



Courage & EnCourage
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ENCOURAGE SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Roman Catholic Diocese of Lansing Chapter

When: Sunday October 20, 2013 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 entrance marked with a sign for Holy Spirit Cemetery and Holy Spirit Rectory and School. Turn left. We meet in portable classroom number four. Look for Encourage Meeting signs.

We recently returned from a get-a-way in Northern Michigan and Wisconsin, and as always, we were again reminded of God's grandeur in the glorious display of fall colors. We were especially blessed with the opportunity to spend time at The Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help with a dear friend from EnCourage. We were able to pray for you and for the apostolate and to be reminded of the comfort and power of prayer.

We have included two enclosures that we thought reflected the current cultural climate that faces so many of us as we labor to help our loved ones who are struggling with the issues of same-sex attraction in their lives. We have noticed that more and more of the inquiries we receive are from parents of teenagers who have 'come out'. The parents naturally are concerned as to how to speak the truth in love and how to find competent counseling that reflects the teachings of scripture and the church. This is, unfortunately, not an easy task. The culture especially the culture in which school age children and young adults live is at odds with the truth, and this opposition has become more militant. We hope the two enclosures will be helpful to you.

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. "That the necessity of reparation is especially urgent today 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*)

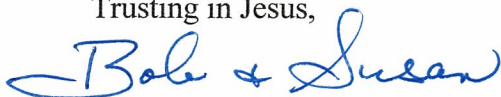
Please note: If you cannot attend the October 20th meeting, our next regular Diocesan EnCourage meeting is Sunday, November 17, 2013.

Our Diocese of Lansing, Michigan provides us with a modest budget and the staff support to make these communications possible as well as assisting with maintaining other essential services. We are very grateful. Any help you can give the Diocese is greatly appreciated.

For more information regarding our meetings, or to talk about the issue of same-sex attraction in your lives, call our Diocesan office at 517-342-2596 or email us at caverart@comcast.net

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

"Lord when my soul is weary and my heart is tired and sore, and I have the failing feeling that I can't take it anymore; then let me know the freshening found in simple childlike prayer, when the kneeling soul knows surely that a listening Lord is there."

A Simple Prayer by Ruth Bell Graham

Why Gays Cannot Speak for Ex-gays

by Joseph Nicolosi, Ph.D.

This summer, a British television network called to interview me for a show about efforts toward sexual-orientation change. The host of the show, they informed me, was a gay man. I declined the invitation, stating that the host's gay identity would disqualify him from a fair evaluation of the ex-gay experience.

To refuse participation because the host is gay may seem unreasonable, until we recognize that the adoption of a gay identity typically prevents someone from honestly assessing the experience of the other man who has taken a different developmental route—i.e., the ex-gay person.

Why would this be true? Let me explain.

According to the literature, the “coming out of the closet” process begins in early adolescence with the discovery of same-sex attraction. The teenager then usually rejects his homosexual feelings because of the negative social values around him. His painful and lonely efforts to suppress, repress and deny his feelings result in guilt and shame, which eventually culminates in self-loathing.

But shortly thereafter, this teenager discovers that there are others like him, and often through the support and encouragement of a gay counselor, coach, teacher or religious leader, he decides that gay is “who he is.” The adoption of this gay identity necessitates the abandonment of any hope that he could ever modify his unwanted feelings and develop his heterosexual potential. He must surrender his earlier wish that he could have a conventional marriage and family. So in order to internalize this gay identity he must mourn the possibility of ever resolving his unwanted homosexuality; i.e., he must grieve the loss of what he yearned for.

It is this process of grieving his own hopes and mourning his own dreams which prevents the person who later identifies as gay from believing that change is possible for others: “If I myself could not change, how could they?” Perhaps on a deeper level, this thought is also rooted in anger: “If I cannot have what I wanted for my own life, neither should they.”

Explaining this inherent bias of the gay-identified person against the ex-gay person's experience, an Orthodox Jewish friend of mine commented: “It would be like a group of rabbis deciding that they themselves would determine if Jesus really was God.”

