not families. We cannot give them the right to a regular marriage. . . .A marriage is a union between a man and a woman, but every couple should have civil rights.”

2013

Statements by Hierarchy

January: The [French bishops' conference Family and Society Committee](#) issue a document entitled “Expand Marriage to Persons of the Same Sex? Let's Open the Debate!” in which they call for dialogue about same-sex relationships, offer respectful words for same-sex couples, and severely condemn homophobia.

February: In a document opposing a marriage equality bill in the United Kingdom, the [Bishops' Conference of England and Wales](#) acknowledge: ‘We recognise that many same sex couples raise children in loving and caring homes...’

February: [Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia](#), head of the Pontifical Council for the Family, discussed “cohabitation forms that do not constitute a family,” and he called for laws “to prevent injustice and make their life easier.”

February: [Bishop Charles Scicluna](#), an auxiliary bishop from Malta, reprimanded a Catholic writer who negatively characterized lesbian and gay relationships as based on lust, saying that such an approach denies “the truth of what the Church teaches.”

March: *The New York Times* reports that newly-elected [Pope Francis](#) supported civil unions when he was an archbishop in Argentina.

April: In a television interview, [Cardinal Theodore McCarrick](#), retired Ordinary of Washington, DC, said he would have “no problem” with civil unions for lesbian and gay couples.

April: During a lecture, [Cardinal Christoph Schonborn](#) of Vienna Austria, and at one time considered a papal candidate, endorses the idea of civil unions, saying: “There can be same-sex partnerships and they need respect, and even civil law protection. Yes, but please keep it away from the notion of marriage. Because the definition of marriage is the stable union between a man and a woman open to life. We should be clear about terms and respect the needs of people living in a partnership together. They deserve respect.”

April: [Cardinal Ruben Salazar](#) of Bogota, Colombia, and president of the Colombian Bishops' Conference, argues that civil unions for same-gender couples is an alternative to granting them marriage: ““There can be no true marriage but between a man and a woman, and only on this basis can there be a real family. The other unions have a right to exist; no one can ask them not to exist, but they should not try to equate themselves with the family.”

April: In an interview, [Archbishop Piero Marini](#), president of the Vatican's Pontifical Committee for International Eucharistic Congresses, states: “In these discussions, it's necessary, for instance, to recognize the union of persons of the same sex, because there are many couples that suffer because their civil rights aren't recognized. What can't be recognized is that this [union] is equivalent to marriage.”

May: [Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia](#), head of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Family, [clarifies](#) his February statement (see above), noting that it was not intended to support same-sex marriage. He continued to support civil unions, though, by adding: “I proposed what the church has maintained: it is a matter of [protecting] individual rights. Facing the explosion in various forms of living together today, I simply called on states to find solutions which help people and avoid abuses.”

June: [Bishop Geoffrey Robinson](#), a retired auxiliary bishop of Sydney, Australia, who had previously called for a total re-thinking of Catholic teaching on sexuality, calls for a Third Vatican Council to discuss how to prevent sexual abuse in the church. Such a council would also include re-examining a number of other sexual and gender-oriented topics, as well, including same-gender relationships.

June: Two [Belgian prelates](#) support civil unions. Cardinal Godfried Daneels, retired archbishop of Brussels, was asked about civil unions in an interview and he responded: “About the fact that this should be legal, that it should be made legitimate through a law, about this the Church has nothing to say.” He also said that supporting [same-gender relationships showed “more nuanced thinking about the person in their totality rather than being fixated on the moral principle.”](#) Daneels' statements were supported by his successor, Archbishop André-Joseph Léonard.

October: [Archbishop Lorenzo Baldisseri](#), secretary general of the Vatican's Synod of Bishops, announces an Extraordinary Synod on Marriage and Family, scheduled for October 2014. In an unprecedented move, he asks bishops around the globe to consult the laity on a wide range of topics concerning marriage and sexuality, including same-gender couples.

Statements by non-hierarchical church leaders

April: Addressing the news that France established marriage equality for lesbian and gay couples, [Fr. Frederico Lombardi](#), the Vatican's principal spokesperson, said that society should "clearly show that marriage between one/a man and one/a woman is a fundamental institution in the history of mankind. This does not mean that one cannot recognise in some way other forms of union between two persons."

