

# Lifespan

*“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,  
and before you were born I consecrated you.”* Jeremiah 1:5

## 2017 Third Quarter

### Worldwide News... [Source: SPUC]

**Canada**—The culture of death continues to grow exponentially at an alarming rate. Now, Canadians who disavow gender theory will be charged with hate crimes, fined and potentially jailed as the result of the passage of a new Senate bill (C-16) that adds gender expression and gender identity to the nation’s Human Rights Code. The totalitarian nature of the LGBTQ lobby is filtering throughout every level of government to its highest level. In Ontario, Bill 89 was recently passed by a vote of 63-23. The legislation allows government agencies to seize children from Christian parents who oppose the LGBT agenda. Furthermore, it effectively bans couples that disagree with that agenda from fostering or adopting children. George Orwell’s 1984 has found its expression in Canada of today and it should serve as warning to us in the states for what awaits us if we continue to allow the left to control government and educational institutions. Additionally, Canada is considering explicitly creating eligibility for Patient Assisted Suicide (PAS) and euthanasia to those suffering from mental illnesses. In December, the government tasked the Council of Canadian Academies with conducting a review of several issues related to the law—whether regulations should be relaxed so as to allow for advance requests for PAS and euthanasia, whether minors should be eligible, and whether those suffering from mental illnesses should be eligible. The Council is expected to report back to Parliament by the end of 2018 with its recommendations.

**Ireland**—The debate over the legalization of abortion continues to rage in this predominately Catholic nation. Recently, the Irish Citizens Assembly, a committee formed to advise on potential reversal of the 8th Amendment, voted in favor of legalization of abortion on demand. The so-called impartial advisory panel included an abortionist and other activists. The panel was so extreme that it proposed that abortion should even be allowed on the grounds of poverty. Fortunately, the recommendation of the committee has no binding power even if the government were to agree. The matter must be put to a vote by way of a national referendum. The vote is expected within the next year. That said, the Irish people continue to elect left leaning leaders, a trend that will not bode well for the future. Ireland’s governing Fine Gael party has elected an open homosexual, Leo Varadkar, as its new leader—the youngest and first-ever “gay” man to hold the job in the Catholic nation. According to the British Independent, Varadkar, 38, is expected to be voted in as prime minister when parliament reconvenes on June 13.

**Sweden**—A Swedish midwife who has fought for years not to be required to participate in abortions as part of her job lost her case at the Swedish Labour Court of Appeal. To overturn the ruling, her case will need to go before the European Court of Human Rights. Ellinor Grimmark, a Christian, had originally been offered a job at Höglandssjukhuset women’s clinic in Eksjö, southern Sweden after completing an internship there in 2013. But after she stated that she was unwilling to participate in abortions, the job offer was rescinded. Two other maternity centers also rejected her, based upon her pro-life convictions. She sued in local court, and although the court determined Grimmark’s rights had been violated, it ultimately ruled against her in 2015 because maternity centers have a “duty to ensure that women have effective access to abortion.” Grimmark was ordered to pay the local government’s legal fees, which were more than SKr 1m (over \$100,000 USD).

**Malta**—Recently leaked documents from the Knights of Malta reveal that the decision of the order to distribute condoms was linked to a high-ranking staff member in the Order’s charitable arm who cited Pope Francis to justify distributing condoms in poor countries. In an email dated November 14, 2013, Birke Herzbruch, who worked for Malteser International (MI) as a representative to Myanmar, defended the use of condoms to her superior. *“I cannot believe that HQ [headquarters] is so resistant as not to see the writings on the wall of the new pope who publicly stated that condoms are permissible when it comes to HIV prevention. Why should Malteser be more catholic than the Holy Mother Church itself,”* she wrote in an email to Maren Paech, Malteser International’s Country Group Manager for Myanmar/Thailand. The communication was made eight months after Francis’ election as Pope.

