

VATICAN REJECTS GAY UNIONS; DISSIDENTS REBEL

Pope Francis has been under considerable pressure by gay activists, in and out of the Church, to give the green light to gay marriage. On March 15, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith released a statement to queries on this issue that is the most decisive rejection of those efforts ever written. Dissident Catholics were enraged.

The Church's top doctrinal office said, "it is not licit to impart a blessing on relationships, partnerships, even stable, that involve sexual activity outside of marriage (i.e, outside the indissoluble union of a man and a woman open in itself to the transmission of life), as is the case of the unions between persons of the same sex."

The statement made it clear that this "does not preclude the blessings given to individual persons with homosexual inclinations, who manifest the will to live in fidelity to the revealed plans of God as proposed by Church teaching." It is homosexual unions that are the problem, not homosexuals.

With regard to homosexuality, the Vatican said it cannot "approve and encourage a choice and a way of life" that is "objectively disordered."

God, the document declared, "does not and cannot bless sin." In short, "the Church does not have, and cannot have, the power to bless unions of persons of the same sex." In other words, the Church must follow Scripture.

This did not sit well with those Catholics who have been at war with the Church's teachings on sexuality. The German bishops, in particular, were unhappy; many are prepared to sanction gay unions. In the U.S., so-called progressive Catholics were beside themselves.

The statement simply reaffirmed the Catholic Church's teaching on marriage. Nonetheless, it was seen as controversial in some quarters, and that is because Pope Francis has been welcoming to homosexuals. In fairness to the pope, it is not his fault that some interpret his friendly approach as signifying an interest in changing Church doctrine. That's their problem.

To put it differently, it is one thing to say all persons possess equal dignity in the eyes of God; it is quite another to say that whatever they do is acceptable to God. Human status and human behavior are not identical.

Also, this document applies equally to heterosexuals. According to Catholic sexual ethics, cohabiting men and women are involved in an illicit relationship, and this statement is very clear about their status. Yet the media missed this point, so absorbed were they with gay rights.

Whatever previous confusion there was is now gone. The Vatican left nothing on the table. The door has been slammed shut on the gay agenda.