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## Omaha Archdiocese Bars Student

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This story is complicated from a variety of standpoints.

In short, an Omaha couple is allowing their 8-year-old son to openly live life as a girl. It's a decision that means the child is no longer able to attend Catholic school.

The Archdiocese of Omaha decided that a transgender kid is not welcomed into the succeeding grade: "The child is welcomed to come, but it would not be acceptable to change the child's gender and present as a girl," said Omaha Archdiocese's Chancellor, the Rev. Joseph Taphorn. Taphorn said having the child attend the school for three years as a boy, and then presenting as a girl would not be a good learning environment for the child or other students. He said school has to be a peaceful, positive environment for everyone. The child will attend a public school in the fall, using her chosen name and wearing a ponytail in her hair."

The unique case presents interesting and complex questions involving family decision-making, mental health and education policy. The one thing that is bothersome to me is the appearance of the archdiocese and Catholic school being exclusionary. Maybe it's just that the chancellor didn't explain the decision well or was not quoted in a complete manner. In the back of my mind is the fact that Jesus went out to embrace the outcasts, the different. Maybe the archdiocese made the right decision.

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