**United Kingdom**—A UK judge ruled that it is in a child’s best interest to “die with dignity” rather than to allow his parents to seek additional medical treatment. Charlie, the eight-month old baby son of Connie Yates and Chris Gard, suffers from mitochondrial depletion syndrome, which degenerates his muscles. It is extremely rare, with an estimated 20 cases worldwide. Charlie’s parents raised sufficient funds through a GoFundMe account to obtain medical treatment in the U.S. To make the trip, the baby would need to remain on life support. Incredibly, the judge, however, decided that it is in the “best interest of the child” to withdraw his feeding tube and breathing machine, essentially sentencing Charlie to death. The rights of parents when it comes to their own child exists no more. Whether it be life and death or the way in which children are raised, the government has asserted its supremacy. Further evidence of this is the recent decision that British children starting in nursery school should be taught to accept as normal all LGBT persons and relationships, according to a motion the National Union of Teachers endorsed at their annual general meeting in Cardiff. The British government is already committed to making sex and relationship education compulsory at all levels. Children at the nursery school level will learn that same-sex parenting is normal and be instructed to spot and avoid inappropriate touching. Seven-year-olds will learn, on the other hand, that masturbation is appropriate touching.

## National News... [Source: SPUC]

**Alabama**—On June 3rd, Gov. Kay Ivey signed the Alabama Child Placing Agency Inclusion Act, a bill that protects faith-based adoption agencies from being forced to place children with same-sex couples. The bill passed in the House by a vote of 60-14 and the Senate by a vote of 23-9. All Senate Democrats and one Republican, Sen. Steve Livingston of District 8, voted against it. The bill would prohibit the state from refusing to license or otherwise discriminate or take an adverse action against any child placing agency that is licensed by or required to be licensed by the state for child placing services on the basis that the child placing agency declines to make, provide, facilitate, or refer for a placement in a manner that conflicts with, or under circumstances that conflict with, the sincerely held religious beliefs of the child placing agency.

**Florida**—The Christian religious liberty defense group Liberty Counsel sent a demand letter to the Hillsborough County Public Schools to protest a lesbian activist teacher who allegedly banned some of her students from wearing Christian jewelry and turned her classroom into an intolerant, pro-LGBTQ propaganda zone. Lora Jane Riedas, a math teacher at Riverview High School in Tampa, placed LGBT “rainbow” stickers on her students’ notebooks and decorated her classroom with décor that “blatantly promotes a pro-LGBT agenda.”

**Illinois**—A federal appeals court ruled Tuesday that Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which bans discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, and national origin, also covers homosexuality. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit, which handles cases in Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin, decided 8-3 that discrimination on the basis of “sex” also means discrimination on the basis of “sexual orientation.” The ruling is significant because it recognizes special protections for LGBTQ status in existing law, making gay activists’ attempts to create LGBTQ anti-discrimination laws unnecessary.

In other news, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services has instituted sweeping changes to its policies and procedures in caring for children who experience gender dysphoria that essentially weed out all employees and volunteers who cannot in good conscience support and promote transgender ideology. Illinois now “requires that all LGBTQ children and youth be placed in an affirming safe housing, receive LGBTQ competent medical and mental health services, and have equal opportunity and access to care.”

**Iowa**—In a major win for the pro-life cause, Gov. Terry Brabstad signed the state budget that denied over \$400,000 in funds to Planned Parenthood, redirecting patients instead to other federally qualified community health facilities. The \$1.77 billion health and social service budget was passed by a Republican majority and by the state Senate in a 28-21 vote along party lines. The success came with a price, however. The state had to reject \$3 million in federal Medicaid funding for other services just for the privilege of blocking family-planning dollars from going to facilities that provide abortion care. Within weeks of the passage of the budget, Planned Parenthood announced the closing of 4 of its 12 centers in the state. Also, a 20 week abortion ban that would prohibit most abortions has passed the state senate. Senate file 471 was ap-

proved 32-19, sending it to the Iowa House, where it faces an uncertain future. All 29 Republicans voted for the ban, joined by two Democrats and one independent. If the measure is signed into law, Iowa will join a dozen other states that restrict abortion at 20 weeks.

**Kentucky**—The Kentucky Court of Appeals upheld a previous court victory for a Christian who in 2012 declined to make a t-shirt for the Lexington homosexual “Pride Festival,” saying to do so would violate his faith. Blaine Adamson’s Lexington-based company, Hands On Originals Christian Outfitters, offers “high quality, customized Christian apparel,” according to its website. “The right of free speech does not guarantee to any person the right to use someone else’s property,” wrote Appeals Court Chief Judge Joy Kramer.

