



THE SAME SEX ATTRACTION MORALITY LEAGUE

A Beacon for the Storm Tossed Traveler in the Modern World

CORRESPONDENCE

In this document I have reproduced a comprehensive sampling of the correspondence I have received and sent in connection with this website. I have deleted all names, email addresses and personal information to protect anonymity.

Thank you for your website. I am the wife of a man who is now in the life after 22 years of marriage. We have a profoundly disabled daughter and he does not even come to see her. Your website addresses all the things he has said to me as his new creed. Thank you for that.

Please pray for us.

Thank you for inviting me to your website. I read half of it and skimmed half of it (sorry, I have only a little time), and I am very, very impressed indeed! I cannot remember the last time I was so wowed by a website. Your humility, your courage in exposing your own weakness in order to glorify God and bring peace and joy and understanding to anguished and confused souls, your solid and well-placed faith united with penetrating wisdom, reminds me of St. Augustine's outstanding work, the Confessions. It appears to me that God's grace is at work powerfully in your life and at your website. If this grace that you show in this aspect of life is representative of the other aspects of your life, then I suspect that you are close to becoming a saint, if you are not one already. You must persevere in all graces. The history of masturbation and the hardships of your cross will sometimes make relapse tempting; be ready to be strong when human weakness attacks! More than this, have strategies prepared to defeat the temptations, perhaps a friend who can visit with you and give you pep talks on the greatness of virtue. The deeper your purity becomes (and it is already deep, I gather) the more souls you may save at your website. This purity can become a life of prayer for those souls you wish to help. Action is always subordinated to prayer, and empowered by it, according to the first page of the documents of Vatican II.

It is my hope that you will not remove any sections of your website, especially your own history. There are two cases of wording that you might wish to alter. "And even if I did find myself in an intimate friendship, I think I would want to see if it could remain chaste." I gather that you do more than think that you want to keep it chaste. As far as I can tell, you are in fact firmly resolved to practice chastity. As a Catholic, you are even resolved to strengthen this resolve until it is perfect as Christ's resolve would be perfect. (Isn't it a great thing about Catholicism, that it doesn't let anyone settle for any degree of moral imperfection, and doesn't let us be "only human" as the phrase goes? St. John of the Cross is the best on this.) If you will permit a digression, one thing to remember is that if, on the road to spiritual perfection, you ever succumb to temptations towards depression in the soul on the one hand or pride on the other, you will be in danger of being less receptive to God's graces that are necessary in empowering your resolve not to sin again sexually. I offer you this because it is a great truth, and because I have experienced its importance, and because homosexual inclinations makes sexual sin a greater danger area. Digression aside, next you write, "Even if homosexuality were found to be caused genetically, it would still constitute a breach of the natural law." As I understand it, homosexuality is only a breach of the natural law (which is the moral law) when the free will obeys (or puts into practice) the homosexual impulse. Homosexuality considered only as a genetically

caused impulse is not a breach of the moral law. It is an imperfection, but not yet a sin (at least not sin in the regular meaning, though it is a remnant of original sin). As I understand it, this is the Church's position, but I too am always willing to be corrected by the Church if I write anything wrong.

In conclusion, I want to say again that I find your site to be filled with wisdom. Your articulation of Catholic doctrines and philosophical truths is certainly far above average, generally even polished...Also, I cannot say enough,

Charles, how I admire you as a person. Again, you remind me of St. Augustine in his greatness writing the Confessions. May God bless you now and always! May your cross occasion the joy of closeness to Christ now, and occasion the fullness of joy when at the end of our lives (which are short) God will not only heal entirely but remove the veil from our eyes in the great wedding feast of Christ! Any good thing on earth that you miss now, because of homosexual inclinations or other, is a foreshadowing of what light God will be to you then and what he will give to you then, presuming that you persevere in this holiness. For now on earth, perhaps God will give you spiritual children through your holy work, which is a better kind of procreation than natural procreation. Please pray for me that I will do what it takes to bring God spiritual children too. Peace be with you. Glory to God in the highest! Holy, Holy, Holy is He.

Congratulations on your new site . I'm sure Our Lord is very with you and your efforts. We will all pray for your success. If there is way we can be of assistance, please let us know.

Peace!

On a swift reading of your site, I must say that you are doing a truly wonderous work. In one paragraph you state:

"Eventually, however, I came to the realization that my fantasies were just that, entirely a tissue of lies to myself without substance, and that I would waste my life away building personal castles in the air unless I took a more practical and realist view that such fantasies were going nowhere."

My Lord, what a needed message for everyone in this cyber-age we live in!

I once lived in the parish Fr. John Harvey served in as resident for weekend Masses. He is a great priest who has done a great work. And you, friend, are a shining example of seminal faith and moral rectitude for a very barren and shiftly milieu of irreverent relevatism. No wonder you are named after Pope John Paul II - "Carol" - Man of the Millenium! Grace to you in your work...

No doubt you will meet with opposition along the way. Fight the good fight of Divine and Incarnational Love!

Looks well done to me Charles. Wishing you much success in your endeavor to help this critical area of faith and morals. We all fall short but we must fight the good fight and it can and will change with Gods grace.

May God bless you for this wonderful work, inspired by Him, no doubt! I have no comments except that perhaps the language could be a bit simpler, but I am not sure if that is necessary. It is quite thorough and an excellent resource which I have bookmarked. Chastity is difficult but not impossible. God will continue to give you the strength to hold fast to Him if you ask Him.

Congratulations for wanting to turn to the Catholic Church as the one true Church of Christ. And, congratulations also for making such a go at fighting your "present" condition. Unfortunately, it seems that your explanation of this condition is mistaken on points. Part of the problem is the Catechism of the early 1980s, which on many points of doctrine is contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church in the past.

When anything "disordered" is spoken of, it ought to be spoken of in reference to the effects of original sin. The sin of our first parents Adam & Eve caused this inner disorder which we were all born with. At baptism it is forgiven, but the effects are still there which we must all fight with the help of the graces of Christ's true Church on earth. That is one reason why the Church is there for us. The Saints are our exemplars in successfully putting that order in their own lives back into balance.

Everyone is born with inclinations to sin because of the effects of original sin. Some have stronger inclinations to steal. Some have a stronger inclination to anger, some gluttony, some drunkenness, some envy, some lust, etc. These must be fought against, as you would agree, with the teachings and sacraments of the Church of Christ (the Catholic Church). Because God made man to eat to preserve life and to marry to preserve our race, the disorders in regard to food and procreation are very prevalent and strong. In fact, it is said that the inclination to procreation is second in strength to saving one's own life. Such a thing as lust is a natural disorder that must always be fought against by all. But the root of it is original sin.

Now let us take natural lust as an example. Lust is a disordered attraction to the ordinary attraction that leads men and women together in marriage. No need to get into particulars...it is simply a disordered act of the will and mind. An extreme. Now, it is Church teaching that such subjects should not be made course for conversations. If one has the inclination to the disorder, they must fight it between themselves, God and their confessor. It is not something to bandy about that one has a disordered inclination to lust, and openly call for compassion. No, that is a disorder itself. A sin itself.

Since such disorders are internal struggles, they should be left to the internal as much as possible, and to the help of a priest. It is an error to call for the public compassion for people who are inclined to any sin. It is not Catholic to call for public compassion for those who have an inclination to steal. Inclinations are internal. It is not Catholic to call for compassion for those who lust, or get drunk. Yes, we must generically feel sorry that men are born in original sin, but that is not the same thing as calling for compassion on particular inclinations of men since we cannot tell if they are guilty of it or not, only God knows. That is why man in general should actually frown upon this publicly, because if there be guilt behind it, it will show disapproval, and if there be no guilt behind it, it shows the person they disapprove of the disorder because it objectively offends God as a disorder that must be actively fought against and subdued, and silenced.

Now to the heart of the issue. There is also unnatural lust. This is a disorder of a disorder. As St. Paul said, it is unnatural. Because it is unnatural, it is very rare throughout history. In the past, it was a disorder primarily of an evil immoral sort. Today they will tell you it was very prevalent in a hidden manner, but it was not. They are trying to make it look acceptable. They will even tell the lie that people are born with this condition. This is the biggest single most harmful thing today that actually makes it more prevalent.

There is also the psychological factor that is probably the biggest reason today why people are calling themselves homosexual. It is like a mania akin to a phobia or mania. A strong feeling that is hard to fight but really just a feeling that can be fought off completely.

In short, sinful inclinations are the lot of the children of Adam. We feel sorry in general about it, but nobody should be publicly proclaiming what their inner inclinations are, and demanding rights or compassions. That is a sin itself. A disorder. It only makes the disorder more acceptable to society and harms society. And laws are correct to subdue any manifestation of "homosexual" acts, groups or marriages. There really is no such thing as a homosexual. It is just a person who has perverted the natural course of things either through ill-will or having been psychologically conditioned into that sorry state.

[Note from Webmaster: Here is my response to the above message:]

Thank you so much for visiting my website and responding with your thoughts. In some respects, however, I am not sure how closely you read what I wrote. I thought I was very clear in tying the notion of the disorder of homosexuality to concupiscence and the effect of original sin. In fact, I see this as a reason why people should not be singled out for special abuse as a result of this disorder. In addition, I also thought I was very clear in saying that compassion for those with this disorder is a compassion for the person as a child of God, and that this must be separate from the necessary condemnation of the activity and the ideology promoting such activity, which can and must be objected to. As I mentioned, it is difficult to love the sinner and hate the sin, and so many people on both sides of

the homosexuality debate can't be bothered to do this. But it is essential that this be done, since charity and moral strictures are both essential parts of Christianity. How can compassion, whether public or private be unChristian? Obviously the notion of compassion can be abused to try to justify changing the moral strictures, but to say that compassion for persons in and of itself is a bad thing I find absolutely chilling. I would hope at least that you approve of private compassion for people who have disorders. And who is "demanding" compassion? I thought it was God that said that we should love Him before all others and our neighbor as ourselves.

I think that the words of compassion in the Catechism clearly do not reverse the longstanding Church doctrine on the sinfulness of the activity or the disorder of the inclination. It would seem an authentic development of doctrine informed by Christian charity and the teaching on dignity of the human person. In addition, is the Catechism not part at least of the ordinary magisterium of the Church, to which all Catholics must give religious submission of will and intellect, if not in parts the assent of faith with regard to the deposit of faith? The Pope has declared that the Catechism is a sure norm for teaching of the faith.

I suppose you have a point insofar as the Catechism seems to single out this particular disorder for compassion, when there are probably any number of other disorders equally deserving of compassion. However, just because it is mentioned here does not mean that one should not have compassion for other disorders. "Expressio unius" does not "exclusio alterius" in this case, to cite the old legal maxim. In most cases it would be obvious that compassion is required, but in this case there is a history of special animus against persons with this particular disorder, so perhaps special mention is warranted.

Blessed Lent,
Charles

Thank you very much for forwarding to us your website. We know of a few Catholics who will

really appreciate the information and will forward your site to them this coming week. We

will also keep it bookmarked as a resource when asked by Catholic families for just such

information. Thank you again and we salute your efforts and your personal courage to live

the Gospel - with all the struggles that entails...please keep our apostolate in your

prayers as we too struggle to "run the race." Together in Christ, then, take care.

Your site looks great. It is good to see all the good that you are doing in Christ's name. Keep up the good work.

I enjoyed reading your story. I agree with you for the most part. I think if acting on same sex feelings were really ok, there wouldn't be so much unhappiness associated with it. Certain relationships bring temporary superficial happiness but no lasting joy. At the age of 50 when most of your contemporaries have a quarter century of marriage behind them and two generations of children (aka grandchildren), the same sex inclination person is still "looking for Ms Right."

I sincerely believe that were it not such a flagrant violation of God's law that there wouldn't be so much internal misery attached.

I suppose a counter argument would be that I made poor choices. Well, had God really been at the center of my life, I'd have selected a partner more in line with The Lord and we would have had him at the center of our lives. Since that is about unheard of in the vast majority of Lesbian unions that thought actually never came up.

Well, God has forgiven me, but I must still live forever with my punishment, that of never having a romantic love.

I could ramble on, but you get my drift.

Thanks for your message. Let me begin by thanking the Lord for your response to sharing the light of truth with others online about this subject! My admittedly rapid survey of your website leads me to think that your approach is true to the Faith and motivated by love for those victimized by this snare.

I would also like to encourage you to continue to pursue this important effort, which is not well promoted in our often disordered age. Continue to respond to God's graces which prompt you to seek those souls who are caught in this snare!

My prayers and best wishes for your effort! :-)

Keep the Faith, always...

May the Lord bless, keep and guide you, always

I just wanted to encourage you regarding your website. It looks very thorough. I did read a good portion of the early articles. I am of the opinion that central to understanding the whole issue of chastity for heterosexual and homosexual alike is the understanding that there is one standard of chastity for everyone. And that standard is very demanding and difficult for everyone, married or single, heterosexual or homosexual. Being married is no sure cure for opposite sex lust as far as I can tell for many people. Good luck and God bless you in your endeavors.

Friend--

I am a youth minister and counselor, and had your web-site address forwarded to me by an apologist friend, as he thought it may be useful in providing further guidance to my youth. I really want to applaud your efforts here, but more importantly, commend you on the life you are living.

Needless to say, as a counselor, I found that the therapy-field was so bent on "normalizing" this behavior, to the point where they would ignore any study that suggested "environment" and to continually pursue the conceptualized "gay gene". I agree with your assessment that the etiology of same sex inclination does not significantly (if at all) impact Church teaching... but in working with people who have dealt with this, if they can blame God for their condition (i.e. "it's biological, so God made me this way") they can then either justify the behavior ("He wants me to be happy as He made me") or on the other end of the spectrum, hate God for what He made of them. Also, saying that environment/nurture plays a role means that there then IS an ability AND responsibility on us as a society to correct or heal environments/systems that can be causal to this inclination.

Again, it was terrific to read your site. As I'm sure you've seen, Catholics err on both sides... either accepting the behavior along with the person, or rejecting the person with the behavior.

I pray that God grows the ministry you have entered into.

I didn't know what to expect, but was quite impressed with your website. There was quite alot of stuff there, but I was able to read a few key items, and understand what you may be going through.

I do think you are on target. Keep your eye on living chastely. Have you heard of the Dr. Nicolosi tapes? The organization you mentioned NARTH is very good.

Thanks! Keep up the good work and we will pray for you in your struggles.

