

## **Bulletin Board**

### ***New Book by Fr. Harvey - Coming Out Soon!***

Fr. Harvey's upcoming book will now be entitled **Homosexuality and the Catholic Church: Clear Answers to 100 Challenging Questions**. The book will be published by Ascension Press. When the book is ready for distribution, we will advertise its availability in this newsletter and on our website CourageRC.net! Please keep Father's continuing work on this book in your prayers!

### ***Start Planning for Courage Conference 2006!***

Courage Conference 2006 will take place at Saint Louis University, in St. Louis, MO from July 27th - 30th. The conference brochure will be mailed out with the next newsletter, at the end of April and information will soon be placed on the Courage website: CourageRC.net. Please plan now to attend, so you can join your brothers and sisters in Courage & Encourage for an uplifting and inspiring time of joy, sharing, and good fellowship!

### ***Philadelphia Day of Recollection!***

The Philadelphia Chapter will be hosting its annual Day of Recollection on March 4th, 2006 from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Cardinal Rigali will celebrate Mass, and the guest speaker will be Rosemarie Scott, author of *Clean of Heart, Overcoming Habitual Sins against Purity* published through lulu.com. The day will include Adoration, Confession, Rosary, two talks with discussion, Holy Mass, lunch, and the Divine Mercy chaplet. Please make mention of this at your local chapter meetings, and please let the Philadelphia group know by February 22nd if you're planning to attend, so they will know how many will be having lunch and can prepare accordingly. Call (215) 593-9426 to confirm your attendance.

### ***More Adoration Power!***

The Courage and Encourage members of Minneapolis/St. Paul will once again hold 40 hours of continuous adoration in observance of the Lenten sea-

son. The members pray for the conversion of those who are still homosexually active, for the conversion of those in the rainbow sash movement, for a greater adherence to Church teaching by clergy and lay people, for the spiritual growth of Courage and Encourage groups, and for personal intentions.

The dates & times of this event are April 7th, 8:00 a.m. through April 8th, midnight. If you would like to join the Minneapolis/St. Paul members during these 40 hours, by praying for an hour before the Blessed Sacrament in your own diocese, please send an e-mail to Tom R. at [photom@aol.com](mailto:photom@aol.com) and Tom will send you a sign-up list. May many graces and blessings flow from this effort!

### ***Courage Participates in the 33rd Annual March for Life!!***

On January 23rd, the 33rd Annual March for Life took place in Washington, DC. For the third year in a row, Courage formally participated in the March by having a banner. Our banner reads:

**Pro-Life = Pro-Chastity**

and it has the websites of three pro-chastity organizations listed on the banner: [RealLove.net](http://RealLove.net), [CourageRC.org](http://CourageRC.org), and [LoveMatters.com](http://LoveMatters.com).

This year we had the participation of members from D.C., VA, NY, PA, KY, and NE! Father Harvey also marched with us! A big thank you to Father Harvey and to all Courage members that came out and marched! Thanks too to those who couldn't join us but still kept the March in their prayers!

### ***NYC Day of Recollection!***

On Saturday, May 6th, New York City will host a Day of Recollection for Courage and Encourage members. Although the guest speaker has not yet been finalized, we are trying to get Molly Kelly, well-known chastity speaker to join us that day! We will also be looking for a Courage member to give a testimony. More information will be posted on our website [CourageRC.net](http://CourageRC.net). We hope that all Courage and Encourage members in the area will attend! We also welcome guests visiting from other areas!

### ***7th Annual Men's SportsCamp: June 1st - 4th!***

We invite the men of Courage to participate in the 7th Annual SportsCamp, from June 1st - 4th. SportsCamp 2006 is located on beautiful riverside grounds near Princeton NJ, convenient to Amtrak and NJ Transit. Enjoy participating in a special weekend of softball, flag football and basketball in a safe and supportive environment! On this weekend, there will be time for prayer and for good fellowship with your brothers in Christ. Please visit the Courage website [CourageRC.net](http://CourageRC.net) for more information, or send an e-mail to [NYCourage@aol.com](mailto:NYCourage@aol.com). The registration fee of \$250 is due by May 12th, and includes housing and meals. Please note that registration is limited, so register early!

### ***Order the Courage Video & Spread the Word!***

Our 2 part video "Portraits of Courage" continues to sell! The video set consists of two 27 minute videos: Part 1: *Into the Light*, and Part 2: *The Cry of the Faithful*. The two video set costs \$29.95 and the shipping and handling charge is \$6. Please call 1-866-BE-CHASTE or 1-866-232-4278 to order the video by credit card. You can also order the video by sending a cheque or money order in U.S. funds, payable to Courage, to: *Courage Video Ordering, 4340 E. Indian School Rd., Suite 21-209, Phoenix, AZ 85018.*

Please consider making a gift of the Courage videos to someone whom you think could use them in ministry: your Parish Priest, the Parish Youth Minister, your Diocesan CCD teachers, etc. And yes, folks, we will be making DVD versions soon...Stay tuned!

