

# FC

## Forward in Christ

*The magazine of Forward in Faith North America.*

Vol. 7 No. 4

May 2015

# *Religious Freedom Under Attack*

*Also In this Issue:*

The False Religion of Marriage  
Equality

Gay Marriage and Christian  
Citizenship

The Hindu Swastika

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# Restoring the Conciliar Church and Her Mission

*One Church, One Faith, One Lord*



INTERNATIONAL  
CATHOLIC

CONGRESS OF  
ANGLICANS

July 13-17, 2015  
Fort Worth, TX

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# One Church, One Faith, One Lord

## "Restoring the Conciliar Church and Her Mission" July 13-July 17, 2015 Fort Worth, Texas

*A conciliar gathering of Catholic Anglicans rooted in the past. Ready for the future*

### Daily Schedule

#### Monday 13 July

- 1:00-4:30PM Registration @ Hotel
- 4:30PM Transfer to St Andrews
- 5:00PM Choral Evensong with Sermon @ St Andrews Preacher Bp Ackerman
- 6:30PM Social Hour
- 7:30PM Dinner on your own

#### Tuesday 14 July, Wednesday 15 July & Thursday 16 July

- 7:00AM Breakfast on your own.
- 7:30AM Said Morning prayer @ Hotel with Bible Teaching A Study on Colossians Bp Nazir-Ali
- 8:45AM Break
- 9:00AM Key note addresses
- |           |                      |   |
|-----------|----------------------|---|
| Tuesday   | Abp Valentino Mokiwa | "Frank Weston and the Foundations for Revival"                  |
| Wednesday | Edith Humphrey       | "The Nature of the Church: Apostolic, Conciliar and Concrete"   |
| Thursday  | Bp Keith Ackerman    | "The Anglo Catholic Congresses and Restoring the Anglican Mind" |
- 10:00AM Break
- 10:15AM 3 Breakout sessions
- |           |  |  |
|-----------|--|--|
| Tuesday   | Cn Jerry Kramer<br>Cn Kevin Donlon<br>Rev Dr Stephen Noll                              | "The Catholic Faith and the Challenge of Islam."<br>Conciliarism<br>"Marriage: creation ordinance, sacrament, contract? Reflections on the current status of marriage in church and society" |
| Wednesday | Chris Hoyt<br>Abbot Luis/Bp Morales<br>Kevin Kallsen/David Virtue                      | "Sacred Music. Some Basic Resources and Practical Skills<br>Religious Life and Catholic Witness<br>Media and the Great Commission"   |
| Thursday  | Fr Chad Hatfield<br>Georgette Forney<br>Bp Sutton /David France/Rev Dr Peay/ Fr Klukas | The use of Icons in Catholic & Orthodox Devotion<br>Anglicans for Life<br>Theological Education in the Frontline. Facing new challenges to the Faith once delivered to the Saints.           |

11:15AM Depart for St Andrews

11:45AM Choral Mass with sermon @ St Andrews  
 Tuesday: Celebrant Bp Michael Nazir Ali Preacher Abp Foley Beach  
 Wednesday: Celebrant Bp Paul Hewett Preacher Abp Robert Duncan  
 Thursday: Celebrant Bp Fanuel Magangani Preacher Rev Dr Bill Dickson

1:15PM Tuesday FCC sponsored Lunch with speakers Bp Haverland & Bp Nazir-Ali  
 Wednesday Bishop's Forum during a sponsored lunch at the Hilton  
 Thursday Abp Kolini — "Christian Genocide". Sponsored lunch at the Hilton

Break

2:30PM Keynote addresses  
 Tuesday Bp Ray Sutton "Theology of Real Presence"  
 Wednesday Bp Michael Nazir Ali "The necessity of Unity in Truth for the Church's Mission"  
 Thursday Bp John Hind Catholic Anglicans and the Future of Ecumenism.

3:30PM Break

4:00PM 2 Breakout sessions  
 Tuesday Dr. Glen Petta SOMA Testimonies of Restoration in the Church.  
 Fr John Heschle The Devotional Societies  
 Abp Stephen Than Myint Oo Maintaining Catholic Faith in the midst of Suffering.  
 Wednesday Fr Lee Nelson/Fr Chris Culpepper Church Planting  
 Julie Grimstad "End of life Medical Decision-making."  
 Bp Paul Sobiechowski [PNC] "Non Papal Catholicism"  
 Thursday Statement Drafting Committee Report

5:30PM Choral Evensong with Sermon @ St Andrews Preacher Tuesday Dean William McKeachie  
 Wednesday Abp Mark Haverland  
 Thursday Abp Walter Grundorf

7:00PM Tuesday night Dinner on your own,  
 Wednesday night, FiFNA/FCC/AWI and other gatherings for business & dinner  
 Thursday night Banquet with Keynote speaker Alice Linsley

**Friday 17 July**

7:00AM Breakfast on your own

7:45AM Transfer to St Andrews

8:00AM Said Morning Prayer with Bible Teaching A Study on Colossians Bp Michael Nazir-Ali

9:15AM Final Report from the Statement Drafting Committee for approval.

9:45AM Break

10:00AM Closing Eucharist @ St Andrews Celebrant Bp Keith Ackerman Preacher Bp Ray Sutton

12:00 Noon Departure

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# Congress Speaker, Alice Christine Linsley

*By Bishop Paul Hewett*

Our banquet speaker, born a Baptist, became an Anglican in Isfahan, Iran, and worshipped with the Antiochian Orthodox for six years before returning to Anglicanism, in the ACNA, in 2014.

She is the mother of four adult children and twelve grandchildren, and earned her BA from the University of Bridgeport, CT, then an M.Div. from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, with post-graduate work in Liturgy at the University of the South, and in curriculum design at the University of Kentucky.

She has taught Spanish, Philosophy and Ethics. From 1988 to 2002 she served as a school chaplain and parish priest, and set aside her orders in 2006.

In 2004 she helped plant St. Andrew's Anglican Church, an ACNA parish, in Versailles, Kentucky.

Her work in biblical anthropology, especially in the Book of Genesis, has opened the eyes of many about what priesthood is, in the Church of God. "Just Genesis" explores this theme in depth. Her work on Genesis is outstanding, using the tools of anthropology in the study of Genesis, to help us deal with one of the greatest issues in the Church today. What does it mean to be a man in Christ? What does it mean to be a woman in Christ? What is sex and marriage and family and culture in God's plan? The Bible begins with the marriage of Adam and Eve, and ends with the Marriage of the Lamb with His Bride, and right in the middle is the Song of Solomon. Pope John Paul II spent years with his Wednesday public lectures on "the theology of the body," the gospel of the body, male and female, as a sacrament of Christ and the Church, a sacrament of the true God. The Pope's lectures are so profound that the Church will spend decades unpacking them, and when it does, there will be a renewed and more profound understanding of the roles of men and women in the Church, and in the Church-transforming-culture.

There are enormous ecclesial deficits in the way. The first is the need to go further with biblical anthropology, as Alice Linsley has. The Bible has far more to say about masculinity and femininity than we may realize.

Another deficit is ecclesiology. What is our doctrine of the Church? The innovators see the Church as a denomination which can vote on matters of faith and morals, and write the rules as it goes along. The orthodox Christian knows the Church to be an organic whole, through time and space, going back through the apostles to our Lord Jesus Christ. Her faith and morals are apostolic. How we read and use the Bible will come into the discussion, and Alice Linsley will lift the lid a little further on biblical anthropology.

All told, what we are doing at the Congress is dealing

with the root causes of the crisis we are in. The ordination of women, abortion, divorce, homosexuality, breakdown of the family, euthanasia, confusion in sexual roles and escalating violence are all interrelated symptoms of the deeper issues referred to above. Anglicans throughout the world are being invited to have a hard look at the root causes, and how as Anglicans, in the great re-alignment, we have got to get our act together, so that we can go on to fulfill our ecumenical vocation.

Now here is a little exercise in biblical anthropology. If you are shopping for a new Bible, flip to Psalm 1, verse one. It should say, based on the Hebrew, "Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly." The Man. If it says, "Blessed are they," don't buy that Bible. You will not be able to read the psalm christologically. That Bible will have a political agenda, a warped anthropology, and is not a faithful translation. "The Man" refers to the Son of man, the Messiah, the Righteous Ruler, looked for even by Abraham's ancestors. As Alice Linsley says, "the Righteous Ruler was expected to rise from the dead and lead his people in procession to immortality as he ascends to the eternal throne." Psalm 68: 18 picks up on this ancient theme: "Thou art gone up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts from men; yea, even from thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them." St. Paul carries the theme further forward: "But unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure

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of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." (Ephesians 4: 7-10) Jesus fulfills the ancient archetype of the righteous ruler priest, the Man, "who can lead his people to the heavenly throne, because He as the Son of God does what they failed to do: be righteous, and rise from the dead." (Ibid)

The Father accepts the perfect Sacrifice of His Son and raises Jesus from the dead, in the Holy Spirit. Jesus is victorious over sin and death, Saviour, King and Lord of all. When He ascends to the highest place, into the Holy of Holies, the Holy Spirit descends and is poured out on all flesh, to incorporate all who say yes, like Mary, into the nuptial mystery. Believers are those who, like her, are temples of the Holy Spirit, where Christ is formed. The Church is the Temple of the Holy Spirit and the Bride of the Lamb. The Eucharist is His marriage supper. "Let us rejoice...for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready..." (Rev. 19.7)

*The Rt. Rev. Paul Hewett is Bishop of the Diocese of the Holy Cross.*

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# In the News

**Forward in Faith North America** is sponsoring an “International Catholic Congress of Anglicans,” which will be held in Fort Worth, Texas, July 13-17. Register now to reserve your place at this important event. See ps. 2-6 and [fifna.org](http://fifna.org) for Congress information.