Awesome! Very well done. I wish you the best of luck. I will try to link to it and let some homosexuals I know, know about it.

I went through your postings and they look very reliable. I have a couple of questions for you:

Do you have any one, in addition to yourself, seeing the emails you receive and the responses you are sending? It seems to me that it would be extremely

wise for you to have someone you are actively accountable to in engaging in this difficult work. The temptations associated with "going it alone" appear significant to me. Do you have a spiritual advisor directing you in your work? Has Fr. Harvey endorsed you work?

Your webpage is the first I have seen by an individual who understands church teaching on homosexuality and chastity (and is also homosexual). It was informative and a relief to see the truth about morality and homosexuality. I couldn't find anything in contradiction to Church teachings. Good luck.

I saw your website yesterday and it is very good. I think the name is incredibly counter-cultural but also true to the message. Good job.

What a lovely website you have. There are very few like them out there that does a good job discussing the issue of same sex attraction. I am also glad to know that you are a faithful son of the Church. Keep up the good work and may God bless you.

You have a very valuable web site. There are many people today who are struggling with the same situation that you are and your leadership is very important. Many, as you state think, the only alternatives are giving in to a gay lifestyle or else living a depressing life- you show that there is another way.

By the way, a Christian friend of mine once made the statement that a Jewish person who converts to Christianity is very fortunate because - since it is so difficult to do - when they die they must go straight to heaven. I think one can make the same statement about the person with a homosexual orientation who leads a Christian life in today's society.

Good bless you and your work.

Hi Charles, just wanted to offer a word of encouragement on your fantastic website... it's taking me a while to plod through it (massive! and worthy of thoughtful reflection as I go) but it's fascinating reading, well thought-out and articulate. I too am 35 and it sounds like our experience has been similar; I'm one of those analytical types too :) Keep the faith brother, and once again thanks for the great website!

Dear Charles, I visited your website and am very impressed - keep up the fine work! Yours is a rational voice that needs to be heard - there is so much yelling

and untruth swirling around the homosexual issue. As a Catholic I have always been rather amazed at how hard it seems to be for many in our society to understand what it means to love the sinner and not the sin. Sin is sin, no matter who is committing it. Any unmarried person who is not chaste is in the same "sin" boat - if you will. And for those who have no trouble being chaste there is something else as we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory fo God. Again, keep up the good work and may God bless you.

[Note from the Webmaster: The following post is from a self-proclaimed "Catholic" homosexual group that dissents from Catholic teaching on homosexuality:]

Thank you for seeking our input on your new website. I want you to know that I appreciate the time and effort that you have put into it.

I invite you to visit our website, as well. As you probably know by now, we in [our group] do believe that celibacy should be a matter of choice not a requirement for living a morally healthy life.

It was a _____ priest who founded [our group] back in _____ to lend support and a positive affirming approach to the subject of homosexuality.

I would be remiss if I did not tell you that, as a Catholic, I have much respect for my Church and for those who hold leadership positions in our Church. My respect for them does not preclude my ability to respectfully disagree with them from time to time on issues that our important to me.

Like you I had to come to grips with my homosexuality and my spirituality. It has been a long process but a very rewarding one. One need never be apologetic for being gay or lesbian any more than one need feel apologetic for having blond hair or green eyes.

I look forward to further exchange with you in the future.

[Webmaster's note: As the Catechism paragraphs cited on my website make clear, the Catholic Church most certainly does not hold that chastity is "optional" for those with same sex attraction!]

Your site is a wonderful witness to the truth and power of the Gospel and I pray that it will be an occasion of grace for those who visit. I teach Catholic morality to high school students and there is no subject which provokes as much discussion as homosexuality. Young people have a great deal of difficulty the 'wrongness' of the activity. Cultural conditioning is a major obstacle.

I looked over your site, and although I am certainly not an expert in web design, may I make a suggestion? It has to do with the name "Same Sex Attraction Morality League".....you may wish to rethink that as it conjures the memory of old morality leagues (now viewed negatively)....best to accentuate

something of spiritual promise and hope. The message is completely Christ-centered and absolutely correct, just the packaging needs to be reworked. One final suggestion: for future development you may wish to add information about the challenges of same-sex attraction in different age brackets - in other words, perhaps a section which speaks to the 'gay' teen, adult, etc.

Excellent site. viewer friendly. ease access, no waiting. Later today, I'll read all the contents, but what I did read is well done. Congratulations on a job well done on a difficult topic that more people want to hear about.

Thank you, Charles, for sharing your website with us. I truly hope that many clergy and other afflicted will view it and see the earnest and gentle manner in which you have approached the subject. Personally, I have always thought that ministry to homosexuals should not begin with their homosexuality but rather with some meditations that are applicable to all sexual passions - homosexual or heterosexual - i.e. Is it licit for married couples to engage in oral sex? Is it licit for married couples to engage in anal sex? Is it licit for married couples to engage in compulsive sexual activity for the sheer enjoyment of it rather than to seek parenthood? The answers would be no, as any of these activities (and more) preclude the possibility of children and are not being engaged in for that purpose. In short, the first issue to address is Addiction to the Orgasm - who gives it is a secondary matter. Then, and only then, does the issue of homosexuality enter the picture. Homosexuals and heterosexuals need to understand

that the orgasm is addictive, like drugs or alcohol, and discover and address the underlying

causes for it. Then one can investigate the various forms this addiction takes - incest,

child abuse (gay or straight), partner-swapping, homosexuality, pornography of any kind, etc.

May God's peace continue to descend upon you and guide you on this most difficult but holy path. As our Holy Father says, "Couragio!"

I have visited your site. It is a wonderful idea to create such a League. I have read about St. Sebastian Angels website which promotes homosexual activity among clergy. I also have read about many sexual scandals among the priests and bishops. So your service to the catholics with same sex attraction is a necessity. Catholic Church needs you to show our brothers in faith the right path.

I gave a quick look at your site and found it to be very well done, and I agree with your position. Fr. John Harvey established

COURAGE along the same lines, viz., helping those with same sex attraction to live a chaste life in keeping with Catholic teaching. You may perhaps be familiar with his organization.

My prayers and good wishes go with you. You, no doubt, will be ridiculed for your beliefs, but that is the price we have to pay for giving Christian witness.

We'll see your page. But be careful since God loves natural things. May He bless you.

[Webmaster's note: Huh?]

It's a clear and well done site. I'm sure you will receive many blessings from your honesty. You are offering and sharing God's Love. Do not be disheartened if you find that people will reject this Love as God's children too often reject Him and His Love. May God continue to bless you and, by the way, welcome home.

I can't believe what I just read. P L E A S E! You are DEAD in Christ. Read the Bible.

[Webmaster's note: I don't understand this reaction. I cite and discuss Biblical citations on homosexuality on my website.]

Why so apologetic????! I had only time for a 5 minute look, but from what I managed to read in that time, it looks like a great site. Authorative, well researched and easily readable. This area is of interest/concern to me as my brother is a transsexual- and so he is now my sister. Of course, this is something completely different, but trying to find advice/guidance on this has been very difficult, and in my searchings I have come across some sites about homosexuality, as well as other issues of sexual morality, which would be very UNhelpful to anyone going there for advice or encouragement.

So best of luck with your endeavour. One comment- how 'bout some colour?!

I've visited your site a few times and commend you on your commitment to live your life in the Church, and for your courage in "coming out" with a public statement that's likely to bring you harassment from both groups - Catholic and homosexual.

In a small way, I understand something of what you're dealing with. I'm straight, and in fact have been married for 22 years. However, due to my wife's medical problems, I became suddenly celibate a while back. I have since learned that it would be *very* easy to overcome the celibacy - I had no idea how many

women would be available to a graying, middle-aged, civil servant. While it's simply a matter of not availing myself of these chances - the *not* part sometimes takes a lot of effort. As I sometimes mumble as I work on the web site - "I'm sublimating as fast as I can...."

Anyway.... Good job. Keep fighting the good fight.

I admire your courage. We are all part of God's family. We need more understanding and compassion.

I have personally been shown much kindness by many people who are homosexual.

Just a note to let you know that you will be kept in my prayers. I understand your condition given my own past struggles with similar disorders, and may God grant you the necessary grace to live a chaste life as you so obviously desire to do. Your website is an excellent resource not only to persons with same-sex attraction but to all of us because we are ALL called to live chaste lives according to our state. I wouldn't hesitate to use portions of your website in instructing my daughter about chastity as God's plan for her life. My husband and I have revisited the Church's teachings on chastity lately, as we've recently dealt with some issues between us that necessitate such a reminder and renewal of commitment. Your personal testimony, in particular, inspires me to live accordingly.

That said, thanks for all your work towards creating and maintaining this valuable site that plainly yet eloquently proclaims the truth about these issues. Most of all, I admire you for your courage to tell your story!

I must say, this Website is a great treasure of wisdom! While I do not experience same-sex attraction, I do have sympathy for those who do, and realize that it is probably difficult to live by the laws of the Church in these regards. Kudos to you for a great Website that all Christians (Catholics and non-) should see!

I am very impressed with your web site.

I think perhaps the places you could fill out more, and you've been very holistic, is on consecrated virginity (I believe EWTN has a file on that in their library), and on the value of sacrifice, and the individual cross--And how each individual can learn things that otherwise would not be learned by the bearing of that cross, and so be able to help others.

I tend to think nowadays when we look for 'soul mates' it speaks of an aching in our lives that is often a mistake, a combination of our physical passions, and our spiritual yearning--I know that from personal experience, the strengthening of my prayer life and daily mass and the Eucharist greatly ease any yearnings I have and fill a void I was unaware of at the time I put a soul mate as my first priority. When the first priority of every man, God and love of God is put in the right place, all secondary vocations will begin to sort themselves out more properly.

I believe is in the Diary of St. Faustina that the religious person is compared to the moon, and a layperson living in the world a star--The religious person makes great sacrifices, and one of those sacrifices is a life of chastity. Also, it is to be remembered that Christianity focuses on a beautiful life in the next world, and that we do not focus upon the gifts of love we will find there, the literal eternity of joy that meets all needs--Needs which in this life we sacrifice to God so that he may perfect us and show us that our only true need is His Love, and all other worldly attachments, even the love of creatures make us vulnerable when not loved in union with Him.

Also I would note that a man who approaches knowledge of the family also approaches knowledge of the Trinity, and vice versa. And that in the afterlife, there is no more marriage nor are people given in marriage and bearing children, because there is a final marriage: The marriage of the Lamb to His Bride the Church. Our complete fulfillment. The bliss of this, amidst complete emotional, and mental control, in arisen bodies, able to explore the universe of God's goodness and treasure--Is incomprehensible to us now! But we can taste it as we speculate and become more attached to spiritual joys, experiencing the Dark Nights of the senses and our souls.

One Family in Christ. Which we often forget here.

Finally I will add that a devotion of 3 Hail Marys said morning and evening is a wonderful aid for chastity.

May God bless you in your vocation, and your journey. I am glad also, you have noted Courage in your links. I am very impressed with them.

Best of luck with your website. You have put an enormous amount of work into its creation

and I have no doubt that the providence of God is at work here.

Nice website - God bless you in your efforts to live by the Church's teachings and inform others who remain in ignorance about it.

A much needed site -- great content and powerful personal testimonial -- bravo!

Hi, I am a Rosary Maker and was checking out my new web site on Yahoo!, saw your site and dropped in. Yours is a wonderful site, a breath of fresh air. I am not homosexual, but I must tell you this: you are trying to live a Christ-centered life style that all of us sinners are endeavoring to travel. I also am a convert to the Catholic Church for the last 24 years and it changed my live in ways too wonderful to list. It isn't always easy, but God is Good and Faith-ful. I pray the Rosary every morning and I will remember you to God. Blessings coming at you!

I just read your beautiful story--

Thank you so much for the lovely work that you're doing. May God bless every moment of it.

[Webmaster's note: The following is from a letter from the head of a diocesan ministry to "gays" and "lesbians":]

You asked me for comments about your newsletter. Charles, the the church clearly teaches that homosexuality is an orientation, and as such, cannot be limited entirely to same-sex attraction or to disordered genital activity to which no one has a right or a gay subcultural life style that I too believe to be depraved and self-indulgent. The Church clearly makes a distinction between being and doing. I believe that not acknowledging the nuances of the church's teachings or pastoral practices, is very dangerous, misleading and seriously flawed. Your insistence on one approach to ministering to homosexual persons is also a denial of the complexity of homosexuality and ultimately fails to minister to the majority of homosexually oriented people. Such an approach has its own ring of totalitarianism.

I encourage and laud your resolution to live a chaste life and to follow the teachings of our Church. God has given you a most precious gift. I would also urge you to ponder and pray over those same teachings and so enter ever more deeply into the wisdom and richness of the Church.

