

Los Pequeños Pepper

Publication of Los Pequeños de Cristo

March 2004



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Newsletter of Los Pequeños de Cristo
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We are an Archdiocesan-wide Catholic lay organization committed to a charitable defense of the Catholic Faith by means of education, communication, and prayer. We are devoted to the Roman Catholic Magisterium, the Holy Father, and to the bishops and clergy in union with him. Our members believe what the Church believes and we promote what the Church teaches. To this end, we believe that no individual, whether cleric or lay person, has the right to alter the substance of the gospel message or moral truths which have been inerrantly and infallibly held by the Catholic Church since Her founding.

Non-Discrimination Laws for Homosexual Persons

Last year's SB 28 returned to the legislature for a face-lift

By Stephanie Block

Last year the New Mexico Legislature passed a law that banned discrimination based, among other things, on sexual orientation and gender identity (SB 28).

This legislation, in so far as it referred to sexual orientation and gender identity, was not motivated by political or economic inequities. Persons living openly homosexual lives can and do hold political office, vote, influence legislation, and, as a group, have a statistically higher income than the general population. There is no need for further legislation to safeguard political or economic opportunity.

What the legislation did was to **expand special protection** of one group of persons **at the expense of others**. It weakened the ability of employers and institutions, such as those working with children, to enforce basic standards of behavior.

* For example, as the law now stands, a school cannot refuse to hire or dismiss a teacher on the basis of sexual orientation or “gender identity.” Therefore, open sexual self-expression, such as cross-dressing, becomes protected behavior.

* Landlords of more than three single-family dwellings cannot refuse to rent to persons with whom they are at a moral variance.

* Expressions of moral disapproval for particular sexual orientations or “gender identities” are illegal in the workplace if they can be construed – directly or indirectly – as affecting the hiring or firing of another individual.

In addition to the problem of protecting certain sexual behaviors, it is of concern that non-discrimination legislation has been consistently used around the world as a step toward the legalization of same-sex marriage – against which the Church has spoken strongly.

* The Family Court of Australia identifies three steps that lesbian and gay legal initiatives have followed to achieve full social inclusion. They are the decriminalization of same sex acts, the implementation of non-discrimination laws for equal protection in the workplace and in the provision of services, and the attainment of legal marital status between same-sex couples. [Danny Sandor, “Same Sex Couples and Family Law,” www.familycourt.gov.au]

* Outright, “Scotland’s democratic lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender rights organization,” presents a similar analysis, explaining that the legal recognition of same-sex unions is built upon the decriminalization of homosexual acts followed by the enactment of non-discrimination legislation. Legal recognition of same-sex unions, the “third step,” is



Capitol of Santa Fe

“unlikely to be taken in any individual legal system without the taking of the first two steps.” According to some legal theorists, there is “an internal logic in these steps which seems to make the progression inevitable.”

“Once people engaging in homosexual activity are no longer seen as *criminals*, but instead as *citizens*, they can hardly be denied their civil rights, including their right not to be treated differently because of their (criminally irrelevant) sexual orientation. In this way, the step of non-discrimination not only follows, but builds on the step of decriminalization. Similarly, the very idea of non-discrimination with regard to sexual orientation simply demands that no one shall be disadvantaged by law because of the gender of the person he or she happens to love. In this way, the links between the steps of decriminalization, anti-discrimination, and partnership legislation are not only sequential (in the European countries that have gone that far), but also morally and politically compelling.” (Kenneth McK. Norrie, “Sexual Orientation and Family Law,” www.outright-scotland.org.uk; quoting Kees Waaldijk, “Civil Developments: Patterns of Reform in the Legal Position of Same-Sex Partners in Europe,” 2000.)

* The Catholic Organization for Life and Family, founded by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Knights of Columbus, has recently produced a leaflet (“Marriage Matters,” © 2004) that makes a similar link. It writes: “Two provincial appeal courts (British Columbia and Ontario) have found the opposite-sex definition of marriage to be discriminatory.”

Lastly, this legislation was and continues to be of particular concern to Catholics because the Vatican has clearly directed us to resist including the protection of homosexual behavior in anti-discrimination law.