“Worse,” I responded. “It would be more like a person desperately trying to find God in his life, abandoning the hope and adopting atheism, then setting himself up as the person who determines the reality of God in the lives of others.”

And it is that grieving process, that painful letting-go of one's dreams, that has biased the gay person's evaluation of the ex-gay experience.

However, public-policy decisions on homosexual issues are, in fact, typically determined by gay activists who carry this intrinsic prejudice. It is gay teachers who determine policy for homosexual students; gay librarians who determine what books are permitted on the library shelves; and gay mental-health professionals who get to tell the world whether any sort of sexual-orientation modification is possible. For example, anyone who has a comment or question about APA (American Psychological Association) policy is referred to the Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns, which does not recognize ex-gays or the concerns of people struggling to change. In fact, the most grievous and damaging example of this prejudice is the recent APA Task Force Report on the treatment of homosexuality, written by a panel that consisted almost entirely of gay mental-health practitioners. Of the six APA panelists, five self-identify as gay or bisexual, and the APA Staff Liaison who chose them, Clinton Anderson, is also gay. All of the panelists admitted, at the start of their work, to being opposed to reorientation therapy. Not a single reorientation therapist who applied to be a part of the Task Force—and there were several distinguished and scholarly psychologists who did apply—were permitted to join the committee.

This dominance of gay-identified homosexual persons on panels that determine policy for non-gay homosexual persons is due, in large part, to the larger community's intimidation and subsequent avoidance of the whole polarizing issue. Faced with policy decisions, the straight person, ignorant of the fact that gay-identified homosexual persons are a category that is quite distinct from non-gay homosexual persons, readily relinquishes his authority to a gay co-worker, and takes the easy way out. "I don't know about such things myself, of course; but Steven is gay— he'll know the best policy for the library collection." (Needless to stay, "Stephen" is all too ready to comply.)

An additional result of gay activism's power to determine public policy is the fact that ex-gays are then marginalized and intimidated into silence. Gays see them as "gays-in-process," or gays with a small "g," and not entitled to claim a valid identity in their own right. Ex-gays, they believe, are merely gays who have not yet come out of the closet; they are simply "inhibited by their own homophobia."

But the emergence of the ex-gay person can change this balance of power. Despite the intimidating influence of gay activism, society is beginning to recognize the ex-gay person's existence, as ex-gay men and women are telling us about their lives. Further, there is an impressive group of ex-gay websites, such as peoplecanchange.com, restoredhopenetwork.com, and voices-of-change.org, where ex-gay men and women tell their stories.

People Can Change continues to offer its JIM (Journey Into Manhood) Weekends, scheduled in 2013 for several locations in the U.S., as well as one in Israel. The ex-gay person was also recently legally acknowledged by Washington D.C. as a distinct sexual minority.

The new support group Restored Hope Network has also emerged, vibrant and powerfully committed, to replace Exodus Ministries (which recently closed down).

Further, the Executive Director of HA (Homosexuals Anonymous), Dr. Douglas McIntyre, launched a 10-day tour this summer to lobby for freedom of choice for youth to pursue counseling for unwanted homosexuality.

Every social movement has used as a tool toward its success the shaming and intimidating of others who do not agree with them. Those who disagree with them are stigmatized and excluded from the cultural discourse. As time goes by, I believe this swing to extremism will ultimately right itself. But in the meanwhile, we must look to that core of committed individuals who understand that our bodies tell us who we are— that humanity was designed and created for heterosexuality, and we must support those men and women who are brave enough to speak out and say, “We have changed.”

Sexual Orientation Therapy Ban: Where Is Tolerance?

By Christopher Doyle, Op-Ed Contributor

March 19, 2013|6:52 am

Where is tolerance? Where is diversity? Where is equality? If you live in California, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Washington, or Massachusetts and have a child who experiences unwanted same-sex attraction (SSA), soon you may not find tolerance, diversity, or equality there. That's because activists in these states are carefully working with sympathetic members of their state legislatures to take away your parental rights and your child's ability to receive treatment for unwanted homosexual feelings.

