



The Task Force in the News

Media Highlights

Nov. 14 – Dec. 5, 2005

Quotes of the Week:

"Today, the Vatican made it official: gay men should not be priests. This is appalling on two levels. First, it defames all gay people because it is part of a calculated campaign to blame gay men for the Church's own criminal conduct in fostering and covering up decades of sex abuse of children and young people."

"Today, that silence must end. We urge gay priests and seminarians to come out and denounce this affront to their faith, vocation and dignity. We call upon all other priests and bishops of good conscience to stand up for their brothers. And, most importantly, we call upon Catholics to vociferously reject this shameful instruction."

....Matt Foreman, Executive Director

"Clearly, the Bush administration's de-funding, de-prioritizing, and de-gaying HIV prevention programs has been nothing short of a disaster and we call upon Congress to act immediately to begin to address this tragedy," said Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. (Windy City News)

Focus of the week:

The big news this past week was the release of the Vatican instructions regarding gay men in the seminaries. The Task Force issued a statement which was widely quoted in the media. The Creating Change Conference and the Hispanic Same Sex Couple Household study continued to receive coverage and California is on the radar screen.

...Roberta Sklar, Director of Communications

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[KLTV 7 Tyler-Longview-Jacksonville, TX](#) Nov. 2005
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[San Francisco Bay Times](#) Nov. 3, 2005



The Miami Herald

Widely distributed AP story ran in publications across the country, including:

Aberdeen American News (South Dakota)
Akron Beacon Journal (Ohio)
Belleville News-Democrat (Illinois)
The Buffalo News (New York)
The Bradenton Herald (Florida)
Centre Daily Times (State College, PA)
Duluth News-Tribune (Minnesota)

Hartford Courant (Connecticut)
The Lexington Herald Leader (Kentucky)
The Myrtle Beach Sun-News (Georgia)
The Philadelphia Inquirer (Philadelphia)
The Tallahassee Democrat (Florida)
Ventura County Star (California)
The Wichita Eagle (Kansas)

Vatican Defends Policy on Gay Priests Vatican Defends Ban Preventing Men With 'Deep-Seated' Homosexual Tendencies From Becoming Priests

By VICTOR L. SIMPSON Associated Press Writer

The Associated Press

VATICAN CITY - The Vatican defended a policy statement designed to keep men with "deep-seated" homosexual tendencies from becoming priests, but said there would be no crackdown on gays who are already ordained.

The Vatican document, the first major policy statement of Pope Benedict XVI's papacy, was officially released Tuesday after being leaked earlier. Conservatives have said it may help reverse the "gay culture" of many U.S. seminaries, while liberal critics complain the restrictions will create morale problems among clergy and lead to an even greater priest shortage in the United States.

The Rev. James Martin, a U.S. Jesuit who has written on the issue, said American theologians, canon lawyers and other Roman Catholics will "hope that the document won't really mean what it says." But he believes it's clear the Vatican wants to keep gay men from being ordained even if they're committed to celibacy and hopes bishops and seminary rectors will act accordingly.

Martin predicted "a slow, silent attrition among celibate gay men who cannot accept the idea of staying in an organization that condemns their existence in the priesthood."

Matt Foreman of America's National Gay and Lesbian Task Force called the document "appalling," saying it was an affront to thousands of gay priests. He accused the Vatican of "a calculated campaign to blame gay men for the church's own criminal conduct in fostering and covering up decades of sex abuse."

The official "Instruction" from the Congregation for Catholic Education was released a week after an Italian Catholic news agency posted a leaked copy on its Web site.

The document has been in the works for years, but its existence came to light in 2002 at the height of the clergy sex abuse scandal in the United States. A study commissioned by U.S. bishops found most abuse victims since 1950 were adolescent boys.

Experts on sex offenders say homosexuals are no more likely than heterosexuals to molest young people, but that did not stifle questions about gay seminarians.

The Instruction said men "who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture'" cannot be admitted to seminaries. The only exception would be for those with a "transitory problem" that had been overcome for at least three years.

The head of the education congregation defended the document as a clear reflection of long-standing church teaching, saying that "in this field, in today's world, there is some confusion."

"Many defend the position according to which the homosexual condition is a normal condition for the human being, as if it were nearly a third gender," Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski told Vatican Radio.

He also made clear the Instruction was intended for candidates for the priesthood and not someone who "discovers his homosexuality after having been ordained."

The cardinal said such a priest "has to try to live in chastity ... Maybe he will need more spiritual support than others, but I think he should be a priest in the best way possible."

The cardinal also elaborated on the meaning of "transitory" problems.

"For example, during an adolescence not yet completed, some curiosity; or, under accidental circumstances, when drunk, or other particular conditions such as a person who has been in prison for many years. In these cases, the possible homosexual acts do not come from a deeply seated tendency, but are determined by the circumstances," he said.

"Or, these acts are made to please someone and obtain advantages ... These acts in such cases do not originate from a 'deeply seated' tendency, but from other transitory circumstances, and these cases are not an obstacle to the admission to the seminary or to holy order. In this case though, they have to end at least three years before the diaconal ordainment."

Candidates for the priesthood who have slight homosexual tendencies could be "very talented, very able and very valuable" to the church, said Austrian Bishop Klaus Kueng.

But Kueng acknowledged the difficulties such candidates might encounter. "It would undermine the celibacy requirement if a homosexual subculture were to exist in a seminary or a monastery," he said.

The Rev. Timothy Radcliff, former superior of the Dominican order, wrote in the British Catholic weekly the Tablet that the phrase "deep-seated homosexual tendencies" could be interpreted as concerning men with a "permanent homosexual orientation."

"But this cannot be correct since, as I have said, there are many excellent priests who are gay and who clearly have a vocation from God."

"Having worked with bishops and priests, diocesan and religious, all over the world, I have no doubt that God does call homosexuals to the priesthood, and they are among the most dedicated and impressive priests I have met," he wrote.

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The New York Times

ON THE WEB

November 30, 2005

Directive Banning Gay Priests Is Released by Vatican

By IAN FISHER

VATICAN CITY, Nov. 29 - The Vatican officially issued a new document today that strongly reinforces its ban on ordaining homosexuals as priests, and a cardinal, making the church's first public comment on the decree, rejected criticism that it is discriminatory.

"It's not discrimination, for example, if one does not admit a person who suffers from vertigo to a school for astronauts," the cardinal, Zenon Grocholewski, head of the Congregation for Catholic Education, the Vatican department that issued the directive, said in an interview broadcast on Vatican Radio.