In the June 1992 letter to the American bishops, *Some Considerations Concerning the Catholic Response to Legislative Proposals on the Non-Discrimination of Homosexual Persons*, we read:

“...[I]t is inappropriate for Church authorities to endorse or remain neutral toward [legislative proposals on the non-discrimination of homosexual persons] legislation even if it grants exceptions to Church organizations and institutions. The Church has the responsibility to promote the public morality of the entire civil society on the basis of fundamental moral values, not simply to protect herself from the application of harmful laws.”

Unfortunately, despite the Vatican directive, the bishops of New Mexico saw nothing in SB 28 or in this year’s clarification bill, HB 277, to protest. They were, however, responsive to concerns that this legislation is a slippery slope toward legalized same-sex marriage and supported an amendment to the law that would have stated that non-discrimination legislation might not be construed as legal grounds for same-sex marriage. But it was too little, too late.

When the time came for the legislature to consider the amendment, seventeen Catholic lawmakers voted against the proposal and defeated it. The neutrality of the New Mexico bishops toward non-discrimination law for gender identity and sexual orientation has begun to work its poison. ☹

Current NM Non-Discrimination Law

- **This legislation, in so far as it pertains to sexual orientation, does not redress political or economic inequities.**
- **This legislation, in so far as it pertains to sexual orientation, expands special protection of one group at the expense of others, weakening the ability of employers and institutions, such as those working with children, to enforce basic standards of behavior.**
- **This legislation, in so far as it pertains to sexual orientation, has created a foundation for the legalization of same sex marriages.**
- **This legislation, in so far as it pertains to sexual orientation, is unacceptable to the Vatican because it promotes public immorality and therefore does a disservice to the common good.**

Open Letter to Sr. Joan Brown

People of God columnist persists in using the Archdiocesan paper to promote theological novelties

Dear Sr. Brown:



Los Pequeños de Cristo members have read your columns in *People of God* with increasing discomfort. “Ecology and Spirituality” in the November 2003 issue says that the “month that celebrates Thanksgiving calls to mind Our Mother/Our Father...” There is no such Catholic prayer. Jesus did not teach such a prayer. The Church mothers and fathers did not pray in such a fashion. You have introduced a personal novelty that has no place in a Catholic publication.

Worse yet is your “apology” in the January 2004 *People of God*. There, you confirm that it is your practice to alter the words – and therefore the substance – of the one prayer given by Jesus to His followers. There is, however, no assurance to readers that you will not again use the pages of the Archdiocesan paper to promote your own ideas about the Faith.

Los Pequeños recognizes your free will to worship whatever god or goddess you choose. We, too, have the right to worship as we choose – and for us the choice is to worship as Jesus taught us, in the words He gave us. It is highly disrespectful of our rights for you to use Catholic resources, paid for by Catholic donations, to embed the apologetics or practice of gnostic worship into *People of God* articles. The Archdiocesan paper ought not to be the vehicle of dissident or individualistic spiritual expression. ☩

Cardinal Ratzinger Calls Relativism “Greatest Problem of Our Time”

Prefect of Vatican congregation publishes book on interreligious dialogue

This past autumn, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, saw publication of his book *“Fede, verita, tolleranza—Il cristianesimo e le religioni del mondo* (Faith, Truth, Tolerance—Christianity and the World Religions), which concerns certain issues of interreligious dialogue.

“The real problem is that of truth,” the Cardinal writes. He asks if relativism is really an “...assumption necessary for tolerance; whether religions are really all the same,” or whether, in fact, “truth can be known.”

Tolerance and respect for the other seem to have imposed the idea of the equivalence of all religions, Ratzinger writes, but “in Christ, we have been given a new gift, the essential gift—the truth—and, therefore, we have the duty to give it freely to others.”

To “say that there really is a truth, a binding and valid truth in history in the person of Jesus Christ and in the faith of the Church, is considered as fundamentalism and is presented as a genuine attack against the modern spirit and as a manifold threat against its supreme good: tolerance and freedom,” the cardinal writes. But, “to renounce the truth does not save man.” On the contrary, “Christian faith impels inexorably toward the question of truth,” keeping in mind that “truth does violence to no one.”