May: [Fr. Michael Fallon](#), an Australian priest calls for "public celebration of committed love for homosexual couples. . . . [The public should offer] not just recognition, but joy, public joy in their communion with each other, that's the least we can offer people."

May: [Sister Jeannine Gramick](#), co-founder of New Ways Ministry, defends Catholic support of marriage equality in a public debate with Bishop Thomas Paprocki of Springfield, Illinois.

June: [Terence Weldon](#), who blogs at *QueeringTheChurch.com*, reflects on statistical evidence that Catholic lay people support same-gender couples, in a post entitled "Gay Marriage, Civil Unions, and the Church."

June: [Franciscan Father Daniel Horan](#), who blogs at *DatingGod.com*, responds to U.S. Supreme Court's decision to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act, stating: "Wednesday's decisions, as best I can tell, affect no one for the worse. They do not threaten different-sex marriages. They do not ruin the foundations of our society. They do not do anything but provide another step to guarantee that all human beings have the right to be treated like other human beings in the United States. We've come as a society to recognize, oftentimes too slowly, the need for these legal protections with regard to sex, race, and now sexual orientation — all things inherent to a person and outside one's control."

June: [Thomas Bushlack](#), a professor of moral theology at the University of St. Thomas, in St. Paul, Minnesota, responds to U.S. Supreme Court's decision to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act, stating: "Despite the plurality of voices within these theological debates, one thing seems certain: what was once taken as a commonplace definition of marriage as between one man and one woman can no longer be assumed."

July: [Francis DeBernardo](#), executive director of New Ways Ministry, pens an essay entitled "The Bishops Aren't Happy, But the People in the Pews Are" for *Advocate.com* responding to U.S. Supreme Court's decision to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act.

July: [Father Bert Thelen](#), a Jesuit for more than 45 years, resigns from the community and the priesthood, in part as "a protest against the social injustices and sinful exclusions perpetrated by a patriarchal church that refuses to consider ordination for women and marriage for same- sex couples . . ."

July: [Fr. Frank Brennan, SJ](#), a professor of law at Australian Catholic University, argues for Catholic support of civil same-gender marriage. This is a development from his 2012 position when he advocated for civil unions.

August: In an essay in *Commonweal* magazine, [Joseph Bottum](#), a conservative Catholic commentator, argues for legal recognition of same-gender marriage.

September: In St. Paul, Minnesota, [Julie Sullivan](#), president of St. Thomas University, addresses the school's faculty and mentions: "We are called to love and support everyone in our community regardless of their sexual orientation...And, I might add, regardless of the gender of their spouse."

September: [Marianne Duddy-Burke](#), executive director of DignityUSA, pens an essay for *The Huffington Post* on "15 Years in the Lives of a Catholic Lesbian Couple."

October: During a talk at a Pride celebration at Fairfield University, Connecticut, (a Jesuit campus), Religious Studies Department Chair [Nancy DellaValle](#) states the Church is "hard-pressed" in explaining why it will not allow same-gender couples to marry if marriage is the "blessed union of a couple."

October: During Illinois' marriage equality debate, [Cristina Traina](#), a Northwestern University religion professor and a Catholic, pens an op-ed in *The Chicago Tribune*, debunking religious arguments against same-gender marriage.

November: [Fr. Bill Kienneally](#), retired pastor of St. Gertrude Parish, Chicago, Illinois, writes a letter to the editor of a daily paper in which he states: "There are many gay and lesbian couples [in the parish], many of whom are doing their best to raise children as a family. I admire their constancy and care while they continue to belong to a church that 'officially' seems wrongheaded and bizarre in its resistance to legalization of same-sex marriage."

2014

Statements by Hierarchy

January: An autumn 2013 speech by [Pope Francis](#) to the Catholic Union of Superiors General is made public. In the speech the pope speaks of same-gender couples: "On an educational level, gay unions raise challenges for us today which for us are sometimes difficult to understand." He also pondered: "How can we

proclaim Christ to a generation that is changing? We must be careful not to administer a vaccine against faith to them.”