The document's official release ended months of piecemeal leaks on one of the most sensitive issues facing the church. Last week, a copy of the entire directive was posted on an Italian Web site, sparking debate especially among American Catholics about how restrictive the church meant to be and how the rules would be applied in practice.

It was officially published today in two forms, as a booklet that ran for seven pages, in the English translation with footnotes, and in the official Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano.

The newspaper also published a much longer commentary by Tony Anatrella, a French Jesuit and psychologist, who repeated the church's long-held condemnation of homosexuality both in the priesthood and in the wider culture. Generally, he said, homosexuality "presented a destabilizing reality for people and for society."

"During these past years, homosexuality has become a phenomenon that is always increasingly worrying and in many countries is considered a quality that is normal," he wrote. He said that homosexuality was a "sexual tendency and not an identity."

According to the text of the document itself, the church will not admit to a seminary nor ordain "those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture.'"

Only candidates who had experienced "homosexual tendencies" that were "transitory" will be ordained, the directive said, provided such tendencies had been "overcome" three years before ordination as a deacon, a step on the path to full ordination as a priest.

But the document did not provide definitions of terms like "tendencies," "deep-seated" or "overcome," though Cardinal Grocholewski gave several specific instances of homosexuality that could be considered "transitory" and thus possibly acceptable.

"For example, some curiosity during adolescence, or accidental circumstances in a state of drunkenness, or particular circumstances, like someone who was in prison for many years," he said in the Vatican Radio interview.

Advance reports of the new instructions pleased many conservative Catholics, who say that church teaching on homosexuality needs to be restated and enforced. But many liberals, who say that celibacy rather than sexual orientation ought to determine eligibility for the priesthood, have been equally critical.

A central question is whether the new rules will allow the ordination of a man who is celibate but believes his basic sexual orientation to be homosexual.

The new instructions do not apply to priests already ordained, though some liberal Catholics predicted resignations in protest by some priests who consider themselves gay.

Though the general content of the document has been widely known for some time, many local church officials withheld comment until today, when the official version was issued.

The president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, issued a statement calling the new policy a "timely document" in an era when homosexuality and gay marriage are so widely discussed.

He said it was a "valid concern" for the church to seek priests who are chaste, mature and "can faithfully represent the teaching of the church about sexuality, including the immorality of homosexual genital activity."

Bishop Skylstad said that for people who wonder whether "homosexually inclined" men can be good priests, the answer is yes. In the future, he said, a man could be considered for the priesthood "if homosexual tendencies are indicative of a passing problem in the candidate's life."

He called on bishops, major superiors, seminary rectors, priests and seminarians in the United States to discuss the new instructions thoroughly.

In an effort to stir resistance to the Vatican directive, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, based in Washington D.C., called on closeted gay priests to go public and "denounce this affront to their faith, vocation and dignity." It said that heterosexual priests, bishops and parishioners should stand up for gay priests.

Laurie Goodstein contributed reporting from New York for this article.

The New York Times

Editorials / Op-Ed

Ban on Gay Priests

Published: December 2, 2005

To the Editor:

Re "Vatican Officially Releases Document on Banning New Gay Priests" (news article, Nov. 30):

Tragically, the Vatican again refuses to address a persistent problem in its midst: pedophilia.

As much as the Vatican tries to paint pedophilia and homosexuality as one and the same, it simply isn't so.

A 1998 study in The Journal of the American Medical Association found that 90 percent of pedophiles were men and that 98 percent of these individuals were heterosexual.

It's not likely that the Vatican will change its position any time soon, but the media can shed light on this problem, which could cost many more young people their childhoods, many good priests their vocations, and many congregations the able leadership of priests who happen to be gay.

Matt Foreman
Executive Director, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
New York, Nov. 30, 2005

Nature or nurture?

By Ellen Goodman | December 2, 2005

SOMEWHERE ALONG the way, the dividing line over gay issues picked up and moved. It's no longer between red and blue states, or left and right wings, but between nature and nurture. Or to be more precise, between those who believe that homosexuality is a choice and those who believe that homosexuality is innate.

Remember the moment in the 2004 debate when CBS's Bob Schieffer asked Bush and Kerry whether they thought homosexuality was a choice? The president answered, "I don't know," and the senator replied, "We're all God's children."

Well, it turns out that the more you believe homosexuality is innate, the more accepting you are of gay rights. A full 79 percent of people who think human beings are born with a sexual orientation support gay rights, including civil unions or marriage equality. But only 22 percent of those who believe homosexuality is a choice agree.

The same line can be found in the religious world between those who regard homosexuality as a (bad) choice and those who see it as a (biological) trait. The most conservative Protestant churches that talk about the homosexual "lifestyle" prohibit gay ministers. Religious liberals who see sexual orientation as an inborn trait, are more open to gays in the pulpit.

All and all, Americans seem reluctant to condemn people for who they simply *are*.

What then do we make of the Catholic Church's banning -- and perhaps purging -- of gay priests? On Tuesday, the much-leaked and much-awaited document from the Vatican said the church "cannot admit to the seminary or to Holy Orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies, or support the so-called gay culture."

What was painful to many Catholics was the obvious scapegoating of gays for the church sexual abuse scandal. But there was something less obvious.

Thirty years ago the Catholic Church accepted the view that some were definitively gay. Church teachings said "they do not choose their homosexual condition." Nevertheless, the new document doesn't just ban gays who "practice" homosexuality, breaking the vows of celibacy. It bans all those with homosexual "tendencies."

In the strange new backsliding language of the Vatican, homosexuality is a "tendency." The church doesn't define tendency, nor does it say whether such a tendency is biological. Voluntary or not, it marks a man permanently. As Matt Foreman, a gay activist raised Catholic, says, "Doesn't matter what you do or believe or practice. If you are gay, there is no making that better in the eyes of the church."

Ironically, the only exemptions are offered to men who were not "real" homosexuals but "transitory" ones. They're given a pass, in the words of a Vatican cardinal, for "some curiosity during adolescence or accidental circumstances in a state of drunkenness or particular circumstances like someone who was in prison for many years." A drunk or ex-con is OK; a chaste, gay seminarian is not.

The same cardinal said that banning gays was no more discriminatory than "if a person who suffers from vertigo is not admitted to a school for astronauts." Such a dizzying analogy overlooks the fact that gay men are already among the stars of the priesthood.

The document does more than denigrate the priests who have given their lives to the ministry. In the face of a conflict between biology and sin, the church has labeled homosexuality as "intrinsically disordered."

Let's remember that the evidence is with those on the nature side of the dividing line. While we don't know the precise biology, the weight of research suggests that sexual orientation is indeed something we are born with. Perhaps there is a "gay gene." Perhaps the Japanese scientists who found how a gene alters the sexual orientation of the fruit fly will find a similar switch for people.