**Baltimore Riots:** Following the death of Freddie Gray in police custody, riots erupted in the city of Baltimore, leading to the deployment of the National Guard to restore order.

The Bishop of the Episcopal Church Diocese of Maryland, Eugene Sutton, called the riots “righteous anger” in a pastoral letter to his diocese. Sutton also listed the deaths of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown, who were shot in self-defense, as examples of brutality against African Americans.

The Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) has responded to the rioting in Baltimore and elsewhere, by proposing a four point plan to bring about reconciliation. This encourages congregations to “pray and work for racial reconciliation,” and proposes strategies for multiethnic evangelism, church planting and church leadership.

*Anglicanink.org.*

**Bane Goes Back:** The Rt. Rev. David Bane, who resigned from the Episcopal Church (TEC) in 2009 to join ACNA, has returned to TEC.

Bane, who was the TEC Bishop of Southern Virginia before joining ACNA, was received back into the Episcopal Church on April 27, at a “service of reconciliation” led by Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori.

After leaving the Diocese of Southern Virginia in 2006, Bane, who voted against the consecration of gay bishop, Gene Robinson, was unable to find episcopal work, or ministry within TEC. According to *Anglicans Unscripted*, Bane has found parish ministry within the Episcopal Church.

*Virtueonline.org, Anglicanink.org, Anglicans Unscripted.*

**The Diocese of West Texas Goes Gay:** The Bishop of West Texas, Gary Lillibridge, announced this April that he would allow three parishes to conduct same-sex blessings.

Lillibridge, who had previously stood against gay marriage, changed his mind after reading the Bible during a Lenten retreat and praying. In a letter to his diocese, he states, “Scripture itself reveals instances in the life and ministry of Jesus where he works outside of established, long held religious tradition and practice to extend grace and mercy to people who otherwise are not included.”

The Diocese of West Texas joins other southern dioceses that allow same-sex blessings, including the Diocese of Texas, the Diocese of Mississippi, the Diocese of Western Louisiana and the Diocese of Alabama.

*Forward in Christ* has to ask, what is it that caused Lillibridge *et al* to climb aboard the pink steamroller, prayer and devotion to the Word of God, or something else?

*Standfirminfaith.org, Anglicanink.org, Episcopalcafe.com.*

**Westminster Abbey Turns Muslim?** A service in Westminster Abbey to mark the centenary of the Gallipoli campaign in World War I, included the following prayer:

*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful,  
Praise be to the Lord of the universe who has created and formed us into tribes and nations so that we may know each other, and not so that we may despise each other, Peace be upon all auspicious prophets of God, from Adam, Noah and Abraham to Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed Mustafa, who pulled humanity out of darkness into the light and became guides to peace.*

Quite apart from the accuracy of describing the warlord Mohammed as a “guide to peace,” it seems strange that a Christian church would relegate Christ to co-prophet status with the founder of the “religion of peace.”

*Virtueonline.org, Archbishopcranmer.com.*

**SCOTUS Argues Gay Marriage:** The Supreme Court of the United States has been hearing arguments for and against gay marriage, and is expected to rule on whether such marriages are a constitutional right this summer.

If the Supreme Court rules in favor of this, churches and religious institutions could find themselves punished by the state. For example, when US Solicitor General, Donald Verilli, was questioned by Justice Samuel Alito about the impact such a ruling would have on the churches tax exempt status, he replied, “It is going to be an issue.”

When asked about the effect same-sex marriage legislation would have on a religious school’s housing policy, Verilli stated that would depend on “accommodation” worked out at state level.

Verilli’s comments show, at the very least, that religious institutions face financial ruin and precarious tolerance if the Supreme Court rules in favor of gay marriage. Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President, Albert Mohler, has described this as possibly “the greatest threat to religious liberty of our lifetime.”

*Albertmohler.com, Realclearreligion.org.*

**Civil Disobedience:** A group of prominent religious leaders have pledged to disobey the law if the US Supreme Court decides for same-sex marriage.

In a document entitled *Pledge in Solidarity to Defend Marriage*, signers state:

“While there are many things we can endure, redefining marriage is so fundamental to the natural order and the common good that this is the line we must draw and one we cannot and will not cross.”

Signers include former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, former U.S. Senator Rick Santorum, National Religious Broadcasters president Jerry Johnson, Pastor John Hagee, and Franklin Graham, President and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan’s Purse.

*The Christian Post.*





# Big Gay Goes After Christians

*By Fr. Michael Heidt*

As the U.S. Supreme Court met in late April to hear oral arguments for and against the constitutional right of same sex couples to marry, two Oregon bakers, Aaron and Melissa Klein, were fined \$135,000. The Kleins are one of several Christian-owned businesses singled out for punitive legal action by pro-gay advocacy groups.

Melissa and Aaron Klein, of Sweet Cakes by Melissa, had refused, on account of their Christian faith, to bake a cake for Rachel and Laurel Bowman-Cryer's lesbian wedding. They were subsequently sued by the Cryers for "emotional distress" and found guilty of discrimination by Oregon's Bureau of Labor and Industries. Sweet Cakes by Melissa has been forced out of business.

The Kleins are not alone. Memories Pizza, in Indiana, was forced to shut down after receiving death threats for refusing to cater gay weddings. Unlike Sweet Cakes by Melissa, Memories has reopened, following a successful funding campaign. That's not all.

In 2014, the Christian owners of Liberty Ridge Farm, in upstate New York, were fined \$10,000 and ordered to pay Jennifer McCarthy and Melisa Erwin \$1,500 each, after they refused to host the couple's lesbian wedding. Christianity, in upstate New York, obviously comes with a price. It does in Colorado, too.

When Jack Phillips, of Masterpiece Cakeshop, in Lakewood, Colorado, refused to bake a marriage cake for a gay couple because of his Christian belief, he was sued, and found guilty of discrimination by the state's Civil Rights Commission. Phillips was subsequently ordered to make gay wedding cakes and send his staff to gay-friendly training sessions. The Commission also directed Phillips to send in quarterly reports, over a period of two years, confirming that his bakery hasn't refused to make gay wedding cakes. But it isn't just small businesses that are being targeted by the marriage equality movement, individuals have also been singled out.

In December, 2013, Phil Robertson, of the popular T.V. show, *Duck Dynasty*, made anti-gay comments in *GQ* magazine. "Don't be deceived," stated Robinson, "Neither the adulterers, the idolaters, the male prostitutes, the homosexual offenders, the greedy, the drunkards, the slanderers, the swindlers -- they won't inherit the kingdom of God. Don't deceive yourself. It's not right."

The T.V. personality's comments certainly weren't right by A&E, which suspended Robinson after releasing a statement declaring its support for the "LGBT community."

"We are extremely disappointed," declared A&E, "to have read Phil Robertson's comments in *GQ*, which are based on his own personal beliefs and are not reflected in the series *Duck Dynasty*. His personal views in no way reflect those of A&E Networks, who have always been strong supporters and champions of the LGBT community. The network has placed Phil under hiatus from filming indefinitely."

Robinson was reinstated after a massive public backlash against A&E's decision; tech prodigy, Brandon Eich, wasn't



so fortunate. Eich was forced to resign as CEO of Mozilla in early 2014, after an internet campaign revealed he had donated money to Proposition 8, the anti-gay marriage initiative that banned same-sex unions in California. State legislatures haven't been immune to gay pressure either.

In March, 2015, Indiana's Governor, Mike Pence, signed the Religious Freedom and Restoration Act (RFRA) into law. This guaranteed immunity from prosecution to religious persons conducting business and hiring according to their faith. This provoked a firestorm of protest from gay rights pressure groups and corporations such as Eli Lilly, Starbucks, Cummins Diesel, Salesforce, Apple and Angie's List. Governor Pence duly backed down and amended the RFRA to ensure non-discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.

A similar bill to Indiana's RFRA was introduced in Arkansas in March, 2015, but Governor Asa Hutchinson was forced to amend the law after complaints from the state's largest employer, Walmart. Walmart has taken an openly pro-gay stance nationwide, supporting LGBTQ events such as New York City Pride and giving grants to gay advocacy organizations, including the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund.

Proponents of same-sex marriage and the penalizing of businesses that refuse to cater to them, argue that LGBT persons deserve equality and that opposition to this, regardless of religious belief, is discriminatory. Amanda Goad, staff attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union, makes the case, with reference to the Masterpiece bakery in Colorado.

"While we all agree that religious freedom is important, no one's religious beliefs make it acceptable to break the law by discriminating against prospective customers. No one is asking Masterpiece's owner to change his beliefs, but

treating gay people differently because of who they are is discrimination plain and simple.”

