

# Gay and lesbian in a catholic religion

Business



The position of Catholic Church on many issues of sexuality has caused hot, public debates and controversies.

The Catholic Church does not condone various sexual practices, such as abortion, artificial contraceptives, masturbation, and homosexuality among many others. The Catholic teachings on sexuality are mainly based on natural law and sacred scriptures. According to the Church, God created man in His own image and acknowledge that, everything that He had created in him was good. Therefore, according to Catholic's teaching, sex is good. However, it is good only when practiced within an institution of marriage between a man and woman.

Therefore, same sex marriage is considered as blasphemy by the Catholic Church. According to Catholic's teachings, the main purpose of sex and hence marriage is procreation. Therefore, homosexuals are rendered intrinsically disordered since they do not aim at fulfilling the purpose of procreation, which God assigned them. However, catholic gay and lesbians have defended their identity in the church arguing that their homosexual orientation is God-created and hence should not be termed evil. They want the Church to recognize and accept homosexual relations as long as these relations observe Catholic sexual ethics, such as monogamy, commitment, and faithfulness. The Catholics teach on many issues of sexuality, such as celibacy, abortion, contraception, and homosexual acts among many others.

Most of their teaching on issues of sexuality mainly comes from natural law. The Catholic Church believes that human life and sexuality are two things, which are indissoluble and sacred. However, sex remains sacred when

practiced in an institution of marriage between a man and a woman.

Therefore, any sex between two heterosexual partners outside marriage is considered sinful before the eyes of the Lord. Homosexual relationships and marriages are considered as objective disorders and hence sinful.

The Catholic Church does not allow contraception since God created a man and woman and told them to multiply and fill the earth. Therefore, family planning is an act that goes against God's orders. According to Catholic's teaching, abortion is sinful, as it is equal to killing. The main purpose of marriage and hence sex is procreation. Therefore, any marriage based on any other purpose, which is not procreation is an act to fulfill one's sinful desires.

However, several studies reveal that Catholic gay and lesbians believe that the position of the Catholic Church on many sexuality issues are erroneous, especially with issues pertaining to homosexuality. Many of the Christian gay and lesbians argue that that the Church has a valid reasoning only to issues pertaining abortion. Catholic Positions on Sexuality issues The Catholic Church teaches on many issues of sexuality. These include marriage, abortion, masturbation, contraceptives, chastity, and homosexuality among many others<sup>1</sup>. The church mainly draws its teaching from various sources, such as natural law, sacred scripture, and sacred tradition. The Catholic Church believes that because God created human beings in His own image, and admitted that everything He had created in him was good, then sex is also good.

However, Catholics embrace the virtue of chastity, which moderates sexual appetite. Since sex is an act of love, which is a gift from God, then sexual intercourse should only take place between a man and a woman in an institution of marriage. Therefore, sex outside marriage or between partners of the same sex is considered sinful. The Catholic Church position on issues pertaining to homosexuality has raised many debates and much controversy, especially in developed countries like America. The controversy mainly revolves around the term “intrinsic disorder,” which was first used by Pope John Paul II in his pastoral letter 2.

Before this term, homosexuality was described by the Catholic teaching as a subjective disorder. This is because they thought gay and lesbians were heterosexual human beings who wanted to fulfill their lust by indulging in same sex genital acts. However, after medical research revealed that indeed there exists a sexual orientation that is inborn and unchangeable, the term subjective disorder was changed to intrinsic disorder. According to the Catholic Church’s teaching on homosexuality, God created all human beings as heterosexuals. Therefore, homosexual orientation signifies some distractions of God’s creative plan, which may have been contributed by original sin. From this teaching, it is evident that the Catholic Church believes homosexual orientation is evil and any action that originates from such an orientation is sinful before God.

According to Catholic’s teachings, God had a purpose for creating a man and a woman with different genital organs. The purpose was that they would be compatible for sex intercourse, which is a sign of love between a man and woman who are in the institution of marriage. Therefore, a homosexual act

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goes against Catholic's ethics because it violates the meaning and goals of God's sexual design<sup>3</sup>. The Catholic Church and other Christians believe that the main purpose of sexual activity is procreation. Therefore, same sex genital acts, which originate from homosexuality, are intrinsically disordered as they cannot fulfill the purpose of transmitting new life. On issues of contraceptives, the Catholic Church believes that it is an act that goes against God's orders of procreation.

Therefore, any form of artificial contraception is considered intrinsically evil, as it makes procreation impossible. Masturbation is an act of lust, which aims at fulfilling one's sexual desires. Therefore, according to Catholic's teachings, it is sinful. Abortion seems to be the only sexuality issue that gay and lesbians Catholics seem to agree with their church's teachings. According to the Church's teachings, abortion is equal to ending human life. The Church's position has received much criticism from several activists who propose abortion under some circumstances, such as rape or difficulty pregnancies.

However, the church has remained adamant and argues that if abortion is allowed under any circumstance, it will encourage promiscuity, especially among the youth, which is ethically wrong<sup>4</sup>. Social theories on Gay and Lesbian Catholics' and their views on Catholic church's Positions on Sexuality issues According to theorist Andrew K. Yip, being a Catholic gay or lesbian is difficult because of the church's position on homosexuality. Being a Catholic, it is difficult to identify as a gay/lesbian because of lack of religious assertion and acceptance<sup>5</sup>. However, the theorist indicates that some Christian gay and lesbians are standing up for their identities amidst criticism and rejection.

