



Courage & EnCourage
228 North Walnut Street
Lansing, Michigan 48933-1122
517-342-2596
Facsimile: 517.342.2468
caverart@comcast.net

ENCOURAGE SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Roman Catholic Diocese of Lansing Chapter

When: Sunday November 20, 2011 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 want to wish you all a very Blessed and Happy Thanksgiving. We know that it is hard to believe that this holiday is only a couple of weeks away. Actually, Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays, because the focus of the day is on those with whom you celebrate the day, and not on what one gives or gets.

We have two enclosures for this November letter that we believe are inspirational as well as informational. The first is the *Chaplet Of The Precious Blood* that has been modified to reflect the ministry of Courage and Encourage. We do not know who did the modifications, so we can't give him or her proper credit, but the result is a beautiful prayer. Personally, we have further modified it to fit our specific needs, but that is something each of you can look at as you read over the Chaplet. We have chosen, for example, not to say five Our Fathers with each "mystery"; instead we say only one. We are particularly attracted to the reflections presented at each mystery as they relate to Courage and Encourage. We urge you try it and let us know what you think.

The second enclosure is from the most recent edition of *Renewal Ministries Newsletter*, and is the lead article entitled "The Courage To Be Catholic" by Peter Herbeck. The writer addresses moral relativism as it relates to same-sex marriage, abortion, and with application to same-sex behavior. Peter concludes the article by

sharing that the redefinition of marriage, and by application acceptance of same-sex behavior, is not a victory for human rights, but rather one more act of the suppression of truth.

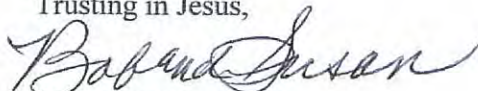
Remember please that we unite to pray each Thursday to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in reparation for our sins and the sins against human sexuality such as same-sex behavior and abortion. Reparation is making amends for the wrongs committed through our sinful condition. Additionally, we pray as intercessors 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. "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 November 20th meeting, our next regular meeting is December 18th.

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.

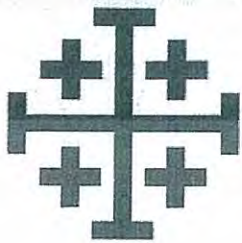
Trusting in Jesus,



Bob and Susan Cavera

"The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal, shepherding them rightly."

Ez 34:16



Renewal Ministries

November 2011

Proclaiming Jesus through Catholic Renewal and Evangelization



The state has always recognized the utterly unique contribution that the union of man and woman in marriage has made to society and regarded the family as the fundamental building block of every society.

The Courage To Be Catholic

By Peter Herbeck, Missions Director

"If I take the Catholic out of me, which is hard to do, then absolutely they should have these rights."

These are the words of Senator Mark Grisanti of New York, as he cast his vote in favor of the Marriage Equality Act, the bill that legalized Same-Sex Marriage in the state of New York this past June. Senator Grisanti's vote contradicted his campaign pledge in which he had unequivocally stated that he would not support any law legalizing same-sex marriage.

Besides being terribly disappointed in the senator's decision, I found his reasoning revealing. To cast his vote in favor of same-sex marriage he had to disregard his faith, in his words, "If I take the Catholic out of me..." What he once opposed with certainty, he now promoted with absolute certainty. He made it clear that he didn't change his mind for political reasons, but because of his newfound "personal belief." Up until the day he cast his vote, he publicly held his original position and stated, "Marriage is between a man and a woman. It's been a term... that has been around for thousands of years." (*The New York Observer*, retrieved June 25, 2011)

Prior to his vote, the senator recognized that marriage has had a precise definition, one that was based on the commitment of one man and one woman, on the complementarity of the sexes, and on gender differentiation, which made marital union possible. Marriage, by definition, implies the kind of bodily union of persons that make reproduction and the begetting of children possible. The state has always recognized the utterly unique contribution that the union of man and woman in marriage has made to society and regarded the family as the fundamental building block of every society.

Previous generations of leaders recognized that the social goods which arise from the family need to be promoted and protected, for the benefit of the wider society. Historically the state has also recognized that marriage is pre-political, not something that the state created, and therefore has a truth and integrity of its own which the state acknowledged in its laws. By supporting the traditional definition of marriage, the senator was not denying fundamental rights to same-sex couples, because it is impossible for such couples to express the kind of bodily union that is ordered, in principle, to the begetting of children, an essential aspect of marriage.