If, then, it is possible to find the truth, and there is only one true religion, how are diverse religions able to work and speak together? Christians must not “just communicate a structured ensemble of institutions and ideas, but the most profound dimension of the faith: real contact with Christ,” he says. ☛

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South Dakota House Passes Bill Criminalizing Abortions

In February 2004, the South Dakota House passed a bill saying that life begins at conception, which would therefore outlaw abortions in the state.

The bill will force the U.S. Supreme Court to reconsider its 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling, which legalized abortions nationwide.

The Thomas More Law Center, a Michigan-based public interest law firm, says it worked closely with state Rep. Matt McCaulley, the chief sponsor of HB 1191, helping him with the drafting and legal strategy of the bill.

“This is new and unique legislation that has never been considered by the Supreme Court,” Richard Thompson, president and chief counsel of the Thomas More Law Center, said in a press release.

In the same press release, Rep. McCaulley called abortion an important moral issue that transcends party lines. “Protecting unborn human life is something the vast majority of South Dakota residents support, and Democrats and Republicans joined together and passed a bill that will protect unborn human life in our state.”

The preamble to HB1191 says that based on the best scientific and medical evidence, life begins at fertilization and that South Dakota's Bill of Rights applies equally to born and unborn human beings.

The legislation also notes that abortions pose risks to the health and life of pregnant women, including the risk of suicide, depression and other post traumatic disorders.

The bill says physicians must make every effort to preserve the life of both the mother and her unborn child, but physicians would not be charged in cases where medical treatment given to a pregnant woman resulted in the accidental or unintentional death of the unborn baby.

The bill now goes to the South Dakota Senate, where support is said to be strong.

Should South Dakota's pro-life governor sign the bill, the new law would directly confront *Roe v. Wade*, the Thomas More Law Center noted.

U.S. APPEALS COURT TO HEAR ROE MOTION

Meanwhile, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit will hear oral arguments in Norma McCorvey's Rule 60 Motion to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. The hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, March 2.

Sandra Cano, the plaintiff in *Doe v. Bolton*, is also seeking an overturn of existing legislation under Rule 60. The Court's decision to hear oral arguments in the case is significant as only about 10 percent of cases filed receive oral arguments and the state of Texas is not opposing the case. McCorvey's attorneys will be the only attorneys arguing in the case, since neither the state nor the District Attorney have filed briefs.



Call to Action-New Mexico Polls Priests

Organization Stirs the Pot of Dissent

By Stephanie Block

In August, 2003, 163 priests from the Milwaukee Diocese signed a letter to the President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, demanding a “discussion” of mandatory celibacy for priests of the Roman Rite. They were supported by the Association of Pittsburgh Priests, a Call to Action affiliate, in September and similar letters were organized in two Minnesota dioceses.

By December, the *modus operandi* of a public letter had expanded to include tolerance for variant sexual orientations. Two dozen Chicago priests wrote an open letter accusing the Vatican of “vile and toxic” references to homosexuality, calling such references “divisive and exclusionary” and increasingly “violent and abusive.” They were endorsed by the Catholic Gay and Lesbian Family Ministry of the Rochester Diocese and 7 diocesan priests.

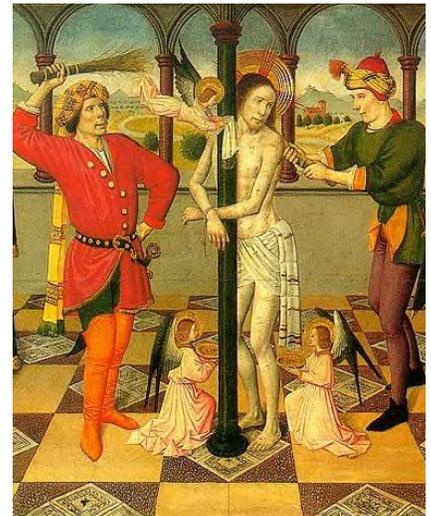
The New Mexico chapter of Call to Action has entered the arena by sending a “survey questionnaire” to the priests of the Santa Fe Archdiocese. It asks priests to anonymously answer: “Do you favor an open discussion of the mandatory celibacy rule for Diocesan Priests?” and “Do you favor an open discussion of the question of women’s ordination to the priesthood?”