This has proved a powerful argument. In 2008, only two states, Massachusetts and Connecticut, allowed gay marriage. In 2015, 37 states allow it and 13 states do not. Of the 13 states that don't, eight have had their same-sex marriage bans overturned by Federal judges and are appealing the rulings.

So far some 22 Christian businesses and individuals have been targeted by gay activists, both in and out of court. Whether this number will rise or fall when the Supreme

Court decides on the constitutionality of gay marriage this summer, remains to be seen. That gay advocates believe their perceived rights trump those of Christians, is clear.



*Fr. Michael Heidt is a priest in the Diocese of Fort Worth and Editor of Forward in Christ.*

## Religious Freedom Under Attack

*By Fr. Michael Heidt*

Sometime this summer, possibly in late June, the U.S. Supreme Court will decide whether same-sex marriage is a constitutional right. To quote a former Secretary of State, what difference does it make, if the Justices rule that it is?

If you're a Christian business owner like the Kleins in Oregon, the answer is \$135,000 worth of difference and financial ruin. They made the decision to turn down a lesbian couple's request for a wedding cake because they believed, as Christians, that marriage can only occur between a man and a woman. For the Kleins, making a gay wedding cake went against their faith. They were forced out of business for that belief and found guilty of discrimination by an Oregon court.

Individuals like Brendon Eich, the high-tech prodigy who invented the programming language, Javascript, might be worried at a pro-gay ruling from the Supreme Court, too. Eich was forced to resign as CEO of Mozilla, which he co-founded, when an internet campaign on the popular dating site, OkCupid.com, revealed he had donated \$1000 to Proposition 8. Proposition 8 denied gay couples in California the right to marry, and Eich's donation provoked the following message on the interestingly named OkCupid.com:

“Mozilla's new CEO, Brendan Eich, is an opponent of equal rights for gay couples. We would therefore prefer that our users not use Mozilla software to access OkCupid.”

The threat of a gay boycott was apparently too much for Mozilla, and Klein was forced to pay the



consequences of being an “opponent of equal rights,” or in other words, a discriminatory bigot. It's hard to see how a Supreme Court ruling in favor of gay marriage wouldn't work to further stifle Christian expression in the public square. To coin a phrase, bake a gay cake or get out of the kitchen, and as that version of “equality” gains ground, expect fewer and fewer Christians to stick their heads above the parapet of our new cultural orthodoxy.

Still, it's argued, Christians will be free to worship and believe as they please in their churches and religious institutions. Not so fast; the oral arguments heard by the Supreme Court this April imply a different story.

When Justice Samuel Alito asked U.S. Solicitor General, Donald Verrilli, if religious institutions would be able to maintain tax-exempt status if they opposed gay marriage, Verrilli replied:

“You know, I — I don't think I can answer that question without knowing more specifics, but it's certainly going to be an issue. I — I don't deny that. I don't deny that, Justice Alito. It is — it is going to be an issue.”

An issue? That's putting it lightly. The loss of tax-exempt status would cripple churches and religious institutions, forcing them to close through loss of charitable contributions and the burden of property taxes. Seemingly, and to no lesser figure than

the Solicitor General, this doomsday scenario is conceivable, why? Because of the precedent bound up with Alito's question. This centers on Bob Jones University, which lost its tax-exempt status for disallowing interracial dating and marriage. "Would the same apply to a university or a college if it opposed same-sex marriage?" asked the Justice, and we can add the unspoken words, "if not, why not," when both practices apparently fall under the same crime of discrimination.

Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. also asked a telling question of the Solicitor General. "Would a religious school that has married housing be required to afford such housing to same-sex couples?"

Virilli answered by saying that the Federal government did not, at the present time, have a law banning discrimination on the grounds of gender identity or sexual orientation. He also referred the matter to the States, many of which do have such legislation. According to Virilli, the requirement in question "is going to depend on how the States work out the balance between their civil rights laws, whether they decide there's going to be civil rights enforcement of discrimination based on sexual orientation or not, and how they decide what kinds of accommodations they are going to allow under State law."

There you have it, religious schools might, or might not, be allowed to practice discrimination depending on what individual states decide, to say nothing of the very real possibility of a Federal law banning such behavior. Presumably that too would become a matter of "accommodation," of tolerance, or not. Again we have to ask, if not, why not?

This brings us to the point. The fulcrum, or pivot on which the argument for gay marriage stands is discrimination, that it is unjust to deny a class of people the same rights as everyone else, merely because of "who they are" as people. To do so, it's argued, is nothing less than bigotry and hatred. In the same way, we're told, that it is wrong to discriminate against people because of the color of their skin, so too is it wrong to do so because of sexual orientation or identity.

If this argument is right, that being opposed to gay marriage and

refusing to offer married on-campus accommodation to same-sex couples, for example, is bigotry, then there is no reason why it should not be stamped out with the full force of the law. Schools, churches, charities, hospitals, in sum, anyone or anything at all, should not be allowed to practice discrimination; it's wrong, pure and simple, across the board, regardless of religious belief. Where does this leave Christianity, or any other faith that upholds what everyone has always known until now, that sexual relations properly take place between a man and a woman, and that anything else is disordered and wrong? Nowhere good, I'm afraid.

Regardless of its merits, the discrimination argument has won the day in the popular mind and has the potential to be used as an anvil on which to beat the churches into submission. It is already, as we've seen in Oregon and elsewhere, and if it applies to bakers and CEOs, then why not to everyone else, churches included? Good question, and the secular left, which is the standard-bearer of our new sexual politics, has no answer, other than thin hints of "balance" and "accommodation." How could they, when their own reasoning argues otherwise? With that in mind, don't expect tolerance to last for any length of time, as the logic of "marriage equality" marches to its conclusion.

For now, Christianity in the U.S. is perhaps too big to assault directly; there are too many Christians with too many votes, to attack head-on. It wouldn't look good to campaign for public office on a platform of putting pastors in jail for anti-gay "hate speech." Likewise, shutting down religious schools and churches because they refuse to burn incense on the altar of our new gay orthodoxy isn't a vote winner, yet. But there is nothing in the language of the gay rights movement that suggests it shouldn't be, and that language is in the ascendant, not its reverse. This does not, to put it mildly, bode well for long-term religious freedom.

To return to the question, where does this leave Christianity? For faithful Christians who believe in the divinely ordered nature of sexuality and stand against anything that contradicts it, there are several choices.

It might be possible, for a time, to

ignore the world and pretend that religious enclaves of what the culture believes to be discrimination and hatred will be allowed to exist. Who knows, the ostrich that trustingly buries its head in the sand might never wake up to find its neck severed. That's one possibility, that a society which has learned to hate and despise a religion they believe hateful will tolerate it. Or, to put it another way, perhaps a compromise can be reached between two totally opposed points of view. Perhaps our Constitution and the principles behind it have sufficient genius to make this happen. I hope they do, but it appears another, less comfortable option is fast taking center stage.

Laws can be disobeyed, and a coalition of Christian leaders from across America have promised to do just that, sending an unyielding message to the Supreme Court in their *Pledge in Solidarity to Defend Marriage*. In it, the signers state:

"Our highest respect for the rule of law requires that we not respect an unjust law that directly conflicts with higher law. A decision purporting to redefine marriage flies in the face of the Constitution and is contrary to the natural created order. As people of faith we pledge obedience to our Creator when the State directly conflicts with higher law. We respectfully warn the Supreme Court not to cross this line."

So what difference will it make if that line is crossed? This remains to be seen. In the meanwhile, the Supreme Court of the United States has been put on notice. There are Christians, in this nation, who will not bow to the false gods of our age.

FC

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# The Hindu Swastika

*Shane Schaetzel on the Freedom of Religion*

It seems that while Christians are dying for their faith all over the world, the United States of America is embroiled in a national debate about whether or not it is legal to force Christians to bake a same-sex 'wedding' cake. The conflict isn't just about cake. It also involves flowers, pizza and other commodities. It's a strange debate to be sure, but oddly enough, probably one of the most significant in our nation's history. The basic gist of it goes as follows.

A homosexual couple wants to get "married." So they approach a Christian baker for a wedding cake. The Christian baker politely refuses to make the cake for that occasion, citing religious reasons for her objection. She will make any other cake for them; a birthday cake, a baptism cake, a bar mitzvah cake, even a blank cake

which they can buy and decorate themselves. However, for this Christian, baking and decorating a cake for a same-sex wedding would actually be participating in what that Christian believes to be a mortal sin. It violates her religious beliefs, and moral sensibilities. So she refused. In turn the homosexual couple sued her for discrimination. They won in court, and the Christian baker was forced to bake the same-sex wedding cake or face thousands of dollars in fines. Rather than violate her religious and moral beliefs, she shut down her bakery.

The national debate that has erupted over this, and similar cases, is one that pits civil rights against religious rights. However, one could say that "conscience rights" are really what is in question here. What it comes down to is the right to deny service, when a business owner feels that his/her conscience is being violated. So it would seem the real issue that is being debated is whether or not business owners have any rights at all once they decide to operate a business publicly.