**Missouri**—In February, the city of St. Louis passed Ordinance 70459, which criminalizes “discrimination” against those who have had abortions or are planning an abortion, and against those who advocate for “reproductive health.” Although essentially restricted to real estate transactions, it creates a protected class for abortion providers under the law. Under the ordinance, a landlord or property owner will be forced to rent or sell space to an abortion clinic or face penalties under the law. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. Louis, led by the Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson, called the passage of the ordinance a “terrible moment” for the city, saying, “*As a city resident and the leader of the oldest organized religion in the region, I am outraged that the City of St. Louis Board of Aldermen has now enshrined into law an ordinance which creates a ‘sanctuary’ for the despicable practice of abortion.*”

**New Mexico**—New Mexico has become the sixth state to criminalize any professional counseling that helps minors overcome unwanted feelings of same-sex attraction. Republican Gov. Susana Martinez signed SB-121 into law in April. The law bans doctors, nurses, and licensed therapists from any attempt to talk to clients about recovering from same sex attraction. The ban also applies to the treatment of gender dysphoria.

**North Carolina**—Four statehouse legislators have proposed House Bill 780, the Uphold Historical Marriage Act, to restore the state’s constitutional ban on homosexual “marriage” and make gay “marriages” illegal. HB-780 explicitly says the U.S. Supreme Court “overstepped its constitutional bounds” in the Obergefell decision and the high court’s ruling is “null and void in the State of North Carolina.” Bill 780 states that “the State of North Carolina shall henceforth uphold and enforce Section 6 of Article XIV of the North Carolina Constitution.” That section was amended in 2012 to explicitly say “Marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this State.” North Carolina voters approved the 2012 pro-marriage amendment 61 percent to 39 percent.

**Oklahoma**—Miracle Foster allowed her daughter to attend a school educational field trip only to find that upon her return, her daughter had a three-year chemical contraceptive implant inserted in her arm. Youth Services of Tulsa hosts an annual sex-ed class at the high school Foster’s daughter attended. On a follow up field trip to the clinic, the government agency inserted the chemical device in Foster’s daughter’s arm without

her mother's knowledge. Youth Services of Tulsa argued that they legally do not have to tell a parent when contraceptives are implanted inside schoolchildren. Title X allows for youth as young as age 12 to receive "birth control"—even abortifacient contraceptives—without a parent's consent. Youth Services of Tulsa is part of the Tulsa Area Teen Pregnancy Prevention Collaborative, whose PregNOT program began in 2010 with \$1.5 million in tax funding from the Obama Health and Human Services' Office of Adolescent Health. Its stated goal is to reduce pregnancy among poor youth ages 11-19 via "youth-friendly" contraceptives.

**Nevada**—Nevada became the ninth state to ban pro-heterosexual therapy for minors when Gov. Brian Sandoval signed the pro-LGBTQ bill into law. Nevada joins New Mexico, Connecticut, California, Vermont, Oregon, New Jersey, New York, Illinois, and the District of Columbia in banning pro-heterosexual therapies for children. Similar legislation is also pending in California, but its implementation has been delayed by a legal challenge that has worked its way to the Supreme Court which up to this point has declined to hear the case.

**Pennsylvania**—Administrators at a Pennsylvania high school said "yes" to gay-straight alliance clubs and political science clubs but "no" to pro-life clubs because they are too controversial and political. Last fall, senior Elizabeth Castro and junior Grace Schairer attempted at Parkland High School to start a Students for Life club. Parkland already has a gay-straight alliance club, a political science club, a fashion club, a chess club, and other student-led groups.

**Texas**—Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed into law a bill that protects babies from dismemberment abortions, prevents aborted babies' bodies from being sold, and requires that babies killed via abortion are buried or cremated rather than treated as medical waste. Senate Bill 8, the Texas Unborn Child Protection from Dismemberment Abortion Act, also makes partial-birth abortion illegal, even though a federal law already bans partial-birth abortion. The procedure involves partially delivering the baby, severing the spinal cord at the back of the neck and crushing the skull for easy removal. It is important to note that other, equally barbaric methods of late-term abortion are legal up to the moment of birth.

**Virginia**—A disabled Virginia woman who was being starved at a nursing home there is now getting food and water, but her family and attorneys are sounding the alarm because she is still at risk and not receiving adequate care. Yolanda Bell, sister of Anastasia Adams, contacted Life Legal Defense Foundation (LLDF) on behalf of Adams. Adams was denied treatment for a blood clot and had her guardianship nullified before she was then clandestinely taken to an undisclosed facility. After several questionable injuries in a short time there, Adams was moved back to the hospital and put into hospice care, where she had been denied nutrition. Treatment is still being withheld. "The family is Catholic and Anastasia has communicated that she wants to live," said LLDF Executive Director Alexandra Snyder. "Anastasia does not have a terminal disease—the hospital is simply refusing to treat her and instead wants to put her to death."