[Webmaster's note: The following is my response to the previous email:]

Thank you for for taking the time to visit my webpage and giving me your comments. However, I am sorry that all you can say about it is that it is "dangerous, misleading and seriously flawed" to set out the Catholic truth that those with same sex attraction are called to chastity and that those with this condition should be treated with compassion. Frankly those concepts are taken right from the Catechism, so if you are calling anything "totalitarian", then it is Catholic teaching itself. I think to say that I am "not acknowledging the nuances of the church's teachings or pastoral practices" tells me that you have not really

read a word that I wrote. I very clearly make the distinction between activity and inclination -- in fact that is one of the biggest points I was trying to make. I also emphasize the need for love and compassion for those with this condition. Even such a personage as Mel White had the decency to recognize my sincerity and my loving concern for my brothers and sisters with same sex attraction. If I anywhere in my website say anything inconsistent with the authentic magisterial teaching of the Church, please let me know. I must heartily disagree with you that combining compassion for those with this condition with a call to chastity is merely "one approach to ministering to homosexual persons". Ministry to homosexuals that ignores the call to chastity and affirms homogenital acts may be some sort of ministry, but it is not a Catholic ministry. Dignity wrote to tell me that they believe that chastity is optional for those with same sex attraction. They certainly are entitled as a civil matter to their views, but they are not entitled to call them Catholic. True pastoral concern is never at variance with the revealed moral truths. Being pastoral does not mean rewriting doctrine on faith and morals to suit the convenience of one's flock. If any approach is "pastorally flawed", it is an approach that simply turns a blind eye to sinful activity and even says that it is not a sin. If I had to choose between the wisdom of the ages as enunciated in the magisterium of the Church as guided by the Holy Spirit and as reaffirmed by our Holy Father in Rome, on the one hand, and the dissident gay activists at Dignity on the other, I would choose the former thank you very much. As for my denying the complexity of homosexuality, that is just a ridiculous charge. I have experienced this difficult condition all my life and am well acquainted with its complexity. I don't know whether or not you have (and I don't particularly care to know), but in either case I don't think you are in any position to lecture me about the complexity of homosexuality. But I do know that the teaching on homosexuality at its core is not complex, but simple -- the activity is sinful, the condition is disordered, those with the condition are called to chastity and deserve compassion, dignity and respect. I am very suspicious that those who try to complicate these simple truths set forth in the Catechism are really trying to create a new religion out of historic Christianity, as the Episcopalians seem intent on doing. If one wants to start a new religion, that's fine, but religious freedom demands that those who hold the Apostolic faith should be free to continue to believe. Your attempted distinction of "homosexual orientation" and "same sex attraction" makes no sense at all. Homosexual orientation means an erotic attraction to those of the same sex. Same sex attraction means an erotic attraction to those of the same sex. You are trying to make a distinction without a difference. The activity is sinful and the inclination is not sinful, but it is disordered. If by "orientation" you are trying to say that the Catholic Church requires those with same sex attraction to embrace the ridiculous gay ideology of "pride" in one's hormones, then I cannot think of a more pernicious and wrongheaded doctrine. Please don't play word games to try and change the moral teaching of the Church. The recent tragic abandonment of Christian moral truth on sexuality by the Episcopal church provides a salutary warning on how Christian doctrine can be totally overturned and rewritten by people making clever and complex arguments to obscure the truth, and engaging in "dialogue" to advance

their agenda. Having received so many graces since my conversion to Catholicism, I dread the thought tht the Catholic Church would so apostatize from the Apostolic faith. (Modern Anglican divines even go so far as to say there is no "core" Christian teaching on sexuality -- a demonstrably false position that would be laughable if it weren't so sad).

I also totally reject your charge that the message of chastity "ultimately fails to minister to the majority of homosexually oriented people". I'm sorry, but all homosexuals are called to chastity, whether they live in the "gay" lifestyle or not, and whether they are "out" or not. Courage ministers to all homosexuals, not simply a minority. Courage has all sorts of people, including both those who have been quite active in the gay lifestyle and subculture as well as those of us maligned souls who do not wish to be publicly identified merely by one's sex drive. And as I said above, any ministry that ignores the call to chastity and affirms sinful behavior is simply not a Catholic ministry.

Moreover, you have no right to label people as "gay", which denotes a very specific political ideology that the Church has no right to impose on people -- it is not in the least part of Gospel truth. It is total blot on the sacred garments of the Church for you to use this political term for an official ministry of the Church. At least the term "homosexual" is a more neutral, clinical word.

I'm sorry for if this correspondence bears an angry tone. I don't enjoy this kind of correspondence any more than you do, but I do get angry when those who are in positions of authority in the Church belittle the deposit of faith instead of building it up and defending it. If you were simply a private person voicing your own view, I might be able to ignore it, but since you are in a position of authority, I feel compelled to "speak truth to power".

Your invitation for me to enter further into the spiritual riches and prayer life of the Church is certainly right on the money. I most certainly need to do that and I thank you for your encouragement to do so. However, I don't believe that in doing this I will find anything that will contradict the simple message of chastity and compassion set forth in the Catechism.

Yours in Christ,
Charles

A very nice website. Kudos for your commitment to holiness and your willingness to share the universal call to holiness with others. I wish you great success in your endeavors and will keep your apostolate in my prayers.

I think you have a fine Web site - may Our Lord bless you for what you are doing, and also for putting Him first in your life.

[Note from Webmaster: The following is from the head of a diocesan ministry to "gays" and "lesbians":]

I find your site to be balanced, compassionate, constructive and orthodox. thank you for sending it to me. I am not sure who you are from just the name Charles and your e-mail address, so perhaps we haven't met and I just ended up on your mailing list. In any case, I wish you the best and thank you for the fruits of your own research, reflection and soul-searching.

I have read several of your web site's pages and must certainly applaud your good efforts and deep desire to follow the wisdom of Mother Church, rather than simply your own personal whims in flights of fantasy. Your appreciation of orthodox Catholicism is refreshing a source of great hope.

I am most pleased to see how far you've come in your journey, and await the time when you complete it on this issue. You are very close, but at this point there is still a certain weakness in your embrace of Church teachings. For example, you say:

"For years I longed in silence for such a relationship but never seemed to come in contact with the right person. At this point in my life, however, I am rather skeptical as to whether such a relationship really is possible for me or even desirable. I'm not sure if I could find a relationship involving a degree of selflessness on my part that would meet Our Lord's purity of heart standard. "

You need to become sure. I am confident you will, for you have come ever-so-far. I will keep you and your ministry in my prayers... it is much-needed.

I was, at first, uncomfortable while visiting your site. However, as I explored further and read what you had to say and what your position was, I was very impressed by your straight-forwardness and your taking a stand. When I read what you said that people shouldn't try to change the Church, I was nodding in agreement.

We are all given a path to follow from God. You have decided to follow the Lord and are setting a great example for all Christians. I will pass this on.

I disability retired from the U.S. Navy in 1997 with MS. Have you ever heard of 'Redemptive Suffering'? I practice that, it is where you offer your suffering up to Jesus through Mary so your suffering can be turn into Grace that is sent where needed. I think this may be something for you. I know when I offer up my suffering, it tends to lessen (although that may just be psychological).

I just wanted you to know that not only did your personal story strike a chord with me - it was practically a mirror of my own life and views and thoughts! Nice

to know that there are people like me out there. Great site. I'm sure you already know this, but just in case you don't, your site is listed on Dave Armstrong's "Biblical Evidence for Catholicism" site: Biblical Evidence for Catholicism: Main Index It's a fantastic compilation of articles and writings on just about every subject touching on Catholicism. Incidentally, I'm curious about something. Were you religious at all before your conversion to the Catholic Church? What were you raised as (if anything)? I remember distinctly as a child being asked my religion and not being able to give an answer. I suppose it was the shock of hearing his baptized son ask what religion he was that prompted my father to start attending mass again with us children. I never really became interested in my faith or religion in general until recently, and I toyed with the idea of Protestantism and Eastern Orthodoxy before settling back into my "native soil".

First view of this page appeals to me (1) because of your neat writing style and way of expressing your thoughts and (2) in my Catholic discussion group this very subject just came up and I sent a message to the group about it.

It's high time a web site like this comes to the fore. I have not yet seen anything on Courage that you mention.

I think one of the reasons this subject attracts me is because of the way "things" get so twisted and blown out of proportion and thus misrepresented. Another is that my husband and I have two children with developmental disabilities, so we live somewhat in an arena where we are exposed to much misunderstanding just as a person of a different race, culture or sexual orientation might face.

Not too long ago one morning I just happened to turn on the Family Channel where they were airing a 700 Club segment, and the topic was on Exodus, which is (I think) the name of the group that formed to help homosexuals flee from all the negative pressures. If you are familiar with the program, or even the group, then you will understand when I say that I burst into tears right there in front of the TV when I heard one man witness to how he was lured into morally inappropriate behavior, believing it was right and yet grappling with so many painful issues within..... until finally he hit upon a group of Christians who helped... the story was so awesome that my own reaction, I believe, was simply a rejoicing in the Holy Spirit, that his love will 'find a way' to those of good hearts and, honestly, the program was magnificent. Had I only been able to tape it !

I have booked mark your site and will use it in my ministry in the Church. I will be ordained a Permanent Deacon on June 23rd of this year.

Thank you for taking the time to share your talents to help others try and remain faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for the information about your website. It is an issue that needs the church's teaching on it explained and a public that is willing to learn about the church's teaching on the subject. God Bless your mission to do just that.

Have finally had time to just start reading your site. The concept and introduction are wonderful.

God does many things that I do not understand. But we love Him anyway :) One who loves God and never finds a truly good "mate" and lives a celibate life in sacrifice must bring so much grace for mankind. I can only guess that the same grace, or perhaps even more, can come from those who know they cannot marry even the one they may love but follow Christ instead. As a Carmelite religious woman, we especially appreciate the value of sacrifice.

It will take me a little while to get through the writings, but hope to read all your pages.

Several years ago I heard about "Dignity" and then about "Courage". The difference was very pronounced. Courage decidedly sounded more healthy.

When I was in college I wondered why my best friend (a male) didn't actually *date* with me. *duh* Then he went to San Francisco, and that was the early 70s. I have never stopped worrying about him. :(Wish there had been an organization like Courage back then, because he was a beautiful person and I think he really would have appreciated the support.

I would like to thank you very much for your web site. It does a great service for all of us struggling with ssa. Please keep it up.

Dear Webmaster of the 'Same Sex Attraction Morality League' website, I have visited your great website via PetersNet (congratulations on your excellent review!!).

Peace and God bless you!

Kudos on your website! I saw your review on Peter's Net & thought I would check it out...

Charles, I just viewed your site. It is great. I have not had time to "devour" it yet because I am at work. However I will go through it more later. Any of you who have not seen it go look. It really is right on target. I am going to hopefully be able to use it for refuting some of the arguments I frequently encounter, esp the

one about the apostles not knowing about the concept of SSA in how it exists today.

Thanks Charles, You go dude<G>.

This is an excellent site. I am a happily married heterosexual male, but have encountered confrontational homosexuals espousing the 'morality' of homosexuality (some within the Church). I have tried to be charitable, but they make it difficult at times.

You have keen insight. God Bless.

You are saying that gay men should go without the enjoyment of any sexual relationships with another man. Well that is simply against nature. Just as abortion is an act against nature. It is not that big a deal to find another male attractive. I don't find sexuality to be part of religion. That is man talking there. God already made up his mind when he gave me all of my desires, not just my sexual desires. Would you try to deny my love for the color purple. Would you rather I prefer the color blue? Why do you care that God gave me the desire for purple, or the desire for men, and not women. This is all about the majority using their power over the minority. Most people are straight, and so they think it is best. It isn't. It is just different. If you think about it, all of the religions in the world do the same thing. They try to get people to all act the same exact way. Whatever that may be. Nature isn't that way. It works in diversity. I am just part of that diversity. Maybe I was supposed to like men because if all men liked women we would breed ourselves into extinction. We already have way too many people on this planet anyways, so being gay or sterile is God's natural way of keeping us from overproducing. We are not deviant from nature, we are nature. Just like you won't see edible fruit from every single plant, you won't see offspring from every single human. It doesn't mean that there is something wrong, it is just an unusual kind of plant. But people want others to live up to some norm. Well nature doesn't always stick to norms. Gay people are not part of the norm, but we are part of the whole. I think you are right about the excessive amount of sex that gay men have. But that is not unnatural. It is never unnatural to have any kind of sex. Sex between people is really only wrong when one of the participants is not consenting. Excessive amounts of sex between men is simply that-excessive. Like overeating or overdrinking. To eat is necessary and natural. To have sex is necessary and natural. To be promiscuous is to be unbalanced, and that is all. Just like fat people are unbalanced in their lives. I find abortion to be much more against nature than any kind of sexual act could ever be. You Catholics have got great art, but you spend way too much time worrying about somebody having more fun than you. You are a gay man who is denying nature. That is fine with me, but you are not balanced. Everybody has a sexual side to them. You are denying yourself sexual pleasure. Remember that your heterosexual brethren in the church aren't just having sex for the making of kids. They are having sex because nature (God tells

them too). You are denying a very important part of your being. You might make it to Heaven, but your gunna have a painful trip.

[Webmaster's Note: This is my response to the previous post:]

Thank you for your email. My responses below:

You are saying that gay men should go without the enjoyment of any sexual relationships with another man. I believe that God requires this and I've always felt it to be so, even when I am tempted. Well that is simply against nature.

The natural law is about what one ought to do, not what one feels like doing. Not everything that one feels like doing is moral. I would hope that you would agree we should not go into a store and simply shoplift at will if we feel like taking something. There are defects of will that incline us to do things we should not. Surely you would agree that if one is sexually attracted to young boys, one should not give into this inclination, because of the harm to the child. Our biological sex is designed to be complementary to biological female. Something just went wrong in my case. I feel I fully have dignity as a human being, but I can recognize that shortcoming, just as someone with a genetic or other defect should be treated with respect, but does have an objective shortcoming. And in the Christian religion, all humans are recognized to have defective concupiscent wills as an after effect of original sin. That is why this life on earth is continual spiritual warfare against forces both internal and external that would draw us away from our supremely good and merciful God. Of course following the natural law is difficult, but we have the help of grace to aid.

And it is patently not the case that following every single sexual impulse is good. Civilization would fall apart if everyone were to dissipate all of their sexual energies on "getting some". That energy should be rechanneled in healthy and constructive directions. Just as abortion is an act against nature.

I'm sorry, I don't see the analogy.

It is not that big a deal to find another male attractive. No, but if one dwells upon this and it leads to sinful activity, then we need to be careful. Certainly admiring beauty is one thing, but people should know their personal limits and avoid what might be for that person a near occasion of sin.

I don't find sexuality to be part of religion.

I don't see how we can simply carve this one area out as being of no concern to God. Certainly that is not a Christian belief.

That is man talking there.

I don't agree.

God already made up his mind when he gave me all of my desires, not just my sexual desires. God allows all kinds of challenges to arise in our lives. Not everything is good just because it exists. Poverty, torture, injustice, murder,

abortion, etc. are not good just because they exist. We are challenged to live holy lives with the challenges and cards that we have been dealt.

Would you try to deny my love for the color purple. Would you rather I prefer the color blue? Why do you care that God gave me the desire for purple, or the desire for men, and not women. God has not laid down any moral rule on the issue of color preference, so I don't see it as relevant.

This is all about the majority using their power over the minority. Most people are straight, and so they think it is best. It isn't. It is just different. Again, you are assuming a man-made rule, but I believe it is a God-given rule. Sex is a glorious mystery that God has created for the context of a union of a man and woman in marriage. The Bible and book of nature show that. And the Spirit of God guides the Church into all truth, so I trust its interpretation. I think God meant for those with deep seated same sex attraction to rechannel that energy into other pursuits and lead chaste lives. I think the current cultural climate encourages a "victim" mentality, whereby we are just supposed to sit and complain about how unfair the world is. Well, I frankly have never felt victimized by society or by the Church that I freely chose to join. I do feel victimized, however, by the totalitarian ideology of gay activists that one constantly confronts and that does not respect any views in disagreement with itself and vilifies religious believers.