On the one hand, we have the civil-leftists who argue that civil rights trump all other rights, and that business owners have no right to deny service to any paying customer, no matter what. They argue that allowing some people to deny service, for whatever religious or moral reason they cite, will inevitably lead to institutionalized racism again, in the form of racial segregation or what have you. Therefore government should get involved immediately to



stop this "dangerous trend." On the other hand, we have civil-libertarians who say that a business owner is the sole proprietor of his financial property, and therefore has the right to refuse service to anyone, for any reason, or no reason at all. The consequences of his discrimination will be played out in negative public attention and loss of business. The government should not get involved, and lawsuits should be denied.

It seems to me that what we have here is a case of political hysteria on both sides. Sadly, the whole thing is being fueled by special interest groups, who usually benefit from such hysteria in the press and in the courtrooms. May I suggest that allowing a Christian baker to refuse making a same-sex wedding cake is not tantamount to institutionalized segregation, and at the same time, business owners do have a social contract with the public to not discriminate against customers based on some commonly accepted social standards. To illustrate my point, I'm going to use a hypothetical situation, which could really happen.

Suppose a Hindu couple, husband and wife, walk into a Jewish bakery. The couple asks for a very special cake to be made for their young Hindu son. The cake will mark a particular religious rite of passage. The cake will be white, with a red trim. On the top it will be adorned with a big swastika, similar to the image above. Now the Jewish baker is obviously a little disturbed by this. He politely tells the customers: "Look, I'm sure this symbol has some

special meaning to you, and that's your business, but you have to understand my people have suffered greatly under a symbol identical to this, and it causes me great distress to make this design. I will have to decline your request." In addition, this particular Jew might also feel uncomfortable making a religious symbol for what he believes to be an idolatrous religion, but he courteously decides not to mention that. The Hindu couple leave the store quite distressed, because this bakery was the only bakery for miles around.

What should the Hindu couple do? How should the public, and the government, respond to this obvious case of discrimination? Should the Hindu couple sue the Jewish bakery? Do they have the right? Should the court then force the Jewish bakery to bake and design the cake they requested, or else face steep fines?

What I've done here is change the players and the design of the cake, but the situation is IDENTICAL to the case of a Christian baker who wouldn't bake a same-sex wedding cake, or a Christian florist who wouldn't provide flowers to the same occasion, etc. The question is, where does a customer's civil rights end, and the business owner's civil rights begin?

I'm going to offer my opinion here, which comes as both a Catholic Christian and an American citizen. I believe a customer's civil rights end when the customer demands that the business owner violate his conscience to participate in an act the business owner deems immoral or distressing. In the case of the gay couple, as in the case of the hypothetical Hindu couple, the various persons are not being denied service because they are homosexual or Hindu. What is being denied is a particular kind of service. It is the kind of service that is being denied, not the person being served.

Forcing a devout Christian, or a devout Jew, or a devout Muslim for that matter, to bake a same-sex wedding cake is a very distressing thing. It causes the Christian, Jew or Muslim baker to violate his conscience by participating in an act that goes against his/her religious beliefs. It is no different than forcing a Jewish baker to bake a Hindu swastika cake. Some Jews might do it, but others might not. It doesn't matter who would do it, and

who wouldn't. What matters is the conscience of the people who wouldn't. The question is, do we live in a society that legally forces people to violate their conscience? And, is that really the kind of society we want to live in?

Even the very conservative Ozark Mountains of Southern Missouri have not been immune from this national debate. Recently, in the City of Springfield, a civil rights ordinance, passed by the city council, was put up for repeal by the voters in a city-wide referendum. The ordinance dealt with issues related to this. Even though a recent civil-rights commission found no evidence of discrimination within the city, the ordinance was passed anyway, giving the city sweeping powers to force businesses and schools to comply with anti-discrimination laws for homosexual and transgender persons, in a way that could violate the consciences of many people. The local Catholic bishop urged Catholics in the city to vote YES in favor of the repeal of this ordinance. This was based on advice from his lawyers who informed him that the ordinance posed a significant threat to Church operations within the City of Springfield, as well as threats to local Catholic business owners and local Catholic schools.

Many local Baptist, Pentecostal and Evangelical pastors also organized their church members to turn out and vote YES for the repeal as well. The YES campaign won by a very narrow margin, even though it was radically outspent by the NO campaign, and the ballot language was confusing. In this case, the real victory was for small government, because repealing the ordinance prevented the city government from gaining more intrusive powers that it did not need and could not afford. The cost of enforcement of this ordinance was calculated to be very high. The State of Missouri already has strong anti-discrimination laws, and so does the City of Springfield. By repealing the ordinance, the city just reverted back to how the law was before the ordinance was passed, which was plenty strong enough.

In talking with some supporters of the ordinance, I used the hypothetical Jewish baker and Hindu customer to make a point. I actually ran across one supporter of the ordinance who

said that Jewish bakers should be forced to bake swastika cakes if Hindu customers ever request them. He then volunteered his rationale as to why he thought this. He said it was to "avoid discrimination." While I completely disagree with his conclusion, I must admit that his rationale was at least consistent. If avoiding discrimination against any customer's unusual or controversial request is the goal of our society, then yes, Jewish bakers should be forced to bake swastika cakes. But I don't agree with him! Why? Because I disagree that avoiding discrimination against any customer's unusual or controversial request should be the goal of our society. Should a black baker be required to bake a Confederate flag cake? Should a Catholic baker be required to bake a cake commemorating the Protestant Reformation?

So I must ask, if in the name of avoiding discrimination, we force Jewish bakers to bake Hindu swastika cakes, are we not committing some other kind of discrimination? What about discrimination against the Jewish baker, who is being forced to do something he finds morally reprehensible? The answer of some in our society would be to simply tell the Jewish baker that if he cannot follow city anti-discrimination codes, then he can no longer do business in our fair city. So now Jews can't do business in our city? For some, that's what it comes down to. It's not the Jewish baker's fault that some German politicians used that symbol to slaughter his people more than half a century ago. Just like it's not the Christian baker's fault that his religion teaches that same-sex marriage is a sin and he/she shouldn't participate in it.

The fact of the matter is, any society that forces Christian bakers to make same-sex wedding cakes, is the same society that forces Jewish bakers to make swastika cakes. The swastika may not mean anything bad to the Hindu couple that requests it, but it may mean something horrible to the Jewish baker who is legally forced to design it. The same goes for the same-sex wedding cake. It may not mean anything bad to the homosexual couple getting married, or the people attending the wedding, but it may mean something horrible to

the Christian baker who is being legally forced to design it. I don't know about you, but I don't want to live in a society that legally forces people to violate their consciences. What becomes of a society when business people are no longer allowed to have a conscience? What are the long-term social effects of this? Perhaps history might hold some answers for us. Maybe somebody ought to look into that.

What is even more troubling is our society's move toward redefining religious liberty. Currently, religious liberty means both "freedom of worship" and "freedom of conscience," but these cases regarding same-sex wedding cakes and other similar matters, are seeking to drop "freedom of conscience" from religious liberty. The idea is to limit religious liberty to just "freedom of worship." What is being said is that we are free to worship however we want, within the four walls of our church buildings, but outside of those four walls, we must conform to the standards and morality that our society and government tell us to conform to. It is, in effect, an attempt to limit God to chapels and cathedrals, but outside of those buildings, God's commandments are "void where prohibited by law."

I think the solution is common sense. If we want to live in a multi-cultural society, than the particular sentiments of each culture must be respected. Jews and Muslims should not be legally forced to handle pork products or

bake swastikas. Christians should not be legally forced to participate in what they believe to be sin, and homosexuals should not be legally forced to agree with any of this. At some point the conscience of everyone has to be respected. In general commerce, discrimination against persons should not be tolerated, whether that be because of race, color, sex, creed, or what they do in their bedrooms. However, business owners should simultaneously not be required to participate in acts they find objectionable to their consciences. In other words, people cannot be discriminated against, but actions that violate conscience can be.

I think that's a reasonable solution for a reasonable society. Sadly, it seems our society and governments are moving in a direction that is becoming increasingly unreasonable, and this I find not only unfortunate, but also potentially dangerous.

FC

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# The False Religion of Marriage Equality

*By David Virtue*

On any scale, and by any reckoning, the speed with which the gay behemoth is rolling over America can only be paralleled by the blitzkrieg of Nazi Germany in World War II.

With a gay population of less than 1.5% of the total population, a small group of wealthy, upwardly mobile, mostly white middle class pansexualists have seduced a nation into believing that their behavior is good and right in the eyes of God (mainline Protestant churches) and the State(s), forcing "gay" marriage on a quiescent nation who have been bullied and cowed into a false compassion for a deadly behavior that has taken the lives globally of more than 30 million men and women.

In the U.S., the figures are staggering despite a huge public relations effort by politically motivated homosexuals to successfully persuade a president and now, most politicians, and not a small number of clergy, to legitimize first a behavior and then a nation into changing the laws that have governed marriage for more than 2000 years.