The cover letter to the February survey was unequivocal about its aims: “One of the major goals for the reform group Call to Action USA is an open discussion of the question of celibacy, but we are not interested in putting any priests at risk for expressing such support publicly.” Results of the survey will be mailed to all archdiocesan priests by May.

Besides married and women clergy, Call to Action USA dissents on Church teaching about abortion, contraception, and homosexuality. It insists that the Church ought to be restructured non-hierarchically and democratically, that Socialism be taught as doctrinally true, radical pacifism be considered the only morally acceptable practice, and that the Church reverse its defense of right to property and reasonable profit.

The CTA-led coalition of organizations, called Catholic Organizations for Renewal, includes:

- pro-abortion Catholics for a Free Choice,
- Conference for Catholic Lesbians,
- Matthew Fox's new age Friends of Creation Spirituality,
- the ex-priests' organization CORPUS,
- the homosexual activist group Dignity,
- Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church,
- Association of Pittsburgh Priests,
- Pax Christi,
- Chicago Catholic Women,
- FutureChurch,
- Loretto Women's Network,
- National Coalition of American Nuns,
- New Ways Ministry,
- Women's Ordination Conference,
- and many others. ☪



IRON JOHN or JOHN THE BAPTIST?

“Wild Man” Roots and Revelations

By Marie P. Loehr

My brother Esau is an hairy man... – Genesis 27:11
John was clothed with camel’s hair... – Mark 1:6

Christ says “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.” He gives us his person as the way we must follow, the truth we must find, the life we must live. We find the pattern for hearing his Word and practicing his Work in the Gospels, in the Church, in its sacraments. Is this the way that Fr. Richard Rohr of Albuquerque’s Center for Action and Contemplation proposes for men in his books on male spirituality, *The Wild Man’s Journey* and *Quest for the Grail*?

In *Wild Man* Rohr says:

In almost all cultures men are not born—they are made.... Historically, the program was clear. The boy had to be separated from protective feminine energy, led into ritual space where newness and maleness could be experienced as holy; the boy had to be ritually wounded and tested...

--Richard Rohr and Joseph Martos, *The Wild Man’s Journey*, pp. 49-50.

He speaks of how ancient this initiation ritual is. The *Larousse Encyclopedia of World Mythology*, p. 22, agrees on this antiquity. From the earliest ages of fallen man we find:

...the frenetic dances, that entire school of combative fury which transformed men into madmen, beginning as soon as childhood ended...a brutal and exhausting discipline...by the time it was over, the hallucinated adolescent had seen visions and was instructed about the world of the spirits, to which he addressed himself...directly or through a sorcerer.

Disneyfied tribal experience is touted in disciplines as widely disparate as pediatrics and religion, as the answer to our modern malaise or confusion. Much of this is error. *Rousseau nouveau*, the cult of the “noble savage,” a back-to-nature movement cannot save us. Since this philosophy does not acknowledge Original Sin, it can only rant against dysfunctional institutions, corrupting civilization. Alas! The real evil is always Original Sin, and fallen man who corrupts himself with the devil’s help. We *are* all in need of salvation. The season of Lent reminds us of this. We are all “wild men,” before receiving Baptism, Penance, Eucharist--the redemption of Christ. What is God’s solution to “wild men,” a.k.a. sinners? Does Rohr use God’s template for civilizing wild men, or does he turn to human paradigms?

We do find initiation rites for the boy who must grow into a man--*i.e.*, provider, protector, patriarch, priest—among both primitive tribes and civilized cultures. Rohr claims that the Church over centuries eliminated initiation rites for manhood, suggesting that the Church—and the West—substitute rather feeble and feminized ritual incapable of producing strong, tough men.