If you think about it, all of the religions in the world do the same thing. They try to get people to all act the same exact way. Whatever that may be. I don't see that. I feel free to act as an individual. But I know that in my case I should act chastely.

Nature isn't that way. It works in diversity. I am just part of that diversity. I'm all for true diversity. First of all, I would like gay activists and their sympathizers to practice what they preach about tolerance and diversity and stop their vilification of traditional religious believers and stop trying to impose their ideology on the rest of society.

Maybe I was supposed to like men because if all men liked women we would breed ourselves into extinction. We already have way too many people on this planet anyways, so being gay or sterile is God's natural way of keeping us from overproducing. I think the overpopulation scare is a myth, at least in Western developed countries. These have a population shortfall, not an overproduction. And evil should never be permitted to bring about a supposed good. China's one child policy may bring down their large population growth, but economic development will do the same thing without such evil and draconian laws and regulations. History has demonstrated that economic development is the solution to overpopulation in the developing world.

We are not deviant from nature, we are nature. See above about nature.

Just like you won't see edible fruit from every single plant, you won't see offspring from every single human. It doesn't mean that there is something wrong, it is just an unusual kind of plant. Perhaps so, but for that plant, it should follow

the divine law as applicable to it. Also, there are plants that might have a disease or a defect.

But people want others to live up to some norm. Well nature doesn't always stick to norms. Gay people are not part of the norm, but we are part of the whole. Those with same sex attraction are fully human, capable of reason and ethical behavior, and should be treated with full dignity and respect. However, one's sex drive does not define who we are at base. I reject this effort to put me into a little box.

I think you are right about the excessive amount of sex that gay men have. But that is not unnatural. It is never unnatural to have any kind of sex. Sex between people is really only wrong when one of the participants is not consenting. I disagree. First of all, this is not the Christian viewpoint as it has been understood for 2,000 years. You're entitled to have your own views, but traditional religious believers are entitled to their views of sexual morality as well. Moreover, even from a human perspective, I think that promiscuity will inevitably lead to a very selfish treatment and view of other people as simply means to our erotic satisfaction and is not respectful of the dignity of other people. I think it will lead to a very cynical society. And of course there are health and psychological problems.

Excessive amounts of sex between men is simply that-excessive. Like overeating or overdrinking. To eat is necessary and natural. To have sex is necessary and natural. To be promiscuous is to be unbalanced, and that is all. Just like fat people are unbalanced in their lives. Any kind of excess can be sinful.

I find abortion to be much more against nature than any kind of sexual act could ever be. You Catholics have got great art, but you spend way too much time worrying about somebody having more fun than you. You can go have your fun, but I think you are shortchanging yourself, both in the medium term and in the long term in terms of getting closer to our spiritual homeland in all eternity.

You are a gay man who is denying nature.

"Gay" is an extremist political and cultural term that I reject and refuse to use. I experience same sex attraction. That is all I am willing to say. I am not denying this objective fact at all.

That is fine with me, but you are not balanced.

So it is a cardinal sin to suggest that there might remotely be anything wrong with pursuit of the active homosexual lifestyle, but those who choose chastity are defective and unbalanced? Give me a break. Who is trying to castigate and vilify who now? And who are you to say how balanced I am? And in any event, life is a struggle, no one is ever at a perfect stasis in life. And we are all sinners and inclined to sin. We should do the best that we can, with the help of God's grace, to live a life of faith, hope and charity. Everybody has a sexual side to them. You are denying yourself sexual pleasure. I don't deny that one has sexual urges. I just think in my position, it is incumbent upon me to rechannel those urges in a chaste direction.

Remember that your heterosexual bretheran in the church aren't just having sex for the making of kids.They are having sex because nature(God tells them too). But the unitative aspect of sex must be intimately connected with the openness to the creation of life to be blessed of God. That is how the Church has authoritatively interpreted the deposit of faith. Natural family planning is as far as the magisterium felt it could go without reversal of the apostolic teaching of the Christian faith. I will give that conclusion my wholehearted religious submission of will and intellect. You are denying a very important part of your being.

I don't think so. I think it rather arrogant to tell someone that they are less of a person if they are not having sex all the time. What about someone who for whatever reason cannot marry or have sex. Why are they less of a human being and less entitled to respect and dignity than those who do? I totally reject the notion that one must have sex to be complete. Christianity has a long ascetic tradition which points us beyond the base attractions of the world to the heavenly spiritual kingdom. That is why I would very much regret if the Church caves into the demands of the world and eliminates the beautiful and glorious tradition of priestly celibacy.

You might make it to Heaven,but your gunna have a painful trip. I think this could be said of all of us. Nobody promised an easy ride in this world here below.

Thanks so much for sharing your thoughts. I do appreciate it!

Take care and God bless you!

I'm not a biblical scholar but, I'm just wondering what Jesus said about homosexuals. I see that you use passages from the Old Testament and from St. Paul but nothing from Jesus himself.

Just wondering.

[Webmaster's note: This is my response to the previous posting:]

I'm not a Bible scholar either. However, I do know that while the Gospels may not record Jesus as speaking specifically to the issue of homosexuality, we do know that he was an observant Jew who followed and recognized the Mosaic law -- he said he had come not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. He criticized the Pharisees for hypocrisy, not for the substance of their moral strictures. He told the woman caught in adultery to go and sin no more, so he clearly recognizes that there is such a thing as sin and would presumably accept what the Mosaic law's description of what kind of activity constitutes sin. He recognizes that marriage is an essential and mystical component to God's plan by referring to the creation of Adam and Eve in connection with his discussion of marriage, and thus recognizes the special role that a bond between a man and woman plays and the complementarity of sex roles. And to the extent he talks about the Law and its moral strictures, he actually gives us a higher standard -- i.e., in the sermon on

the mount, he says that not only must we not commit adultery, but we must not lust in our heart, i.e., we must not give free reign to thoughts of committing sin, since thinking about such will lead us more likely to do it. He asks that we be pure in heart. I can't think of anything that calls into question the compatibility of the current "gay" lifestyle with Christianity more than Jesus' call to purity of heart.

Anyways, that's just my take on it.

God bless,

Charles

This is from Matthew 22:36-40

"Sir, which is the most important command in the laws of Moses?" Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. The second most important is similar: 'Love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.'

All the other commandments and all the demands of the prophets stem from these two laws and are fulfilled if you obey them. Keep only these and you will find that you are obeying all the others."

I'm just wondering if you eat shellfish, wear mixed fibers, and all the other parts of the Mosaic law that have been conveniently disregarded? And as for the other parts of the New Testament, do you believe in women preaching the Word or should they remain silent as demanded by St. Paul?

[Webmaster's note: This is my response to the previous posting:]

Please see my comments below:

This is from Matthew 22:36-40

"Sir, which is the most important command in the laws of Moses?" Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. The second most important is similar: 'Love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.' Of course charity is the prime directive. But it is just ridiculous to interpret that to mean that therefore Jesus is saying that there is no such thing as sin and morality and we can all go off and do whatever the heck we want. Jesus clearly recognized that there is such a thing as sin and morality. In fact our God gives us moral injunctions because He knows better than we do what is best for us, and sometimes the loving thing is to call to the mind of others moral principles. I perhaps wrongly assume by your email address that you are heterosexual [N.B. from Webmaster: the sender's email was in the form _____'sdad@_____]. If so, I find it breathtakingly arrogant and uncharitable of you that you advocate changing the moral principles of Christianity so as to consign those that experience same sex attraction to the slavery of sin by encouraging us to pursue our lusts with wild abandon. For shame, sir!

I'm just wondering if you eat shellfish, wear mixed fibers, and all the other parts of the Mosaic law that have been conveniently disregarded? One hears this bogus argument all the time, and I cannot fathom why it is taken so seriously. It is very clear from the New Testament that the Apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit to exempt gentiles from the merely dietary or other non-moral requirements of the Mosaic code. The Apostles also make it quite clear that principles relating to sexual morality would remain. And this makes sense, since issues of sexual morality are core to our human personality in a way that mere dietary rules are not. Adultery is prohibited by the ten commandments, which Christians have never viewed as having been abrogated (perhaps you're like the anti-Christian bigot Ted Turner who wants to rewrite the ten commandments to suit his fancy). And again, Jesus, by stressing that we should not only not commit adultery, but should avoid lust in the heart, by extolling purity of heart and by enunciating a high doctrine of marriage between biological male and biological female, clearly thought that issues of sexual morality were of key importance for humanity. Christian asceticism has a long and noble history that modern sex-worshipping materialistic hedonists want to destroy. Taking the moral asceticism out of Christianity will essentially change Christianity into some new religion.

And as for the other parts of the New Testament, do you believe in women preaching the Word or should they remain silent as demanded by St. Paul? I think we have to take seriously everything the Apostles said and wrote. There are differences between the sexes. That is a biological fact that cannot be denied, no matter how much the radical feminists and their "progressive" fellow travelers try to do so. In marriage especially the different sexes play different roles. This is a great spiritual mystery, as Jesus says. It is completely against the Gospel for women to transform themselves into men and deny their unique female characteristics and roles as the radical feminists want to do. Jesus bestowed a special teaching role on the Apostles, who in the liturgy act as "alter Christus". Thus I think that it is appropriate and in accordance with Paul's injunctions to reserve the sacramental priesthood to men and to require that homilies be given by priests or deacons. There are lots of other needed and valuable roles for women in the Church. In fact, the decimation of traditional female religious life encouraged in the wake of the Vatican II Council robs the Church of especially needed heroic witnesses of female spirituality.

All the other commandments and all the demands of the prophets stem from these two laws and are fulfilled if you obey them. Keep only these and you will find that you are obeying all the others." It is more loving to ourselves and to others to practice the holiness of chastity and to encourage others to do so. It saves us from slavery to sin and brings us closer to God. You are not being loving to others by promoting slavery to the sins of promiscuity and homosexual activity.

Best regards,

Charles

I needed to thank you for the work you have done on your website. Your well considered and carefully thought-through reasonings will be a blessing to many. I have a dear friend who, after many, many years of marriage had her husband (a minister in a protestant church) announce that he was gay and he had been throughout their marriage. She (very naturally) still loves him even though she is divorced from him, and she is having a hard time in her own spiritual life due to this very question--How could a person she loved for so long really be "bad." The struggle always occurs when one discovers that someone you love is acting improperly. Well, she is only one of many who may be able to come to terms with the truth because you have chosen to produce such a website. My sincere appreciation and thanks.

May God continue to bless you and your mission.

I am a priest and want to thank you for doing this work. I hope your example may encourage others who share the experiences you describe to live a hopeful and fulfilling journey in the Church where we look forward to the life of heaven where no torments shall touch us. God bless you.

Charles said: ...God doesn't do bad stuff, but he allows bad stuff to happen on occasion, perhaps to challenge us to greater holiness or redemptive suffering. We know that His long term plan for us is good because we know on faith that He is good. I honestly don't know why everyone gets so worked up about these issues.

May I just say this is so nicely stated that I can add very little to it. I would simply say that in this day and age it's sometimes difficult for us to think about the tribulations of Job. Still, we have our own versions of the horsehair shirts worn by the Saints as they slept upon the ground -- no doubt about it.

And while no one enjoys suffering, we all know it is surely as good for our souls as is experiencing the joys in our lives. So...

[Webmaster's note: This is my response to a correspondent in a same sex relationship:]

Thank's for your email. Please see my responses below:

I have over many years found myself struggling with the Catholic church because of my sexuality. I am a believer in the truest sense in all things but this. I guess for me, I have struggled with issues of sexuality, but I've never the thought of myself as struggling "with" the Church. I know many feel this way, but my gut reaction has always been that our culture makes too much of a cult of rebellion -- it is thought always good to be in opposition to parents, teachers, the Church and authority figures of any kind. I also think that confrontation can and often has led to destruction of a lot of good, the throwing out of the baby with the bathwater, so

to speak. Calm advocacy of reasonable change within a procedure of due process and rule of law is what I prefer. Perhaps it's just my makeup and background that makes me feel that way. Anyways, I am glad that you value the truths in our Christian revelation! That's more than a lot of people nowadays! I have been in a monogamous relationship for over 9 years and it has, without a doubt brought me back to the Catholicism I left in college. My partner and I are not lustful or promiscuous, but share an affection for one another as any other married couple. I am glad that you have a close and good friendship. There is no error whatsoever in chaste friendships. I wonder though if sex really has to be a necessary part of a close relationship. Our Courage group leader lives with his ex-lover in a chaste relationship, so it certainly can be done. Surely we owe it to Christ and his Apostles to take the Church's teachings on sexual morality seriously. They must mean something and must in some way be better for us in the long run, since God is good and has our long term interest at heart. Shouldn't we take Him at His word and try to live in holy chastity? And maybe there will be untold benefits, for instance, perhaps the friendship could become stronger without any self-serving sexual component but greater disinterested love?

In the statement "Same Sex Morality League" on the web page, you state the basic principal that sex is deemed appropriate between man and woman because it leads to life. Are you also saying then that a married man and a woman who are barren or impotent are to remain chaste and are not to engage in intimate relations? That the common affection they share is not to be acted upon in a sexual way?

As long as the married couple does not use artificial means to block the openness to new life, then it is a context in which the Church has judged that there is a sufficient connection between the affective unitive element of the sexual act and the requisite openness to new life. It is the same with Natural Family Planning (NFP). The Church's magisterium has always held that a mere unitive act completely divorced from the openness to life is sinful. That is the Apostolic teaching that has always and everywhere been held in the Church and cannot be changed. In addition, in both of these cases, the acts are still in the overall context of a lifelong marriage that would be open to new life if possible. The Church has bent over backwards to say that in the case of the barren couple or NFP there is still sufficient closeness of the affective act with the procreative purpose that it is still licit. It has felt that it cannot go further without reversing Apostolic teaching and holding that mere affection justifies sexual acts. I understand that the Episcopal Church now proclaims that any consensual, safe sexual act is justified, even fornication and perhaps even adultery. Such teaching is not consistent with the Apostolic teaching that the appropriate and treasured place for sex is within a lifelong committed marriage between a man and a woman open to new life, and the Apostolic teaching that honors asceticism and self-denial outside of such marriage. I don't think the Church can change its position on this without becoming a new religion. In the Bible, marriage is only spoken of in the context of a union between a biological male and biological female. The whole story of creation in Genesis centers around the creation of the first married couple.

