



**Courage & EnCourage**  
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## **ENCOURAGE SUPPORT GROUP MEETING**

Roman Catholic Diocese of Lansing Chapter

**When: Sunday May 17, 2015 from 2:30 to 4:00pm**

**Where: Holy Spirit Catholic Church  
9565 Musch Rd.  
Brighton, Michigan 48116**

Directions: US-23 to Silver Lake Rd. Exit (exit #55) West on Silver Lake Rd. to Whitmore Lake Rd. (a short distance). South on Whitmore Lake Rd. to Winans Lake Rd.(a three way stop). West on Winans Lake Rd. approximately one mile to Musch Rd. Turn left or West on Musch Rd. to Holy Spirit Catholic Church. We meet in the new school that connects to the church in the Conference/Lending Library Room. Look for Encourage and Courage Meeting Signs.

Much has happened since our last meeting. The oral arguments supporting the appropriate and traditional definition of marriage have been made to the Justices of the Supreme Court and the outcome is now in the hands of these nine individuals. We again urge all of you to unite in prayer for our nation's Supreme Court. Pray that the Justices will decide that marriage is, indeed, a life-long covenant between one man and one woman and that no other arrangement can be identified as marriage.

We are also delighted to announce that a new Courage Meeting is being held at the same time as our EnCourage meeting. They too are, for now, meeting monthly under the spiritual direction of Fr. John. They will not be meeting with us, but in another room close by. We have had the blessing and privilege of having one or two of their group meet with us, but now a sufficient number of Courage members are attending so as to have a separate meeting. We thank God for the blessing they have been and will be to us.

We have enclosed an article that we thought was particularly relevant to our times. The author makes the clear distinction between functioning based on "feelings" or on "reason" as represented in Natural Law. We urge you to read it.

**Please** also remember that we unite to pray each Thursday to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in reparation for our sins and the sins against human sexuality such as same-

sex behavior and abortion. Reparation is making amends for the wrongs committed through our sinful condition. Additionally, we pray as intercessors for all our loved ones who will, like the prodigal, someday return home. We generally follow the model given to us by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in the booklet *Holy Hour of Reparation* published by CMJ Marian Publishers. If you would like a copy of the booklet, we have a small supply in our office or you can order one by calling the publisher at 1-888-636-6799. Another beautiful prayer is the *Chaplet of the Precious Blood* that is available upon request. This beautiful chaplet has been modified to address the specific concerns of Courage and EnCourage members. We have chosen to add this powerful prayer to our Holy Hour of Reparation. Please remember, “that the necessity of reparation is especially urgent today and must be evident to everyone who considers the present plight of the world, ‘seated in wickedness’. The Sacred Heart of Jesus promised to St. Margaret Mary that He would reward abundantly with His graces all those who should render this honor to His Heart.” (Pope Pius XI Encyclical *Miserentissimus*)

**Please note:** If you cannot attend the May 17th meeting, our next regular Diocesan EnCourage meeting is Sunday, June 14, 2015. **Please also note:** the June meeting is a week early. We are meeting on the second Sunday instead of the usual third Sunday because of Father’s Day.

For more information regarding our meetings, or to talk about the issue of same-sex attraction in your lives or the lives of loved ones, call our Diocesan office at 517-342-2596 or email us at [courage@dioceseoflansing.org](mailto:courage@dioceseoflansing.org) We might also mention that the Diocese of Lansing supports this ministry even though more than half of our letters go well beyond our borders. Any financial help you can give us is greatly appreciated.

We look forward to meeting with you. Let us remember, however, to always respect the right of each to complete confidentiality.

Trusting in Jesus,



Bob and Susan Cavera

“You will know the truth and the truth will make you free.” (Jn 8:32)

**Ryan T. Anderson**

*Founder & Editor*

**Serena Sigillito**

*Managing Editor*

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## Hearts, Parts, and Minds: The Truth Comes Out

by [Doug Mainwaring](#)  
within [Marriage](#), [Natural Law](#)

March 9th, 2015

Once I began thinking, reasoning, and examining my life, an extraordinary thing happened: I couldn't stop. Reason led me to acknowledge natural law, which led me to begin rejecting some of my former ways of thinking and acting. Reason then led me to recognize God.

"If the hearts fit, the parts fit." These words were emblazoned on t-shirts during Washington, DC's gay pride celebration several years ago.

Back then I thought: "What a great message! It's so simple, even out of touch conservative *straights* will finally be able to 'get it.'" I was so taken with the slogan that I spread the shirt out on a table, snapped a picture, and sent it around to friends.



Since then, the gay world and I have gone in opposite directions. Now, my instant embrace of this slogan troubles me, because it was based purely on feeling and

sophistry. It made great sense, and it seemed inspiring, as long as I didn't stop to think about it.