Even as I write, more than 1.2 million people in the US are living with HIV infection, and almost 1 in 7 (14%) are unaware of their infection. Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM), particularly young black/African American MSM, are most seriously affected by HIV. The CDC estimates that 1,201,100 persons aged 13 years and older are living with HIV infection, including 168,300 (14%) who are unaware of their infection. Over the past decade, the number

of people living with HIV has INCREASED. The pace of new infections continues at far too high a level—particularly among certain groups, reports the CDC. New HIV infections run at about 50,000 a year with MSM continuing to bear the greatest burden of infection. An estimated 13,712 people with an AIDS diagnosis died in 2012, and approximately 658,507 people in the United States with an AIDS diagnosis have died overall. The CDC reports that gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM) of all races and ethnicities remain the population most profoundly affected by HIV.

You won't find these figures in any discussion by those fixated on changing the marriage laws for a very small group of same-sex persons who now wish to marry.

Numerous articles now reveal that same-sex couples in 37 States with legal gay marriage are not rushing to the altar. Plenty of gay couples do not want to marry, and their reasons are as complex — and personal — as any decision to wed.

So why is the Supreme Court even considering addressing a behavior that has no overwhelming interest to the vast majority of Americans, is eschewed by the Roman Catholic Church, the Southern Baptist Convention, the Lutheran Convention-Missouri Synod, the majority of evangelicals, the Mormon Church and most African American churches. These groups rightly say that elevating sexual orientation to



a protected class, or same-sex marriage to a fundamental right, would impede religious liberty.

Religious organizations, public speakers, and scholars concerned about free speech say that those who do not agree with same-sex marriage have been actively silenced or frozen out when it comes to speaking their views. Given the importance of freedom of speech to political and religious minorities, this is especially disturbing, they say. They further argue that not supporting man-woman marriage is not based on animus, nor is it founded on bigotry, hatred, or irrational prejudice. Another name for this is homofascism.

The fact of the matter is that convictions supporting traditional marriage express truths that religious believers and faith communities have held for centuries about the positive value of man-woman marriage. These beliefs PREDATE any conception of homosexuals as a discrete and insular minority, much less same-sex marriage. The notion that traditional marriage laws exist for the purpose of harming gays and lesbians is empirically false.

Opponents of same-sex marriage firmly believe it would have a disastrous impact on religious liberty and stigmatize them as bigots akin to racists. That stigma would impede their full participation in democratic life, as their beliefs concerning marriage, family, and sexuality are placed beyond the constitutional pale. Because religious people cannot renounce their scriptural beliefs, a finding of animus would consign believers to second-class status as citizens, whose doctrines about vital aspects of society are deemed presumptively illegitimate. The misattribution of animus would rob believers and faith communities of their rights to the free exercise of religion, free speech, and democratic participation. Assaults on religious liberty, already under pressure, would intensify.

In short, a constitutional right to same-sex marriage under any theory would generate tensions with religious freedom and related interests across a wide array of religious, educational, charitable, and cultural fronts. Sooner or later, a priest or pastor expressing a Biblical concern from a pulpit for traditional marriage (and by extension



opposing gay marriage) could be arrested, jailed and fined.

Two cases make the point: A 19-year Marine Corps and Navy veteran chaplain was removed from the promotion list and detached for cause (essentially terminated) for privately expressing support for traditional marriage. An Atlanta Fire Chief authored a book in which he briefly stated his religious view that marriage should only be between one man and woman, for which he was suspended and then terminated despite no evidence of discrimination by him while at work.

So how is it that Gay Clark Jennings, President of the House of Deputies of the Episcopal Church, writes an open letter to the Supreme Court linking the necessity for gay marriage to the Doctrine of Discovery as if somehow the two are related!

Her entire spiel is based on ad hominem reasoning. Consider this typical paragraph; "In 35 years of ordained ministry, it has been my

privilege to know many faithful, committed same-sex couples whose love gave me a deeper understanding of God's love and whose joy in one another testified to the goodness of God's creation. I have also learned through simple, everyday experience that same-sex couples make vital contributions to our civic life. They work hard, raise children, volunteer and pay taxes, just like opposite-sex couples. There is no reason that they should not enjoy the same dignity and legal protections." You can read her full letter here: <http://www.religionnews.com/2015/05/05/open-letter-supreme-court-consider-sex-marriage-commentary/>

She does not even address the implications for religious liberty, or a rampant homofascism that has swept over The Episcopal Church (TEC) forcing thousands of orthodox Episcopalians to flee to safer spiritual climes, resulting in the slow withering of the Church she plays a leading role in. This (TEC) has gone ahead and consecrated gay and lesbian bishops

in defiance of the vast majority of Anglicans in the world, singlehandedly tearing apart the fabric of the communion with resolutions and much more.

Carl H. Esbeck is the R.B. Price Professor of Law Emeritus at the University of Missouri recently said this; “The Constitution marks a wiser course--that is, leaving the people free to decide the great marriage debate through their state democratic institutions. Allowing all citizens an equal voice in shaping their common destiny is the only way the diverse views of a highly diverse people can be respected on this matter of political, social, and religious importance. Respect for the principle of equal citizenship and equal participation in the democratic process is the only way that the contemporary controversy over same-sex marriage can

be resolved without inflicting harm on millions of religious believers and their institutions.”

In the end, forcing gay “marriage” on America could provoke hostility to religion, limit free speech and bring about civil disobedience in the face of overt persecution of Christians by the State. Christians, stand up and be counted against this threat.

FC

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# Gay Marriage and Christian Citizenship

*By David Corey*

Fear is rising among committed Christians that the legalization of gay marriage is merely a first step in what will soon become an onslaught of religious restrictions in this country—the removal of Christians from public offices, the dismantling of religious institutions such as faith-based colleges, and, eventually, the requirement that clergy in their own churches perform gay weddings.

Well, I am not so fearful, actually. And I think we have ample resources within Liberalism and Christianity alike to contain this issue.

I use the word “Liberalism” (with a capital “L”) to refer to the longstanding philosophy of politics that predates the United States, inspired our Constitution, and continues to animate virtually all politics in the West today. In this broad sense, “we are all Liberals,” whether we side with “conservatives” or “liberals” in everyday political skirmishes.

Broadly defined, Liberalism is about freedom (*liber* is Latin for free). Liberalism tries to advance and maintain freedom of various kinds, including religious freedom. But herein lies the problem. Freedom comes in many varieties, and these often conflict. In fact, *every* freedom in Liberal regimes is checked by competing freedoms. No freedoms are exempt. Thus, for example, freedom of speech is checked by freedom from unnecessary havoc caused by reckless utterances. Freedom from crime is checked by freedom from undue invasions into our privacy. Freedom to smoke is checked by freedom from unwanted second-hand smoke. All freedoms have limits. None is absolute.

If you think about it, then, the issues arising from gay marriage are new in substance but not in form. They are typical of conflicts surrounding competing freedoms. In this case, the competing freedoms are religious freedom and freedom from discrimination. The first is so fundamental to our regime that it is literally the “first freedom” on our Bill of Rights. But we also cherish—have long cherished—freedom from legal discrimination—from a system that makes invidious distinctions on the basis of accidental traits, such as class, race, gender, and sexual orientation.

Both freedoms are fundamental to America’s character, and there’s no point supposing that one freedom will simply trump the other, even if religious liberty has held a privileged position in our historical documents. Let’s therefore try to transcend the vitriol attached to both sides of the conflict over gay marriage. When we do, we find ourselves confronted with a difficult political question. That question is not which freedom ought to “win”—freedom of religion or freedom from discrimination—but rather where the boundaries should be drawn between freedoms that are both desirable and yet naturally limit each other. How should we as Americans choose to harmonize the competing claims that these freedoms entail?

If the real question concerns the boundaries of these competing freedoms, then the problem with the way this issue has been handled by homosexual and Christian apologists alike, is that it’s been treated as a simple moral question. Either you are for gay marriage or you are against it. One’s political stand is then a mere projection of one’s moral position. But the question is more complicated than that. It is by nature civic, not merely moral; and this has implications for how it should be approached and finally resolved.

Civic questions are, interestingly, not answerable by individuals reflecting privately on their own moral beliefs. They are answerable only by the collection of people who make up a *civitas* (a political community). In other words, while I as an individual am perfectly capable of resolving the question, “what do I think of gay marriage?” I am not capable of resolving the question, “what should we do to solve the tensions between this freedom and other, competing freedoms?” That is something only the parties to the conflict as a whole can determine.

Of course the Supreme Court can rule on issues like this and pretend to have solved them once and for all. But in fact courts do not “solve” such conflicts. At best, they issue artificial rulings in the hope of stating what “we citizens ourselves” would eventually work out with respect to the boundaries of our freedoms. The Court can also educate



through its rulings, but there are limits to this. If *Roe v. Wade* taught us anything, it is that some beliefs are so closely held that they cannot be “educated away” by the Court.

The problem then is that Christian activists and Gay-rights activists have both tended to see only one question, when in fact there are two. The question both sides see is whether gay marriage is good or bad, moral or immoral, right or wrong. But that is not the ultimate question from a civic point of view. The ultimate question is, again, how we as citizens should live together in a polity that exhibits diverse (and deeply held) answers to the moral issues at hand.

On this point, I would like to make a few observations about how such conflicts have been successfully negotiated in the past. Both from the standpoint of Liberalism and the Christian tradition, we have powerful resources to fall back on.