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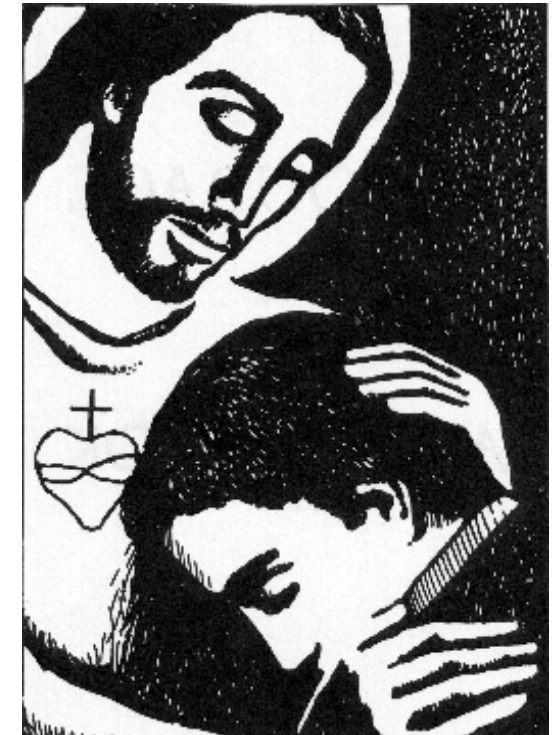
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# **COURAGE Newsletter**

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***Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.***

**John 14:27**

## **Director's Corner - Rev. John F. Harvey, OSFS**

*The following is an excerpt pertaining to the new Vatican document addressing the question of men with same-sex attractions and ordination, from Fr. Harvey's upcoming book **Homosexuality & The Catholic Church: Clear Answers to 100 Challenging Questions**, which will be published by **Ascension Press**. When the book is available, we will announce it in this newsletter and on our website: [CourageRC.net](http://CourageRC.net)*

### **How does one explain deeply rooted homosexual tendencies?**

Having already explained homosexual activity, it is necessary to make distinctions concerning the intensity of such inclinations. In many persons with same-sex attractions (ssa), the inclination may be addictive in the sense that they have little or no control over the inclination. In others, however, they have been reduced through individual and group therapy as well as through constant prayer. As Archbishop Chaput said in reference to admission to a seminary, it is necessary "to examine and discern the suitability of every candidate for priesthood on a case-by-case basis that respects the dignity of the individual". In drawing this same conclusion, I have consulted with a distinguished Catholic psychiatrist, Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons, Conshohocken, PA. In my pastoral work with persons with same-sex attractions I have noted men with ssa where the person had firm control over these inclinations. Prayer was part of that control. Dr. Fitzgibbons has had similar experience. For this reason, those responsible to discern candidates for admission to seminaries and eventually to priesthood should consider that there will be some persons with ssa who are chaste and lacking in deeply rooted homosexual tendencies.

### **What does it mean to "support the so-called gay culture"?**

Besides homosexual activity and deeply-rooted same-sex attractions, a third group of candidates who should not be admitted to the seminary or to the priesthood are those who "support the so-called gay culture." It is necessary to describe "gay culture". It is a philosophy of life advocating homosexuality with its behaviour as a lawful alternative to the state of marriage. This philosophy holds that homosexual activity is natural; that one may look forward to finding a life partner, and to persuading the government that their sexual unions should have the same

privileges as traditional marriage. If a candidate for the priesthood holds this view, he should not be admitted to the priesthood. Even if he were heterosexual and supported the "gay culture", he should not be admitted because he would mislead persons with same-sex attractions.

### **How do deep-seated same-sex attractions hinder one's relationships to other men and women?**

To understand the difficulties which some persons with same-sex attractions have, it is helpful to appreciate that the natural attractions of man toward woman and woman to man is the basis for the mutual attraction of the sexes, and for the institution of marriage in every culture.

The person with deep-seated same-sex attractions, however, lacks that natural attraction to the other sex; he is also uneasy towards members of his own sex. Before he is brainwashed by gay propaganda, he perceives that sexual actions with his own sex are immoral. In short, ssa is a deficit, affecting the person's relationships to other men and women. In men it finds expression in resentment of the authority of the rector and in fear of other competition from other candidates. In other cases, one finds a fear of women related to his earlier relationship with his mother; just as frequently, the candidate is resentful to the authority of his father. It is really hostile detachment of his father.