Jesus refers to the mystery of this story in his teaching on the sacredness and indivisibility of marriage. Clearly God sees the sexual roles as essential to the mystery of marriage. It is just a complete revision of the Christian faith to say that there is nothing special about marriage in God's plan, and that a union of the same gender is exactly the same as a marriage between a man and a woman from the perspective of the Christian religion. And those outside of marriage are called to chastity, something lovely and holy, because it is an offering to God and to one's neighbor. The Christian church has always held chastity and asceticism for His sake in tremendous esteem, until our current sex-worshipping society came along.

The Catholic Church seems to ignore that science has begun to expose the genetic association of homosexuality and that it is not a preference and it is more than the "deep seeded" desire of which you speak. I don't think science has absolutely proven anything on the origins or the mutability of homosexuality, and I am skeptical that it can prove anything that would be applicable at all times to all persons with this condition. The origins of thoughts and behavior are very complicated and in some ways any theories on that is eminently unverifiable. Just think of Freud's theories. How could one ever prove if they were right or wrong? I think the most that might be possible might be some theories. I would be very surprised if anyone could ever objectively say that every homosexual thought or action is caused by a gay gene. Perhaps its cause is different for different individuals, or perhaps it is a mixture of biological predisposition and environmental factors. I don't think one can dogmatically say that in every case the cause is biological and that it can never diminish in some people. And in the meantime, if some people want voluntarily expose the possibility of diminishing their same sex attraction, I think it is an impermissible restriction of freedom for such information and services to be denied to those who wish it. I would counsel such people, however, that it may not be God's wish to take away this challenge from this person at this time. One should be open to God's will and grace, not our own.

Anyways, a biological origin, even if irrefutably proven, would not affect in the least the Church's teaching on the sinfulness of homosexual activity or that the condition is not in line with our ideal nature as biological males or females. There are such things as genetic defects and of course the concupiscence of original sin, which we basically inherit. I imagine there may on occasion be biological bases for certain character defects, such as perhaps some cases of chronic irritability or chronically bad disposition. Not everything that biology throws up is necessarily good or directly created by God. Pius XII in *Humani Generis* says that we only need believe that the individual soul is directly created. Perhaps some challenges have come in through our biological body. God doesn't do bad things, but He sometimes allows bad things to happen, perhaps to challenge us to greater holiness or to bear redemptive suffering, or to make our free choice in His favor more meaningful. But we know despite our present struggles that He loves us and that His long term plan for us is good, since we know by faith He is good.

Heterosexual couples have an opportunity to promise to one another, to God, and the church community that they are one, monogamous, and loving.

Homosexuals, like myself and my partner, enter this union without anyone looking on...without the "blessing" of family or society.

But if an organization believes that homosexual activity is wrong, then it is unfair to insist that it bless that activity. A chaste friendship, perhaps, but not a sexual relationship. Yes, a Christian must love everyone, but love does not mean that one has to accept and affirm activity that one believes is wrong. And it's unfair to force others by saying "you must accept and affirm my behavior". In a free society, different individuals and groups have the right to have and express different beliefs on the complex issue of sexual morality and homosexuality.

No one is looking over our shoulder except ourselves and our own morality. Just because the "leaders" of the gay movement are not speaking out against promiscuity does not mean that every homosexual is promiscuous or encourages promiscuity. I think it is absolutely great that you are eschewing promiscuity! And I am glad that there may be others out there doing the same. I hope there can be more and more. I am looking for a way back into a church and a faith that was once very important to me and to my life. You know, and I am just thinking out loud here, I think sometimes that the relatively modern practice of frequent communion is overrated. Particularly now that so many people don't follow the beautiful discipline of the sacramental economy: mortal sin > confession > communion. The sense of the reality of sin seems underplayed now. In the middle ages, the common people often only took communion once a year at Easter. They supposedly felt unworthy to take communion more often, and the elevation of the host was the high point of every mass, not communion. In some ways, this seems a suitable model for all of us -- all of us are sinners who don't fully deserve the grace that we are given and we all should perhaps be more humble than we are. There are always long lines for communion, but relatively short lines for confession -- I wonder if people really are taking their responsibility for mortal sins seriously. Perhaps if you can't find your way to chastity, you might still attend mass regularly, not taking communion and instead soaking up the grace floating around in the house of the ineffable and transcendent God who came down to earth. I guarantee you're not going to hear any homily decrying the abomination of homosexuality. I have only heard homosexuality mentioned from the pulpit only four times in my nine years as a Catholic, and twice favorably. There have been times when I have had really bad struggles with masturbation and have often not had the occasion to go to confession before attending mass. On those occasions I do not partake of communion, but just soak up the rays from our crucified and risen Lord at the elevation of the host. Anyways, that's just an idea I had, and probably not a kosher one at that.

Another idea might be that, even if you didn't think you could now, perhaps when you and your friend are older, you could move on to a chaste relationship more akin to brothers and good friends.

Anyways, you have to choose yourself what you are to do and be accountable therefor. My partner and I are seeking to become one in the family of Christ through His One Church. This is the single thing that I can not overcome. Our union, partnership, is life giving. We took in an at risk youth 5 years ago who

would otherwise have never made it. She came to us directly from rehab after being abused by her father. She has overcome the tumultuous past she has suffered and is now entering her last year in college. She has overcome her alcoholism and drug use to become an upstanding young lady. She works hard, maintains a relationship with her biological family in spite of her past, and is learning what family is really supposed to be from us and our own loving Catholic families. Thank you so much for your wonderful charitable endeavors in taking in and being guardians for this child. It is a noble work. While statistics and I think common sense show that a child is usually best off raised with a mother and a father, there may be of course some exceptions such as this or situations where there is no other choice, and people like yourselves take in the child. I don't see, however, as this charitable act makes a friendship a marriage as the Christian church has understood it for two thousand years. Certainly uncles, aunts, grandmothers, etc. have taken in children in the past and it doesn't change the definition of a marriage or a family. Anyways, that's just my own personal view of it.

I imagine you probably won't be happy with everything that I have said, but I've tried to state my views honestly. Nevertheless, I do wish you the very best, and I will pray for you, your friend and your ward in your journey of life! And please send up a little prayer for me and all of us who experience same sex attraction, for the continuance of the Holy Church throughout time, and for our ultimate reunion with the saints in the Church Triumphant in Heaven!

God bless,
Charles

I must say your web site is beautifully presented, but it is not Christ like, Christ' teachings is TO love one another, Like i have loved you. What you are saying does not do that at all. I am about to become a Cleric and i am gay and Catholic, i am very proud to be who i am. God made me in a Pacific way & placed me in a Pacific time. He wants me to carry out his work, to bring sinners alike & the fallen which we all are everyday of our lives, back to him.

God is about love and spirituality, not hate and prejudice. It is people like you who proclaim to be faithful & obedient to God that will not get there reward in Heaven. I sincerely hope that God will forgive all people like yourself. I am not here to judge only God can do that.

[Webmaster's note: The following is my response to the previous message:]

Thanks for your email. Obviously I have a different perspective from you. God has loved us so much that He has given us the moral law, as well as the perfect sacrifice of His Son, as a beacon to help free us from slavery to sin. I think it is very loving of the Church to hold high this beacon, and I hope you will continue to do so as well in your order. Christ certainly promoted purity of heart and

counseled his flock to absorb and even go further than the Mosaic law, as with respect to adultery. I am sure there could be nothing less Christlike or charitable than the self-centered and self-indulgent "gay" lifestyle of our times. Loving individuals does not mean one has either to affirm and support everything they do, or else shun them. If we had to do that, it would be pretty bad, since we are none of us without sin and we would have to universally shun everybody or else condone every wickedness under heaven. I congratulate you on your vocation to the holy orders, but I do hope that you will take that call seriously and accept the fullness of teachings of God's church, not just what subjectively appeals to one. And I hope you will take your vows of chastity seriously. Charity involves being decent, merciful, compassionate and forgiving to sinners, it does not mean changing the definition of sin so that wrongdoing can continue. I personally object to the label "gay" since it promotes the idea that my entire identity is found one's sex drive. Actually, I think this is a very small part of who I am. I reject this ideology and will not be so labeled by you or anyone. I am proud of being a human being and a child of God endowed with charity and reason. I am not led by pride to parade naked in the street in celebration of a mere animalistic sex drive. My website is not about hate and prejudice, but about love for fellow sufferers of the inclination to sin that is same sex attraction. If you are wishing to condemn us poor souls with same sex attraction to slavery to lust, then it is you who are filled with hatred and prejudice. Whether your Pacificity refers to the Ocean or to the absence of war, I hope and pray that you will truly be an instrument of the peace of God which surpasses our mere human understanding, opening the channels of grace through authentic teaching and the sacraments to bring all to holiness.

First let me say that I'm basically in agreement with everything you say on your site, so don't worry this isn't a hate-lettter. :-)

I want to comment on your "personal.html" page, where you say: "Perhaps with full disclosure to her and her acceptance of my sexuality and the problems it posed for a marriage, I might have been more willing to give the relationship a go, but since I could not bring myself to be open and honest, I let the relationship lapse."

So are you saying that she had no idea about your SSA? Seems to me that if she didn't know, it must not have been much of a problem between the two of you, right? So if it wasn't an issue, then there would be no reason to discuss it. (There is no law that you have to disclose to your girlfriend every temptation you are having.) But if she did know about your SSA, or had a strong suspicion about it, then it wouldn't be hard to talk to her about it, right? I'm not sure why it was so difficult for you to talk to her about it, or why you even felt that you had to discuss it in the first place.

I sincerely hope that you write back to me! But if not, at least remember this: Never underestimate a woman. Especially a Catholic woman. :-) We are smarter and stronger than you think.

Saw your site on Peters Net! Praise be to God there are individuals like yourself willing to fight the gay agenda. I want to tell you how much i admire you. If all of us would apply the quote I have lifted from your website (below), we would be well on the way to changing our culture of death to the culture of life. It does not merely apply to homosexuality, but to all aspects life.

"We can and must speak out against wrong ideas and actions, but we should not target persons as such and should leave judgment to God. Many who rightly decry homosexual activity and the ideology of practicing and promoting homosexuals need to be careful about their language and not vilify persons. Moreover, those with same sex attraction can feel dignity in the unique gifts of their entire human personality and need not descend to either a narrow "pride" based solely on one's sex drive or a debilitating self-hatred. Humans are not simply walking hormones!"

I will keep you in my prayers always and ask you to do the same. I believe in redemptive suffering and believe that God has given great graces. Your sufferings, united with our Savior, Jesus, will greatly aid Him in transforming His people into a "holy race, a royal priesthood.!"

I am a 57 y/o male with a same sex attraction. I really liked your essay on Chastity. It certainly speaks for my lifestyle. I pray to remain celibate and remain chaste in spite of the debate over the "correct" interpretation of Biblical texts allegedly espousing condemnation of same sex sexual relationships. The debate goes on over the historical context of those particular texts and whether we are born into this orientation or at some point chose it. As for me, I'm in agreement with Paul regarding His statement regarding the single lifestyle.

Although I do espouse a celibate, chaste lifestyle for myself, I believe your exegesis is askew regarding the Biblical texts cited concerning same sex attraction. I think scholars often forget the historical context of what these texts espouse. In most cases, they do not apply to the homosexual community of the 21st Century. I say "most cases" because there are groups out there within the gay community who worship the created, not the Creator.

"Neque enim quaero intelligere ut credam, sed credo ut intelligam." (For I do not seek to understand so that I may believe, but I believe so that I may understand.)

~ St. Anselm of Canterbury, Proslogion

It seems that you have spent a great deal of time and effort on this site, and I give you credit for your energy and work.

I cannot however agree with your generalities and conclusion that all gay men and lesbian women must practice chasity when they within a committed

relationship. Chastity is and has always been seen by the Church as a gift from God, not a moral prescription against anything. I feel you devalue chastity and misuse this gift from God when you suggest that it is a mandate from God to "protect" any gay or lesbian from acting out this orientation.

As far as homosexuality being a disorder or evil, review good scripture scholarship, investigate the scholarly commentaries of Catholic and other denominational theologians, and then read the Gospels and see if you can find a Jesus who denounces health relationships that are God-life giving. I know many gay and lesbian in such relationships, and God is every bit as present in their love, sexual and otherwise as in any heterosexual married couple's love.

Your site demonstrates a great deal of work, but very little pastoral, theological or psychological knowledge. Generalities and dogmatic pronouncements without face to face discussions and pastoral applications are dangerous. I hope few if any read it and less allow it to affect their lives

[Webmaster's note: The following is my response to the previous message:]

We live in a country where there is freedom of religion. If you wish to invent a new religion that changes the definitions of sin to suit yourself, you are free to do so. Those of us who hold fast to the entire deposit of faith that God has bequeathed to us are also entitled to do so. I feel that we are called to follow God's will as found in the unchanging teachings on faith and morals, not our own subjective will. God knows what is best for us, not we ourselves. And by the way, your impulse to censor and restrict freedom of speech and expression is a classic reaction of gay activists, who seem to want to silence anyone with whom they disagree.

God bless,
Charles

I am homosexual and recently made the decision to remain celibate. I found your web site at <http://www.ca-catholics.net/> and was more than pleasantly surprised to hear of you and the other organizations which can help "us" out! (I just realized that the juxtaposition of those quote marks could have made that sentence read - help us "out"!)

It was with particular interest that I read your own history of 'searching' for that right mate. I've been exposed to the more liberal elements in the Catholic church that continue to tell us that a loving relationship between two men is "OK", and within God's plan for us. This position doesn't make sense to me anymore.

I found on your web site an acceptance of our lot in life and the call to chastity as prescribed by our Mother church. You made so many valid points that I couldn't begin to list them, but they all have confirmed my own and relatively recent decision in life.

Even at my ripe age of 64, I still find myself caught up in masturbation and fantasy, but I'm praying - no longer for a change in sexual orientation, but just for the grace to be chaste.

PS. I was married for 19 years, and have three children. 10 years ago, I went through a very painful divorce during which the 'ex' outed me to the kids. It was hard on all of us, but the kids, after an initial period of estrangement, have come to accept their "gay dad".

I was just inspired to suggest a 'witness' section to your web site, which you might accomplish with a guest book.

Praise God for your obedience and trust in God for sharing this site with others who share your struggles! We will be sharing your article on "Chastity" and how to get into your web site at our next Courage meeting.