## Nationwide News...

—Oral arguments were heard before the Supreme Court today in a case concerning state funding for a Missouri preschool's playground equipment that has religious liberty implications for people of faith nationwide. *Trinity Lutheran Church v. Pauley* is also the first religious freedom case that recently sworn-in Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch will hear from the bench. It has been called "the term's remaining marquee case." The fundamental issue at hand is whether a state can exclude religious individuals or organizations from secular public benefit programs, according to the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF). ADF attorneys represent the Columbia, Missouri church that operates Trinity Lutheran Child Learning Center. The state had excluded the church from a program that provides a partial reimbursement grant for rubberized surface material from recycled tires for children's playgrounds. The surface material increases safety for children and was intended for use on the church's preschool playground, which the entire community uses. More than 90 percent of the children who go to the preschool do not attend the church. Additionally, the preschool has an "open gate" policy with the playground. Children in the neighborhood frequently use it after hours and on weekends.

—President Trump continued to keep his promise to promote a pro-life agenda with three executive orders. The first overturns a last-minute Obama-era regulation that forces states to fund Planned Parenthood. The regulation, which pro-life groups call former President Obama's "parting gift" to the abortion industry, forced states to give Title X money to organizations that commit abortions. Now, states can decide for themselves if they wish to withhold money from pro-abortion organizations, instead prioritizing non-abortion businesses. Secondly, the Trump administration has withdrawn U.S. funding from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) because of its participation in China's forced abortion regime. Lastly, the President signed an executive order entitled "Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty" that allows churches to speak about politics from the pulpit while keeping their tax-exempt status and provides regulatory relief for ordinary Americans who don't subscribe to gender ideology or believe in same-sex "marriage."

—Failing to support Trump's pro-life agenda, Congressional Republicans and Democrats agreed in May on an omnibus budget deal that funds Planned Parenthood through September. By reaching a deal and compromising on the promise to defund Planned Parenthood, Republicans prevented a temporary government shutdown. The bill increases funding for abstinence education programs but continues to give far more money to some "comprehensive" sex-ed programs.

## Did You Know...

➤ *Did you know that* Ireland's health minister said he is determined to shut down a pro-life crisis pregnancy center run by Human Life International (HLI) after an undercover video sting by *The Times* of Ireland found pro-life counselors linking abortion to trauma, breast cancer, and long-term regret?

- **Did you know that** an Australian company has pioneered a process to make frozen human embryos into jewelry? The company is facing backlash after a story went viral about jewelry that is essentially the cremated remains of a human being preserved in resin. The jewelry is priced from \$80 to \$600 and can be shipped worldwide.
- **Did you know that** a program that aims to give young children “unabashedly queer role models” is making its way across the U.S. via various public libraries? “Drag Queen Story Hour (DQSH) is just what it sounds like—drag queens reading stories to children in libraries, schools, and bookstores.” The initiative’s website states: “DQSH captures the imagination and play of the gender fluidity of childhood and gives kids glamorous, positive, and unabashedly queer role models. In spaces like this, kids are able to see people who defy rigid gender restrictions and imagine a world where people can present as they wish, where dress up is real”.
- **Did you know that** nursing is not just for moms anymore, according to a blog post from the *National Catholic Register* this week that included a policy statement from La Leche League International? “As the cultural understanding of gender has expanded, it is now recognized that some men are able to breastfeed,” the organization stated.
- **Did you know that** the DNC’s new leader is an abortion activist and an openly married lesbian? 43-year-old Jess O’Connell most recently led EMILY’S List, a national pro-abortion organization devoted exclusively to electing female abortion activists into positions of influence in government. The election of O’Connell says much about the values and direction of the Democratic Party.
- **Did you know that** the homosexual-transgender pressure group Human Rights Campaign has declared political war on world-renowned psychiatrist Dr. Paul McHugh, a leading mental health expert, for speaking out against radical gender ideology? McHugh, whose many honors include receiving the top award of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences’ (NAS) Institutes of Medicine, is the target of a special HRC attack-website, “McHugh Exposed,” which accuses him of peddling “junk science.”
- **Did you know that** the LGBT agenda has subtly wormed its way into online instructional videos that are popular with homeschooled, private and public students? Some of Khan Academy’s free offerings are laced with a politically correct view of homosexuality. Math, English and other subjects may seem morally neutral, but they are being used to promote ideas and worldviews having nothing to do with Math or English. To illustrate, one math problem is worded such that the only appropriate answer is wives when talking about two women.
- **Did you know that** a new study, conducted in the UK, indicates that teen pregnancy rates drop when liberal sex-ed funding is cut? The study entitled, Effect of Spending Cuts on Teen Pregnancy, analyzed data in England before and after contraceptive-based sex-ed expenditures were slashed and used statistics from 149 municipalities between 2009 and 2014 and found that after sex-ed budgets were cut, teen pregnancy rates fell by 42.6 percent.