First, the way gay activists have been ferreting out Christian business owners and humiliating them in the public eye is a prime example of bad citizenship. For, unlike the historic case of businesses that refused to serve African Americans prior to civil rights legislation—an analogy that is often, but facilely drawn—Christian citizens have longstanding *religious* reasons to be uneasy with some (though not all) business transactions with gay couples. The reason is that in Christian teaching, homosexuality is a sin; marriage is a sacrament; and weddings are communal celebrations that commit the celebrants to what is being celebrated.

This trio of facts puts many Christians in a terribly awkward position when they are asked to contribute to a gay wedding, either by providing flowers, or taking photos, or baking cakes. The situation is much more awkward than merely doing business with homosexual and heterosexual couples alike, which ought (in my view) to be routine. But for gay activists to take advantage of the awkward position in which many

sincere Christians find themselves is simply a failure of good will and good citizenship.

Moreover, when this attempt at humiliating Christian business owners extends to death threats (as it has), it’s also an example of criminality. No one who knows what it feels like to be discriminated against should have any truck with such conduct. It’s a violation of the Liberal “civil relationship” which, for better or worse, can be boiled down to the principle that we have no right to harm people (no matter how much we dislike their beliefs and practices),



so long as they do no *tangible* harm to others. Holding unwelcome views is not a tangible harm.

But the terms of civic fairness cut both ways. Christians who believe that homosexuality in general and gay marriage in particular are terrible sins have no right to insist that civic institutions reflect such beliefs. The criterion of public morality is not what apostolic teaching maintains, but rather what “we” who mutually inhabit this community deem appropriate “for us.” Anything less would not only be a violation of fairness, it would be a reversal of the hard-won policies of toleration that emerged after the civil-and-religious wars of the 17<sup>th</sup> century

and which constitute the groundwork for freedom (including religious freedom) in the West.

And there is strong support in the Christian tradition for the settlement that undergirds Liberal regimes. Christ calls us to render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s, thereby instituting a delicate but necessary arrangement in which Christians participate in civic life while orienting their souls toward God.

The great theologian St. Augustine championed this delicate balance when he argued that Christians live in two cities at one and the same time: the City of God and the City of Man. And he was convinced, based on St. Paul’s testimony in Romans 13, that civic obedience is *obligatory* for Christians, even when living in a sinful regime.

So too with the Reformation theologian (and one-time Augustinian monk) Martin Luther; in fact, Luther pressed the point further: Insofar as civic offices need to be filled, Christians should feel fine about filling them, since *somebody* has to. Even the office of “Executioner” could be filled—despite the fact that Christians *as Christians* ought not kill—because a Christian executioner acts on public authority, not his own, when he executes a death sentence.

The challenge, then, for Christians who accept this longstanding tradition is to preserve our souls while living and participating in a regime that is not, in many respects, Christian. The challenge is to orient our commitments correctly so that the kingdom of God comes first in our loves and attachments, rather than the kingdom of man. The goal is not to transform the kingdom of man into the kingdom of God (which is futile and dangerous). Nor is it to make civic participation conditional upon a Christian litmus test: “I’ll participate only insofar as I think our laws are ‘Christian.’” Neither Christ nor Paul nor Augustine nor Luther—each of whom spoke wisely on this matter—says any





such thing.

To this extent, I am tempted to rehabilitate a classic argument from St. Augustine. When it comes to citizenship, Christians ought to outstrip even the most ardent secular citizens by a wide margin in trying to bring about civic peace and order. We should be leaders in striving for a *modus vivendi* by which, in this case, homosexual citizens and others can live in peace.

Of course, some very tough issues need to be addressed. And these are not all going to go our way. It may be that some Christians will want to resign from offices like “Justice of the Peace” rather than officiate over gay marriages. I happen to think—*theologically speaking*—that such resignations are unnecessary, because a Justice of the Peace who officiates at a gay wedding (whether he happens to be Christian or not) is not participating in a Christian ceremony, but a secular one. Marriage predates Christianity by millennia, incidentally. This is analogous to the distinction Luther had in mind when he argued that Christians could in good faith be executioners, even though Christians *qua* Christians should not kill. Nevertheless, Christians who do not already occupy such positions may understandably decline to seek them. This is a likely effect of the changes underway.

But what about those frightening scenarios with which I began? Won’t the gay activists fight on until religious schools are coerced into doing things that go against their basic doctrines? For instance, will religious schools have to treat same-sex faculty marriages as identical to heterosexual marriages when it comes to hiring, housing, and benefits?

Here’s where I think some calm political analysis goes a long way. The supporters of gay marriage are a radically diverse and fragile coalition of people. They are persuaded

that gay marriage doesn’t hurt anyone in a politically relevant sense; they’re for freedom from discrimination. But the same coalition does *not* exist when it comes to depriving religious schools of their longstanding legal rights. There are, of course, extremists who might wish to destroy all vestiges of Christian belief and practice, but they do not have the numbers to win—not even close. (This despite their overrepresentation in the press.) One must analyze these issues case-by-case, and understand how different issues generate different coalitions of support and resistance.

Of course, for many Christians today, this isn’t good enough. It’s too messy and “compromising.” Their view is that America is a Christian nation, and when that ceases to be the case, we’re all in trouble. At its extreme this view implies that Christians cannot or should not live in a culture that permits biblically forbidden practices.

But this view is naïve. Not only *can* we live in such a culture, we always have. Adultery is sinful but legal. Coveting wealth is sinful but legal. Hatred of neighbors is sinful but legal. There has never been a time when politics was insulated from sin, and the best theologians have always known this. Except where the sins of our culture directly imperil our personal salvation, we are obliged to participate at least minimally in citizenship: to render unto Caesar; to obey the authorities; and, where possible, to contribute to the cause of civic peace and order.

Of course this raises the question: at what point do the sins of a culture directly imperil the personal salvation of Christian citizens? It’s a valid question, but not as hard to answer as we sometimes seem to think. I won’t rehearse here the fundamental requirements of salvation articulated in scripture. They’re not really “requirements” after all, so much as qualities that flow naturally from properly ordered loves. But it’s hard for me to see how the waning of Christian values in our public culture necessarily imperils the salvation of committed Christians who continue to believe and practice their faith in their private communities and, wherever possible, in public as well. Christians have managed to thrive in cultures *much* more iniquitous than ours. Our salvation is not being snatched away from us. And, frankly, I don’t believe it *can* be, by the acts of legislatures or courts.

Nevertheless, we must prepare ourselves for the fact that the Judeo-Christian culture that was so dominant at the time of our Founding is indeed dissolving all around us; and it will continue to do so. It will never die out completely, but it will certainly become less politically relevant. And to that extent we can expect to see all kinds of changes in our laws and our public morality. Moral laws don’t do much at the end of the day. The philosopher Plato saw the paradox of moral laws: a good society doesn’t need them; a bad society can’t be helped by them. Law, even “constitutional law” is not going to prevent America from changing.

But as I’ve tried to suggest here, we are a long, long way from witnessing the dismantling of religious liberty. The issue of gay marriage in civic life is an issue that has found its moment. That is, in part, because it emerges from a solid American tradition of equality before the law that is attractive to many people on the right and left. The same support is not there when it comes to persecuting

Christians and regulating their private institutions.

We live in an age of extremism, or at least an age in which extremism gets all the press. But extremism leads to a bad political end. That's the hard-won lesson we Christians learned from the English Civil War, in which an unconscionable amount of bloodletting took place before Christians of all stripes reached the conclusion that endless bloodshed is a waste of time. The wise truce that emerged from that horrible event was that politics and religion ought to be kept largely (though not perfectly) separate to such an extent that battles between ultimate principles can be avoided, and peace can be maintained.

This truce is too valuable to lose, and yet it needs to be renewed by successive generations. Today we can say: Christians aren't going away, and

neither are gay citizens. Thus we have to think about the end game here. It's no good clinging to unrealistic visions of how one side or the other will achieve ultimate victory.

We will never awake one day in the future to tell our grandchildren a story like this: "Once, long ago, there were gay people who wanted to get married; and this put our whole nation on a slippery slope toward perdition and anti-religious spectacle. But *we stopped them!* We blocked the legalization of gay marriage and now we're all going to be okay." No such story will ever come true, and neither will the equally absurd story on the Left that posits the final removal of Judeo-Christian values from our polity.

So what should we do? The answer is that we—both sides—should abandon the winner-take-all logic that has driven so much of our civic debate, and

embrace the hard work of finding the right boundaries to this set of competing freedoms. It's the work of Christian charity and responsibility toward the state, in my view; so we should be taking the lead in this. We begin by "witnessing," by showing the culture what a charity-based understanding of politics entails. We then—or rather, at the same time—demonstrate what Christianity uniquely has to offer to a secular society obsessed with identity politics and the pursuit of material goods: namely, that the permanent things emerge from love, not power; and the ultimate goods are not of this world.



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## Thinking Out Loud

### *Bill Murchison on Religious Freedom*

The narrative is familiar enough: depressingly so. A baker or a florist declines, out of religious conviction, to service a gay wedding. Down comes the state, in wrath, claiming the right to punish discrimination against a protected class of citizens. The unprotected class of citizen, by contrast, finds no relief from the state's self-imposed duty to uphold and, by implication, encourage same-sex marriage.