Broken and bruised, God wants to use you. Broken and bruised, He'll show you the way. His heart wants to love you and use you, but you must rest in Him, broken and bruised. Holy and sanctified Useless and nothing God wants to use YOU!! May you continue to touch others as you find healing and continue to discover Good's awesome love and plan for your life.

[An article about your website] caught my attention today. I couldn't wait to check it out after reading the article. Now I feel the need to open a dialogue with you about your views. I read many similar painful experiences as you traveled the same road to self-realization as many gay men and women have done before you. Your website could become a place for many gay Catholics to discuss the issues confronting them as they make their peace with themselves and God.

I am a gay Catholic man who traveled the same path you did but came to a different conclusion. I believe there is room for both views in the Church and maybe, just maybe, you could provide a vehicle for many to discuss the issues involved and bring peace to those searching for it.

At 62, I am twice your age. In fact I didn't begin coming to an understanding of who I am until my early 30's. Before coming to terms with who I am, I was very active in the Church teaching religion classes, serving as a lector, leading congregational singing, etc. When I realized my sexual orientation, I saw no compromise between who I am and the Church's view of who I am. Like many gay men and women, I took a sabbatical from the Church and drifted for 20 years, finally finding my way back about 8 years ago, when I became active in Dignity. I understand that's not a "nice group" in the Church, but nonetheless, the group helped me understand who I am. After a couple of years, I found myself at odds with Dignity and many others in the gay movement who think one has to make an issue of being "out." I found my way to mainstream society and the Church, this time as a person understanding who I am and that I have something to contribute to society and the Church.

Today I live in a committed relationship with another Catholic man and we are about as "normal" as the family next door. Our relationship is acknowledged and respected by the community where we live and we attend to our Catholic religious obligations like many other Catholics. We've been together for 7 years and have lived together for the past 2 years. It seems to me that there is room for both a celibate gay person and gay committed couples in the Church, just as there is room for celibate straight persons and committed straight couples in the Church.

Your website could become a vehicle for bringing opposing views to the discussion table. I'd enjoy an open dialogue with you on these issues; I know there are many more who would participate if given the chance. Maybe both sides will listen and discuss rather than attempting to convert the other side to their point of view and more souls will find a welcoming God with mercy and grace for all of us.

Your thoughts?

[Webmaster's note: The following is my response to the previous message:]

Thanks so much for your kind email. I'm glad you were interested in my website. I am in no way a public figure and simply said what I thought needed saying on my website and put it out there in the public domain.

I found your life's journey to be very interesting. How wonderful that you could serve the Church in your earlier life, and how sad must have been your separation. I also am glad to hear that you exercised more of an independent mind (as evidenced by your concerns about Dignity) than most apparently do nowadays who buy into the "gay" ideology hook, line and sinker. I certainly think that we should in good faith look to the Church as our mother and not be in a confrontational or antagonistic stance, as so many "out" people seem to be. He would have God as his father must have the Church as his mother, as someone famous said. And I think we must use all the teachings of the Church handed down from the apostles, including teaching on sexual morality, in good faith as a basis for all of our thinking about the faith and our struggle for holiness in this challenging life. I personally don't think it legitimate for us subjectively to pick and choose what we want to be sins and what we don't. I believe God through the Church has given us his moral commandments. Could people in the Church be more loving and show more respect for those who experience same sex attraction, as the Catechism advises? Yes, of course. People are apt to either hate the sin and the sinner or love the sin and the sinner. In fact, everyone must carry out the task of loving the sinner and hating the sin. We are none of us without sin, except Our Lady and Our Lord, and therefore mercy and love of everybody, including those with same sex attraction, is fundamental. But strident declamation that the Church is wrong and must change what it has always taught on faith and morals to suit one's subjective preferences is quite uncalled for, particularly in a free civil society where one is free to join or not join any particular religion. And what the Church has always taught, i.e., that the appropriate place for sex is in a

committed marriage between a man and a woman in an act not artificially closed to new life, is a sublime rule and philosophy. As Pope John Paul II has written about in his "Theology of the Body", only in this context can the sexual act be a total giving of self and not a selfish use of another person. Not everyone is going to be able to marry, and for us, we are called to try living chastely. How sad that so many simply want to turn away from this sublime teaching, consistent with the Church's teaching throughout the ages, and simply embrace the philosophy of the world that any and all sexual activity, so long as safe and consensual, is praiseworthy. I do pray fervently that those in our society besotten with this ideology, which is pushed on all sides by the media and popular culture, will have a change of heart and convert to Christ and holy chastity. I would also just mention that the Church has nothing against intimate chaste friendships, even between members of the same sex.

Finally, I want to thank you for being so polite with someone with whom you may disagree. I've certainly had some doozies in my inbox, and it's so pleasant to have civil rather than uncivil disagreements!

God bless and Happy Advent!

Charles Silesia

P.S. I hope you will please pray for me!

[Webmaster's note: This is my response to a subsequent message from the sender of the next to last message:]

Thank you for your email. Please see my responses below.

Charles, thanks for your thoughtful reply. I think it is very important for people who disagree not to be disagreeable. The only solution to same sex attraction in the church is dialogue.

I must confess that having seen how the term "dialogue" has been used and abused in other churches, such as the Episcopal Church, I am a little suspicious of the use of this term. I get particularly concerned when it is used in a sense that suggests that magisterial teaching of the Church should be on an equal level with dissident teaching, or that the truths of faith and morals should be determined through democratic processes. The Church is not a democracy, since its duty is to preserve the fullness of truth on faith and morals and revealed by Christ to his apostles and as preserved by their duly appointed successors through the centuries.

And if I must say so, having been on the receiving end of some of the most hateful language imaginable, if there is any danger to civil discourse, it comes from intolerant gay activists who will not tolerate one word of dissent against their ideology of being "out" and "proud". Just look at how gay activists try to silence the freedom of speech of Dr. Laura, or Jerry Falwell, or Pat Robertson. Look at the current persecution of the Boy Scouts and the Salvation Army. Look at the infringement on the freedom of speech, association and exercise of religion by

traditional religious believers on college campuses across the US. Look at how groups like the NEA and GLSEN try to impose the establishment's beliefs on sexual morality, i.e., that any and all "safe" and consensual sex is laudable, on society through schools and sex education, rather than leaving those sorts of moral value teaching to families and churches. Look at how public officials endorse the establishment's beliefs on sexual morality, as well as endorsing public indecency and promiscuity, by participating in so called "gay pride" marches. Look at how some gay activists insist that pornography, sado-masochism and even pedophilia is something wonderful and good. Look at how groups like ACT UP, Soulforce and Rainbow Sash seek to intimidate traditional religious believers and destroy the free exercise of religion by disrupting church services. Look at how the organizer of the "in your face" gay pride millenium march in Rome said in the press "f*** the Pope". Look at how Michelangelo Signorile has called the Pope a "Taliban". Look at how since Sept. 11 even "moderate" gay activists like Andrew Sullivan and Richard Tafel have exploited that tragedy by slanderously trying to equate traditional Christian believers with mass murdering Islamist fanatics. Whatever you think of traditional Christian believers in our country, it is totally unfair and scurrilous to suggest they support violence or suicide bombing. I have lived much of my life in liberal circles of the east coast, including attending a good liberal ivy league college. For the people I have been around most of my life, traditional Christian believers are to be mocked, ridiculed and despised. They are not really to be treated as fully humans. When I think of how human nature likes to demonize whole categories of people, as the Nazis did the Jews and the Soviet Communists did the kulaks and "capitalists", then I tremble to think of what our ever so enlightened and tolerant liberal establishment would do to believing Christians given half a chance. After all, with a majority of justices on the supreme court, they could get the Constitution to say anything they want, and First Amendment freedoms of speech, association and religion be damned!

In the end individuals may disagree, but that doesn't mean that we can't support each other mentally and spiritually.

I must say, I have found precious little support of any kind from practicing and promoting people. I have basically been called hateful, a fanatic, a Taliban, a terrorist, a Nazi, etc. etc. I have not found the "gay community" to be inclusive or friendly. On a social level, if one is not among the "beautiful people" in the swinging fast set, then one is just not accepted and no friendliness is on offer. And on the level of ideas, as mentioned above, any questioning of the gay ideology in any respect is utterly verboten. Those who do question such are not to be reasoned with, but rather to have their character attacked and to be vilified and demonized. That has been my experience of the much vaunted and culturally promoted "gay community".

I look forward to communicating with you on this and other issues that face us in our unique spiritual journeys.

Many gay men and women have been so suppressed about their sexual identity, Catholics are some of the worst, that when they finally come to terms with it they over react to others who disagree with them.

I totally reject that making one's sex drive one's primary public identity is in any way an advance in one's personal development. It is certainly a very minor part of my personality. I am not a beast rutting away in the field, bragging about my sexual prowess.

It takes a certain level of maturity and self-acceptance to understand that expressing an extreme position is not the answer.

I've mainly encountered extreme positions and intolerance from practicing and promoting people.

And it takes more maturity for others to accept the outspoken at their level of understanding and help them to a higher level of understanding and maturity.

I'm sorry, but there is no excuse or justification for the intolerance and vilification that gay activists display towards those with whom they disagree. For people who talk so much about tolerance, diversity and inclusivity, they display anything but. It is the rankest of hypocrisy.

I've been fortunate, finding many "sensible" gay and straight people who understand that being gay is just one part of overall personality.

But by labeling yourself "gay", you are making your sexual drive your main public identity and are denying the fullness of your personhood. I am a human being, a Catholic, an American, of a certain ethnic background, a member of a certain profession and a certain political party. I have reason and capacity for ethical behavior. All of this is light years more important to me than the inclination to a certain sinful behavior that I might have. Gay activist simply want us all to label ourselves in the most rigidly and narrowly way possible. It is a absolute straitjacket that they want to impose on me, and I will have none of it!

They know who they are and are comfortable with it. If you are willing to "reach" out to them many will respond with similar understanding.

We need to reach out to everyone to embrace the fullness of truth in Christ, following His call to charity, chastity and holiness. We don't reach out by pandering to sinful behavior and condoning it.

I am also fortunate to have an accepting family as is my partner.

There is nothing wrong with close friendships, so why shouldn't people accept that? But no one has to accept or condone sinful behavior, and it is the height of arrogance to insist that others must do so.

Not all gay men are "swishy queens" and "bull dikes."

No, but we must love even these.

I'm sure you have met some of them, but may not have had an opportunity to know them as friends. I have met all kinds of interesting people through Courage, including some that might fit your description. I have found all of their personalities delightful. I don't think it is fair to simply label people as "gay" and try to shove them into some stereotypical box. We are all individuals and as such are unique and beloved of God. And I absolutely love the women at Courage.

They are so much kinder and more nurturing than the men, which I guess goes to show that gender differences persist even for those with same sex attraction. I just had my first face-to-face meeting with a Courage brother -- what a wonderful and decent person. He has certainly inspired me in my Christian path and has helped me a lot. I hope to meet more of my Courage brothers and sisters in the future. It's nice to now that there are others like me to whom faithfulness to Christ and the Church is more important than sexual acting out, and who can provide support for living a chaste life!

Most gay people are concerned about earning a living, paying taxes, trying to secure a few possessions, and enjoy friends, family and relationships. We need to build bridges between the church and them.

As I said above, we reach out to them by inviting them to follow Christ more closely and follow his commandments, not to ignore those commandments.

I see Church teaching is an evolutionary process. There are many concepts today that were completely rejected by earlier church teaching. For example, many of the scientific concepts of the Renaissance and even today the theory of evolution. The church changes slowly, very slowly. Much of the church's view on sexuality, straight and gay, is based on "natural law." Using natural law, the Church continues to prohibit birth control, but as you know most Catholics have rejected the church's position and practice some form of contraception. Is the church right and the people wrong? Will the issue be resolved by a "change" in church policy? Those are interesting questions.

First of all, matters of physical science are not the same thing as teachings of faith and morals, which the Church preserves as part of the divine revelation revealed to us through Scripture and Apostolic Tradition. The heliocentricity of solar system is a matter of "is", whereas sexual morality is a matter of "ought", with such moral commandments being part of the deposit of faith that the Church has perfect authority and in fact an obligation to teach with confidence. And as far as the apostolic teachings on faith and morals, of course there is doctrinal development. However, as we know from the Venerable Cardinal Newman and the Vatican II documents, authentic doctrinal development is always an organic growth that spells out what was implicit in the original apostolic teaching or that applies that teaching to specific situations. There is never a reversal of what has always and everywhere been taught in the Church regarding faith and morals. That is why His Holiness Paul VI could not reverse the teaching on the sinfulness of artificial contraception. In its wake we had the horrific spectacle of dissident theologians that called themselves Catholic publicly repudiating the duly authorized teaching authority in the Church and trying to establish a counter-magisterium appealing to the wisdom of the world rather than the apostolic deposit of faith. The Church is not here to sanctify the popular practices or beliefs of world, but to call us to a higher life, to be a sign of contradiction, to be a fountain of freedom, charity, mercy and forgiveness of sin! What is popular is not necessarily true or right. Just think of the Germans that voted Hitler into office, or public opinions that in the past have justified slavery, or those who support the

"right" of a human fetus to be killed, or those Moslems who believe that infidels should be killed by the sword in physical offensive jihad.

So it is with same sex attraction. Many priests are working quietly with gay men and women bringing to them the peace and support needed. Is this wrong; is it right?

It depends on what you mean by "peace and support". A ministry that does not uphold the fullness of truth with regard to faith and morals taught in the Church is in no way a Catholic ministry. If a ministry to people with same sex attraction ignores the call to chastity or condones or promotes homosexual activity, it is not a Catholic ministry. Granted the Church should stress that the inclination is not sinful, as the sin is, and that all are beloved of God, and that the inclination is only disordered in the sense that it is an inclination to sin, and that indeed all humans have concupiscence in some way or another as result of original sin. Inclusivity should mean welcoming people into following Christ ever more closely, not in watering down the ideals that Christ asks us to try and achieve in holiness and charity. The single most important "pastoral" issue facing Catholics with same sex attraction is how we can live chastely in accordance with God's commandments. Thus any ministry to those with same sex attraction that does not provide support for that endeavor is simply not a Catholic ministry. Nor is it Catholic teaching to sanctify the gay ideology of "coming out" and "gay pride". Those are secular ideologies and in no way part of the Gospel, and the Church has no business trying to foist that ideology on the faithful.

During my "sabbatical" from the church, one of the major issues I confronted was forming my own conscience. I had to get out of the thinking mode of believing something because "Father said" or "Sister said."