Despite Christian writers from Gildas in the 6th century AD to C.S. Lewis in the 20th, the Arthurian cycles and their Grail quest are far more ancient and pre-Christian than most of us realize. Rohr's paradigm of initiation, ritual, and education is rooted deep in pre-Christian gnosticism, in keeping with his opinions about denigration of Church sacrament and ritual. Arthur and the Grail emerge from three strains as old as man himself: shamanism, paganism, and occultism.

The shamanistic roots of the Grail go back to the earliest Celts. The bardic ritual of the later Irish and Welsh poet-prophets were remnants of their ancient shamanism and its magic. Their legends spoke of a magical Cauldron that either provided endless food and drink, or restored dead warriors to life, and wounded warriors to health. The *Mabinogion*, *Black Book of Carmarthen*, *Red Book of Hergest*, *Book of Taliesin* and *Book of Aneirin*, among others, contain this ancient Matter of Britain in its extensive pre-Christian form.

Once influenced by cosmopolitan paganism, Celtic shamanism altered. After the Roman conquest of Britain, this material developed in contact with Roman myth and ritual; it shifted even more in association with Mithraic cult. The religion of Mithras was particularly potent among Roman soldiers stationed in Britain. It had flowered first in Persia. Brought to Rome by returning troops, prior to Christianity, Mithraism presented somewhat distorted parallels--a sun god cult, sacrifice of a bull whose blood was drunk from a communal cup, performance of good works, fulfillment of duty with integrity.

In its occult form the Grail provides magical control over men and nature. Its possessor wrests power and riches from material Creation. It develops from the shamanist and pagan roots of the Matter of Britain, and flowers fully in the work of Chrétien de Troyes c. 1180. It anticipates Wagner's gnostic Norse operas in the work of Wolfram von Eschenbach in Germany writing in about the same era as Chrétien. It amalgamates with the ritual of the Knights Templar in the Middle Ages, and filters over centuries into various secret societies, including Hitler's occult mythos. It still surfaces in every generation with spurious works, such as *Holy Blood*, *Holy Grail* and *The DaVinci Code*, wherein Mary Magdalene's womb is claimed as the true "Sangraal" or chalice of the living bloodline of a gnostic Christ.

From Chrétien de Troyes until the mid-20th century, myriad Arthurian versions are thoroughly Christianized, sanitized and pruned variations on prehistoric sources. None of these has deep Catholic Christian roots. By the end of the last century, paganism and the occult again rule Arthurian writ, thanks to feminism and New Age spirituality. It is no surprise to find Rohr dabbling in this material. His fascination with the occult is clear in his promotion of enneagram and labyrinth. But it is most visible in his promotion of male spirituality. The pre-Christian tribal king is personified in Arthur, the warrior in his knights, the magus in Merlin, and the lover in Lancelot for impure or carnal love, in Galahad for pure or spiritual love. This is derived as much from Robert Moore's Jungian archetypes, as from any familiarity with the actual legends. What does this have to do with the "Wild Man?"

In 1990, poet Robert Bly published *Iron John: A Book about Men*. In it, he tells the tale of the Wild Man of the Forest, known as Iron John. Iron John is covered with hair and *he refuses to be ruled by the king*. Although Iron John starts out in this German fairy tale as a rather fearsome villain, in the end he is the one man who can educate the king's son to be a true ruler of discipline, discernment, and detachment from false values.

Bly's book became a runaway bestseller. Men flocked to the woods for retreats with Bly, using drums and campfire and wilderness to celebrate their manhood, share stories of their reduction to wage slaves or marital *castrati*, and raise one

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Reference Resources

Robert Bly, *Iron John: A Book About Men*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.:1990. Read with a grain of salt, aware that Bly is a secular humanist whose Wild Man is rooted in unbaptized folk tales, rather than Judeo-Christian tradition and precept.

Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Princeton University Press: 1974. A useful reference for the roots of New Age spirituality and techniques, although few New Agers may be aware of these primitive sources of their enthusiastic spiritism.

Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine*. Harper Collins: San Francisco, 1990. Moore's work is definitely Jungian, therefore developed out of psychological insights and humanistic agendas, rather than Christian spirituality and imitation of Christ.

Richard Rohr, *Quest for the Grail*. The Crossroad Publishing Company: New York, 1994.
-----and Joseph Martos, *The Wild Man's Journey: Reflections on Male Spirituality*. St. Anthony Messenger Press: Cincinnati OH, 1996. Rohr's denigration and dismissal of the Church as a source of training for masculine maturity is subtle but constant. He does not seem to understand Paul on the nature of love, as in 1 Cor 13, although this is central to mature Christian masculinity. Rohr implies, unconsciously perhaps, but following the illusions of Rousseau and the delusions of Nietzsche, that Christ in the person of the Church has weakened and feminized men. Both books are a shallow mix of New Age psychology and "tribal" naturalism, presenting a pop-psych Christ, picking and choosing ideas less from the Gospels and saints than from secular psychology, anthropology, and socialist or tribal liberalism. This is seen in the footnote references, in the unattributed borrowings from Moore, in misunderstanding the medieval era, the Western hero, and corporate motives reduced to mere money and selfish profit, although it is the medieval era--under the influence of Catholic teaching--that gives us the corporation, banking, and a great leap forward in economics and standard of living. We find the roots of a truly Catholic view of corporate development, vision, and necessary asceticism in the parable of the talents, and so did the medieval Church.

Nicholai Tolstoy, *The Quest for Merlin*. Little, Brown and Company: Boston, 1985. This is an excellent examination of Merlin's role in the Arthurian and Grail cycles, with particular relevance to both Christianity and the sophisticated medieval attitude to the Wild Man motif and its antiquity. See pp. 190-193.

another's masculine consciousness. Like Rohr, Bly cites Robert Moore, a psychoanalyst and professor of religion and psychology, and his *Rediscovering Masculine Potential*, audiotapes made 1988. The back cover of Moore's 1990 book, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover*, calls it "the best-selling, widely heralded, Jungian introduction to the psychological foundations of a mature, authentic, and revitalized masculinity." This states its New Age credentials as well. This is also the template Rohr uses word for word in *Quest for the Grail*, although one must look hard to find any acknowledgement that this formula and method are borrowed from Moore.

The bridge between Bly's "wild man," who frees the masculine from civilization's corruption and constraints, and Rohr's re-working of Moore is Merlin the Magician. In history and legend Merlin is sometimes a Wild Man of the Wood, dressed in animal skins, subsisting on nuts and berries, guarding a sacred spring beside a cavern storehouse of bardic rite, magic, and history in the ancient forest of Caledon. *This medieval concept of Wild Man is NOT Christian man*. This Wild Man refuses the constraints of both civilization and Gospel. He goes beyond the shaman of prehistoric cave paintings, wrapped in animal skins. He goes back to Adam and Eve, evicted from Eden, dressed in "hides" or animal skins by God Himself. These animal skins are a sign of man's Fall, our sin and its "wildness," life at an animal level of existence and conflict. Sin is a refusal to live within the boundaries of either our incarnate spiritual nature or God's order. This refusal of discipline and necessary order at a human level appears again in the story of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 27.

Esau is hairy. The Hebrew word used is the word for "shaggy, he-goat." By analogy, according to Strong's Hebrew and Aramaic Dictionary, this can also mean "a faun," i.e., devil, goat, satyr. It is an image of sin: sexual licentiousness, refusal of order, domestication, or domesticity. Esau loses his birthright because he trades it to feed his stomach and his sensuality with Jacob's stew or "mess of pottage." He also loses his father's blessing to Jacob because he chooses wilderness and the pleasure of the hunt over the responsibility and obligations of tribal camp. He is denied rule over his siblings and tribe because he has not the exterior discipline or interior maturity to rule other men wisely. He cannot even rule himself.