That's right, even if your child was sexually abused by a pedophile such as Jerry Sandusky and develops homosexual inclinations as a consequence, he/she may not be able to receive Sexual Orientation Change Effort (SOCE) therapy from a highly educated and skilled professional counselor, social worker, or psychologist. Why, you ask? According to the office of Massachusetts State Representative Carl Sciortino (D), because SOCE is an "archaic vestige of homophobia" and should be banned.

Sciortino, who authored the bill titled: "An Act Relative to Abusive Practices to Change Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity in Minors" in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, is one of five states across the country proposing such legislation, all of which contain very similar language. The Massachusetts bill is "careful to not interfere with therapy efforts which seek to provide help and support for sexual orientation or gender identity acceptance."

In case you have a hard time understanding that language, it's politician-speak for: counselors are only allowed to affirm a client's homosexual orientation—that is, if a minor comes into a therapist's office and is confused about her or his sexual orientation, the therapist is obligated to help him or her accept their homosexuality. Period. There is no mention of the possibility of changing from a homosexual to a heterosexual orientation. This is forbidden, even if the client and/or his family's values conflict with homosexual practice.

The counselor is also allowed to affirm a transgendered minor who seeks to change their biological sex or live as the opposite gender. But to help a young person who is distressed by unwanted homosexual feelings live according to his or her family values, religious beliefs, or cultural heritage, that would be diagnosed as "internalized homophobia" and harmful! Additionally, the client is told that "SOCE is ineffective and dangerous for adolescents, so don't even try to change, because it won't work."

Before we get ahead of ourselves, let's examine the evidence behind this proposed legislation. Allow me to cite peer-reviewed scientific research that shows SOCE therapies are harmful and ineffective for adolescents. Oh, you couldn't find any studies either?

Apparently neither could Washington State Representative Marko Liias (D), who recently authored a bill with the other four openly-gay Washington state representatives that proposes to set up a "panel to determine whether so-called 'gay conversion therapy' works, whether it is harmful, and whether its use with minors should be regulated." Well at least that legislation calls for one advocate of SOCE to be a part of a 15-member panel, which will undoubtedly vote 14-1 to ban SOCE should it be given a chance. Fortunately, this bill is yet to get out of committee and receive a full vote in the legislature, but parents in Washington State must act quickly to insure their children have the right to seek counseling should they desire help.

When I asked Rep. Sciortino's office if he was at all concerned that the State of Massachusetts might be sued for millions of dollars by disenfranchised clients who are seeking to change their sexual orientation and practitioners who want to help them, and that his bill is proposing an unconstitutional ban on a therapeutic practice for adolescents that has not even been researched, his office was surprisingly silent!

The truth is, the blueprint for such legislation was pushed through a partisan legislature in 2012 in the state of California, and then duly signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown. Almost immediately, there was a federal injunction placed on the law until the courts could decide if it is constitutional. We await the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decision in late April, when oral arguments will be heard.

The original bill in California proposed to outlaw all SOCE, not just for minors, but for adults as well. The activists were cautioned that such an aggressive move might not have enough support, and suggested they start with banning this therapy just for minors. Once it is banned for minors across the country, their plan is to outlaw SOCE all together! That means no therapist would be allowed to assist any client who experiences unwanted homosexual feelings for any reason! No one. Where is the tolerance? Where is the diversity? Where is the equality?

The problem with this conspiracy is this: There is NOT ONE scientific study that contains any hard data on the outcomes of SOCE for adolescents. Not one!

So when I contacted the offices proposing a ban on SOCE therapies and asked them to cite studies that show "harmful" outcomes for adolescents, they could only point me to position statements from liberal trade organizations, which are known for their one-hand clapping viewpoint, strictly pro-gay and anti-ex-gay. If these organizations were made up of objective scientists that looked at all the evidence, such legislation would not be allowed anywhere.

We must defend the right of self-determination for all Americans-life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

For more information, visit www.ComingOutLoved.com