Science may well offer some future shocks. Imagine, for a moment, we could tweak the "gay gene" in a petri dish or a womb. What would the religious right, which opposes both homosexuality and embryonic research, say about eliminating the "sin"? What would the left, which favors reproductive choice but is appalled at the idea of "curing" a population of homosexuals, say?

For now, however, the church has run directly into a conflict. Increasingly, Americans accept homosexuality as something that isn't chosen and cannot easily be changed. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church has moved in the opposite direction, rejecting men with "deep-seated tendencies."

Once, even the most conservative churches proclaimed they could love the sinner and hate the sin. The new pope's Vatican has labeled homosexuals themselves as the sin. The case is closed and so are the doors to the seminary.

Ellen Goodman's e-mail address is ellengoodman@globe.com. ■



Vatican officially unveils policy banning gays from seminaries

By **Marie Szaniszlo**

Wednesday, November 30, 2005 - Updated: 08:15 AM EST

After months of anticipation prompted by a series of leaks, the Vatican officially released a policy statement yesterday intended to keep men with "deep-seated" gay tendencies from becoming priests.

The document, the first major policy statement of Pope Benedict XVI's papacy, stops short of banning gays who have already been ordained, but says men "who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture' " cannot be admitted to seminaries.

The sole exception is those with a "transitory problem," such as a drunken encounter or adolescent "curiosity," provided it has been overcome for at least three years, Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski told Vatican Radio.

The Rev. Christopher Kirwan, dean of faculty at St. John's Seminary in Brighton, said the policy will help bishops and seminary rectors strengthen programs intended to help determine whether men are suited to the priesthood.

Kirwan said he does not believe the document will have a "chilling effect" on morale or exacerbate the priest shortage in the United States.

Matt Foreman of America's National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, however, called the document an "appalling" affront to thousands of gay priests.

Foreman accused the Vatican of "a calculated campaign to blame gay men for the church's own criminal conduct in fostering and covering up decades of sex abuse."

The policy has been in the works for years, but surfaced in 2002 at the height of the clergy sex abuse scandal in the United States. A study commissioned by U.S. bishops found most abuse victims since 1950 were adolescent boys.

Experts on sex offenders, however, say gays are no more likely than heterosexuals to molest young people.



Vermont bishop takes stand on gay priests

November 30, 2005

By Kevin O'Connor Rutland Herald

Vermont Catholic Bishop Salvatore Matano will stand by gay priests as long as they stay celibate and teach that "homosexual activity is immoral."

The Vatican, in an announcement Tuesday, said the worldwide Catholic Church won't ordain men who are active homosexuals, have "deep-seated tendencies" or support "gay culture."

In response, Matano said the statewide Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington would obey the instruction in regard to men in seminaries, but won't question Vermont's 82 current priests.

"For those ordained and who find themselves with a homosexual tendency, it should be noted that this does not affect the validity of Holy Orders," Matano said in a statement. "Priests are expected to be celibate and to teach that homosexual activity is immoral. If a homosexually inclined priest is celibate, faithfully conveying church teaching, this instruction places no added burden upon him."

The Vatican announcement is sparking debate at a time when the 148,000-member Vermont diocese is dealing with a clergy shortage and more than a dozen lawsuits charging former priests with child sexual abuse. Matano said although the instruction reiterated past practice, he understood the church's need to say it again.

"In addressing this sensitive issue, the church wishes to assure that those who are to be ordained priests have an undivided mind, heart and will in relation to fundamental moral matters so that they are able to present this teaching to the faithful with a true sense of integrity and authenticity," he said.

But the bishop added that gay priests who obey church teachings could continue to work in the state's 130 parishes.

"A person who has come to grips with his sexuality and is at the same time able to live a life consistent with the church's teachings as demonstrated by his actions and lifestyle requires careful consideration in the discernment of a priestly vocation," he said.

Matano declined a request for an interview. But the bishop, installed earlier this month, decided to release his first public statement after reading the Vatican announcement online.

"He read it in Italian," diocesan spokeswoman Gloria Gibson added.

Matano said all Vermont Catholics must practice chastity, be it married couples remain-ing faithful to each other or singles refraining from extramarital sex. He also called for restraint when considering other people's sexuality.

"Every person has the right not to have his personal issues made public," the bishop said. "One must be pastoral, discreet and charitable when addressing a person's human sexuality. A matter so personal and integral to one's life must be treated with the utmost concern for the person with a genuine effort to understand the struggles and hardships endured by the person."

The Vermont Catholic Church has spoken out against homosexuality and lobbied the Legislature against civil unions for same-sex couples. But Matano cautioned people against resorting to verbal or physical threats.

"Slander, unbridled attacks and, worst of all, violent actions have no place in this discussion and certainly do not reflect

the call of Jesus Christ to love one another despite all the weaknesses and imperfections that are a part of the human condition," he said. "The instruction makes it clear that those who find themselves in a sexually conflicted state 'must be accepted with respect and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided.'"

The bishop added: "When people are suffering and enduring trials, the church is expected to minister to them even if our teaching is difficult for them to accept."

The Vatican announcement came a week after an Italian Catholic news agency posted a leaked copy on its Web site.

The Vatican document is the first major policy statement of Pope Benedict XVI's papacy. Conservatives have said it may help reverse the "gay culture" of many U.S. seminaries, while liberal critics complain the restrictions will create morale problems among clergy and lead to an even greater priest shortage in the United States.

Matt Foreman of America's National Gay and Lesbian Task Force called the document "appalling," saying it was an affront to thousands of gay priests. He accused the Vatican of "a calculated campaign to blame gay men for the church's own criminal conduct in fostering and covering up decades of sex abuse."

Some observers also have raised questions about exactly what the document means by a "deep-seated homosexual tendency," since a definition isn't provided.

The head of the Congregation for Catholic Education, which released the "Instruction," defended the document as a clear reflection of church teaching, saying "in this field, in today's world, there is some confusion."

"Many defend the position according to which the homosexual condition is a normal condition for the human being, as if it were nearly a third gender," Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski told Vatican Radio.

He also made clear the Instruction is intended for candidates for the priesthood and not someone who "discovers his homosexuality after having been ordained."

The cardinal said such a priest "has to try to live in chastity ... maybe he will need more spiritual support than others, but I think he should be a priest in the best way possible."

The document restates church teaching that deep-seated homosexual tendencies are "objectively disordered" but that gays should be treated with respect and shouldn't be discriminated against.