## Political Action Corner...

### Embryonic Stem Cell Research

Synopsis: The U.S. National Institute of Health Director, Dr. Francis Collins, is supportive of embryonic cloning and embryonic stem cell research. He has been in that position since 2009 and does not reflect the pro-life direction President Donald Trump is leading the country. He should be replaced with someone who respects life from the moment of conception.

Forty Republicans in the House of Representatives have written a letter to President Trump asking him to replace Dr. Collins with a pro-life director. Their letter notes the director’s support of embryonic stem cell research is in direct conflict with President Trump’s “pro-life direction.”

#### Action Steps:

Thank these three PA Congressmen for signing onto the letter urging President Trump to replace Dr. Francis Collins, National Institute of Health director:

Congressman Mike Kelly—202-225-5406

Congressman Keith Rothfus—202-225-2065

Congressman Tim Murphy—202-225-2301

Contact President Trump directly and ask him to replace Dr. Francis Collins as the NIH director.

### Religious Freedom in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PAHRC) is a state commission/agency responsible for enforcing laws prohibiting sex discrimination. Joel Bolstein, appointed by Gov. Tom Wolf, serves as interim chairman of PAHRC and is presenting a “Proposed Guidance” to advance the homosexual agenda in ways that also violates the religious liberty of Pennsylvania citizens.

As a means to advance the LGBT agenda, Bolstein is using PAHRC to expand the definition of the term “sex” to include “sex stereotyping.” The purpose of the “Proposed Guidance” is to provide a defense for men who want to enter women’s restrooms or changing facilities of “any public accommodation, resort or amusement [parks]” because they self-identify as female.

#### Action Step:

Send a message to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission Communications Director Christina Reese who is receiving public comments until May 26.

### Taking the Culture Back Through Media and Advertising

Dove, a popular personal care brand owned by Unilever Plc., just released a so-called “inclusive” Mother’s Day advertisement that includes a male to female “transgender” individual as an example of real motherhood.

#### **Help us tell Dove that men cannot be mothers.**

Sign here: <http://www.citizengo.org/en/fm/57393-tell-dove-biological-men-cannot-be-real-moms>

A mother is, by definition, a woman in relation to her child or children. By attempting to include biological men under this definition, Dove has devalued the importance of women in motherhood.

## Notable Quotes...

*“The two dangerous ideologies of ‘fundamentalism’ and ‘secularism’ are battling for supremacy in this day, just as ‘Communism and Fascism’ fought each other in the 20th century. On the one side is fundamentalism, religion without reason. It breeds fanaticism, violence, terrorism, to cause disruption and to force upon others its extremist views. This is a tragic reality in the volatile nations of the Middle East. It now threatens the west also. On the other side is secularism, reason without religion. Its champions seek to privatize religion, driving it out of the public domain... Secularists are hell-bent on burying the Christian patrimony of this land proposing Orwellian changes to our language and placing ever more draconian restrictions on religious expression, even on what we wear...Both fundamentalism and secularism are extremes. They are totalitarian. They are destructive of the human person. They pose a grave threat to human happiness and to a healthy society.”*

**UK Bishop Philip Egan, Easter Vigil Homily**

## Must See...

Tucker Carlson interviews Lila Rose about Planned Parenthood Conference video that has been banned from being viewed by the public by a circuit court judge:

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/pulse/foxs-tucker-carlson-on-censored-planned-parenthood-video-if-there-was-ever>

## Pro-life Hero...

On February 27, 2017, K9 Officer Max Janofsky lost his amazing wife, Danielle, after her courageous battle with cancer, lasting only about three weeks.