At some point, the senator and his new "personal belief" led him to conclude that his religion prevented him from seeing and defending the basic rights of same-sex couples. How could same-sex couples be denied marriage rights if, by definition, marriage includes one man and one woman? Isn't this the truth about marriage that the senator once recognized? The crucial mistake the senator and many Catholic politicians make today is to think that the traditional definition of marriage is only religious. Same-sex couples who oppose the traditional definition of marriage argue that it is a religious imposition which denies gay couples their fundamental rights. And, since we are a secular, pluralistic society, religiously informed beliefs are private, personal and have no place in the public arena. What Senator Grisanti failed to recognize is that the traditional definition of marriage is not simply a Catholic or a religious idea. The Church's teaching doesn't create the truth about what marriage is, it simply recognizes it.

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The Courage to be Catholic

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It's analogous to the confusion surrounding the Church's teaching on abortion. Many Catholic politicians "personally oppose" abortion because their faith tells them it is wrong, but they end up publicly promoting it because they don't want to "impose their private, religious beliefs" on others. The Church says abortion is wrong because it recognizes the undeniable, biological fact that the product of conception is a human being. The direct killing of an innocent human being is always wrong. Abortion kills an innocent human being, therefore it is always wrong. The humanity of the child is not true because my faith tells me so; my faith tells me so because it is true. You don't need faith to recognize the humanity of the child.

Both Senator Grisanti and Governor Andrew Cuomo, who is also a Catholic and the driving force behind the Marriage Equality Act, could have made powerfully compelling arguments in favor of the traditional definition of marriage that did not depend on faith. As with other states that have put the issue to a popular vote, their leadership in favor of a traditional definition of marriage would have garnered wide popular support throughout New York. But they didn't.

Dictatorship of Relativism

Both the same-sex marriage and abortion issues are concrete examples of what Pope Benedict XVI calls the "dictatorship of relativism," the prevailing political ideology of the first world. It is the denial of moral truth, to which all people are subject. It is an absolute insistence that everyone has the right to define their own truth. This worldview was perfectly articulated in the majority opinion by Justice Anthony Kennedy,

a Catholic, in the 1992 *Planned Parenthood vs. Casey* decision: "At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life." In other words, freedom means defining reality on our own terms. It's a dictatorship because the powers that be insist this is the only acceptable public view of reality.

Governor Cuomo and Senator Grisanti pushed this worldview to its logical conclusion. There is no absolute truth about marriage. The religious idea of marriage is nothing more than a personal perspective, and to see it as anything more than that is to impose one's narrow viewpoint on others, thereby denying each person the right to make up their own truth about marriage.

In this case, the homosexual community decides to redefine marriage, to make a break from the received understanding of those who have gone before us. Essentially they are saying, "It's our right to define our own truth about marriage. And it is the state's responsibility to protect that right."

The failure of our elected leaders, especially our "Catholic" leaders, to make a coherent case in the public square for the fundamental truth about marriage is a scandal. The decision to "take the Catholic out of me" is not simply a decision to not impose a personal religious opinion on others. It's the acceptance of a particular worldview, which ironically, is nothing more than the unbending, unrelenting, self-refuting, absolute truth claim that there is no truth. It's a concession to the spirit of the age, to a relativistic worldview that is aggressively demanding center stage.

Please Pray...

Our country was established with an entirely different worldview that was simply taken for granted up until the sexual revolution of the 1960's. It had the humility, reverence and intellectual honesty to recognize the truth of real things and the design and purpose in nature. C.S. Lewis said the wise men of old sought to "conform the soul to reality" but today we seek "to subdue reality to the wishes of men." (*Abolition of Man*)

Senator Grisanti had a chance to stand on the shoulders of the "wise men of old." But in the end, like so many in our day, he bent the knee to the spirit of the age. He bought the lie, not just about marriage, but about reality itself. He crossed over to a worldview that ultimately affirms nothing beyond the human will, the power to define reality on our own terms. The decision to enthrone the dictatorship of relativism as our public philosophy has unavoidable,

devastating consequences. The legalization of abortion in 1973 began with the same logic. Now, fifty million dead babies later, the consequences are undeniable.

It's time for Catholic politicians to stand up! They must wake up to the battle and understand what is really at stake. St. Paul, in Romans 1 identifies what might be the fundamental temptation of the human heart, the desire to "suppress the truth," about God and his claim over our lives. Truth—the way things are, reality as it unfolds itself to the humble heart—is simply an expression of God, of his design and purpose in creation, the work of his hands. Marriage is a revelation of God and his design. The redefinition of marriage is not a victory for human rights, it's one more act of suppression, the attempt to subdue reality to man's wishes. Catholic politicians should know better, "they are without excuse." (Rom 1:20)

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CHAPLET OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD
*adapted for the ministries of
Courage and Encourage*

Each bead of the Precious Blood Chaplet is, as it were, a chalice filled with the Divine Blood of Jesus, uplifted by Our Lady to the Eternal Father, imploring every grace necessary for your soul and body.