February: [Cardinal Christoph Schonborn](#) of Vienna, Austria, calls for a re-thinking of the Church’s teaching on marriage and family, stating: “For the most part, the church approaches the [family] issue unhistorically. People have always lived together in various ways. And today, we in the church tacitly live with the fact that the majority of our young people, including those with close ties to the Catholic church, quite naturally live together. The simple fact is that the environment has changed.”

March: [Pope Francis](#) calls for individual case evaluation of civil unions, but the Vatican spokesperson denied he was speaking about same-gender couples.

March: [Bishop Stephan Ackerman](#) of Trier diocese, Germany, calls for rethinking of church’s sexual ethics, and says we cannot think of homosexuality as unnatural.

April: [Archbishop Carlos Jose Náñez](#) of Cordoba, Argentina, approves the Cathedral baptism of the daughter of a lesbian couple.

May: [Bishop Nunzio Galantino](#), head of the Italian bishops’ conference, calls for dialogue “without any taboo” on, among other things, homosexuality

May: In an interview, [Bishop Leonardo Steiner](#), secretary general of the Brazilian bishops’ conference, says that same-gender couples should have legal protections, stating: It’s important to understand unions of persons of the same sex. . . . It’s necessary to talk about the rights of ordinary life among persons of the same sex who decide to live together. They need a legal protection in society.

Statements by non-hierarchical church leaders

January: [German theologians](#) call on church leaders to rethink sexual theology, focusing on the fragility and marriage and the personal vulnerability of sex, not evaluation of individual sex acts.

March: [Fr. Stephen Geofroy](#) of the island nation of Trinidad, speaks publicly in support of civil rights for lesbian and gay people, stating: “We are citizens of a country and people have the right to love who they want irrespective.”

April: [Lisa Fullam](#), a professor of moral theology at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, California, publishes an essay entitled "[Civil Same-Sex Marriage: A Catholic Affirmation.](#)"

April: [The Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales](#) writes to Parliament to ask them not to change all civil partnerships to marriages. In their discussion, the bishops note that many lesbian and gay couples ". . . have entered into civil partnerships in order to secure important and necessary legal rights. . . "

May: A draft document from the [Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales](#) which instructs Catholic organizations how to conform to the United Kingdom's Equality Act of 2010 is made public. The document observes: "Treating a same sex married couple less favourably than an opposite sex married couple will amount to direct discrimination. Therefore it is not possible to argue that such behaviour is a proportionate means to a legitimate aim, . . . and as such will be unlawful unless it falls within the exceptions out-lined. . . " ⁷

Appendix 4: Selections from the Supreme Court Ruling (6/16/15)

Note: I include these selections because they illustrate how civil discourse can continue to respect the religious views of opponents without vilifying them and without surrendering to them. The selections also contain forceful language illustrating how history and the liberties guaranteed by the Constitution make it imperative to respect the rights of a minority even when this is not the popular thing to do.

No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice, and family. In forming a marital union, two people become something greater than once they were. As some of the petitioners in these cases demonstrate, marriage embodies a love that may endure even past death. It would misunderstand these [homosexual] men and women to say they disrespect the idea of marriage.

From their beginning to their most recent page, the annals of human history reveal the transcendent importance of marriage. The lifelong union of a man and a woman always has promised nobility and dignity to all persons, without regard to their station in life. **Marriage is sacred to those who live by their religions and offers unique fulfillment to those who find meaning in the secular realm.** Its dynamic allows two people to find a life that could not be found alone, for a marriage becomes greater than just the two persons. Rising from the most basic human needs, marriage is essential to our most profound hopes and aspirations. . . .

There are untold references to the beauty of marriage in religious and philosophical texts spanning time, cultures, | and faiths, as well as in art and literature in all their forms. It is fair and necessary to say these references were based on the understanding that marriage is a union between two persons of the opposite sex. That history is the beginning of these cases. The respondents say it should be the end as well. **To them, it would demean a timeless institution if the concept and lawful status of marriage were extended to two persons of the same sex.** Marriage, in their view, is by its nature a gender-differentiated union of man and woman. This view long has been held—and continues to be held—in good faith by reasonable and sincere people here and throughout the world.