Thus, in Christian terms, a *wild man*—the hairy man, unruly and goatish in his ways—is unredeemed man. He chooses wilderness and sin rather than the sheepfold and redemptive care of Christ, the Good Shepherd. How can this Wild Man be a legitimate model and ideal for the Catholic man's initiation into redeemed, sacramental masculinity? Where does this lead the Catholic man seeking redeemed masculine regeneration in Christ, rather than gnostic New Age manhood? In the desert of Lent, we must turn to John the Baptist to witness the transformation of the hairy man, the wild man, in the redeeming Christ. We'll examine this next month in "Wild Man or Wimp? Christ—Redeeming Word and Work." ☞

Fr. Rohr will be a keynote speaker for the 68th National Conference for Catechetical Leadership, to be held in Albuquerque, April 25-29th. He lectured at the St. Francis Cathedral on February 5, 2004 on "Called to Wholeness: Male Spirituality."

Bringing the Parliament into the Parish

Brother Wayne Teasdale to address local Catholic community.

Brother Wayne Teasdale was invited to speak at the Sangre de Cristo Catholic Community (Albuquerque) on February 21, 2004, according to the archdiocese's *Catholic Communicator* (February 1, 2004). Brother is a Benedictine monk "trained in the ancient Hindu tradition of sannyasa - a renunciation of all worldly things that frees a person to pursue mystical truth." [Kloehn, Steve (writing for the Chicago Tribune) "Dalai Lama Focus of Religious Conference", Albuquerque Journal, July 28, 1996, A 11.]

He serves on the Parliament of the World's Religions, which includes representatives from all the major religions, and many lesser ones, among them Freemasons, Animists, Wiccans, the Satanic Lucis Trust, and the American Humanist Association. The various declarations these groups have supported are an attempt to identify fundamental principles that are held in common. The participants in this "interreligious dialogue" hope that by articulating these principles, greater peace and understanding will be developed among their members.

Teasdale was directly involved with preparation of the utopian document, *Universal Declaration on Nonviolence*, which "grew out of a number of discussions between the Dalai Lama and Brother Teasdale," and signed by many at the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions. [Teasdale, Wayne, *Universal Declaration on Nonviolence toward the Emergence of a Global Culture*, <http://rain.org/-origin/ucs/ucsO28.html>.]

What we are attempting to do in this Declaration, is to draw attention to a fundamental element of a new global culture and society...a new vision of civilization in which organized violence is no longer tolerated... [The] interdependence of economies, cultures, and religions, fortified by the technological advance of instantaneous communications, not to mention the dynamism of evolving societies in the matrix of world history itself, make this particular dream a genuine possibility. [*Universal Declaration...*]

A global culture, Brother Teasdale believes, predicated on nonviolence, will give expression "to a more ultimate notion of justice." Furthermore, "it would be more firmly established on a profound sense of the sacredness of Nature with all its wonderful diversity of life-forms and a permanent, unwavering commitment to ecological justice." [*Universal Declaration...*]

Another document adopted by the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions is Hans Kung's *Declaration toward a Global Ethic*. [The *Declaration toward a Global Ethic* can be obtained at <http://astro.temple.edu/-dialogue/index.html>. This site will also guide the reader to further commentary about the *Declaration*.]

The function of this document is to establish general norms of behavior and responsibility, particularly among the religious of the world. It is humanist-based, attempting to identify the common elements of a "spiritual" person - those elements which are "transformative" and which will lead in time to a "universal spirituality."

In this, the Parliament of the World's Religions goes beyond dialogue and sympathetic awareness of other religions to the fostering of spiritual indifferentism. "Universal spirituality" is not a distillation of the essential spiritual values common to all faiths but is another "faith" and another "doctrine." ☺



Bro. Wayne Teasdale

Doing What Christ Tells Us about Marriage

Excerpts of a sermon by Father Roger Landry, Fall River Diocese

Today we are present at the most famous wedding of all time...one in which we do not even know the names of the bride and groom.

It's the one that took place in Cana in Galilee, and it's the most famous wedding because Jesus Christ was there –and what happened at that wedding has been remembered by Christians ever since. The liturgical remembrance of the wedding of Cana causes us to remember what Christ has done for marriage. God created this institution in the beginning as one of the greatest blessings a human being could share, and like everything in creation, God pronounced it good.