### **Are homosexual tendencies transitory in some persons?**

The document refers to one whose adolescence is not yet complete as an example of transitory homosexual tendencies. It is a good example, but not the only one. The document goes on to say, the person, however, must have clearly overcome these tendencies "at least three years before ordination to the diaconate."

This would seem to refer to an adolescent already in the seminary. Probably, he would need an evaluation by a reliable psychiatrist or psychologist to discover whether his same-sex attractions are no longer deeply rooted and whether he has been chaste during this period.

The document however does not treat the question of an adult person with ssa who has remained chaste while practicing chastity of the heart through prayer. Both spiritual directors and Catholic therapists have met such persons. I believe that such persons should have the opportunity to enter a seminary with the hope of subsequent ordination when they have completed their studies. They will need to be monitored by both spiritual director and therapist.

I also believe that we need more study of same-sex tendencies in adolescent seminarians. Spiritual directors, Catholic therapists, and moral theologians need to integrate their findings in this area.

### **What are the two indissociable qualities found in every priestly vocation?**

These two aspects are (1) a vocation is a free gift of God; (2) it involves the responsible liberty of the man aspiring to the priesthood.

- (1) "Vocation is a gift of Divine Grace, received through the Church, in the Church and for the service of the Church."
- (2) Responding to the call of God, the candidate responds freely to the call of God in love. The desire to become a priest is not enough. There is no strict right to receive ordination to priesthood.

It is the duty of the Church to discern the qualifications of one who wishes to enter a seminary, and to spell out the necessary requisites for ordination to the priesthood (p.3).

### **What does the document say about the formation of seminarians for the priesthood?**

After describing requisite qualifications, the document addresses bishops, major superiors, rectors and spiritual directors concerning their responsibility for the continued personal formations of the seminarians. This formation "must articulate, in an essential complementarity, the four dimensions of formation; human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral." (p.3) It stresses that the human foundation is the most important one, because it is the foundation of the intellectual, spiritual, and pastoral.

I understand human foundation to refer to (a) the complementarity of mutual attraction of the sexes; (b) adequate intellectual capacity; (c) freedom from emotional disorders that hinder the free exercise of the will. I would place same-sex attractions under emotional disorders in the area of sexuality. With reference to the diaconate and priesthood, the document states that the candidate must have achieved "emotional maturity" (p.3.) I understand that to be freedom from deeply rooted ssa.

### **Who are responsible for the ordination of a candidate to the priesthood?**

Ultimately responsible are the bishop or the major superior of a religious male congregation or order. They in turn charge rectors and spiritual directors in seminaries to discern the suitability of each seminarian. I use the

term "ultimately" with regard to the bishop or major superior, because they make the final decision and, in case of serious doubt, they are bound to turn down the seminarian in favour of the common good of the Church.

The rector of the seminary, after consultation with the faculty, must make a decision in regard to the fitness of each seminarian for the priesthood. Finally, in the process of discernment, is the spiritual director who works in the internal forum of conscience, and is bound to secrecy. Like the rector he has a grave obligation to discern the suitability of the seminarians he directs. Representing the Church in the internal forum, he must find in the candidate the practice of priestly chastity as well as "the emotional maturity specific of a priest" (p.3). The spiritual director needs to ascertain the personal traits of the seminarian who must meet with him regularly.

There is good reason for such intense inquiry in order to ascertain that the candidate does not present sexual troubles incompatible with the priesthood (p.3.). Examples of such troubles would be habitual masturbation and addiction to pornography.

If the person with such troubles were willing to leave the seminary until he has recovered from habitual masturbation and/or the use of pornography, he may be given the opportunity to renew his path to the priesthood. If however the seminarian "practices homosexuality" or presents "profoundly deep-rooted homosexual tendencies, his spiritual director, like his confessor, must dissuade him, in conscience, from proceeding towards ordination" (p.3).

The document acknowledges that the candidate himself "has the first responsibility for his own formation" (p.3.). In a spirit of faith, he must submit his judgement to those representing the Church: "the bishop who calls to orders", the rector, the spiritual director, and the other teachers of the seminary.

The document adds that it would be gravely dishonest "if a candidate were to hide his own homosexuality in order to proceed, despite everything, towards ordination" (p.4). Such an attitude should not be found in one "called to serve Christ and His Church in the ministerial priesthood" (p.4).

### **What is the concluding statement of the document?**

"Let bishops, episcopal conferences and major superiors look to see that the constant norms of this Instruction be faithfully observed for the good of the candidates themselves and to guarantee that the Church always has suitable priests who are true shepherds according to the heart of Christ (p.4)."