"In light of such teaching ... the church, while profoundly respecting the persons in question, cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture,'" it says.

Such men can't be priests because they are in a situation that "gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women," it says.

But it distinguishes such men from others with homosexual tendencies "that were only the expression of a transitory problem — for example, that of an adolescence not yet superseded."

"Nevertheless, such tendencies must be clearly overcome at least three years before ordination to the diaconate," it says.

The Vermont diocese hasn't received any calls for or against the position since then, Gibson said.

"This is dealing specifically with seminarians — this is not going to turn into a witch hunt here," the diocesan spokeswoman said. "Sexual orientation is not the problem. The thing being considered is can you be celibate so you can donate your life to the service of God and his people."

AP contributed to this story.

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EUROPE NEWS

Gay groups slam Vatican document on homosexual priests (Roundup)

By DPA

Nov 29, 2005, 19:00 GMT

Rome - The Vatican has reaffirmed its opposition to homosexuals becoming priests with a controversial document published Tuesday that was immediately slammed as 'discriminatory' and 'hypocritical' by gay activists.

Drafted by the Church's Congregation for the Catholic Education and approved by Pope Benedict XVI, the 9-page document is an Instruction containing norms 'concerning a specific question'; whether to admit to the priesthood 'candidates who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies'.

It is seen as offering Church officials the clearest guidelines yet on an issue 'made more urgent by the current situation' - an apparent reference to a series of recent sex abuse scandals involving Catholic priests in the United States and other countries around the world.

Noting that the Church traditionally considers homosexual acts as 'grave sins' because they are 'intrinsically immoral and contrary to natural law', the Instruction reiterates the Church's ban on gay priests.

'In light of such teachings ... it is necessary to state clearly that the Church, while profoundly respecting the persons in question, cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practise homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture'.'

The document states that 'unjust discrimination' towards gays 'should be avoided' while Church officials note that the priesthood is a gift, not a right.

The document, which does not apply to already ordained priests, makes an exception in the case of men whose homosexual tendencies are 'the expression of a transitory problem' and states that such people may become priests if such tendencies are 'clearly overcome at least three years before ordination to the diaconate' - the last step before becoming a priest.

It does not explain how the 'transitory problem' may be overcome or how a candidate can prove that he no longer has homosexual tendencies, but notes that it would be 'gravely dishonest for a candidate to hide his own homosexuality'.

Vatican expert John L. Allen of the U.S.-based National Catholic Reporter argues that the document falls short of an outright ban on gay candidates while Father Thomas Reese, a Jesuit scholar, has told the BBC that the fact that the document refers to 'tendencies' rather than orientation 'has left many people scratching their heads'.

But while many conservative Catholics see it as a welcome clarification on a ban first formalised by a Church document published in 1961, gay activists in Italy, Germany and the United States see it as a discriminatory document which will force many would-be priests further underground.

'It is to be feared that the requirements will lead to a climate of intimidation and secretiveness,' the Ecumenical Task Force of Homosexuals and the German Federation of Lesbians and Gays said in a joint statement issued in Berlin.

Franco Grillini, a leading Italian gay activist, psychologist and member of parliament, sees the Instruction as a 'scientifically unsound' document that 'racially discriminates gays'.

'People don't choose to be gay, they are born that way. Just in the same way as some are born with brown or blonde hair,' Grillini told Deutsche Presse-Agentur dpa.

'This is a ridiculous document for a number of reasons. Studies have found that a person's sexual orientation is formed at a very early age and I have never met someone who has stopped being gay,' Grillini said.

In the United States, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force said it was 'appalled' by the document.

'It defames all gay people because it is part of a calculated campaign to blame gay men for the Church's own criminal conduct in fostering and covering up decades of sex abuse of children and young people,' Matt Foreman, the group's executive director, said in a statement.

The group, the country's first national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender civil rights and advocacy organization, urged gay priests and seminarians to come out and denounce the 'affront to their faith, vocation and dignity'.

Father Christopher Kirwan, dean of faculty at St. John's Seminary in Boston, stressed that homosexuality and paedophilia were separate issues.

'The priests who abused minors are culpable and there's no link between the two,' said Kirwan, who is a professor of moral theology.

He said the document was intended to help bishops and others address the question of 'deep-seated' homosexual tendencies in men who wanted to become priests.

Thomas Groome, theology professor at Boston College, told the Cable News Network (CNN) that the document was 'open to interpretation' and that he hoped it wouldn't lead to the emergence of a gay subculture in the church.

The French reformist Catholic magazine Goliath, in a comment published in response to extracts of the Instruction published on the Internet earlier this month, described the Vatican text as 'scandalous, discriminatory and insulting

The guidelines provided by the Instruction are thought to be the outcome of a review ordered by the late Pope John Paul II in the wake of the abuse scandals in the U.S., in which several men accused Catholic priests of having abused them as teenagers.

But according to Father Eberhard von Gemmingen of Vatican Radio's German language service, the document is simply a response 'to the growing number of homosexuals in the world'.

The New York Times

November 20, 2005

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Gay Retirement Communities Are Growing in Popularity

By **CLAIRE WILSON**

ALMETTO, Fla.

THREE years ago, Philip Owens started thinking about retiring from a career in retailing in New York, and he considered what his next move might be. He wanted to get away from the snow and miserable winters. Florida's Gulf Coast beckoned, especially Sarasota with its rich cultural calendar.

A friend searched the Internet for him and found the Palms of Manasota, a community for people 55 and older just north of Bradenton. Mr. Owens, now 63, went to visit and loved the quiet streets lined with houses and town houses the color of pale terra cotta, the attractive landscaping and the friendly residents. But it also had one other important thing going for it.

"It is a community of people who happen to be gay," Mr. Owens said. Last year, he moved into a three-bedroom, two-bath duplex that cost \$246,000.

With 51 units, and more being built, the Palms, with town houses now starting at \$190,000 and detached houses selling for \$299,000, is one of a growing number of communities aimed at the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender population across the country. There are four communities operating, one under construction and about 18 more in the planning stage, according to Gerard Koskovich, staff liaison for the lesbian and gay aging issue network of the American Society on Aging in San Francisco.

"We are just now reaching the point where if the projects being built are successful, that will give a push to predevelopment efforts under way across the country," Mr. Koskovich said.

Developments range from the 278-unit Resort on Carefree Boulevard, an 11-year-old, women's-only community of manufactured homes and recreational vehicles near Fort Myers, Fla., where a recreational vehicle lot costs about \$90,000, to the upscale RainbowVision, in Santa Fe, N.M., which last month opened the first 20 of 60 planned condos, priced at \$270,000 each, all of which have been sold.