However, once I did begin to think about what I was doing and where my life was headed, I eventually came to the conclusion that I had committed a grave injustice against my kids by divorcing my wife and attempting to create a family with another man. They deserved to be raised by both their mom and dad under the same roof. Who was I to deny them this most basic of children's rights? I became determined to find a way to bring our family back together for the sake of our kids as they finished out their high school years.

### **Right Reason Leads to Right Actions**

Once I began thinking, reasoning, and examining my life, an extraordinary thing happened: I couldn't stop. For instance, at first I was willing to own up to the fact that I had hurt our children through our divorce and concluded that I needed to repair that wrongdoing. But hadn't a grave injustice also been inflicted on my wife? Against our families and friends who had always supported us?

Where and when should I draw the line with reason? With examining my conscience? With looking at the facts and making decisions based not simply on what I want or what I think is good for me, but based on absolute truths? My thoughts needed to result in actions. Eventually, I chose to lead a chaste life. In view of the facts, in view of the constant testimony of nature all around me, it was the only reasonable thing to do.

Reason led me to acknowledge natural law, which led me to begin rejecting some of my former ways of thinking and acting. Reason alone was enough to lead me to change the direction of my life. Then quite amazingly, natural law and reason working together led me to recognize and acknowledge God's existence. And once I acknowledged God's existence, again there was only one reasonable thing to do: I asked Jesus Christ to take the throne of my life, and I began to reject the emptiness of my self-centered ways.

In the end, I returned to full communion with the Catholic Church, but my choice to remain faithful to my wife predated my embrace of faith by a full two years. Although I had only hoped for peaceful coexistence with my then ex-wife as we agreed to join forces for a few years for the sake of the kids, I was met with another wonderful surprise. We found our relationship repairing itself day by day, and our love rekindled. And while our kids are now long past high school age, there's no question about the future of our marriage: *'Til death do us part.*

The true ideas I embraced had positive consequences in my life. When I look back on my earlier life, I see the converse is also true. As I first stepped out of the closet in the 1990s, I made a conscious decision to ignore natural law. Once I made that choice, I could not stop. Untethered from natural law, I could not draw a line regarding my behavior, nor could I justify making any sort of judgment regarding the behaviors of others. Should I condemn lending my tacit approval to the prostitution of young men and

women and reject viewing pornography? Why? Should gay couples invite a third man into their bed? Sure, why not? Should gay partners who declare themselves monogamous be okay with having casual sexual encounters with other men? Sure! Committed throuples (instead of couples threesome)? Why not? Public nudity, group sex, sex in public? Who was I to judge?

As I observe the deteriorating trajectory of this nation's judicial system, I am reminded of my own past. It's hard to predict if and where our judges might draw the line on marriage and gender issues. They have rejected the solid foundation of natural law, leaving the whole house rickety and unsound, vulnerable to the slightest wind of political correctness or sophistry. And just as with the poor decisions I once made, children will be collateral damage, bearing the unintended negative consequences.

### **Truth Comes Out**

Interestingly, that slogan—*If the hearts fit, the parts fit*—does far more to discredit than it does to promote the same-sex marriage cause. It accidentally calls attention to the very reason that genderless relationships cannot be called *marriages*, even as it lures us into pretending that complementarity is an irrelevant, outdated component of human relationships and existence.

We are all now expected to pretend that natural law does not exist, that complementarity and gender are nothing more than outdated social constructs. Yet the beauty of nature and our own internal faculties of reason and conscience testify to their supreme significance.

As a child, I experienced the stirrings of same-sex attraction. As a teenager, the urges grew stronger and stronger. Yet even from a very young age, I inwardly sensed something was not quite right. I knew that somehow I was different and felt apart from others—the universal experience of almost every self-identified gay or lesbian. Nowadays, it's nearly unanimously agreed that this experience comes from society's heteronormativity. We are told that exterior cultural pressures cause same-sex attracted young people to feel “different,” resulting in depression or behavioral problems.

My experience tells me that the opposite is true. There was a powerful, innate interior recognition that I was different. It wasn't society telling me this or accusing me, disenfranchising me in the process. No. My own conscience was speaking to me, leading me to self-understanding. I was judged by no one, because no one knew. Why would they even suspect? I didn't fit the stereotypical profile of a gay guy. When I was old enough to work, I got a job as a carpenter. By the time I was seventeen, I had earned my pilot's license, and one of the most beautiful girls in school was my prom date. Yet still there was always that gnawing feeling within.

The world encourages me and those like me to blame others for any discomfort we feel. Surely the culprits are my parents, the Church, or society at large. But to blame others, I

would have to deny what I know to be true. My self-understanding wasn't inflicted on me; its source was my perfectly functioning faculties of reason and conscience.

Although I had never heard of the term *complementarity*, I was well-acquainted with the truth, which was all around me. I was created male, and no matter my predilections, I could look beyond those to understand that I am created to give myself fully not to another male, but to a woman—my future wife.