The chaplet consists of seven mysteries in which we meditate on the seven principal blood-sheddings of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus. The beads number thirty three in honor of the thirty three years the Precious Blood flowed in the veins of Jesus before it was all poured out on the Cross for our salvation. Its seven petitions unite with each of the seven blood-sheddings, making up seven chapters in the gospel of Christ's love for me: "He loved me, and delivered Himself up for me."

To pray this chaplet, recite the Our Father on each of the thirty-three beads, completing each of the seven groups with the Glory Be, as thanksgiving to the Holy Trinity for this great gift of the Precious Blood.

While reciting this chaplet, you are asked to meditate on each of the seven blood-sheddings of Jesus.

Opening Prayer:

Lord, we come before you today to offer this chaplet on behalf of all men and women who carry the burden of same-sex attraction in their lives. We pray that they may commit to a life of chastity, find healing through Your grace, and consolation in Your Love for them. We bring before You all the Christian faithful, especially our Church and government leaders, that they may offer continual compassion and support for these souls in Your Truth, that not one of your sheep may be lost to the false promises of the gay lifestyle, and that no one may carry this burden alone. Help each of us here today to be open to Your call at all

times, that we may be bold, and ever ready to see and love You in our brother or sister who we see struggling against the sin of homosexuality, or trapped in the snares of the gay lifestyle. We would especially like to remember _____ in prayer, and thank you for calling us to do Your Will, remembering that whatsoever we do for the least of our brothers, we do for You. Amen.

V. O God, come to my assistance!

R. Lord, make haste to help me!

V. Glory be to the Father...

R. As it was in the beginning...

- Announce the Mystery
- Our Father x5
- "Incline unto my aid, O God./ O Lord, make haste to help me."
- Glory Be x1
- "We beseech Thee, therefore, help Thy servants/ whom Thou has redeemed by Thy Precious Blood."

1st Mystery

Jesus shed His Blood in the Circumcision.

Lord, we pray that all men and women who experience Same-Sex Attraction, that they may receive the grace to discover and commit to a life of chastity in body and soul. Give them your consolation and strength, and may your most Sacred Heart be a refuge for them in times of temptation and trial in this world.

2nd Mystery

Jesus shed His Blood whilst praying in the Garden of Olives.

Lord, we pray for all members of Courage and other Christian spiritual support ministries for SSA, that through perseverance in prayer, each of

them may come to know You intimately, and discern clearly Your Will for their lives until they are welcomed victoriously into Your heavenly kingdom.

3rd Mystery

Jesus shed His Blood in the scourging.

Lord, we pray that you may call many Christians to SSA ministry in a spirit of mortification and penance, that through dying to self and cooperating with Your grace, they may become an instrument of salvation for many souls from the eternal punishment due to sins of homosexuality. May we be always ready to lay down our lives and be scourged by the world for our brothers and sisters with SSA, when- and wherever You may call us to do so.

4th Mystery

Jesus shed His Blood in the crowning with thorns.

Lord, we pray for all men and women who are living or promoting the gay lifestyle, that they may be given contempt for worldly honors. We know it is pride that is the deadliest of sins, and so in removing the false pride of worldly honors, may these men and women find the courage to step away from a way of life that could never be pleasing to You or bring them happiness. Help them to find freedom in Your Truth, that they may be crowned for the virtue of purity in Heaven.

5th Mystery

Jesus shed His Blood while carrying His cross.

Lord, we pray for all Christians, that they may be granted the patience and wisdom to recognize SSA for what it is - an unwanted disorder and temptation that causes great suffering - that they may approach all individuals with Same-Sex Attraction with compassion and love, continually praying for their salvation and strength in carrying this cross.

6th Mystery

Jesus shed His Blood in the crucifixion.

Lord, we pray for those who are in the process of leaving the gay lifestyle, that they may have a true contrition for their sins that keeps them from going back. Help them to persevere through alienation, abandonment, betrayal, insecurity, and other trials this transition may hold for them. May You Yourself be their consolation and their joy as they find peace and freedom in being crucified to their old life that they may live truly in You.

7th Mystery

Jesus shed His Blood and water when His side was pierced.

Lord, we pray for the members of EnCourage and all family and friends of SSA individuals, that they may persevere in praying for their loved ones, and find consolation and hope in that great promise of Our Lord: "seek and you shall find, knock and the door will be opened, ask and it shall be given unto you."

Final Prayer

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ in satisfaction for my sins, for the needs of Holy Church and for the relief of the souls in purgatory.

We pray also for the spread of the Courage and EnCourage ministries. Guide and protect them from the attack of the evil one. Grant all of us, Your servants and Church militant, the COURAGE we each need to persevere in doing Your Will here on earth, that when the battle is done and our sacrifices have been joined to Yours, we may hear the voice of Our Heavenly Father saying: "well done, good and faithful servant. Enter, now, into the joy of Your master." Amen.