Although RainbowVision is being marketed as a residence for "the second 50 years," with club facilities and a cabaret planned, it accepts residents with varying needs and of different ages, according to Joy Silver, the chief executive of RainbowVision Properties, the developer.

There will also be 60 independent living units for rent that will include meal service and housekeeping and 26 rentals that provide assisted-living services like medical-care monitoring.

Ms. Silver said the assisted-living services are also available for younger residents with medical challenges. Some communities, like the Palms, are restricted to people 55 and older, while others, like RainbowVision, are marketed more broadly to people wanting to plan ahead. Buyers at Birds of a Feather, a 160-acre, environmentally friendly project about to get under way in Pecos, N.M., range in age from 42 to 63, according to Bonnie McGowan, the community's chief

executive and founder. "They are buying a second home or vacation home but are concerned about their future," she said.

Prices on the smallest of 64 units planned start at \$342,000 for a 1,620-square-foot Santa-Fe-style town house called a casita, Ms. McGowan said.

Communities are not allowed to discriminate and are open to anyone wishing to live in a gay-friendly environment. Two straight couples live at the Palms of Manasota.

Stonewall Communities, a 14,000-square-foot, 55-unit apartment building planned for Boston's Fenway neighborhood will also be mixed, according to David Aronstein, president of Stonewall Communities, where one- and two-bedroom units will be priced at market value, between \$400,000 and \$600,000.

"As one person said, 'I don't need it to be exclusively gay; I just want to be in the majority for once in my life,' " he said.

Ms. Silver envisions 10 to 15 RainbowVision properties over the next 10 years, designed to serve a population whose over-50 members currently number more than three million, according to Sean Cahill, director of the policy institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, although he admits estimates are rough and most likely conservative.

Most people interviewed at Palms of Manasota said they bought here to live in a place that offers them social comfort. "I want to be able to walk around holding John's hand or give him a hug," said Billy Bruce Wagener, 71, a retired professor of public address and theater, referring to his partner of 14 years, John Dorr, 75, a retired Episcopal priest. "I can do that here without feeling the pressure of being straight. We can be ourselves." The two men shared an apartment in their home state, Indiana, and moved to the Palms in 1998.

Fear of what lies ahead as residents age also makes these communities appealing. Aging gays and lesbians fearing discrimination and sometimes abuse in mainstream care facilities are often forced back into the closet if they require long-term care, and rarely are same-sex couples permitted to share rooms in these facilities. Reluctance to be open about sexual preference leads to isolation that can affect the level of care elderly gays get.

Greer North and Roger Robinson, trim 64-year-olds in electric blue T-shirts who have been a couple for 42 years, live in a spacious, 1,600-square-foot house in the Palms overlooking a pond with a fountain. "If something happened to either one of us, we wouldn't want to go to a straight home," said Mr. North, who retired from a technical company in Oregon.

Over the next few years, the Palms will add a pool, a clubhouse and an assisted-living center with the emphasis on holistic health care, according to Mary Lynah, president and trustee of the development corporation.

Meanwhile, the emphasis is on independent living in the Palms, whose social network is extremely busy, with a highly developed sense of community-as-family and neighbors helping neighbors.

Geraldine Whitaker Scott, a former school psychologist who has multiple sclerosis, lives alone and gets around in a motorized wheelchair but knows she can rely on her support system of neighbors whenever she needs them - something she couldn't do back in New Jersey, where her family is dispersed.

"If I have a problem, I just pick up the phone and people come," she said. "It is a family environment."

Such social contact is key to staying healthy, according to Ms. Silver of RainbowVision. "Frequency of social contact is critical," she said. "Less isolation means better mental and spiritual health."

In her view, the new communities will be a model for the mainstream, where elderly care is a hot-button issue. "We set the trend in music, art and fashion," she said, "and we are going to be setting the trend in communities for the second 50 years."

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POLITICS



Brett c Vermilyea

Matt Foreman, seen here in 2003 when he assumed leadership of the Task Force, spoke this past week about the need to unite secular and faith-based components of the LGBT civil rights struggle.

Task Force Focuses on Faith

At Creating Change, Matt Foreman, others urge strong offensive to regain moral high ground

By JOE DIGNAN

So much of the bigotry we face is framed around so-called “deeply held religious beliefs,” argued National Gay and Lesbian Task Force executive director Matt Foreman, that the gay civil rights movement will not advance further unless it goes forward as a united secular and religious community.

Oakland, just across the bay from San Francisco, was the host to the Task Force’s annual Creating Change conference last week, where a record 2,500 lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered activists came together, to “plan, commiserate, and learn,” Foreman said.

“Our message for the conference is that we and our allies need to reclaim moral values—and that involves not hesitating to talk about the immortality of our opponents’ tactics,” he stated in an interview on Saturday.

Creating Change is “the annual gathering of the activist family.... to share success stories and failures.”

“It’s the one time of the year to meet people who are doing the same thing,” Foreman said, “because so many work in relative isolation, people are hungry for skills and information.”

They came from most states—including large delegations of New York activists, from organizations like the Empire State Pride Agenda and The Door, which operates an educational and health program for youth in Lower Manhattan—and attended almost 300 workshops, about half of which were organized by NGLTF staff, the rest by other organizations and individuals.

“We don’t censor,” Foreman said.

Subjects ranged from serving homeless LGBT youth, to lobbying rules for non-profits, a critique of the gay movement from “radical queers,” fighting for LGBT rights within the United Nations, police misconduct, planning for World Pride in Jerusalem, and the ballroom scene. Attendees watched a movie, produced by Children of Gays and Lesbians Everywhere (COLAGE), about what it’s like to have LGBT parents.

But on Saturday, and in his keynote address the day before, Foreman emphasized that “the secular part of the movement has distanced itself from people of faith, and that’s got to end.”

On Saturday afternoon, the Empire State Pride agenda's Christopher Cormier led a session about organizing among communities of faith. He emphasized that the Pride Agenda isn't a religious organization.

"We're an advocacy group, not a religious group," he said, but ESPA's "Pride in the Pulpit" program has now attracted more than 450 members and is crucial to undoing what Foreman called "the unholy alliance between religious extremism and political extremism."

"We don't do theology," Cormier said. "This is about passing legislation."

In California, gay Democratic San Francisco Assemblyman Mark Leno introduced his gay marriage bill this year in the sanctuary of Glide Memorial Methodist Church in San Francisco, with ministers from half a dozen churches present. After its first introduction last year that legislation died early, partly because of opposition from religious fundamentalists. But this year it passed both the Assembly and the State Senate, only to be vetoed by Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. Leno credits some of the success to the efforts of religious communities in advocating for it.

