

Catholic Church Teaching on Homosexuality

1. CIVIL RIGHTS AND HUMAN DIGNITY:

“Homosexuals...should not suffer prejudice against their basic human rights. They have a right to respect, friendship and justice. They should have an active role in the Christian community.” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1976; 1990)

“The intrinsic dignity of each person must always be respected in word, in action and in law.” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1986)

2. ORIENTATION:

“Such an orientation in itself, because not freely chosen, is not sinful.” (*Human Sexuality: A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning*, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1990)

“The homosexual orientation is not simply a...truncated sexual development...The Church’s ministry ...must move in such a direction that homosexuality might be a building block rather than a stumbling block in the ongoing search for unity and harmony.” (*Ministry and Homosexuality in the Archdiocese of San Francisco*, 1983)

“The Church does not morally condemn homosexual orientation...nor are homosexual persons to be blamed for not changing their orientation.” (*The Prejudice Against Homosexuals and the Ministry of the Church*, Washington State Catholic Conference, 1983)

—“The inclination itself must be seen as an objective disorder.” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1986)

3. PASTORAL MINISTRY:

“...we would ask the Bishops to support with the means at their disposal, the development of appropriate forms of pastoral care for homosexual persons.” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1986)

“...the Christian community should offer [homosexual people] a special degree of pastoral understanding and care.” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1976; 1991)

“The pastor may distinguish between irresponsible, indiscriminate sexual activity and the permanent association between two homosexual persons who feel incapable of enduring a solitary life devoid of sexual expression...when offering pastoral advice.” (*An Introduction to the Pastoral Care of Homosexual People*, Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, 1979)

“Ministry to homosexual people must acknowledge, therefore, the sanctity of conscience, but must also assist persons toward a formation of conscience that is guided by the ‘objective norms of morality.’” (*Ministry and Homosexuality in the Archdiocese of San Francisco*, 1983)

4. HOMOPHOBIA:

“We call on all Christian citizens of good will to confront their own fears about homosexuality and to curb the humor and discrimination that offend homosexual persons.” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1991)

“It is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the object of violent malice in speech and action. Such treatment deserves condemnation...wherever it occurs...It...endanger the most fundamental principles of a healthy society.” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1986)

“...prejudice against homosexuals is a greater infringement of the norm of Christian morality than is homosexual...activity.” (Washington State Catholic Conference, 1983)

5. HOMOGENITALITY:

“Objectively speaking, it is morally wrong, and subjectively, one may be guilty of serious sin.” (*Human Sexuality: A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning*, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1991)