The petitioners acknowledge this history but contend that these cases cannot end there. **Were their intent to demean the revered idea and reality of marriage, the petitioners' claims would be of a different order. But that is neither their purpose nor their submission. To the contrary, it is the enduring importance of marriage that underlies the petitioners' contentions. This, they say, is their whole point. Far from seeking to devalue marriage, the petitioners seek it for themselves because of their respect—and need—for its privileges and responsibilities.** And their immutable nature dictates that same-sex marriage is their only real path to this profound commitment.

Recounting the circumstances of three of these cases illustrates the urgency of the petitioners' cause from their perspective.

Case #1: Petitioner James Obergefell, a plaintiff in the Ohio case, met John Arthur over two decades ago. They fell in love and started a life together, establishing a lasting, committed relation. In 2011, however, Arthur was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS. This debilitating disease is progressive, with no known cure. Two years ago, Obergefell and Arthur decided to commit to one another, resolving to marry before Arthur died. To fulfill their mutual promise, they traveled from | Ohio to Maryland, where same-sex marriage was legal. It was difficult for Arthur to move, and so the couple were wed inside a medical transport plane as it remained on the tarmac in Baltimore. Three months later, Arthur died. Ohio law does not permit Obergefell to be listed as the surviving spouse on Arthur's death certificate. By statute, they must remain strangers even in death, a state imposed separation Obergefell deems "hurtful for the rest of time." App. in No. 14–556 etc., p. 38. He brought suit to be shown as the surviving spouse on Arthur's death certificate.

Case #2: April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse are co-plaintiffs in the case from Michigan. They celebrated a commitment ceremony to honor their permanent relation in 2007. They both work as nurses, DeBoer in a neonatal unit and Rowse in an emergency unit. In 2009, DeBoer and Rowse fostered and then adopted a baby boy. Later that same year, they welcomed another son into their family. The new baby, born prematurely and abandoned by his biological mother, required around-the-clock care. The next year, a baby girl with special needs joined their family. Michigan, however, permits only opposite-sex married couples or single individuals

to adopt, so each child can have only one woman as his or her legal parent. If an emergency were to arise, schools and hospitals may treat the three children as if they had only one parent. And, were tragedy to befall either DeBoer or Rowse, the other would have no legal rights over the children she had not been permitted to adopt. This couple seeks relief from the continuing uncertainty their unmarried status creates in their lives. (pp. 2-5)

The ancient origins of marriage confirm its centrality, but it has not stood in isolation from developments in law and society. The history of marriage is one of both continuity and change. **That institution—even as confined to opposite-sex relations—has evolved over time.** For example, marriage was once viewed as an arrangement by the couple's parents based on political, religious, and financial concerns; but by the time of the Nation's founding it was understood to be a voluntary contract between a man and a woman. See N. Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* 9–17 (2000); S. Coontz, *Marriage, A History* 15–16 (2005).

As the role and status of women changed, the institution further evolved. Under the centuries-old doctrine of coverture, a married man and woman were treated by the State as a single, male-dominated legal entity. See 1 W. Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* 430 (1765). As women gained legal, political, and property rights, and as society began to understand that women have their own equal dignity, the law of coverture was abandoned. See *Brief for Historians of Marriage et al. as Amici Curiae* 16–19.

These and other developments in the institution of marriage over the past centuries were not mere superficial changes. | Rather, they worked deep transformations in its structure, affecting aspects of marriage long viewed by many as essential. See generally N. Cott, *Public Vows*; S. Coontz, *Marriage*; H. Hartog, *Man & Wife in America: A History* (2000).

These new insights have strengthened, not weakened, the institution of marriage. Indeed, changed understandings of marriage are characteristic of a Nation where new dimensions of freedom become apparent to new generations, often through perspectives that begin in pleas or protests and then are considered in the political sphere and the judicial process.

