Opinion



by NCR Staff

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You may have seen the recent news that Pope Francis said in a new documentary, "Francesco," that he supports civil union laws for same-sex couples, which as NCR reported, is not really that recent of news. However, LGBT activists and supporters are hailing the affirmation as progress, even though some say that LGBT Catholics deserve more than just words. Letters to the editor have been edited for length and clarity. You can join the conversation by following the guidelines at the end of this post.

Why do you use the term "same-sex civil unions" instead of "same-gender civil unions" in the article since the word "sex" is a loaded word, while "gender" indicates the difference between woman and man?

HENRY J. MOORE

Stavanger, Norway



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I think it is incorrect to believe that the matter of civil unions is irrelevant to the U.S., as the author stated, "because the country has gone way past civil unions to marriage for gay couples, which is supported by 70% of Americans, including 67% of Catholics according to PRRI. There is no possibility of reversing that and going to civil unions."

If a majority of American voters and Catholic voters believe in the right to abortion, should the laity and clergy be silent about the dignity of the human person? Isn't it our mission to bring to our brothers and sisters the church's teachings on all matters of natural law and the dignity of the human person among others?

Also, this article seems to be putting the cart in front of the horse. I have not seen the film, and I probably am not alone in wanting more context for the pope's words. I think it is rash to say, as stated in the article, "Has he changed his mind on this? If so, it would have an impact in the U.S. church's fight over religious freedom." We look to our Holy Father for clarity and guidance. Let's be patient and give him time

to explain his words more fully.

PAMELA VALSTAD

Fort Collins, Colorado

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Several years ago, I was in New Orleans. I was hunting for a restaurant where I could eat breakfast. An employee rushed to me as I opened the door. He told me semi-nicely that I was not allowed in their establishment because I was wearing shorts. Did I respond with annoyance or write a hostile letter to the owner? No, I did not. Did I feel upset and confused? Yes, I did.

As long as I have been a Catholic, I felt perfectly guided by what Jesus's teaching in the Bible. Now, I feel that for the Catholic Church to allow civil service unions between same-sex couples is not compatible with the New and Old Testament theological principles.

I did not think the Catholic Church approved of heterosexual civil service unions. I hope the Catholic Church doesn't go through with this dangerous precedent.

ROSEMARY GREMILLION

Pineville, Louisiana

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We needn't be surprised that Pope Francis' encouraging support regarding civil unions for the LGBT community was met with outrage by the usual suspects in the church's traditionalist sector. Ready at the whip with chapters and verses from both New and Old Testament as well as passages from the Catechism of the Catholic Church that denounce homosexual activity, their reactions made for robust conversation with those of us who admire Francis' arguable call to lead his smelly flock kicking and bleating into the 21st century.

Upon entering the fray, one can ponder the fact that the New Testament preceded the first Catechism of the Catholic Church by 1,400 centuries; that the average, practicing Catholics are woefully ignorant of the Gospels completed in the first century and have a lot of catching up to do as regards the spirit of the law that prompted Francis' message in the first place.

NANCY McGUNAGLE

Kalispell, Montana

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Regarding Xavier M. Montecel's article on the pope and civil unions, the theology of the church really is that the couple marry themselves. The church can then bless the union — if she so desires.

But, also, one who sees the love between married LGBT people, knows the love is true.

GORDON LEWIS

Largo, Florida

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