

DETROIT BISHOPS SLAMMED FOR THEIR FIDELITY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on recent attacks on the bishops of Detroit:

When we learned that Detroit Auxiliary Bishop Gerard Battersby, following the lead of Archbishop Allen Vigneron, was instructing priests not to allow a Mass for members of Dignity Detroit, we did not feel compelled to say anything. After all, DignityUSA rejects the Church's teachings on sexuality and has been openly defiant of America's bishops for decades. But now that the Detroit bishops are coming under fire for practicing fidelity, a lay Catholic response is necessitated.

The first dissident group to defend the Detroit chapter of Dignity, and to attack the Detroit bishops, was New Ways Ministry. It has now been followed by the *National Catholic Reporter*.

Dignity, New Ways Ministry, and the *National Catholic Reporter* have all been condemned by Church officials for their rejection of the Church's teachings on sexuality, and all three have received funding from establishment foundations seeking to undermine the Church. Their claim to a Catholic status is risible.

Dignity has no standing in the Catholic Church. At one time, its New York chaplain was Father Paul Shanley, the most notorious serial homosexual rapist in American history. It is comprised of embittered ex-Catholics, many of whom were priests, who falsely claim to be representative of Catholic homosexuals. It is a recipient of money from the Arcus Foundation, a left-wing philanthropy.

In fact, the only organizations that minister to homosexuals

that can claim to be legitimately Catholic are Courage and Encourage; the former helps homosexuals who are Catholic to live chaste lives; the latter is an apostolate of Courage that provides family support for these Catholics. Both groups are supported by the Detroit bishops.

New Ways Ministry, another homosexual group at war with the Catholic Church, has been condemned as a fraud by Vatican and American Catholic leaders for decades. In 1999, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith permanently prohibited this renegade group from any pastoral work with homosexuals. It also receives funding from the Arcus Foundation.

It issued a statement on March 13 saying “[Archbishop Allen] Vigneron’s record on LGBTQ issues is quite negative,” and that Bishop Battersby’s statement means “the archdiocese appears to be moving backward.” Translated, this means that New Ways Ministry is unhappy with the bishops for doing their job.

The *National Catholic Reporter* was founded in Kansas City, Missouri in 1964. Catholic in name only, Bishop Charles Helmsing of Kansas City-St. Joseph wasted no time telling the editors to remove the word *Catholic* from its title. It rejects the Church’s teachings on marriage, the family, and sexuality, and receives money from the Hilton Foundation to portray a positive picture of dissident nuns.

On March 17, this media outlet featured an article by homosexual activist Jamie Manson that called the decision to ban Masses for Dignity “a particularly callous act,” even while admitting that Dignity has been “thrown out of the church.” Her hubris is astonishing.

Detroit is fortunate to have Archbishop Vigneron and Bishop Battersby. There was nothing strident or caustic about their response to Dignity.

They knew that if the Catholic Church is going to hold Masses

for organizations that unequivocally and publicly reject the Church's teachings on sexuality, it would give scandal to the faithful, making them wonder what to believe. They acted with fortitude and honesty.