The irony is an odd one. It would have seemed strange at least, if not incomprehensible, to previous generations of Americans, primed not only to believe in man-woman marriage as normative but also to suppose that religious conviction in basic matters like marriage held sway over variant opinions. God was on the believer's side, in other words.

That used to take care of things. It no longer does. Same-sex occupations trump – with a bang – the right to see those occupations as contrary to the will of God. All this, with the nation at least evenly divided, according to polls, over the suitability and morality of the

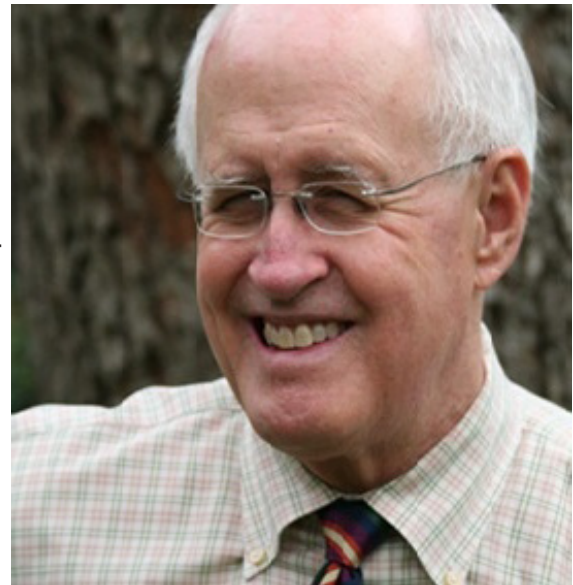
same-sex relationship.

Something has changed. What?

What I think – what I fear – has changed is the emptying out of our civic sensibility supply. It would be a mistake to posit that, once upon a time, in the Land of Make Believe, we all respected each other's convictions to the max, making room for divergences of viewpoint, differences of opinion.

The fallen nature of humanity argues otherwise. We retain some intuition, nonetheless, that freedom of religion, in the United States of America, accorded religious believers some measure of tolerance and protection. No ideology overrode, in constitutional terms, the conviction that, differ as we might on the finer points of religion, we were a people committed in general terms to the dispensations of God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.

We know this commitment no longer to be so general. The ideology of



personal expression has crowded aside the idea that God's preferences, spoken and imputed, deserve deference. The ideology of personal expression took in mostly the male-female relationship but now embraces the male-male relationship, the female-female relationship and everything else, apparently, in between.

I do not suppose, in this place, that



the normative nature of the male-female relationship, most of all in the context of marriage, needs exposition. The right of the religious to insist on that relationship as part of religious duty is the issue at hand. Society's more vocal elements have decided no such duty deserves governmental respect.

Has there been a debate on the matter? By no means: setting apart, to be sure, the debate before federal judges who have elected to impose their personal view of the matter on the whole of society. Something to notice about that particular "debate" is the exclusion from it of the religious viewpoint that formerly prevailed respecting male-female marriage. You don't bring before the federal courts these days ideas based on religious understanding. To do so would violate "separation of church and state," or such like. Our oldtime civic undertaking to obey the Lord in all things is a dead letter – the consequence of fast-growing indifference, or actual hostility, toward the historic idea of man and woman as divinely created, not to mention divinely obligated.

Such an assumption underlay all our civic relationships. It required no articulation. You didn't have to come to federal court and say, look, your Honor, the male-female family works. It does, of course, in most cases, despite the rise of divorce and the pursuit known as shacking-up. But its utility, its benefit to society, wasn't the main point. The main point was, male-female marriage agrees with the Order of Things – the way things are, never mind what ideological pressure groups may aver.

Judge Richard Epstein, a Reagan appointee to the federal bench, was particularly, and disagreeably, harsh in lecturing defenders of a same-sex ban on their failure to see the civil

rights case made by proponents of same-sex marriage. Epstein would have cold-stared out of the courtroom any lawyer who tried to defend the same-sex ban on religious grounds, the grounds that once were part and parcel of the way we once understood marriage. No, no – these days it's utilitarianism all the way: what's useful and fair and right. Depriving same-sex couples of marital rights isn't useful; it isn't fair; it isn't right. Anybody who says otherwise – you're on another planet!

Maybe in a sense we are. The planet we presently inhabit doesn't feel like the one on which most of us grew up. The dynamics have shifted; the gravity; the whole terrain. What's all this about bakers and florists objecting on religious grounds to same-sex marriage? Don't they know, don't they understand that we no longer officially care about such things? Let 'em get with the program – the new program – or betake themselves to another clime. Such is the choice society, so-called, is fixing up for presentation to disfavored dissenters.

It is no fun for the religious to live and move and have their being on such terms. The oddity of the case is, what a chance to make the case for the view of God as in command and control of human destinies, never mind the contempt visited on Him by the ideologues.

The present state of affairs could be a gift from Him. A challenge, yes; a predicament to be faced and overcome. Gifts come in odd sizes and packages. We should never discount the value of this one.

FC

*Bill Murchison is an author and journalist, he lives in Dallas.*

## Can We Talk About Sex?

*By Fr. Gene Geromel*

I suspect that your first thought in reading that title is: "That's all we talk about in America". Nearly half of our children are born out of wedlock. The majority of our young people live together outside Holy Matrimony. Many of our retirees do the same thing. College students and others "hook up". No commitment required.

In fact, sex is so casual and prevalent that we naturally assume that we feel very positively about sex. I would like to suggest to you that the opposite is true. Most of you would agree that the sexual morals of America are not Christian but I would like to suggest to you that our culture's view of sex is not only antithetical to Christianity, but negative in the extreme.

What are the words that we use when someone is mistreated at work? What are the words we use when we don't like something? When someone gets into trouble at work we hear, "Boy his really boss f\*\*\*\*\* him over." If you get cheated by a business you will hear, "They really scr\*\*\*\*\* me". Then there is the ubiquitous word which applies to all things negative. "That S\*\*\*\*\*". I have heard these words (well,

not the F bomb, but all the others) as part of polite society. Perhaps you have even heard them among church members?

These are all sexual words. This suggests that, as a culture, we must hold sex in disdain. Have you ever heard them used in a positive manner? I cannot think of an instance. Yet, is sex to be viewed negatively?

In the classic movie, *Pimpernel Smith*, the hero corrects a rather priggish school teacher who objected when he said a statue represented the Greek Goddess of love. In fact, she started to take the children away. Then he stated she was the Goddess of "lawful wedded bliss," upon which she and her group remained to view the naked Venus.

This whole movie, in fact, shows two perspectives of sex: The Christian view and the view of the so-called liberated world, as represented by the Nazis. One sees sex as an act of love and commitment, the seal on the union of Holy Matrimony. The other sees it as coarse, lewd and exploitive. It might be pushing it to suggest that the hero's view was a Christian one but it certainly dealt with commitment and wedded bliss. Certainly the Nazi view, as depicted in



the movie by rather brutal and pagan paintings on the walls, was selfish and even, in a sense, "sexless". There is neither beauty nor joy, not even sensuality. It's the furthest thing from "sexy". Kardashian modes of dressing, and their reverse, come to mind.

It is important that we have some understanding what Christians believe about sex.

In Genesis we are told that, after God created everything, he said it was good. When he looked at the entire creation, he said it was very good. Therefore, everything he created, including sex, is good. Male and female created He them. In the eye of God all things are good. That includes sex. It is a gift of God which is to be celebrated.

We do know, however, that the

Christian understanding of sex does have a down side as far as the world is concerned. In fact, the Church is under attack because of these beliefs. Politically, we are entering perilous times. Adam and Eve were the first married couple. They had everything. Then they blew it. Immediately, they noticed that they were naked and felt ashamed. There are certain ramifications in this story concerning a certain level of discomfort about sex. It is not as if our first parents were contaminated by their culture to view sex negatively – something Christianity is constantly blamed for.

There were times in the Church's history when some movements considered sex and all material things bad. There were the Gnostics, the Manicheans and Jansenists to name a

few. Although they were all condemned as heresies, some of their attitudes seeped into the religious culture. Nevertheless, the Church officially condemned those heresies. What does that tell you? The Incarnation reminds us that all God's creation is good if used as God ordained. In fact, countless studies indicate that married women of faith have a much higher level of satisfaction when it comes to marital relations than non-religious women.

There is one other thing which occurred after The Fall and the expulsion from the Garden. Just as God placed the limits of the sea so he placed limits of marriage. It was to be monogamous. I know, your children and grandchildren are being taught that this was a patriarchal conspiracy. But study it closely and you will find that it really and truly was, and is, a protection of women. It's the very opposite of a get-out-of-jail-free card for men who want to play the field and have no responsibility.

St. Augustine once wrote that he had led an evil life and then chose a good life. He found the good life to be more fun. The closer we live to the way God intended the happier we will be. Anglicans have traditionally been Incarnationalist. That means we see God's power and grace as being present in all of matter and life. When used properly, all that God has created is good. My hope is that after reading this the next time you hear young people use the above mentioned words you will look over your glasses and say, "Young man, it is obvious that you hold a negative view of sex. I hope someday you will meet Christ and discover just how wonderful sex can be!"