Danielle “Dani” Janofsky was 6 months pregnant when she entered the hospital with abdominal pains on February 8, 2017. It was quickly discovered that melanoma had spread to her liver, kidney, stomach, and finally, brain. She made the selfless and loving decision to deliver baby Jake on Friday February 24th thereby sacrificing herself so that her son could live. Jake was born 1 pound 11 ounces and is currently in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at the University of Pennsylvania where he recently met his big sister Avery, age 4.

Dani’s husband Max, a K9 police officer in Monroe Township New Jersey, was by her side every minute helping to ease her pain and remind her of how much love surrounds her and her family. Max is a retired Staff Sergeant, Bronze Star recipient, combat veteran who served several tours in Iraq and Afghanistan for the United States Army.

A fundraising page has been set up at GoFundMe to help the family after such a devastating loss. Please go to this link and consider making a donation to help:

<https://www.gofundme.com/help-officer-janofsky-his-kids>

## Reflections...

By: Anne Marie DiCarlo

There is much Catholic literature that can be classified as the writings of mystics. Mystics include the people who have had private revelations from God that were meant to be shared with the faithful to help us grow closer to Jesus, to warn us in times of difficulty and to give hope in times of trouble. Many of the

mystics over the years have spoken about a time of tribulation for the Church and I cannot help but wonder if that time is here, now. There have been many times throughout history that the Church was attacked by enemies from the outside: the Roman empire that meant to squash it in its infancy, barbarians, the errors of the Reformation, and now, modern humanism and secularism. As I reflect on recent times, the difference seems to be that the enemy is also within the walls of the Church, so to speak, and at its highest levels.

The papacy of Pope Francis has been permeated with ambiguity which the Pope has allowed to fester and grow. The result has been confusion regarding matters of long-established doctrine, such as the sanctity and indissolubility of marriage. To illustrate, a canon lawyer told priests at a workshop run by a U.S. diocese that Pope Francis’ *Amoris Laetitia* has allowed them to break with the Church’s traditional practice of refusing Communion to “remarried” Catholics. Since the diocesan bishop had not issued his own guidelines on the Pope’s exhortation, the canonist said, the priests could follow the controversial interpretations from the bishops of Malta and Buenos Aires. Last September, the bishops of Buenos Aires issued their directive to priests in their jurisdiction allowing Holy Communion for divorced and remarried Catholics. The document closely quoted *Amoris Laetitia*. The Pope made no formal move to correct the bishops of Buenos Aires and as such, the practice has moved forward.

One cannot overstate the dire consequences of this shift in Catholic teaching. The Catholic teaching on marriage is the underpinning of all that rests upon it—the prohibitions on contraception, abortion and the definition of family as the union of one man and one woman and the children that come into the world as part of that union.

It is no surprise that with the undercurrent of uncertainty about marriage comes the call for respect for gay unions from many members of the clergy. For example, Bishop John Stowe of the Diocese of Lexington spoke at the New Ways Ministry’s 2017 conference titled “Justice and Mercy Shall Kiss: LGBT Catholics in the Age of Pope Francis.” He defended his decision to do so, saying that “Pope Francis has signaled that we need to take another look at those things.” Defending his talk for the gay advocacy group, Stowe said Church teaching on homosexuality “was not Jesus’ approach” claiming that Catholic teaching on the issue was not immutable. The conference included sessions such as “Lesbian Nuns: Gift to the Church,” “Gay Men in Priesthood and Religious Life,” and “Transgender & Intersex Identities and the Family.” All of this is a scandal and a violation of the teaching of Jesus Christ. It is also a betrayal of the faithful in the Church who uphold truth.

One could say that this type of thing is just the behavior of apostate individuals, but it is fast becoming pervasive and has not been addressed. To illustrate, an LGBT Pilgrimage and Mass to the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, New Jersey was recently organized. According to a flyer that advertised the event, the Masses taking place were “with the blessings and best wishes of His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Tobin, C.Ss.R., Archbishop of Newark. The celebrant, Rev. Francis Gargani, frequently offers retreats to LGBT Catholics, one of which was advertised by the gay-affirmative Open Hearts

LGBT Ministry located at St. Patrick–St. Anthony Church in Hartford, Connecticut. The Open Hearts group recently read a book that celebrated the “Queer Christ.” According to a description for the retreat: *Through ritual prayer, reflective input sessions, shared discussion, personal time for prayer and quiet, and social gatherings, this retreat offers a special opportunity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons to celebrate their identity and deepen their experience of community in the living God.* Not a word about chastity or repentance.