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This Christian gay and lesbian community has been able to remain faithful catholic believers, despite their homosexual orientation. According to this group, the Catholic Church teachings on many issues of sexuality, especially homosexuality are unconvincing. They believe that the expression of love, between two partners of the same sex, who are faithful to each other, is compatible with their Catholic faith. Therefore, they think that the Church's attitude towards them as homosexuals is negative. The term "objective disorder" used to describe their condition has made this community outrageous<sup>6</sup>.

They argue that since God created them with such an orientation, then it is not evil as God cannot have an evil intention when creating a person. According to them, all sexualities are God's gifts and hence in using it in a context of a faithful and committed relationship is normal and hence satisfactory. The Catholic gay and lesbians, who are confident enough to stand up for their sexual identity, associate their sexual orientation with God's creation. This association is one of their strongest points against Church's teachings on homosexuality. They believe that their homosexual inclination was a product of God's creation.

However, some people criticize this attribution of homosexuality to God's creation, saying that the Christian gay and lesbians are using it to justify their immoral actions and to counter the church's official position, which threatens their identities<sup>7</sup>. According to Catholic gay and lesbians, love and commitment are most important factors in any kind of relationship, not the gender of the partners. Therefore, the Church should affirm and accept same

sex relationships, which embrace and exhibit Christian principles e. g. faithfulness, and commitment among others.

The gay and lesbian community upholds the belief of companionship, which advocates for comprehensiveness. According to them, this belief allows for relationships to be established from sex friendships, with agreement from both parties involved. According to Conventional Christian Sexual Ethics, monogamy is the most important aspect within the institution of marriage. Recent studies show that many Catholic gay and lesbians uphold this monogamy ethics, where they believe that as long same sex marriage observes these ethics, it should be accepted by the Church. They argue that God created them with such a sexual orientation as to show love.

Therefore, by showing love to someone of the same sex should not be considered sinful by the church. These Catholic gay and lesbians have continued discrediting the Church's teachings saying that they are ill-founded and erroneously formulated. The homosexual act, which receives most criticism from both the church and the heterosexual community, is anal penetration<sup>8</sup>. Many people argue that anus was created for defecation and not sexual intercourse. However, recent studies show that anal penetration is not common among many Christian homosexuals, as they consider it sinful. Therefore, the gay and lesbians argue that the church's rejection of homosexual relations based on anal penetration is stereotyped.

Apart from this group of Catholic gay and lesbians, there is the other group, which cannot stand for their identities because of fear of discrimination by the church and the wider community. As a result, they end up abandoning

their Christian faith and keep their sexual identity as a secret. Some other gay and lesbian Catholics think that their obligation as Catholics prohibits them from all sexual acts with partners of the same sex. Therefore, to them celibacy is the only option. Since they cannot practice heterosexual relationships and practicing same sex acts is evil, they dedicate their lives to serving God through celibacy. Despite the fact the Catholic Church has remained adamant in changing its position towards homosexuality, recent studies show that many catholic gay and lesbians believe that the church will eventually adopt an understanding that will enhance change on its teachings about homosexuality<sup>9</sup>.

They hope that the gay and lesbian communities and the Catholic Church will come into a dialogue on issues of homosexuality and bring changes that will make them accepted as Christians. They want the Catholic Church to avoid from using the term “intrinsically disordered” in its teachings on issues pertaining to homosexuality, as they consider it negative and in total contradiction of their understanding of their sexual identity. Andrew K. Yip and his social theories on Christian gay and lesbians

The theorist Andrew K. Yip has been doing a lot of research on issues that surround Christian gay and lesbians. In his social theory, Andrew points out that Christian gay and lesbian’s community have started fighting for their social identities in the church.

They have come up with various mechanism of fighting against the church’s teachings on issues of sexuality especially homosexuality. According to Andrew this sexual group of people blames the church for attaching negative identities to them such as intrinsically disorderd. However, it seems that

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their resistance and ridicule they face from the church, has not hindered them from fighting for their social identity as homosexual Christians. His theory on social identities of Christians gay and lesbians has been able to shed light on many issues that face this group of Christians. It has revealed that Christian gay and lesbians are not ready to shun their faith, due to their sexuality.

Instead, they are ready to fight for recognition and acceptance in the church. Through his social theory, Andrew points out that Christian gay and lesbians are just like the heterosexual Christians because they believe in all their church' beliefs and practices apart from issues pertaining to sexuality. To this group, the church is biased and erroneous in its teachings on many sexuality issues. Andrew's social is very relevant to this topic since it has been able to identify the issues that surround Christian homosexuals and their identities in the church. This paper has clearly identified Catholic's teaching on various sexuality issues, such as marriage, abortion, contraceptives, and homosexuality among others.

There is enough evidence that the Catholic Church does not embrace issues, such as abortion, masturbation, contraceptives, and homosexuality. The Church believes that the main purpose of marriage is procreation and hence any marriage meant to serve any other purpose, which is not procreation is not Godly. Contraceptives are not embraced by the church as they make procreation impossible. On the other hand, abortion is evil, as it is tantamount to killing. According to the Church, homosexuality is considered intrinsically disordered as God created every human to be heterosexual. However, Catholic gay and lesbian are in disagreement with the Church's <https://assignbuster.com/gay-and-lesbian-in-a-catholic-religion/>

perceptions on many sexuality issues arguing that they are ill-founded and unconvincing.

They believe that God created them the way they are and as long as they embrace Catholic ethics on monogamy, faithfulness and commitment, homosexual relations should be affirmed and accepted. Research shows that this community of people remains optimistic that the church will ultimately change its position on homosexuality and accept them.