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by NCR Staff

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NCR readers shared their thoughts on our editorial "Banning a child from school is the real inconsistency," following the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kansas' decision to deny admission of a kindergarten student with same-sex parents, which stirred division within the parish and rekindled tensions between the Catholic Church and LGBT community. Archbishop Joseph Naumann responded to that criticism, noting the issue has garnered local and national media attention. The following letters have been edited for length and clarity.

It is a dismal state of affairs when an innocent child is prevented from receiving the benefits of a Catholic education. This is exactly what drives people away from the church. This exclusion rather than inclusion is a killer of the human spirit. When will we ever learn?]

MARY ANDERSON

Lincoln, Nebraska

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The pedophile priests are the ones who should have been banned from Catholic schools, not the innocent children. It is refreshing to see that the writers were able to see truth and state it so clearly and logically.

CORRINE GIEL

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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How long will this non-Christian insanity continue? As I have pointed out in NCR and other publications before, the church has backed itself into a corner with its teaching on natural law.

This static, scholastic philosophy based concept of what is natural to human beings, needs to be jettisoned. A static, unchanging understanding of human nature is not a part of divine revelation.



Over the centuries, the church has refused to listen to and incorporate the spirit's insights, gleaned from the natural sciences, into its understanding and teachings about what is human. Biology, genetics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, etc. are avenues to the truth along with theology and philosophy.

If the church would begin to apply the insights of these sciences to human sexuality and the natural law, situations like we have regarding the suitability of same-sex parenting and their children attending Catholic school wouldn't be occurring over and over again.

It's time for the church to get itself out of the corner.

(Fr.) PASCAL IPOLITO

West Seneca, New York

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As Archbishop Joseph Naumann appears to assert the Catholic school has no ability to discern details of the lives of the parents of its students, may I offer him some suggestions?

I am sure the archdiocese maintains the usual records of the sacraments. Review of these would indicate which students are the properly baptized Catholic offspring of properly married Catholic parents. Other dioceses would certainly share these records, if asked. Civil divorce records are public; it would not take long to review court records.

All schools request and maintain contact information for the parents of its students. One can be fairly certain that children whose parents have different last names and reside at different addresses are not married (to each other, anyway). Blank information lines for one parent or the other (if not completed with "deceased") probably indicates a single parent.

On such red flags, the school could review church annulment and funeral records, and follow up with these parents to ensure they demonstrate their understanding and intended compliance with Catholic Church teaching on marriage.

Ensuring parents aren't defying the contraception dogmas would be more difficult, but families with only one or two children would be suspect and I'm sure the local priest could follow up with them.

Bluntly, his claim is bogus.

SHARON MONROE

St. Paul, Minnesota

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The archbishop's letter reads like another self-serving argument from an ecclesiastical bureaucrat. If his school rejects this child, how does he justify

employing gay priests and ministers in his diocese?

GENE ROMAN

Bronx, New York

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The Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kansas, is determined to deny admission to one of its schools by a student with same-sex parents. It would seem reasonable for other parents to stand in solidarity with the denied child and its family and to inform the diocese that they will not be sending their children to the diocesan schools for the coming year.

Today, many Catholic schools are barely surviving with low enrollments as I have seen firsthand in my own Diocese of Ogdensburg in upstate New York. Many of them are a handful of students away from closing at the start of the school year in September. They often tout the benefits of a Catholic education to try to increase enrollment. If enrollment is to buy into a discriminatory policy that has no place in Catholic social teaching, then say no to supporting the wrong-minded leaders of the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kansas.

If parents say enough is enough and threaten to pull their children from the schools they are currently attending, a message will be sent to the archbishop and the superintendent of schools. While they are at it, for good measure, also cut in half the amount of money they put in their weekly envelope for the collection basket. Like any other large organization, contributions or lack of them, sends a loud message to the hierarchy.

TONY BEANE

Canton, New York

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There is no mystery why today's Catholic Church suffers great turmoil. Too many mortal men appointed as church leaders have lost their way simply by forgetting that the very foundation of everything our church teaches originates in the righteous authority of God's word.

Not a single word in the NCR editorial looks to God as the origin of righteous truth. Instead NCR gets lost in a self-inflected maze, manufactured out of whole cloth, just to compare the imaginary beliefs of various different and contradictory churches none of which originate in Catholic Church teachings.

Do not get distracted by the fact that the editorial does identify two Catholic archbishops who acted righteously, and includes quotes of parts of their public statements. Unfortunately, none of the quotes include the righteous foundation of God's word. Instead, the quotes only include sincere, well intentioned, statements of man-made explanation which the editorial writer later uses as a tool to equalize the contrasts with the beliefs of contradictory churches.

In other words, the editorial implies that the beliefs and feelings of all people in all churches, including the LGBT churches it specifically identifies, are equal in value. But, that implication is the jewel of shoddy scholarship that negates the NCR's integrity as being representative of what the Catholic Church actually teaches.

Any reader could easily fall into the trap of superficially believing that the editorial is about a current ongoing debate about whether innocent children should be included or excluded from being educated in a Catholic school. But the NCR editorial is actually about a very ancient ongoing debate about God's righteousness vs. mankind's self-righteousness.

Do you search for truth that righteously originates from God? Or, do you equally respect truth that self-righteously originates in mortals? How long can a church divided continue?

DONALD O'CONNOR

Chattanooga, Tennessee

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