



Catholic Bishops Find New Way to Insult Gays

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The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has drafted new guidelines on ministering to people with "homosexual inclinations." The bishops won't use the word "orientation." The proposal, to be finalized at their meeting November 13-18 in Baltimore, lumps homosexual lovemaking in with "acts such as adultery, fornication, and contraception, that violate the norms of human sexuality."

While the Vatican holds that same-sex orientation is "disordered," the American bishops' draft maintains that "saying a person has a particular inclination that is disordered is not to say that the person as a whole is disordered." The draft claims that homosexual "passions are not fixed" and that "repeated good actions will modify the passions that one experiences," a nod to discredited "reparative therapies" that promise to turn gay people straight.

The bishops say that "those who carry out the Church's ministry must not use their leadership positions to advocate views contrary to Church teaching." They also take pot shots against adoption by gay couples and any legal recognition for their relationships, following on the heels of Pope Benedict's exhortation in Verona last week to oppose legalization of "weak and deviant" unions.

Sam Sinnett, president of Dignity/USA, the LGBT Catholic group, said the bishops' document was drafted "by none of us for whom it was intended." He added, "They speak in willful ignorance about homosexuality-sexuality in general." Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, said, "It's an insult to compare an orientation that leads to love to 'inclinations' that lead to harm." Rev. Troy Plummer, director of the Reconciling Ministries Network for United Methodists, said, "Such hug-and-slug theology and destructive 'pastoral care' sin against lesbian and gay families and harm the church."