This dynamic can be seen in the Nation's experiences with the rights of gays and lesbians. Until the mid-20th century, same-sex intimacy long had been condemned as immoral by the state itself in most Western nations, a belief often embodied in the criminal law. For this reason, among others, many persons did not deem homosexuals to have dignity in their own distinct identity. A truthful declaration by same-sex couples of what was in their hearts had to remain unspoken. Even when a greater awareness of the humanity and integrity of homosexual persons came in the period after World War II, the argument that gays and lesbians had a just claim to dignity was in conflict with both law and widespread social conventions. **Same-sex intimacy remained a**

crime in many States. Gays and lesbians were prohibited from most government employment, barred from military service, excluded under immigration laws, targeted by police, and burdened in their rights to associate. See Brief for Organization of American Historians as Amicus Curiae 5–28.

For much of the 20th century, moreover, homosexuality was treated as an illness. When the American Psychiatric Association published the first Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders in 1952, homosexuality was classified as a mental disorder, a position adhered to until 1973. See Position Statement on Homosexuality and Civil | Rights, 1973, in 131 Am. J. Psychiatry 497 (1974). Only in more recent years have psychiatrists and others recognized that sexual orientation is both a normal expression of human sexuality and immutable. See Brief for American Psychological Association et al. as Amici Curiae 7–17.

In the late 20th century, following substantial cultural and political developments, same-sex couples began to lead more open and public lives and to establish families. This development was followed by a quite extensive discussion of the issue in both governmental and private sectors and by a shift in public attitudes toward greater tolerance. As a result, questions about the rights of gays and lesbians soon reached the courts, where the issue could be discussed in the formal discourse of the law. This Court first gave detailed consideration to the legal status of homosexuals in *Bowers v. Hardwick*, 478 U. S. 186 (1986). There it upheld the constitutionality of a Georgia law deemed to criminalize certain homosexual acts. Ten years later, in *Romer v. Evans*, 517 U. S. 620 (1996), the Court invalidated an amendment to Colorado’s Constitution that sought to foreclose any branch or political subdivision of the State from protecting persons against discrimination based on sexual orientation. Then, in 2003, the Court overruled *Bowers*, holding that laws making same-sex intimacy a crime “demea[n] the lives of homosexual persons.” *Lawrence v. Texas*, 539 U. S. 558, 575.

Against this background, the legal question of same-sex marriage arose. In 1993, the Hawaii Supreme Court held Hawaii’s law restricting marriage to opposite-sex couples constituted a classification on the basis of sex and was therefore subject to strict scrutiny under the Hawaii Constitution. *Baehr v. Lewin*, 74 Haw. 530, 852 P. 2d 44. Although this decision did not mandate that same-sex marriage be allowed, some States were concerned by its implications and reaffirmed in their laws that marriage is | The States have contributed to the fundamental character of the marriage right by placing that institution at the center of so many facets of the legal and social order. There is no difference between same- and opposite-sex couples with respect to this principle. Yet by virtue of their exclusion from that institution, same-sex couples are denied the constellation of benefits that the States have linked to marriage. This harm results in more than just material burdens. Same-sex couples are consigned to an instability many opposite-sex couples would deem intolerable in their own lives. As the State itself makes marriage all the more precious by the significance it attaches to it, exclusion from that status has the effect of teaching that gays and lesbians are unequal in important respects. It demeans gays and lesbians for the State to lock them out of a central institution of the Nation’s society.

Same-sex couples, too, may aspire to the transcendent purposes of marriage and seek fulfillment in its highest meaning. The limitation of marriage to opposite-sex couples may long have seemed natural and just, but its inconsistency with the central meaning of the fundamental right to marry is now manifest. (p. 17) |

The right to marry is fundamental as a matter of history and tradition, but rights come not from ancient sources (p18)| alone. They rise, too, from a better informed understanding of how constitutional imperatives define a liberty that remains urgent in our own era. **Many who deem same-sex marriage to be wrong reach that conclusion based on decent and honorable religious or philosophical premises, and neither they nor their beliefs are disparaged here.** But when that sincere, personal opposition becomes enacted law and public policy, the necessary consequence is to put the imprimatur of the State itself on an exclusion that soon demeans or stigmatizes those whose own liberty is then denied. Under the Constitution, same-sex couples seek in marriage the same legal treatment as opposite-sex couples, and it would disparage their choices and diminish their personhood to deny them this right.