NGLTF has grown quickly since Foreman took over two and a half years ago. Its \$9.1 million budget has doubled, as has its staff, now at a total of about 50. About \$1.6 million of its funding came in two enormous grants from a donor who remains anonymous—even to Foreman. But even after its explosive growth, Foreman's group is small compared to the Washington-based Human Rights Campaign, which ran on a \$30 million budget last year, over half of the total contributed to all national gay rights organizations combined.

Foreman and HRC butted heads after the 2004 election when Foreman criticized the larger group when the New York Times reported it was backing away from gay marriage as a goal and considering giving its support to Republican President George W. Bush's Social Security privatization scheme. HRC denied the report.

"A more radicalized gay movement will make more progress," Foreman said. "I don't think accommodation gets you anywhere. But you need different kinds of organizations... Aggressive activism is not incompatible with behind-the-scenes lobbying. In fact, they're complementary."

According to Foreman, about 75 percent of Americans support non-discrimination legislation for gays, and even 77 percent of Christian Evangelicals support safe schools laws. But only 17 states have non-discrimination laws, just seven of those include transgender protections, and less than 10 specifically protect gay and lesbian kids from violence in their schools.

The federal government offers no protections whatsoever.

The NGLTF has expanded its operation in the nation's capital, adding eight new staff members, including long-time Washington hand Eleanor Acheson, an assistant attorney general in the Clinton administration and the granddaughter of Dean Acheson, secretary of state in the Kennedy administration.

Foreman demanded that politicians who claim to be gay allies "take a stand for us and not run away." He called the posture taken in 2004 by leading Democrats, including presidential nominee John Kerry, "spineless and incoherent."

"Instead of being on the defensive, push back," Foreman said as a rule of thumb for those seeking progressive change.

Windy City Times

HIV Diagnosis Fluctuates Among Categories

by Bob Roehr
2005-11-30

The rate of HIV diagnosis in the United States remained relatively stable over the last four years, according to data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in a Nov. 17 telephone news conference.

However, the rate dipped about 5% among Blacks and increased among men who have sex with men. Those findings were based upon data from 33 states that use names-based reporting of HIV diagnoses.

This is the first time that the CDC has included data from New York, which has about 20% of the national burden of HIV infections. It does not include numbers from states that do not report diagnoses by name, such as California and Illinois, as the CDC believes that other systems are not as reliable.

Ronald O. Valdiserri, acting director of the CDC's National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention, said 38,685 people were newly diagnosed with HIV in those 33 states in 2004. That reflects both recent infections and those that occurred years ago. The CDC continues to estimate that about 40,000 Americans become infected with HIV each year.

"Over the four-year period, the rate of diagnoses did decline among African Americans by roughly 5% every year," Valdiserri said. "But in 2004, the rate of HIV diagnosis remained 8.4 times higher among African Americans than among whites."

Blacks constitute 51% of those diagnosed with HIV over the four-year period; whites 29%; Hispanics 18%; and other groups less than 2%.

Men who have sex with men (MSM) constituted the largest risk for transmission (44%) while MSM who also injected drugs added another 4%. Heterosexual transmission was 34% and injection drug use as the only factor was 17% over the four-year period.

The decline in diagnoses among injection drug users "largely occurred in New York" and likely are attributed to comprehensive prevention programs, including needle-exchange programs, said CDC epidemiologist Lisa Lee. This "may have also contributed to the decline in diagnoses among African Americans."

"Among men who have sex with men, diagnoses remained roughly stable for the first three years of the period, but increased 8% between 2003 and 2004," consistently across all races, Lee added. She warned that this increase among gay men could reflect "increases in risk behavior and syphilis." Valdiserri said it "could reflect increased HIV incidence, increased testing, or some combination of both."

Critics of the Bush administration would add other factors into the mix as well. They point to harassing audits of HIV prevention programs that serve gay men and a shift in resources to abstinence-only programs. Far-right groups also have undermined safe-sex messages through attacks on the effectiveness of condoms at preventing infection.

"Clearly, the Bush administration's de-funding, de-prioritizing, and de-gayng HIV prevention programs has been nothing short of a disaster and we call upon Congress to act immediately to begin to address this tragedy," said Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

— The Independent Student Newspaper at Boston University —

THE DAILY FREE PRESS

O N L I N E E D I T I O N

The Daily Free Press - News
Issue: 11/28/05

Chief gay marriage opponent to retire

By Michelle Laczkoski

After serving 12 terms in the House of Representatives and defining himself as one of the most vocal critics of gay marriage in the State Legislature, Rep. Philip Travis (D-Rehoboth) has announced he will not run for re-election next year.

Travis, whose term will end in December 2006, said in a statement that a change in the direction of his life and a desire to spend more time with his family prompted the decision.

In 2004, Travis proposed a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage, which was ultimately defeated.

Sue Hyde of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force said she is "delighted" with Travis's decision not to run for re-election.

"This is a great blow to the opponents of marriage equality that the standard bearer of the cause in the Legislature is stepping aside," Hyde said. "The Legislature is losing one of the two people willing to be outspoken on the issue and willing to carry the weight. They lost half of their team, and that will be a big problem for them."

Besides Travis, Hyde identified Rep. Emile Goguen (D-Fitchburg) as the only other vocal critic of gay marriage in the Legislature.

Despite fears that the pending citizen initiative for an amendment to ban same-sex marriage will fizzle without Travis's influence, Kris Mineau, president of the Massachusetts Family Institute, said he is hopeful that Travis's successor will demonstrate similar values.

"We have legislators with us on the amendment, and Rep. Travis still has one year left where he will continue to champion traditional values," Mineau said.

Mineau said the Massachusetts Family Institute, an organization that opposes the legalization of gay marriage, defines marriage as a union between a man and woman only.

"The community in which Travis served holds tradition of highest importance, and the next viable candidate will demonstrate those same values," he said.

Hyde agreed that because Travis represents a district with adamant opposition to same-sex marriage, the person who takes his place may hold similar views.

But Hyde said the Task Force has begun discussions and will heavily recruit a candidate from the "pro-equality platform" to replace Travis.

Hyde said that Travis's leaving the Legislature will "help ... efforts to preserve, protect and defend same-sex marriage."

The abortion-homosexual connection

Posted: December 2, 2005

1:00 a.m. Eastern

By Robert Knight

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California Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's appointment of longtime Democrat, lesbian activist and pro-abortion leader Susan Kennedy as his chief of staff is more evidence of The Terminator's disdain for social conservatives.