I've been lucky in that the clergymen I have met since my conversion nine years ago have all been deeply spiritual and holy persons (sorry, haven't met many female religious). Nevertheless, I don't necessarily take what any particular priest says as Gospel, as I have my own mind, and I can read what the Church teaches in the Catechism. Thus I wouldn't necessarily follow what anybody says, but rather what the Church teaches. And we all have a duty to inform our consciences with the teachings of the Church. If we cannot accept what the Church teaches, then the intellectually honest thing is to leave the Church, as sad as it is that anyone would willingly abandon Christ and the fullness of truth. That "Spiritus Christi" congregation in Rochester that dissented on women priests and homosexuality did the right thing in leaving the Church, in my opinion. While I totally disagree with their beliefs, I think that it would have been totally false and unfair of them to simply carry on in disobedience within the Church while denying Church teaching. Better a smaller Church that is true Christ and His teachings than one that simply accepts the wisdom of the world and the lowest common denominator.

It was so easy to accept all church teachings without questions and simply carry them out. But then when I took responsibility for my own conscience I had no one else to blame if I did not lead a good life. My thought process has gone

beyond same sex attraction and today I'm a much happier and better thinking person. Of course some in the church would disagree with me; does that condemn me to a life of sin?

One condemns oneself if one knowingly commits an action involving a grave matter such as homosexual activity without confession and absolution. Again, close friendship is not a sin. In fact, the Catechism commends disinterested friendships for those with same sex attraction! My whole website has been my process in thinking about the Church's teaching about homosexuality and how it makes sense to me. I utterly reject the implication that if one "thinks for oneself" one is bound to reject Church teaching. On the contrary, I see the most terrible herd mentality in those who walk in lockstep with the gay ideologies of "coming out" and "gay pride".

I wonder if we can say to church members that if you don't like church teaching find a church you like.

Of course it's sad when people leave full communion, and we must pray for the lost sheep and try to win them back to the fullness of truth. But that doesn't mean that the Church should simply dump the deposit of faith in the Tiber River! When half of Europe became Protestant, the Church did not at the Council of Trent say, OK, you Protestants can believe whatever you want through private judgment, like sola scriptura, and all our magisterial teaching, well, we really didn't mean it, or at least it is optional, and can't we just get along and be one big happy family regardless of our beliefs. Likewise, with the Arian and Monophysite controversies, the Church did not compromise between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, or say that the teachings of the faith don't matter.

Why shouldn't people in a free society embrace the faith that they believe in? I certainly did. I converted to the Catholic Church because I believed that she possesses the fullness of truth. If she were to some day simply turn around and say that sexual sin was no longer sin, then I would, sadly, have to look for the true Church elsewhere. To stay in a Church and insist that the Church must change its teachings to suit one's subjective desires just seems the opposite of religious freedom, since it denies freedom to those who believe what a Church has always taught.

I believe there is room for different views in the church and those with different views have a responsibility for encouraging rethinking issues as we become aware of newer knowledge on any given subject. This is the way people and institutions grow. Can't we grow to a greater appreciation of God and His universe in this way?

I reject the implication that the teachings on sexual morality are contingent on societal context. God's revelation has involved the placement of sex in the context of a lifelong marriage between man and women that is open to new life. That is a timeless truth that transcends all society contexts. And I think we all, if we would be faithful children of the Church, need to give the full assent of faith to the deposit of faith, including the ordinary and universal magisterium. Respectful discussion of points not yet clarified or of the ordinary magisterium could perhaps

be understandable in certain circumstances. There is a hierarchy of truths, and not everything is negotiable. The Catholic Church is not another Unitarian Church, where there is no dogma at all and one is free to make up one's own belief or non-belief as one pleases. Nor is it like the Anglican Communion, defining the core beliefs so narrowly that it could laughably be held that there are no "core beliefs" of Christianity on sexual morality (a conclusion that flies in the face of two millenia of Christian history), or that could allow a bishop like Bishop Spong to deny every line of the Nicene Creed and remain a bishop in good standing. The Catholic Church possesses the fullness of truth and must proclaim that truth fully, with charity and without fear. I take great hope in God's promise that the gates of hell will not prevail against our Church. And that is what gives me strength hopefully to preserve charity and equanimity, even with those who trash our beloved Church and Holy Father, or who attack me personally with hatred and bigotry.

Please don't take offense at anything I have said. I feel very strongly about these issues and feel I am as entitled to express my views as the next person. You don't have to like them or even listen to them if you don't want to. However, they are not directed at you personally. I feel that ideas are free game for debate and argument, but I want to try to love and respect you as a person, and in fact have a religious duty to do so. Like everyone, I can always improve in the charity department, and I beg your forgiveness if I have shown any uncharity toward you.

[Webmaster's note: The following is a priest's review of this website:]

In our lives, we can occasionally experience some beacons of light when we are confused, misled, or filled with doubt. Many things can cause those problems in our lives. One of them is sexual attraction, especially same sex attraction. The Church clearly teaches its position about homosexuals and homosexual behavior. However, there is another teaching found in popular society that is diametrically opposed to the Church. At times, this erroneous philosophy is clearly expressed while on other occasions it is subtly expressed in the media, especially on television.

The Same Sex Attraction Morality League ("<http://www.ssaml.com>") has a very simple website plainly delineating not only the Church's position but also the wisdom of that teaching. It seems that the word 'league' refers to those who would be of the same mindset, rather than a formal organization. This website appears to be the work of one person. Often, single-person sites lack resources to keep current. The content of this site is such that it can remain timely. It is also good to note that the author is clear when he expresses his personal vision and not trying to make it the outlook of the Church. Besides accurate Catholic thinking, the author has also described his own journey through doubt, personal pain and confusion to the truth of the Church's teaching. This is not a fancy website, but one packed with solid thinking and teaching.

The left-hand side of the homepage delineates the topics of conversation: 'In a Nutshell, Scripture and Tradition, Homosexual Activity, Natural Law and

Homosexual Inclination, Call to Chastity, Singlehood and Marriage, Law of Charity, the Catechism, Key Biblical Citations, and, of course, Further Links.'

The 'nutshell' section is a precise resume of the teaching found in scripture, tradition, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church: homosexual activity is sinful; the inclination to homosexual activity is an objective disorder; homosexuals deserve respect and compassion like all children of God; and homosexuals are called to a life of chastity. Many have difficulty accepting this message, but the author of this website has been able to explain it well and make it more realistic especially since he writes from his own homosexual perspective.

After reviewing the key biblical citations and a link to a patrology website discussing homosexuality and without disregarding legitimate progress in the human sciences, the author wisely points out that the Church's teaching and experience provide more wisdom than some of the so-called 'new insights.'

Modern society misunderstands chastity in such a way that often it is not perceived as a value. Taking those misunderstandings apart one by one, the author is able to present the religious and human value of chastity so that the reader can clearly identify and treasure it as a true fulfillment of one's personality. In this section, the author gives homosexuals and those attempting to understand homosexuality some fresh insights that he has come to understand, undoubtedly, from personal insight along with the truths of the Catholic teaching.

The links here are invaluable resources for the topic and for Church teaching as a whole. Not only are there excellent links for the major topics of this website, but there are also many listings of general Catholic interest. Finally, the author makes a very strong point that charity be a hallmark in all discussions about homosexuality.

I found a great deal of comfort in these writings. My free will will be challenged greatly and for that, I am thankful. What are your feelings about this: Would it be wrong for me to persue a relationship w/ another man where celibacy ruled? I feel as though I want a "partner" in life (male) and would rather it be pure than not. I know that holding hands,hugging,etc. can lead to other things, but they don't have to. I guess being a single male at 35 is a little hard for me.....

I just came across your web page and was impressed with what you have written. Mostly because it is interjected with personal opinion and analysis that makes the otherwise normative perscriptions reasonable and authentic.

I also felt a certain kinship when reading your personal story, as I am about your age (33) and somewhat disillusioned with the gay world. I have never really felt a part of it and am often the odd man out at being horrified at what the gay community seems to be celebrating.

I am not exactly sure what stage I am at in dealing with both homosexuality and being Catholic. I know that my only passion in life is traditional Catholicism, particularly the restoration of the Traditional Mass, I am well read in philosophy and theology, however on the other hand there are moments of deep loneliness that are difficult to deal with.

Also I have over the past few years distanced myself from the parish I was attending, (it was a SSPX parish) and though i found spiritual enrichment there, the insensitivity of some of the parishoners sort of made me lean to keeping to myself and not getting too friendly with them. I guess to most of the people there gay people are beyond help. I can't blame them for being aggressively anti-gay, as the gay community provides its own bad PR, but i just know that i wouldn't have wanted them to find out anything about me. So i now have started to attend a novus ordo parish near my home, however i find that aggravating for all the same reasons why I preferred attending the traditional mass.

Anyway, to keep from boring you about my issues, I do hope to come to terms with this somehow. I suppose having a good chaste relationship would be ideal but perhaps asking too much and I never really thought about it before but your quote about people not having a natural right to affection and sex is a good point, and when i am lonely I will remember that, and that perhaps I am just being selfish in feeling sorry for myself.

Thanks again for the site and please pray for me.

Celibacy is one thing, but living in the closet is quite another. This is what "Courage" demands, but you deserve better.

[Webmaster's note: The following is my response to the previous message:]

Thank you for your message, and happy Easter to you!

I am so glad that you recognize the beauty and holiness of chastity. To my knowledge, however, Courage "demands" no such thing as you state. I know many Courageous who feel comfortable in being known publicly as experiencing same sex attraction. Others are not comfortable in so identifying themselves.

I believe such have just as much right to make their own choices as to their own public identity as anyone else does. Furthermore, I believe such deserve respect for the choices they have made rather than belittlement, ridicule, demonization or psychological terror tactics. I would also point out that some people are shy, and shy people deserve respect as well.

I will say that Courage quite rightly does not demand, as the gay activists do, that one must either embrace the political ideologies of "gay pride" and "coming out" or else be subject to "outing". These secular, political ideologies have absolutely nothing to do with the deposit of faith handed down by the Apostles, and the Church has no right to sacralize and impose them on the faithful.

As for my own personal views, I believe I have a right to choose not to make my sex drive the primary and defining factor of my personality. I am a unique individual with many facets, including reason and a capacity for ethical behavior. I believe it is the latter that make me truly human, not my sex drive, which even animals have and is only one minor part of my personality. I told an acquaintance once years ago about experiencing same sex attraction, and I have not spoken to that person since. I feel that that person would only be viewing me as though my sex drive were my only defining characteristic, and would be equating me with the stereotypes that the so-called "gay community" only serves to perpetuate. No, I don't think the gay activists have any right to dictate to me to whom I should disclose this condition.

I have no desire to live in a gay ghetto culture that encourages promiscuity and what I believe to be sinful behavior. Nor do I have any particular "pride" in having this condition, which I did not choose. It is merely an inclination to a particular type of sin, and a particular manifestation of the residue of concupiscence left by original sin. The only thing that can be said in its favor is that the experience of bearing this cross has perhaps brought me closer to God and the spiritual life. Finally, I just want to state that I find it utterly despicable that gay activists in their arrogance feel called to ruin the lives and happiness of others by "outing" them in order to pursue their political agenda. The gay activists basically follow Vladimir I. Lenin's theory of political action, i.e., the end justifies any immoral means. We have already seen the gay activists' totalitarian tendencies in their efforts to deny the freedom of speech to anyone who does not walk in lockstep with the politically correct gay agenda, witness the treatment of Dr. Laura Schlessinger or Christian clubs on college campuses.

I was so happy when I read Michael Stipe of REM as saying that he didn't want to announce to the world his same sex attraction because he did not think it was "anyone's business". I totally feel the same way and was glad that finally someone had spoken out against the gay activists and their psychological terror tactics. I was sad, however, that he did succumb to their blandishments in revealing his same sex attraction to the public.

Anyways, that is my view of the matter, not necessarily that of Courage or the Church. Therefore, please do not cite it as what "Courage thinks" or what "the Church thinks".

God bless,

Charles Silesia

i cried reading your page! Sigh...i am a cradle catholic, who all my lfe has struggled with figuring out what was with me and sex. With a moral compass set by the Catholic Church as a child, but not well formed otherwise, i simply felt guilty over ALL sexual encounters, and never felt the time was right to sort it out.

However, over time, through a series of relationships, rapes, dry spells, conversions, a long run of therapy, and a lot of time in 12 step & other recovery programs for lots of compulsions (food, sex, relationships, sex), i have matured, and developed some principles that i've been able to reconcile with the Church's teachings. And your site captures them all.

In my adult life, i've not met another single person who has so beautifully expressed what i've come to understand about sex and the Catholic Church. Thank you SO very much for writing so openly and clearly! While i still have some sadness/grief that as a single person i think is called to a celibate lifestyle, who will NOT know what is marriage and family...i also know that accepting that has made my life simpler, easier, guilt-free, and more open to the OTHER gifts of being single.

Now, the other reason i'm writing you:

Lately i've been debating with some other singles on [the internet] the Vatican's recent comment that ordination of homosexual men probably isn't valid. i've been severely discouraged by some who have taken failure of the Church hierarchy to maintain the discipline of celibacy among the religious, (along with the cover-ups, secret settlements, and pastoral neglect), and buying that Vatican misstatement wholeheartedly, advocating barring homosexuals from entry into seminaries and forbidding their ordination (concerned about near occasions of sin and all).

The fundamentalists on the site don't seem to distinguish between homosexual inclinations & acts...or between pedophiles & homosexuals. I've cited the same Catechism sections you use, as well as made it a point to distinguish between homosexual orientations & homosexual acts.

What you have on your page that i've not been able to counter yet is the distinction between homosexual orientation and 'gay culture.' One of our posters has been forceful about posting some of the outrageous stuff from the Man-Boy Love group about encouraging children having sex...which simply distorts the issue.

I am wondering if, since you've last updated your page and the current issues in the American Church leadership have come to surface, you've given any thought to the issues about homosexuals in the religious life...and if you'd be prepared to say something on the matter!

I for one am so sure that it is one of many open discussions we in the Church need to learn to have about how to maturely deal with integrating our sexuality into our entire persons.

I'd love to hear your thinking on that.

Again, thanks for your great contributions!