The respondents also argue allowing same-sex couples to wed will harm marriage as an institution by leading to fewer opposite-sex marriages. This may occur, the respondents contend, because licensing same-sex marriage severs the connection between natural procreation and marriage. That argument, however, rests on a counterintuitive view of opposite-sex couple's decision making processes regarding marriage and parenthood. Decisions about whether to marry and raise children are based on many personal, romantic, and practical considerations; and **it is unrealistic to conclude that an mixed-sex couple would choose not to marry simply because same-sex couples may do so.** See *Kitchen v. Herbert*, 755 F. 3d 1193, 1223 (CA10 2014) (“[I]t is wholly illogical to believe that state recognition of the love and commitment between same-sex couples will alter the most intimate and personal decisions of opposite-sex couples”).

The respondents have not shown a foundation for the conclusion that allowing same-sex marriage will cause the harmful outcomes they (p. 26)| describe. Indeed, with respect to this asserted basis for excluding same-sex couples from the right to marry, it is appropriate to observe these cases involve only the rights of two consenting adults whose marriages would pose no risk of harm to themselves or third parties. **Finally, it must be emphasized that religions, and those who adhere to religious doctrines, may continue to advocate with utmost, sincere conviction that, by divine precepts, same-sex marriage should not be condoned.** The First Amendment ensures that religious organizations and persons are given proper protection as they seek to teach the principles that are so fulfilling and so central to their lives and faiths, and to their own deep aspirations to continue the family structure they have long revered.

The same is true of those who oppose same-sex marriage for other reasons. In turn, those who believe allowing same-sex marriage is proper or indeed essential, whether as a matter of religious conviction or secular belief, may engage those who disagree with their view in an open and searching debate.

The Constitution, however, does not permit the State to bar same-sex couples from marriage on the same terms as accorded to couples of the opposite sex. No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice, and family. In forming a marital union, two people become something greater than once they were. As some of the petitioners in these cases demonstrate, marriage embodies a love that may endure even past death. It would misunderstand these men and women to say they disrespect the idea of marriage. Their plea is that they do respect it, respect it so deeply that they seek to find its fulfillment for themselves. Their hope is not to be condemned to live in loneliness, excluded from one of civilization's oldest institutions. They ask for equal dignity in the eyes of the law. The Constitution grants them that right. The judgment of the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit is reversed. It is so ordered. (p28)

Read more: <http://www.politico.com/story/2015/06/supreme-court-gay-marriage-119462#ixzz3qegRlgw8>

had a shocking willingness to accept dinner invitations from tax collectors and prostitutes—the two classes of persons that were generally despised by the well-connected and influential Jewish authorities of his day.

Appendix 5: Further Resources

[Can Catholics and their church work out their differences on same-sex marriage?](#)

by Scott Allesi, US Catholic

[Confessions of a Gay Jesuit: How I Was Forced To Leave My Church—And Calling](#)

by Ben Brenkert, S.J., for The Daily Beast

[What Pope Francis Taught Me About Being a Catholic Lesbian](#)

by [Victoria A. Brownworth](#) in HuffPost Gay Voices, 15 Sept 2015

[The Church's Gay Obsession](#)

by Frank Bruni

[*Are There Closets in Heaven?; A Catholic Father and Lesbian Daughter Share their Story*](#)

by Carol and Robert Curoe, 01 Sept 2007

[*Archbishop: School that fired gay teacher showed 'character'*](#)

by Mary Claire Dale

[*Who Eats at the Lord's Table?*](#)

by Fr. Peter Day

[*Homosexuality and the Message of Isaiah*](#)

by Frederick J. Gaiser

[*Archbishop \[John Myers\] orders priests to deny Communion to dissenters*](#)

by John Gehring, 14 Oct 2015

[*Homosexuality and Catholicism Annotated Bibliography*](#)

by Paul Halsall, Fordham University

[*Transgender Student: 'Catholic Church Nearly Killed Me. Georgetown Saved Me.'*](#)

by Sarah Kaplan for The Hoya ([short version by Bob Shine](#))

