

Gay Man: Pope Francis Says God Made Me This Way

A Chilean man who suffered clerical sexual abuse has said Pope Francis told him in a private conversation that God had made him gay and loved him that way, according to the Spanish newspaper El Pais.

The Vatican declined to comment on the report but, if confirmed, it would be a striking statement of tolerance towards homosexuality, which the Church has condemned as an immoral disorder if it is actively practiced.

In an interview published on Sunday, abuse victim Juan Carlos Cruz told El Pais that Pope Francis had told him during a meeting this month: "The fact that you are gay does not matter."

Cruz said Francis had also told him: "God made you this way and loves you this way, and it doesn't matter to me. The pope loves you this way, you must be happy the way you are."

Cruz was one of three Chilean victims who were invited by the pope to Rome this month in the wake of a scandal in Chile over priestly sexual abuse and efforts by the Church hierarchy there to hush it up.

After attending a crisis meeting with Francis about the cover-up last week, all of Chile's bishops offered to resign.

Since his election in 2013, the pope has dramatically shifted the language the Church has used about homosexuality, which was once seen as a taboo subject.

"If a person is gay and seeks God and has good will, who am I to judge?" he said on his first overseas trip in 2013. In 2016, he said had ministered to people with unfulfilled

homosexual tendencies as well as homosexuals who were not able to remain chaste, as the Church asks them to.

“When a person arrives before Jesus, Jesus certainly will not say: ‘Go away because you are homosexual’,” he said.

Francis’s predecessor, Pope Benedict, wrote in 2005 that homosexuality was “a strong tendency ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil.” {eoa}

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