But the move also illustrates the strong collaboration between homosexual activists and the abortion lobby. For years, the two radical social movements have worked hand in hand to destroy the primacy of marriage and family and the Judeo-Christian sexual ethic.

All too often, pro-life conservatives looked the other way when ostensibly pro-life politicians and clerics embraced or ignored the homosexual agenda, as if the two issues were not closely linked. For example, the pro-life Catholic Diocese in Maine "killed us" during the recent unsuccessful vote to revoke the state's "gay rights" law for a third time, according to a Catholic lay activist who worked on the initiative.

Other examples abound from coast to coast. But presented with the stark example of Kennedy's appointment in California, pro-life Americans who ignore the homosexual issue might want to reassess.

Kennedy, a former top aide to Democratic Gov. Gray Davis, was described [this way](#) in the San Francisco Chronicle:

Appointed by Davis to the California Public Utilities Commission in 2003, Kennedy had made her name as a political operative as the head of the California branch of the National Abortion Rights Action League. A longtime gay rights activist, Kennedy married her partner, Vicki Marti, in a 1999 ceremony in Hawaii attended by many California political insiders.

California political analysts say that the chief of staff position is no small office. Capitol Weekly News writer John Howard [put it this way](#):

The chief of staff's position is considered the most powerful administrative position in state government, with broad authority over policy-making and the sprawling bureaucracy.

Kennedy's rise to the top of California's power structure is just the tip of the iceberg. Openly lesbian California Democratic legislators Sheila Kuehl and Carole Migden, along with openly homosexual Mark Leno, have led the fight against any restrictions on abortion while initiating a slew of pro-homosexual measures, including full-blown "gay marriage," promoting homosexuality in the schools, and a law prohibiting the state from doing business with firms that do not subsidize homosexual relationships. Leno and Kuehl are listed as co-authors of AB 654, a euthanasia bill so radical that it didn't even get a floor vote in the liberal-dominated Assembly.

At the national level, the pro-abortion National Organization for Women supports all aspects of the homosexual agenda, including same-sex "marriage," hate crime laws, and persecuting the Boy Scouts for barring homosexuals as scoutmasters.

Homosexual activist groups are players in liberal coalitions that work against pro-life judicial nominees, for socialized medicine, and for legislation restricting the rights of pro-life demonstrators, such as the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act, which treats pro-life protesters as criminals.

NARAL Pro-Choice America, formerly called the National Abortion Rights Action League, represents the abortion industry. The group opposes any restrictions on abortion, including partial-birth abortions, and works against requiring abortion clinics to comply with routine medical safety standards for outpatient centers.

On April 7, 2005, Kate Michelman, former NARAL president, presented the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's "Annual Leadership Award" to former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean. The current chairman of the Democratic Party was honored for his "lifetime achievement and commitment to progressive causes," including service to "the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community." While governor, Dean presided over Vermont's adoption of homosexual civil unions that are identical to marriage in all but name.

On April 11, 2005, the chief executive of the pro-abortion Democratic activist group Emily's List moved sideways to become president of the Human Rights Campaign, the largest homosexual pressure group. Joe Solmonese, who has spent years raising money for Democratic candidates, had run Emily's List since 2003. That group distributes money to elect pro-abortion Democratic women. Emily's List has a staff of 85 and a \$40 million budget. Human Rights Campaign has a staff of 125 and a budget of \$30 million, according to the Washington (D.C.) Blade.

Also in April, openly homosexual Episcopal Bishop V. Gene Robinson was the keynote speaker at Planned Parenthood's "prayer breakfast" at the group's annual conference in Washington, D.C. In an interview with Planned Parenthood's Choice! magazine, Robinson declared himself "pro-choice" and described pro-life Episcopalians as being "off the deep end."

For millennia, strategic thinkers have stressed the utmost importance of identifying your opponent. Here's Sun Tzu (500-320 B.C.):

If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

– "The Art of War"

Unless social conservatives realize that they are fighting an unholy alliance of the homosexual and abortion movements, they will lose key battles in both realms.

It's time to acknowledge the linkage and to tell politicians that being "pro-life" means more than just opposing abortion. They could start with Sens. George Allen, R-Va., and Ohio's Mike DeWine (R) and George Voinovich (R), all of whom claim pro-life credentials and all of whom voted last year for the federal homosexual hate-crimes bill, a centerpiece of the "gay" strategy to make over America in a "gay" image. Or social conservatives could take to task the "pro-lifers" among the 30 GOP congressmen who voted with Democrats to pass this year's hate-crimes bill in the House.

Being pro-life means more than casting a good vote now and then on an abortion-related bill. It also means supporting God's institution of marriage and fighting the homosexual agenda at every level, whether it is in the schools, the workplace or in the hallways of government. It also means aiding efforts to curb the explosion in pornography and indecency throughout the culture.

Longtime pro-life activist Janet Folger had an epiphany a few years ago at a pro-family conference at Coral Ridge Ministries in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. She "suddenly connected the dots and realized it's all the same battle" after hearing a speaker discuss "the real aim of the homosexual agenda: the criminalization of Christianity."

Folger went on to become an articulate foe of homosexual activism and an advocate for the ex-gay movement, while also advancing the pro-life cause. Her excellent new book, "The Criminalization of Christianity," amply documents just what is at stake, beyond the human carnage that abortion and homosexuality exact.

The bottom line is that there's no longer any room for neutrality on this profoundly important issue. And politicians should no longer be allowed to hide behind "pro-life" credentials while helping to advance the radical homosexual agenda.



Ruth Ellis Center to expand

By Dawn Wolfe Gutterman

Originally printed 12/1/2005 (Issue 1348 - Between The Lines News)

DETROIT - When homeless LGBTQ youth need help the Ruth Ellis Center is there for them. Now, the center is involved in several expansion projects, a winter outerwear drive, and a national project that will help them do more than ever.

According to REC Executive Director Grace McClelland, REC has applied for two licenses from the state of Michigan. One would allow the Center to open an emergency shelter; the other would allow the transitional living program to open its doors to sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds.

REC is ready to provide both services as soon as the licenses are approved, said McClelland, and added that she expected the approvals to come sometime in December.

In addition, in May REC will be opening a group home for state-placed LGBTQ youth.

"The state has very few resources for our kids," McClelland said.

The combination of the emergency shelter and the group home will increase REC's budget to \$1.3 million in 2006. "A one hundred percent increase from last year," McClelland said.

"We're growing like a weed," she added.

Even as they are growing to meet the needs of Detroit-area homeless LGBTQ youth, REC is also taking part in a project to help the community's young people nationwide.