But Christ did something more during his earthly life. He took this institution, good and created by him from the beginning, and raised it to the dignity of a sacrament, something that would also confer his own life, and bring us closer to him, closer to happiness, closer to holiness, closer to heaven.

Through the sacrament of marriage, which Christians can receive, Christ remains with the couple just as assuredly as he was with the couple in Cana. Marriage is part of God's plan for creation and part of God's plan for our salvation and we must treasure marriage and defend it whenever it comes under attack.

We are now in the midst of a heated debate about what marriage is. For God, it is very clear what marriage is. When Christ was asked by a lawyer about whether divorce was possible, Jesus gave a clear teaching about the real meaning of marriage that is as relevant to the debate about whether homosexuals can marry as it was to the subject of divorce-and-remarriage.

If Jesus were to testify up on Beacon Hill before our legislators about the meaning of marriage, I think he could use the very same words that he used in St. Matthew's Gospel. Listen to him with fresh ears: "Have you not read that in the beginning God 'made them male and female,' and said, 'for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

In this teaching of Jesus – who is the Truth incarnate, who is our Creator and knows how and for what the human person is made, who loved all of us enough to die out of love for us – we see four things that are relevant to our debate:

- a) "In the beginning, God made them male and female." There is great meaning to our masculinity and femininity in God's plan. God didn't clone Adam, but made Eve, who was equal to him in dignity, but complementary.
- b) "For this reason a man shall leave his mother and father and cling to his wife." God's plan is not that a man leave his parents and cling to whomever he wants, but to cling to a wife.
- c) "The two shall become one flesh." This refers more than merely to their sharing a bed together and temporarily joining their bodies physically in the act of making love, because that act is just temporary. God wanted from the beginning a more permanent union, "so they are no longer two, but one flesh." The way this occurs is in a child, who is the enduring union of the flesh of the man and the woman and blessed by God with the infusion of an immortal soul.



This one-flesh union in children “made in love” is for Christ, our Creator and Savior, part of the essence of marriage.

- d) “What God has joined together, man must not divide.” This refers not just to a particular couple joined by God in marriage, but to the union planned by the Creator for a man and a woman in marriage. To try to divide man and woman in the institution of marriage by opening marriage up to two men or two women is clearly contrary to God’s plan for marriage and for man and woman.

God created marriage in a particular way from the beginning for our own happiness as well as for our salvation, to teach us how to love according to the nature he gave us. But he also had something else in mind in creating marriage the way he did.

He wanted to use marriage as an analogy to communicate his own love for us his people. We see this in the first reading from Isaiah: “As a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.”

God’s love for us is likened to a husband’s love for his new bride. When Jesus came, he took this image of heterosexual spousal love even further, calling himself the Bridegroom who was fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecy. St. Paul based all of God’s teachings about marriage on Christ’s spousal love for his bride, the Church: “Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her to make her holy” (Ephesians 5:25).

Human heterosexual spousal love was created by God to reflect God’s own love for his people. To change the meaning of marriage to encompass homosexual “unions” will not only do damage to individual men and women with same-sex attractions, to others and to society as a whole, but it will gradually incapacitate our ability to understand the meaning of all creation and God’s love for us, of which traditional marriage is the highest reflection.

In the face of the assault on the meaning of marriage in our Commonwealth, what does Christ want from us?

He wants us to be his voice, repeating his words and passing on his teaching, which is always given to us out of love for our true good. In the first reading, Isaiah said that he was unable to “keep silent” or “to rest” for the sake of Zion and Jerusalem. God is asking of us a similar zeal in speaking boldly in defense of him and his plan for marriage....☺

March Calendar

Friday, March 19, 2004:

LPC monthly meeting.
Call (505) 293-8006 for information.
All welcome.

Pro-life Prayer Each Tuesday:

- from 8:30 am – 9:30 am, join Fr. Pio O’Conner for prayer at the Planned Parenthood Abortuary on San Mateo
 - from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m., join Fr. David Phillipson for prayer at the Planned Parenthood Abortuary on San Mateo
- Call (505) 286-1655 for more information.