

AN OVERVIEW ON CATHOLIC VIEWPOINTS ON HOMOSEXUALITY

TO LIVE IN CHRIST, **National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1976**

Homosexuals, like everyone else, should not suffer from prejudice against their basic human rights. They have a right to respect, friendship and justice. They should have an active role in the Christian community.

THE PREJUDICE AGAINST HOMOSEXUALS AND THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH, **Washington State Catholic Conference, 1983)**

Church teaching is positive with regard to homosexual persons considered in the totality of their beings ... Church teaching does not morally condemn homosexual orientation ... Nor are homosexuals to be blamed for not changing their orientations ... Church teaching makes certain judgments about the personal sinfulness of acts ... the prejudice against homosexuals is a greater infringement of the norm of Christian morality than is homosexual orientation or activity.

THE PASTORAL CARE OF HOMOSEXUAL PERSONS, **1986, no. 10**

The teachings of the Catholic Church make it clear that the fundamental human rights of homosexual persons must be defended and that all of us must strive to eliminate any forms of injustice, oppression, or violence against them.

LETTER TO THE BISHOPS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ON THE PASTORAL CARE OF HOMOSEXUAL PERSONS, **Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, 1986**

It is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the objects of violent malice in speech or in action. Such treatment deserves condemnation from the Church's pastors wherever it occurs ... The particular inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin.

THE MANY FACES OF AIDS: A GOSPEL RESPONSE, **United States Catholic Conference, 1987**

Those who are gay or lesbian ... should not be objects of discrimination, injustice or violence. All of God's sons and daughters, all members of our society, are entitled to the recognition of their full human dignity.

HUMAN SEXUALITY: A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE FOR EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING, **United States Catholic Conference, 1990**

Sexuality ... is a fundamental dimension of every human being. It is reflected physiologically, psychologically, and relationally in a person's gender identity as well as in one's primary sexual orientation and behavior. For some young men and women, this means a discovery that one is homosexual, i.e., that one's 'sexual inclinations are orientated predominately toward persons of the same sex'.

We call on all Christians and citizens of good will to confront their own fears about homosexuality and to curb the humor and discrimination that offend homosexual persons. We understand that having a homosexual orientation brings with it enough anxiety, pain and issue related to self-acceptance without society adding additional prejudicial treatment.

Educationally, homosexuality cannot and ought not be skirted or ignored. The optic must be faced in all objectivity by the pupil and the educator when the case presents itself. First and foremost, we support modeling and teaching respect for every human person, regardless of sexual orientation. Second, a parent or teacher must also present clearly and delicately the unambiguous moral norms of the Christian tradition regarding homosexual genital activity, appropriately geared to the age level and maturity of the learner. Finally, parents and educators must remain open to the possibility that a particular person, whether adolescent or adult, may be struggling to accept his or her own homosexual orientation. The distinction between being homosexual and doing homosexual genital actions, while not always clear and convincing, is a helpful and important one when dealing with the complex issue of homosexuality, particularly in the educational and pastoral arena.

Like heterosexual persons, homosexual men and women are called to give witness to chastity, avoiding, with God's grace, behavior that is wrong for them, just as nonmarital sexual relations are wrong for heterosexual men and women.

Woven through every search for genuine love, for personal maturity, and for interpersonal commitments, is a call to be chaste, sexually responsible, and appropriate for one's particular vocation or state in life. Chastity is often misunderstood as simply a suppression or deliberate inhibition of sexual thoughts, feelings, and actions in a way that values, esteems, and respects the dignity of oneself and others. Chastity frees us from the tendency to act in a manipulative or exploitive manner in our relationships and enables us to show true love and kindness always.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, 1994

(Homosexual persons) must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided.

Homosexual persons are called to chastity. Chastity means the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being.

NOTE ON CHURCH TEACHING CONCERNING HOMOSEXUAL PEOPLE, Cardinal Basil Hume, London, 1995

Friendship is a gift from God. Friendship is a way of loving. Friendship is necessary for every person. To equate friendship and full sexual involvement with another is to distort the very concept of friendship. Sexual loving presupposes friendship, but friendship does not require full sexual involvement. It is a mistake to say or think or presume that if two persons of the same or different sexes enjoy a deep and lasting friendship then they must be sexually involved.

ALWAYS OUR CHILDREN: A PASTORAL MESSAGE TO PARENTS OF HOMOSEXUAL CHILDREN AND SUGGESTIONS FOR PASTORAL MINISTERS, NCCB Bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family, 1998

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 ... It seems appropriate to understand sexual orientation (heterosexual or homosexual) as a deep seated dimension of one's personality and to recognize its relative stability in a person ... Generally, homosexual orientation is experienced as a given, not as something freely chosen. By itself, therefore, a homosexual orientation cannot be considered sinful, for morality presumes the freedom to choose ... God loves every person as a unique individual. Sexual identity helps to define the unique persons we



are. One component of our sexual identity is sexual orientation ... All homosexual persons have a right to be welcomed into the community, to hear the word of God, and to receive pastoral care. Homosexual persons who are living chaste lives should have opportunities to lead and serve the community.

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 ... In you God's love is revealed.

Adapted from: Safe Space, Santa Clara University