According to McClelland, REC will be one of six agencies working to create a National Gay and Lesbian Task Force publication on LGBTQ homeless youth. The publication "will talk about the problem, the need for services, best practice standards, and national policy legislative recommendations," said McClelland, who added that even though 40-50 percent of the homeless youth in the U.S. are "our kids," there are only four other centers in the country that are exclusively dedicated to young LGBTQs. Roberta Sklar, director of communications for NGLTF, said that the publication will be released in late May.

"We're getting involved with the Task Force to do our part for all LGBT youth in the country - not just ours in Detroit," she said.

Keep a kid warm this winter

The Ruth Ellis Center needs the LGBT community's help providing warm outerwear and other services to youth this winter. REC is taking donations of new or gently used, clean, coats, hats and gloves, as well as cash to buy outerwear for young people in need. In addition, REC needs volunteers to help cook and serve Christmas dinner with and for their residents.

McClelland asked outerwear donors to remember that it is very difficult for the Center to have donated items cleaned, and added, "Thank God most of the gay community donates nice stuff."

Outerwear donations can be dropped from noon - 10 p.m. at REC's Outreach Center at 16501 Woodward Avenue in Highland Park. Mail checks to 2727 Second Ave., Ste. 158, Detroit, MI, 48201-2654. For information on volunteering call 313-964-2091.



Ch-Changes

Luscious lavender confab

Published: Wednesday, November 9, 2005

11/19-11/13

Change is the name of the game. Today (Wednesday) through Sunday, up to 2,500 lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered activists will converge on **the Oakland Marriott City Center for Creating Change, the country's premier LGBT activist conference. Sponsored by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**, the eighteenth annual confab should draw at least 35 percent of its attendees from the Bay Area. While most preconference institutes and workshops are meant for conference attendees, several events welcome the larger community. First on the list is Wednesday's 3 p.m. talk by author Malcolm Gladwell, "The Marriage Equality Tipping Point." Given the Governor's recent axing of same-sex legislation and expected statewide homophobic initiatives, this should be a hot one. Friday at noon brings the third annual Veterans Day march and rally. Joining groups calling for repeal of the military's idiotic "Don't Ask/Don't Tell" policy, the march heads from the Marriott to the *USS Potomac* at Jack London Square. If you've always wanted to dress as Ms. Liberty, here's your chance. The PRIDE Techno Ritual graces the Marriott's West Hall on Friday at 9 p.m. Organizer Christian de la Huerta of Q-Spirit designed this two-hour circuit party for the soul as "a profoundly transformative multimedia, multisensory, and multifaith participatory experience to help the LGBT community rediscover and reclaim our rich spiritual heritage in a celebratory and fun environment." Expect lots of heart-based and expansive music.

Saturday at 9 p.m., the energy shifts to the Oakland Asian Cultural Center on 9th Street for "Bump Up the Night," a celebration of creating change. The cultural explosion includes jazz pianist Mary Watkins, singer JenRo, comic Nick Leonard, drag kings Momma's Boyz (winners of the 2005 Drag King contest, and proud to produce their own reggae and hip-hop without lip-synching), singer Kaylah Marin, the Emeryville Taiko Drummers, and spoken-word artist Scarletto. Save the last hour for dancing to high-energy urban fusion dance band Omeyocan. Info: CreatingChange.org or 202-639-6333. -- **Jason Victor Serinus**



Group: Hispanic same-sex couples affected more by marriage bans

HOUSTON The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force today issued a report targeting a proposed constitutional ban on same-sex marriage in Texas.

The report released in Houston says Proposition Two could hurt gay Hispanic couples more than Anglos because Hispanics have more children, make less money and may not be Americans.

Details were derived from 2000 Census data on Hispanic same-sex couple households.

Texans next week will vote on Prop Two.

The measure would amend the state constitution to ban gay marriage, which is already against Texas law.

Dave Welch with the Houston Area Pastor Council says the Hispanic community has always been strong in supporting traditional families. He doesn't think that will change with this issue.

-- The Census data showed that 66 percent of Hispanic female same-sex couples and 58 percent of Hispanic same-sex male couples were raising at least one child.

That compares to 32 percent of Anglo lesbian couples and 19 percent of Anglo male couples.

-- Anglo gay couples earn about 65-thousand dollars per year on average, compared to incomes in the high 30-thousand-dollar range for gay and lesbian Hispanic couples.

-- Slightly over half of Hispanic male gay partners, 51 percent, and 38 percent of Hispanic lesbian couples were not U-S citizens. That compares to less than ten percent each for Anglo gays and lesbians.

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SAN FRANCISCO Bay Times

THE GAY/LESBIAN/BITRANS NEWSPAPER & EVENTS CALENDAR FOR THE BAY AREA

Let's Hear It for A New Supreme

By Ann Rostow

Published: November 3, 2005

The nomination of Judge Samuel Alito to the High Court was greeted with a now-familiar chorus of concerned rhetoric and calls from the GLBT community for tough confirmation hearings. But there was a deeper sense of outrage and frustration in the tone of the community's response.

"President Bush chose to placate the far right instead of appealing to the fair-minded values of the American people," said Joe Solmonese at the Human Rights Campaign. Over at Lambda Legal, legal director Jon Davidson said Alito's "track record on reproductive freedom, enforcement of civil rights and federalism... raises red flags." Stonewall Democrats charged George Bush with appeasing "the socially conservative political activists who control the Republican party and this White House." **And National Gay and Lesbian Task Force executive director Matt Foreman characteristically declined to mince words:**

"President Bush capitulated to the howling from the extreme, evangelical right and threw them red meat in the form of U.S. Circuit Court Judge Samuel Alito," he wrote. "The country will now be put through a wrenching, divisive and damaging confirmation process. One more travesty inflicted on this nation by the president and his right wing allies."

In an article Wednesday, the New York Times reviewed 15 of Alito's abortion decisions, noting that a strong concept of marriage informed his legal thinking. "People on both sides of the gay marriage debate will be reading many of Judge Alito's abortion opinions with intense interest," wrote the Times' Adam Liptak, who also said that Judge Alito has not been involved in any significant gay rights cases in his 15 years on the appellate bench.

In one widely reported case, however, Alito struck a New Jersey school district's anti-harassment policy on Free Speech grounds. However, the Times took note of another case in which Alito joined the majority on the side of a high school student who had been gay baited and bullied.

Finally, to add to the early confusion, the Boston Globe reports that Alito chaired a student task force on privacy rights during his senior year at Princeton that recommended an end to hiring discrimination based on sexual orientation, and the repeal of sodomy laws.