[*Gay Irish Priest Comes Out To Parishioners — And Gets A Surprising Response*](#)

by [Carol Kuruvilla of The Huffington Post](#) 12 Jan 2015

[*Oral History Interview: Karen Doherty*](#) +9

by LGBT Religious Archives, 10 Dec 2004

[*Why students need LGBT teachers—and allies*](#)

by Hugh MacNeill and Abi Basch (teacher responding)

[*Bravely Searching for a Spirituality of Sexual Intimacy*](#)

by Marysia (22 November 2013)

[*New Approaches to LGBT People*](#)

by Bishop Geoffrey Robinson

[*Gay ministry group \[CALGM \] refuses to sign oath*](#)

by [Brian Roewe](#) in NCR, 25 June 2012

Biblical Studies

Robert A. J. Gagnon in Dan O. Via and Robert A. J. Gagnon. *The Bible and Homosexuality: Two Views*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004.

Ted Grimsrud, *The “Homosexuality” Debate: Two Streams of Biblical Interpretation* (<http://peacetheology.net/homosexuality/the-homosexuality-debate-two-streams-of-biblical-interpretation/>)

Daniel A. Helminiak. *What the Bible Really Says About Homosexuality*. San Francisco: Alamo Square Press, 1994.

David G. Myers and Letha Dawson Scanzoni. *What God Has Joined Together? A Christian Case for Gay Marriage*. HarperSanFrancisco, 2005.

In-depth Studies

Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (NY: Morrow, 1981) [Researcher discovers that in the life of virtually every educated woman in the 19th century, there was a love relationship with another woman. Such liaisons were variously described as “Boston marriage,” “the love of kindred spirits,” or “sentimental friends.” They are documents in correspondence, fiction, and biography, typically without implication of abnormality or immorality.]

Ivan Hill, ed., *The Bisexual Spouse: Different Dimensions in Sexuality* (McLean VA: Barlina Books, 1987) [Contains six in-depth interviews with bi-sexual women who marry men and, at the same time, pursue a romantic relationship with a cherished woman. Given the fact that 20% of lesbians begin with a heterosexual marriage, this study shows that bi-sexuality is more common and more easily achieved by women.]

Martin S. Weinberg, et. al., *Dual Attraction: Understanding Bisexuality* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Meet the Author

Aaron Milavec began his career as an innovative teacher and software developer for twenty-five years. He then turned his attention to gender studies and the

empowerment of women. For seven years (2007-2014) he collaborated with others in designing and expanding Catherine of Siena Virtual College--a center promoting international, interactive empowerment for women in online learning circles. In his free time, he gravitates towards the arts: painting with water colors, glass blowing, creating ceramic pottery in the Maya tradition.

In his youth, Milavec was fascinated with science. After beginning graduate studies in physics, however, Milavec suffered an unexpected loss of faith in science. At that point, he gravitated toward the philosophy of science and ended up with an abiding passion for religious inquiry and spiritual development. While a Research Fellow at the University of Victoria, he completed an essay, "How Acts of Discovery Transform our Tacit Knowing Powers in both Scientific and Religious Inquiry," *Zygon* 42/2 (2006) 465-486.

Milavec earned his B.S. in physics from the University of Dayton (Ohio), his S.T.B. from the University of Fribourg in 1968 and his Th.D. from the Graduate Theological Union (Berkeley) in 1973.

Milavec has published eight books, eight chapters in collected works, and sixty journal articles. His most recent book, *Salvation Is from the Jews*, is a soul-searching exploration of how Christians need to rethink their theology in order to be faithful to the Jewish heritage.