I am nobody's victim, despite the LGBT world's insistence that I present myself this way. The enforcement of such false claims implies that we should deny the fullness of the human experience to those who are same-sex attracted. Please don't assume that all of us who are same-sex attracted have faulty powers of reason. As rational beings, we are capable of discerning what is true about human nature.

Dan Mattson, another Catholic man who is same-sex attracted, has done a magnificent job succinctly stating the truth he has discovered:

I know who I am, and I know who I am, sexually. That truth comes from the truth of my body. I am a man, made for sexual union with women, and the only sane—and rational place—for that sexual union to take place is inside of marriage that is open to the possibility of life.

Dan's life is a testament to the irresistible truth and rightness of natural law. And there are hosts of other same-sex attracted men and women who respect natural law, quietly living their lives either as singles or married, faithful to their spouses and families. They don't seek to draw attention to themselves. They are quiet, unsung heroes. And they are legion.

### **Repeating Esau's Mistake**

The universal understanding of conjugal marriage is being traded for one based solely on romantic interests. Like Esau in the book of Genesis, we are thoughtlessly trading a rich inheritance for nothing more than a bowl of soup, failing to recognize the staggering consequences of our impulsive, misdirected empathy. Our generation is trading the heritage of complementarity for a future of state-enforced genderlessness, undermining our children's rightful understanding of their own personhood.

Our cultural elites—academics, politicians, pundits, and especially jurists—have wrongly assigned themselves a position of moral superiority over the rest of America. In her dissent from the US Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling allowing Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee to continue to define marriage as between one man and one woman, Judge Martha Craig Daughtrey said:

Today, my colleagues seem to have fallen prey to the misguided notion that the intent of the framers of the United States Constitution can be effectuated only by cleaving to the legislative will and ignoring and

demonizing an independent judiciary. Of course, the framers presciently recognized that two of the three co-equal branches of government were representative in nature and necessarily would be guided by self-interest and the pull of popular opinion. To restrain those natural, human impulses, the framers crafted Article III to ensure that rights, liberties, and duties need not be held hostage by popular whims.

I suspect a majority of Americans might look over the last year's cascade of judicial decisions regarding same-sex marriage and conclude that it is Judge Daughtrey and many of her colleagues who are enslaved to "self-interest and the pull of popular opinion," "held hostage" to demands based on sophistry rather than real "rights, liberties and duties."

### **The Fear That Paralyzes Our Judiciary**

When it comes to same-sex marriage, even the country's most powerful attorneys are paralyzed with fear. Last year, Reuters published an article titled "*U.S. law firms flock to gay-marriage proponents, shun other side*". Reuters found that, "Not a single member of the Am Law 200, a commonly used ranking of the largest U.S. firms by revenue, is defending gay marriage prohibitions." The article continued:

Several lawyers opposed to same-sex marriage rights said they believed big firms would not litigate for that side even if attorneys asked to do so. They pointed to the example of Mozilla's Eich as an example of the pressures being faced. . . . One attorney interviewed for the piece said, "I personally know many good lawyers in large firms who . . . are terrified of speaking out even within their own firms."

So not only are this nation's elite, powerful attorneys—and judges, who are drawn from this pool—subject to social cascades, they are subject to sheer paralyzing fear in their decision-making. Principle and law go out the window when social and professional self-preservation dictate decision-making. The relentless narrative of approval for same-sex marriage overwhelms judges until finally, gratefully, they reach for the life preserver marked "Right Side of History" that the media hold out to them.

After the Supreme Court's *Windsor* ruling, barriers to unraveling the true definition of marriage fell one after another. Was this because judges suddenly "saw the light" in a unison that strains the bounds of credulity? Or is it because they suddenly became subject to extreme pressure?

### **Resist Fantasy and Defend Truth**

In the same dissent quoted above, Judge Daughtrey wrote:

If we in the judiciary do not have the authority, and indeed the responsibility, to right fundamental wrongs left excused by a majority of

the electorate, our whole intricate, constitutional system of checks and balances, as well as the oaths to which we swore, prove to be nothing but shams.

The definition of marriage is immutable, despite what some men and women robed in black might say. Complementarity is a simple, self-evident truth. The fact that voters uphold the definition of marriage does not indicate “fundamental wrongs excused by a majority of the electorate” that need to be righted by savior-judges.

In the long run, the efforts of our intellectual and cultural elites are doomed to fail. It's too soon to tell, but the dip in support for same-sex marriage in last year's Pew poll may signal the public's tiring with the heavy-handed tactics of jurists and activist groups. Judges like Martha Craig Daughtrey may see themselves as central characters in a Frank Capra movie, heroically fighting for justice on the right side of history. But it is impossible to be on the right side of history while simultaneously being on the wrong side of natural law.

Let's hope members of the United States Supreme Court can resist such fantasies.

*Doug Mainwaring works with CanaVox, a project of the Witherspoon Institute.*

*Taken from <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/03/14510/>*