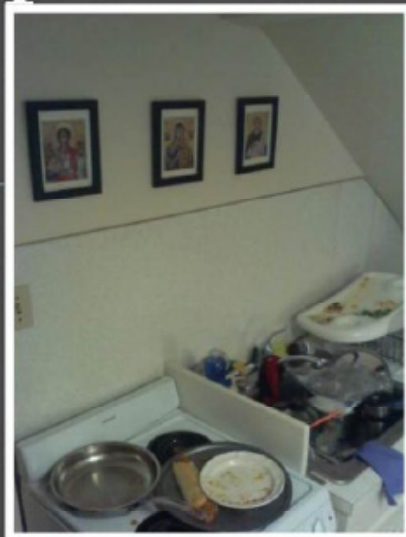
Or if you're like me, you could say, "My dear young sir, you obviously hold a Manichean, Jansenist, Gnostic view of being and sheing. I hope someday you will become a Christian and discover what a joy sex really is."

FC

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# ✝ Family Spirituality



By Fr. Gene Geromel, SSC Ph.D.

*Fr. Gene Geromel is Rector of St. Batholomew's Anglican Church, Swartz Creek, Michigan.*

# Parish Highlight

## *St. Luke's Anglican Church, Richmond, Virginia*

Originally founded by an act of the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1772, under a charter granted by the English Crown, the church today known as St. Luke's Anglican, was first known as Manchester Parish. "Manchester", since the area south of the James River and Richmond proper was known as Manchester, Virginia, until 1910, when it merged with Richmond. Between the founding of the parish and the late 19th century, the church was located at Decatur and 12th streets in Manchester, and had come to be known as Meade Memorial Church. Near the end of the 1800's, the parish name changed to St. Luke's and, in 1929, St. Luke's moved to the corner of Bainbridge and Cowardin, in southside Richmond.

One of the original parishes of the Episcopal Church USA in 1789, St. Luke's had determined by 1990 that it could no longer abide doctrinal differences with ECUSA, and withdrew from the Diocese of Southern Virginia. A legal battle ensued over ownership of the property, the outcome being that of its purchase by the members of St. Luke's. As the cost of upkeep for such a large old building was too much for the numerically dwindling parish, the property was sold in 1996. St. Luke's met in numerous locations until buying the current property (from St. Mary's Episcopal, Goochland) and building a church on the same in 2000, in Manakin-Sabot, Virginia, in Goochland County, just west of Route 288.

The congregation would continue here until 2009, when regular services were suspended due to a clergy shortage and shrinking membership. In the interim, until St. Luke's reopening in 2011, the remaining parishioners were under the care of St. Athanasius Anglican Church in Glen Allen, Virginia. In June 2011, St. Luke's was reopened, under the cure of Reverend Father Jonathan Cook. In May of 2012, St. Luke's joined Forward in Faith North America, and its newly formed Missionary Diocese of All Saints, a non-geographic diocese in the



Archdiocese of the Anglican Church in North America.

Since that time, St. Luke's has been blessed, by God's grace, to grow in membership and serves people of all ages. In 2013, our former Senior Warden, Charles "Chuck" Arturo, entered Holy Orders, being ordained to the Diaconate. Father Deacon and Mrs. Arturo have been a faithful gift to St. Luke's, both during hard times and through the church's present rebirth, providing a clergy presence "in theatre" to both keep Father up to date on the needs of parishioners, and working with our current Senior Warden/Reader, to ensure divine worship continues on a regular basis.

Liturgically, we are a traditional Anglo-Catholic church, using a version of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer as found in the Anglican Missal. The altar is set in the traditional manner, against the wall, so that both priest and faithful face the same direction, with focus on the altar and the Holy Mysteries made present there. We have a special devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham, and are fortunate to have a shrine dedicated to Her honor at the rear of the nave, complete with a replica of the statue found in Her actual shrine in England. Our clergy participate in the annual National March for Life, and

in Anglicans for Life. To this end, Mass is offered for the "souls of those born and unborn." Father Cook, a military veteran himself, also offers each Mass for the benefit of "our soldiers and sailors serving in harm's way." As a ministry of Father's membership in a Franciscan Order, we have a "Blessing of the Animals" each autumn, and in keeping with Our Lord's admonition to "feed my sheep", we participate in a local food bank ministry to help assist those in need.

Christ is in our midst. Come and see!



*Sunday Mass is at 10.00 am. Visit us online at [www.stlukesrichmond.org](http://www.stlukesrichmond.org). Email: [stlukesvamdass@gmail.com](mailto:stlukesvamdass@gmail.com). and [revfrjoncook@gmail.com](mailto:revfrjoncook@gmail.com). St. Luke's is situated at 555 River Road West, Manakin-Sabot, Va, 23103.*

# A Society in Growth and Transition

*David Lewis reports on the Society of King Charles the Martyr*

The above headline could easily refer to trends in Western secular and religious society. However, this article is about one of the devotional societies that arose from the Oxford Movement, the Society of King Charles the Martyr (although much of what is said may apply to the other societies as well).

Wikipedia reminds us that, “Each of these (devotional) societies champions one aspect of Ritualism and Anglican doctrine which otherwise is not emphasized by the Anglican Churches as a whole. Mostly, these are groups or organisations that are part of the High Church or Anglo-Catholic movement, and are considered conservative or orthodox.” Best known are the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, the Guild of All Souls, the Society of Mary – and the Society of King Charles the Martyr (SKCM).

Founded in 1894, the SKCM prays for the Anglican Communion, promotes a wide observance of 30 January (Royal Martyr Day) of 1649, seeks to win general recognition of the great debt owed to Charles Stuart in defending the Church, her episcopal government, and apostolic ministry. The society also works for the reinstatement of the Feast of King Charles the Martyr throughout the Anglican world, and encourages efforts to build and equip churches and erect shrines dedicated to Saint Charles. Logically, many of our members also have monarchist interests.

We’re all aware of the recent and current big picture shifts in Anglicanism. One of them has been a movement toward one of the externals sought by the Oxford Movement: Eucharistic centrality. Another has been a large expansion in the Evangelical-leaning Global South. However, especially in North America and the UK, major Anglican bodies have moved away from the previously settled content of Catholicity and Evangelical teaching, per such proximate issues as women’s ordination and same-sex unions. This atmosphere has resulted in many Anglo-Catholics (and Evangelicals) moving from the historic Anglican Churches into the “continuing” churches, the Anglican Church in North America, and most recently the Ordinariate movement to reunite with Rome. Given our Anglo-Catholic origins, these shifts have naturally carried over into the devotional societies.

Today, the SKCM’s 365 American Region members are 60% Episcopalians, Canadian Anglicans or similar, while 21% are ACNA or Continuing Churchmen, 8% are Roman Catholics of various types, 3% are Eastern Orthodox, 2% are various others, and the affiliation of 3% is unknown. Over the last few years, our new members have been a bit less likely to come from PECUSA while more likely to come from Anglicans outside the Communion and from Roman Catholics. Last year, our net growth was a very healthy 10%. I sense that the other devotional societies may be experiencing some similar diversity, although ours may be the most dramatic for a particular reason.

Unlike the other devotional societies, most of the SKCM’s

members (at least in the American Region) are at-large rather than vetted and associated through local units. In fact, only 28% are in local churches which have two or more SKCM members. Thus, while the focus of leadership and activity in the other societies is at the local level, for us that leadership must be national in scope.

For the SKCM there is another major factor to be added to this mix of a shifting membership and most members not being in local units: an evolving leadership structure. Until a half dozen years ago, the SKCM-AR (American Region) did not have a collective leadership but was blessed in having individuals who moved the Society along, often aided by other individuals. We incorporated in 2008 and began a transition – normal for any organization at this point in its development – to a collective leadership. This means that today the 11 members of the Board of Trustees are taking on increasing responsibilities in such areas as the Annual Mass & Luncheon, membership growth, development, publications, information technology, goods fulfillment, awards, and general administration. We’ve augmented our semiannual SKCM News magazine with a monthly email Communique, continued to upgrade our website, connected our PayPal account to our website (greatly facilitating membership growth, I must add), sponsored a Facebook discussion group, and begun a multifaceted enhancement of our planned giving and membership development work including forming more chapters. Yes, there is a lot on our plate.

What does the individual member experience in this changing environment? Our two publications are published regularly and our Facebook group does its thing, with members contributing. Some churches have annual Caroline commemorations around Royal Martyr Day; we have an Annual Mass and Luncheon each year at a different parish in the US, usually but now not always at an Episcopal church. Annual dues remain low, at \$15, with the Annual Mass being funded through generous membership contributions.

What of the future? As a friend who is not a member (yet) and watches us, recently observed, “the SKCM is successfully becoming a multi-jurisdictional society.” How do we do that? We simply retain the ethos from whence we came and carefully keep our eye on the prize: devotion to the Royal Martyr and his contributions. We learn and pray. We nurture and grow. Thus we remember.

FC

*David Lewis, FAAO, of Arlington, VA is Secretary-Treasurer of the Society of King Charles the Martyr, American Region ([www.skcm-usa.org](http://www.skcm-usa.org)).*



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