

Does the Catholic Church Have a Homosexual Problem?

Due to the sensitive nature of this article, it's important that I make some preliminary statements. There will be enough controversy if my words are rightly understood, let alone misunderstood.

First, I am not a Catholic basher. Second, I am not claiming that the Catholic Church has a monopoly on sexual scandals. Third, I believe the vast majority of homosexual men stand with me in denouncing pedophilia and "man-boy love." Fourth, as we focus on predatory priests, we must not forget their victims. Some of the abused have lost faith for life. Others bear their scars in different, significant ways. They must not be forgotten in the midst of our outrage and grief.

The question, then, is simple: Does the Catholic Church have a homosexual problem?

According to Cardinal Raymond Burke, "It was clear after the studies following the 2002 sexual abuse crisis that most of the acts of abuse were in fact homosexual acts committed with adolescent young men. There was a studied attempt to either overlook or to deny this. Now it seems clear in light of these recent terrible scandals that indeed there is a homosexual culture, not only among the clergy but even within the hierarchy, which needs to be purified at the root. It is of course a tendency that is disordered."

If you're surprised to hear this candid admission, you're not alone. As Cardinal Burke observed, "There was a studied attempt to either overlook or to deny this."

Yes, it was fine to talk about Catholicism's problem with pedophilia. It was fine to discuss sexual scandals in broad terms. But it was basically forbidden to connect them directly

to homosexuality.

Is it true that homosexual pedophiles are more likely to abuse boys than heterosexual pedophiles are likely to abuse girls?

According to a 2007 Mayo Clinic study, "The percentage of homosexual pedophiles ranges from 9 per cent to 40 per cent, which is approximately four to 20 times higher than the rate of adult men attracted to other adult men (using a prevalence rate of adult homosexuality of 2 per cent to 4 per cent). . . . This finding does not imply that homosexuals are more likely to molest children, just that a larger percentage of pedophiles are homosexual or bisexual in orientation to children."

But even if this study is accurate (I have seen other evidence to support this), I don't believe that pedophilia (in terms of men abusing prepubescent children) is the primary issue within the Catholic sex scandals.

This is confirmed by Bill Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. (Donohue holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from New York University; in his 11-page report, he seeks to debunk the notion of widespread sexual sin among the clergy.)

Pointing to a 2004 study, Donohue notes, "The John Jay study found that 81 percent of the victims were male, 78 percent of whom were postpubescent. Now if 100 percent of the victimizers are male, and most of the victims are postpubescent males, that is a problem called homosexuality. There is no getting around it.

"How many were pedophiles? Less than five percent. That is what the John Jay study found. Studies done in subsequent years—I have read them all—report approximately the same ratio. It's been a homosexual scandal all along."

In the words of blogger Matt Walsh, "the real problem in the

Catholic Church isn't pedophilia but gay priests. As the statistics clearly show, the vast majority of predators in the clergy were homosexual and the vast majority were not pedophiles."

What, then, should we conclude from this? That homosexuals are far worse sinners than heterosexuals?

Actually, there has been a flood of scandals involving heterosexual female teachers and their underage, heterosexual male students. What does this prove?

The vast majority of pornography that is produced is for heterosexual use (since the vast majority of people are heterosexual). What does this prove?

It proves that sexual sin is everywhere. And all of it is ugly, especially when it takes advantage of others.

So, my point here is not that homosexuals are more promiscuous than heterosexuals (even though there is evidence to support this). And my point is not that homosexuals are more prone to pedophilia than heterosexuals (although here too, as noted, there is evidence to support that).

My point is simply that the vast majority of devout, heterosexual Catholic men will not want to give up marriage for the priesthood. However, a devout Catholic man who is attracted to the same-sex would be more likely to give up marriage for the priesthood, since he cannot "marry" a same-sex partner and be faithful to Catholicism.

And what do you expect to happen when you have thousands of homosexual men who are single for life, some of whom are fairly young, and who are in intimate environments with teenage men? Read the horrific reports about sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. That's exactly what you would expect.

As Ross Benes explained, "While doing research for my book The

Sex Effect, I came across many scholars who suggested that preventing priests from marrying altered the makeup of the priesthood over time, unintentionally providing a shelter for some devout gay men to hide their sexual orientation. By continuing to disqualify women and married men, the priesthood attracts men who desire to forgo sex for the rest of their lives in an attempt to get closer to God. Because the church denounces all gay sex, some devout gay men pursue the celibate priesthood as a self-incentive to avoid sex with men, which can help them circumvent perceived damnation.”

This, in turn, has produced what some claim is a gay subculture within the Catholic Church, from the local parish to the seminary and beyond. The sordid results that follow are utterly unsurprising.

From my perspective as a non-Catholic, the clergy should be allowed to marry, while those with the gift of celibacy should refrain from marriage. As for priests (or potential priests) who are same-sex attracted, they should seek out help for their sexual conflicts, not being allowed to serve until they have a clear and persistent track record of holy, disciplined living.

To do anything else is to be unfair to them and, far, far worse, to be unfair to their potential victims.