If you appreciated the present book, you might be interested in the eBook below since it takes the analysis in this book and extends it to seven errors that plague the faithful:

- In the USA, use=<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0178GWFTW/>
- In the UK, use= <http://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0178GWFTW/>
- In Australia, use= <http://www.amazon.com.au/dp/B0178GWFTW/>

Prior to this, Milavec devoted sixteen years to unlocking the hidden life of those mid-first-century Christians who lived the Way of Life as described in the Didache. Gaining an international reputation for his innovative research in this area, he affectionately nicknamed his thousand-page volume as "the elephant" and his hundred-page volume as "the mouse." The elephant is entitled *The Didache--Faith, Hope, and Life of the Earliest Christian Communities, 50-70 CE* (Paulist Press); the mouse is entitled *The Didache-- Text, Translation, Analysis, and Commentary* (Liturgical Press). For further details, go to <http://didache.info/AaMainDownloadsFree.htm>

Endnotes

¹ Shocking experiences: Do not read if you fear being traumatized. As a teen, my first experiences with gay existence began with scratched messages in public bathrooms: "Suck a 10" cock, 873-4926" or "Will give blow-job here next Tuesday at 9:15." At the age of 16, I was urinating in a public men's room and, next to me, a man gave out a low grunt, and now my stomach was churning because I noticed that he was watching my penis and masturbating at the same time.

Going beyond this, I still to this day remember reading a *Newsweek* article in the late 60s that described in some detail the dangerous and unsavory encounters between gay men in the bath houses of San Francisco. The fact that I remember this article with such great vividness over forty years later is a sign that this article traumatized me. I felt in my gut an intense revulsion of the “gay life style” being fashioned by gay men in these bath houses.

There is a profound difference between the San Francisco San Francisco LGBT Pride Celebration and the Cincinnati Pride Celebration. In the former, the gay life style of the bath houses spills out into the streets and those intent upon gaining recognition for “same-sex marriages” are all but overwhelmed by the pornographic allure of the exhibitionists (video: http://www.qdomine.com/Morality_video/2007GayPride3.wmv; history: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Francisco_Pride). Cincinnati Pride, on the other hand, is quite another event (<https://www.facebook.com/cincinnatipride/>) – “gay pride” is found only at [the fringes](#) and you have to be looking or you will miss it.

² To appreciate the full scope of “fitting in” to the dominant heterosexual culture, consider reflecting on “30+ Examples of Heterosexual Privilege in the US” (<http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2012/01/29-examples-of-heterosexual-privilege/>).

³ John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality* (1980). Rites of so-called "same-sex union" (Boswell's proposed translation) occur in ancient prayer-books of both the western and eastern churches. They are rites of [adelphopoiesis](#), literally [Greek](#) for “the making of brothers.” Boswell, stated that these should be regarded as sexual unions similar to marriages. Other scholars believe that they were actually rites for becoming adopted brothers, or "blood brothers." Interested readers should also see Mark. D. Jordon , *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology* and Martti Nissinen , *Homoeroticism in the Biblical World*.

⁴ In the course of history, many sayings of Jesus were lost. In the fourth century, the Church settled for a NT canon that contained only four written Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Some scattered sayings of Jesus were to be found in the other approved books. Hundreds of sayings of Jesus were passed on from person to person orally that gradually were lost to us because they never got recorded. The Gospel of Thomas (which quite possibly [was written before the canonical Gospels](#)) brings together 114 detached sayings of Jesus. About half of these sayings have parallels in the Synoptic Gospels; others are uniquely present only in this text. Likewise, the early Church Fathers recorded in their writings a few sayings of Jesus not found in the NT. In the late 1st and during the 2nd cen., [over fifty additional Gospels were written](#)—The Gospel of Mary [Magdalene], The Gospel of Peter, The Gospel of the Twelve, The Gospel of Barnabas, The Infancy Gospel of Thomas, etc. This demonstrates that persons attached to the way of Jesus used their historical recollections and their imaginations to compose Gospel narratives even when the four canonical Gospels were widely known and circulated. Last of all, I myself participated in this time-honored tradition when I composed the “Lost Sayings” here in the course of a writing workshop sponsored by [Women Writing for a Change](#), in 1997.

⁵ <https://medium.com/synapse/the-great-reversal-e6fc788a6541#.10uwafp4f> For details of what information was disseminated and what protests were planned, see <http://www.teachacceptance.org/past-events/>

⁶ US Catholic Bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family, “*Always our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers*,” 1997 (<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/homosexuality/always-our-children.cfm>)

⁷ Source =<http://newwaysministryblog.wordpress.com/church-leaders-supporting-same-gender-couples/>

+++ end of the sample chapter; beginning of your actions in favor of lesbian unions +++