Pope Francis has focused on mercy in his papacy, but falls very short on mention of penance and the amendment of one’s way of life. God is all-merciful, but only when the sinner sincerely seeks to “go and sin no more.” In the current age of humanism and self-determination, we need to hear that message, for the sake of our own salvation.

Instead of chastising the clergy that are preaching a gospel contrary to that of Christ, the Vatican has instead appointed more and more progressives to prominent positions. Most recently, the Vatican selected a prominent LGBT-pushing Jesuit priest to be a consultor to its communications office—Father James Martin, the editor-at-large of *America* magazine. Martin’s new book entitled, *Building A Bridge: How the Catholic Church and the LGBT Community Can Enter into a Relationship of Respect, Compassion, and Sensitivity*, argues that Church employees shouldn’t be fired for going against Church teaching by endorsing homosexual acts or openly professing homosexuality because “such firings selectively target LGBT people.” He also says “church leaders should address LGBT people by the term they call themselves.” Several Pope Francis-appointed cardinals endorsed the book along with far-left dissident nun Sister Jeannine Gramick, who said it “shows how the Rosary and the rainbow flag can peacefully meet each other.”

Additionally, the Jesuit’s new Superior General Fr. Arturo Sosa Abascal, appointed by Pope Francis, claimed that the words of Jesus against divorce are relative and must be discerned according to the conscience of each individual.

Need more evidence?

A homosexual group that campaigns for the Catholic Church to accept homosexual “marriage,” sodomy, and adoption of children by same-sex couples has been given a free pass to operate unofficially in the Catholic Archdiocese of Malta run by Archbishop Charles Scicluna. Last month, the group posted a photo on its Facebook page of a prayer event in a Catholic chapel to end homophobia. The photo showed a Catholic altar be-decked with vigil candles and a statue of the Virgin Mary. The front of the altar was draped in a rainbow “gay pride” flag.



I almost cried when I saw this photo for the first time. It struck me to the core that such subversion of doctrine is taking place.

Do not mistake the condemnation of homosexuality for mean-spiritedness. The gospels themselves speak very plainly. I believe that our modern society has completely bought the lie that homosexuality is an innate characteristic as opposed to a choice made by a disordered spirit or psyche. If we see that the behavior is sinful, we understand that repentance and change are the key to healing, not affirmation and hugs.

It is not just the moral compass of the Church that is threatened in our time. Pope Francis has reached out to the other religions of the world in what he describes as a spirit of evangelization, but with one major component strikingly absent—the primacy of Catholic teaching.

Pope Francis has, on several occasions, criticized what he referred to as “prostelizing”, chiding those who wish to bring the message of Catholicism to others in a call for conversion. The pope went so far as to laud the contributions of Martin Luther in an ecumenical visit to Germany. His words ring hollow when one reflects on the countless martyrs who died as a result of holding fast to their Catholic faith during the Reformation, largely due to the teachings of Luther which were and remain heresy.

That same soft spirit of ecumenism is leading to more and more scandal. A Catholic diocese in the UK is encouraging Catholics visiting pagan shrines to “bow” to pagan images and to eat food “blessed” in pagan rituals in the spirit of “ecumenism and dialogue.” Not to mention that this directive is a clear violation of the First Commandment—“Thou Shalt have no God before Me”—it dishonors and diminishes the martyrs of the early church who went to their deaths precisely because they would not worship false gods or eat meat offered to pagan idols. In the guidelines issued by the Catholic Diocese of Hallam, run by Bishop Ralph Heskitt, Catholics are encouraged to bring flowers to Buddha, bow to the Hindu murtis (images of the dieties) and to bow to the Sikh holy book. Catholics are also encouraged to eat the food offered to them that has been blessed in Hindu and Sikh rituals.

Can you imagine what St. Peter would have to say had these guidelines been issued by first century bishops?

The church is eternal; it is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. As such, there is also an eternal call to defend the Church against its enemies, within and without. As members of the body of the faithful, we must speak out when we see Christ’s Church injured and diminished. It is also necessary to speak truth, even when unpopular, to uphold and preserve the faith in its entirety.

The Church is in crisis. How much damage will be done? We do not have an answer to that, but is it any wonder that in scripture, Our Blessed Lord asked if the Son of Man would find faith when He returned?

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