Warm greetings to you in the Name of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I just last night came upon your website for The Same Sex Morality League, and while it will take me a while to review and reflect upon it as I think it merits, I just wanted to tell you what a wonderful and thorough job it appears to me you have done on this most timely and noteworthy presentation on SSA from a truly Catholic perspective. It is a marvelous work and reflects I perceive a very sound and deep understanding of an issue which finds many in error and confusion today, including many of our priests and consecrated religious. I'm sure that after I finish reading all of your material I will have no hesitation in recommending your site to others who are in need of or who are looking for guidance and understanding with respect to Church teaching and understanding on SSA. God bless you in abundance for this great work of love and instrument of light which you have offered in His Name. It will be greatly profitable for correction, teaching, and for informing with truth the journeys of any/all who are blessed to visit your site.

A few years ago I met with a priest who I greatly admire and who is also a person who would be one in mind and heart with our convictions. He said something to me which validated something which I have myself thought in recent years, i.e. that the greatest and most effective leadership in the area of SSA for the Catholic Church will come by way of the laity and not priests, and this because no other group of people would have the potential to persuade and enlighten others with SSA than those who have actually lived the life and "walked the walk" and who are intent upon living lives faithful to the teachings of the Church in and amongst people who think that such is "impossible", "unreasonable", and for those who are in bondage to shame or cowardice. This sense has intensified for me in recent years, and your website serves to confirm for me that what I have been led to think is likely true. I myself am and have been involved in a process of discernment in recent years inquiring and pondering as to how my own experience of the Lord and the wisdom and understanding with which He has blessed me in my own journey with SSA may be of service and of help to the Church and society.

Your website has served to nurture and encourage my faith today, Charles. I would be interested in corresponding with you and sharing more as we walk a journey which is traveled by few and which is despised and misunderstood by all too many. Let's be sure to humbly give thanks daily for the great love, mercy, and generosity which He has shown us in sparing us and preserving us from the erroneous and perilous thinking to which all too many have given themselves over in our times. And let's pray daily too for our many brothers and sisters with SSA who have been blinded and deceived by the Evil One's slick lies and traps--even those who attest to being practicing Catholics. May Our Lord's merciful and benevolent love continue to guard and encourage us and the protection and never-failing advocacy of Our Blessed Mother Mary obtain for us continued growth in the grace and knowledge of He Who is the greatest Lover of all.

I had a chance to read much of your website tonight. I just wanted to write and thank you for your work. It is well-written and carefully done and fills a need

on the Internet and in media in general. I hope it helps someone and I am confident it will.

I found your web site very interesting. It is a voice I have never heard in all of the debates surrounding homosexuality among seminarians and priests of late. I have struggled with the appropriate Christian response to the concerns of homosexuals. The responses of many Catholic heterosexuals is to turn a blind eye to sexually active homosexuals or, worse, to embrace people in the "lifestyle" in a false display of open-mindedness. The responsibility of a Christian to advocate chastity, something we are all called to, is completely shirked.

The priest at my Church was removed due to allegations that he abused a minor 25 years ago. He admitted to some vague degree of culpability and I believe that he truly tried to reform his life. Unfortunately, he was arrested in a public park with several other men eight years ago. It is still very hard to know how to reconcile this. Most of us suspected that he was homosexual, but assumed (hoped) he was keeping his vows. He was a good priest in many ways. I do believe that his teachings in the area of sexual morality were compromised by his struggles.

I believe that your site is a courageous, honest, and spirit-filled witness of one who has chosen the road less travelled. Instinctively, I knew there were voices like yours that were being drowned out by the gay "establishment". I am inspired by your stand and your story. I wish you well.

Your contribution to this subject is praiseworthy. Glad to see the hard work you have put in. May God bless you.

I am writing from India. Hope to hear from you.

I am a 37 year-old mother of four. I discovered your website via one of the Catholic bloggers (can't remember which). I just wanted to tell you that I have such a deep respect for you and your commitment to truly live your faith. You are an inspiration! May God bless you richly. You'll be in my prayers.

[Webmaster's note: The following message was received from someone identifying himself as a priest:]

I just had a look at your website. Well done...technically speaking.

From an academic point of view, if you were my student, I would've advised you to go back to high school. Your arguments against homosexuality are absolutely unfounded. You base your conclusion on no scientific data, and you keep refuting theological research, of which you seem completely ignorant, in

favour of your blind allegiance to the magisterium's teaching. Sorry, but this is typical of any sick religious attitude that a fundamentalist Christian embraces.

In the developments of your statements, you reach the conclusion before you start thinking. This methodology makes your conclusions void of truth.

Finally, the thing that is really missing in your texts is documentation. While reading, one believes your a solitary teenager trying to solve his guilt and heal his shame by clinging to some doctrinal statements. Because this immature child in you is too lazy to search for more, and too insecure and ashamed to confront his ideas to scientific and theological academic research, you take the easy way: find refuge in the medieval religious condemnations. And when you feel too unsure, just say it comes from God!!! Statements such as "God's Will", "God's Plan" are usually the favourites of ignorant, judgemental, sick religious minds.

You say that you have converted to Catholicism, well I say you bring shame on Christians of the 21Century with your blind conception of religion. My personal advice would be that you'd find a better place in Islam.

[Webmaster's note: The following is my response to the previous message:]

Thank you for your email. I am immensely saddened to hear a priest speak so contemptuously of the magisterium of Christ's church and of the teachings of the deposit of faith on sexual morality handed down from the apostles in the Church for two thousand years. It is especially painful to hear that you consider to be "sick" anyone who actually believes what the magisterium of the Catholic Church teaches. However, I am not too surprised, such are the times in which we live when those specially charged with building up the Church in charity in fact seem to be doing their best to tear her down.

I claim on my website only to speak for myself as a faithful layperson who experiences same sex attraction, and on the basis of my life experiences and my understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Consequently, I feel under no obligation to refer to any other documentation or theological "research" or "studies". In fact I do reproduce the pertinent paragraphs on homosexuality and chastity from the Catechism in my website, despite your reproach that I cite no "documentation". I (and I you do as well) live in a society where there is constitutionally protected freedom of speech and religion. I have as much right to express publicly my views and experiences on same sex attraction and religion as anyone else. I am sorry, but gay activists have absolutely no right as a civil matter to monopolize the public square with their doctrine and to demonize and silence any dissenting voices to their infallible dogma.

Incidentally, I would also note that the Vatican II document Lumen Gentium speaks of the special apostolate of the laity, who "are called as living members to apply to the building up of the church and to its continual sanctification all the

powers which they have received from the goodness of the Creator and from the grace of the Redeemer". Moreover, the laity

"are given this special vocation: to make the church present and fruitful in those places and circumstances where it is only through them that it can become the salt of the earth". I feel I do not need to be a priest or specially trained in theology to announce Catholic truth to the world as I see it.

As Catholics, we believe that teaching authority to interpret and spell out the specific implications of the deposit of faith and morals was granted by Christ to the apostles and their successors, that is the successor to Peter, the rock upon which the Church was founded, and the bishops in communion with him. Theologians are not the magisterium. I have no obligation to read, believe or cite them. Doctrine that is part of divine revelation, i.e., what Christ delivered to the apostles on faith and morals, can develop organically, but the deposit of faith cannot be reversed, as many modern theologians appear to teach. If you need documentation on the teaching authority within the Church and the notion of doctrinal development, I would refer you to the documents "Lumen Gentium" (Dogmatic Constitution of the Church) and "Dei Verbum" (on Divine Revelation) of the Vatican II Council.

Starting from the 1960s with the unedifying spectacle of theologians' in essence spitting in the face of the Pope when he merely reiterated the unchanging moral teaching of the Church on the sinfulness of artificial contraception, we have seen that many modern theologians have developed fancy arguments to undermine practically every doctrine that the Catholic Church has ever been taught. I myself had the misfortune to subscribe to the Jesuit periodical "America" for several years. With regard to the articles on same sex attraction alone in that periodical, there were several which specifically dissented from the moral teaching of the Church. My whole impression is that people are trying to develop fancy arguments to justify their own sins. It is horrible to not have mercy for a sinner and urge them to repentance, but it is even more horrible to try to call sin virtue and virtue sin. And the Christian moral teaching from the start was that sex is only proper and blessed within a lifelong marriage between a man and a woman. From the theological articles I have read, modern theologians try to make things complicated and ambiguous, and I often suspect, and often know for sure because it sometimes is painfully apparent, that the theologian author does not believe the settled teaching of the Church in the particular area. What kind of a loving father would we have if Our Father were to lead the Church into error for two thousand years as regards sexual morality? And why would God require someone to have a master of divinity to understand the moral law? What kind of a father would do that? And do theologians really understand the moral law -- a lot of what is written is in my experience an unintelligible and ambiguous word salad. (By the way, I am not an uneducated high school student but a possessor of a bachelor's and a professional degree from a major American ivy league university.) No, I truly believe that God has given the Church clear rules of sexual morality, which the world does not understand and indeed hates, as you indeed hate.

Certainly the teachings of the Catholic Church on homosexuality could at times be worded more positively than they sometimes are, and I have tried to do that in my website. Certainly sometimes Christians may hate the sinner as well as the sin, in disobedience to Christ's law of love. However, the Catechism of the Catholic Church gives a very balanced treatment of the subject, showing charity, dignity and respect to human beings who experience same sex attraction, while making it clear that homosexual activity is sinful and that the inclination to this sin should be treated with care. That to me is speaking the truth in love.

And I fully believe that the unchanging teachings of the Church on same sex attraction are truly life giving. I entered the Catholic Church because based on my experience and research, I knew that the fullness of all truth as regards faith and morals subsisted in the Church. I rejoice in the Church of Christ, which is such a tremendous channel of grace for enabling us to overcome sin and to become holy, as He is holy! What a liberation, what a release! And here come people who say that there is no such thing as sin, or that what the Church and the Bible clearly say are sins, are not sins at all, but virtues. It makes me tremendously sad to think that future generations will not be able to experience that liberation from sin if the Church were to be such a traitor to Jesus as to change its teachings and scoff at purity of heart and holy chastity. I must rely on God's guarantee that He will not allow the gates of hell to prevail against His Church. Yes, certainly Christ was very close to sinners and the marginalized, but it was to show his mercy and, if they were sinners, to call them to repentance and a new life. He was not handing out a license to sin. He told the woman caught in adultery to go and sin no more. God's love and grace is visible in our being able to overcome sin, not be slaves to it as the world tells us we must!

We are fully human, it is absolutely uncharitable in my view to say as the gay activists do that one's entire identity is based on an inclination to a particular sexual sin that one may experience. What a dehumanizing, hateful message! And the Church has absolutely no right to sacralize the political ideologies of "gay pride" or "coming out". These things simply serve a secular political agenda and have absolutely nothing to do with the Gospel that Our Lord Jesus Christ taught. It is unfair for these ideologies to be imposed by church authorities in the form of diocesan ministries to "gays and lesbians" that sneer at or overlook the call to holy chastity that God has made to us through the Church. And as a civil matter, why does everyone in our society have to believe in the establishment's version of sexual ethics (that any consensual adult sexual activity is laudable)? Is not the essence of a free society that one is entitled to have differing views on morality as on all other questions, including views on sexual morality? Morality involves value judgments, and thus scientific or pseudo-scientific "research" would not necessarily be dispositive of the matter. I am just as entitled as a civil matter to hold and teach my views on sexual morality as you have to teach yours (although I think it would be dishonest for you to hold yourself out as a Catholic priest if you were not to teach Catholic teaching).

And as for your equation of me with an "Islamic" religious point of view, I will merely state that nothing could be more unfair or further from the truth. The

Islamist supports violent warfare against infidels. I do not. The Islamist does not believe in the separation of the spheres of Caesar and God. I do. The Islamist treats unbelievers in an Islamic state as second class citizens subject to special taxes. I do not believe those not of my religion should be second class citizens. The Islamist believes that apostates from Islam deserve death. I do not believe apostates from my Catholic faith deserve death. I fully rejoice in the religious liberty enshrined in law by the Constitution of my country. It is just that which protects the freedom of those of us traditional religious believers (who you so intolerantly and cruelly label as "sick"), who wish only to believe and practice our beliefs in peace, from having the liberal establishment impose its hedonistic and materialistic religious views on us. I believe in freedom of religion. Do you? Freedom of religion includes the right of the Catholic Church and its faithful to believe and preach what it has always believed and preached, including on matters of sexual morality. If one does not believe what the Catholic Church teaches, there are any number of religions that will accomodate one's every whim, including several that will condone and indeed celebrate homosexual activity. In our society, no one has a gun to his head to force him to stay in the Catholic Church. I myself left my previous denomination to join the Catholic Church because I believed that the latter's teachings were the fullness of truth. If anyone in the Catholic firmament is similar to Islamist totalitarians, it seems to me it is Catholic dissenters who do not believe what the Catholic Church teaches but who arrogantly say that they will keep the name Catholic and demand that the Church must change its teachings to justify their sins and meet their subjective preferences. That to me IS totalitarian, since it denies the human rights of those who believe in the Catholic faith, whole and entire, as it has always been.

I know you feel your lack of charity toward me is based on noble motives, just as fanatical gay activists who demonize anyone who disagree with them feel they are fighting a noble cause. However, I feel you are misguided, both in your ad hominem attacks on me, which I believe do not reflect the charity that Christ and St. Paul make the centerpiece of our religion, and in your substantive arguments against Catholic truth as expounded by the magisterium.

I found your website through a Catholic blog this week. I didn't take a good look at the site until tonight. It looks very good. I will revisit.

I never felt same-sex attraction until puberty (I'll be 46 the end of this month). It was very embarassing, it revealed itself in a dream. Until then, I'd fantasized about women, and starting at a very early age. But with no actual sex. Then in high school (this was the time of David Bowie and bisexual "chic" in the 70s) I did have same sex attraction in regard to a friend, and began to regard myself (only to myself, you understand) as I guess a "latent" bisexual. Again, there was no heterosexual sex in my life, either (I was very overweight and had low self-esteem). To make a long story short (you are the first person outside of a priest I have ever told these things), I discovered gay male pornography on the Internet about two years ago. I began viewing it casually but eventually it became more

intense. I didn't realize I had this intense a same sex attraction, but it's substantial. Also the only kind of sex dreams I've had for the past few years have been that of same sex situations.

I very much appreciate the designation "same sex attracted," as I never think of myself as gay.

I hope I have not blabbed on too much in this message, but I thought I'd go to my grave not telling anyone about this outside of the sacrament of Reconciliation. It is really no one's business, but it's not going to just "go away," as I've hoped in the past.

Thank you for your service to the Body of Christ, and I hope to hear from you.