



## **CASE AGAINST THE CATHOLIC CHURCH November 2004**

*In the year since Soulforce last confronted the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the following articles appeared in various news sources concerning the Catholic Church's attempt to deny gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people their basic human rights. Clearly the Church has gotten more focused in its attacks, using repetition as a tool to convince people of the validity of their misguided claims.*

Boston Globe, Dec. 1, 2003 - Boston Archbishop Sean P. O'Malley and the bishops of the dioceses of Worcester, Fall River, and Springfield called the same-sex marriage ruling of the Massachusetts Supreme Court a "national tragedy."

The Boston Globe, Jan. 12, 2004 - Boston Archbishop Sean P. O'Malley and former US Supreme Court nominee Robert H. Bork, called upon Massachusetts Catholic lawyers and judges to oppose last year's historic decision by the state Supreme Judicial Court. O'Malley made his remarks during the annual Red Mass at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross during a service to bless the work of lawyers and judges.

Reuters, Jan 21, 2004 - A Belgian cardinal has been quoted as saying only five to 10 percent of lesbians and gays are actually gay and the rest are "sexual perverts." "I am willing to write in my own blood that of all those who call themselves lesbian or gay, a maximum of five to 10 percent are effectively lesbian or gay," Cardinal Gustaaf Joos, 80, told the Belgian weekly P-Magazine on Wednesday.

365Gay.com Newscenter; Boston Bureau Mar 26, 2004 -The Roman Catholic Church has begun a massive statewide drive to register voters in hopes of defeating Massachusetts lawmakers who support gay marriage. The voter drive was announced in The Pilot, the official newspaper of the Boston Archdiocese and is being regarded by some lawmakers as an open challenge and a blurring of the separation of church and state.

National Catholic Reporter, Mar. 24, 2004 - A USCCB employee was asked to resign as a result of publicly supporting John Kerry for president. Ekeh acknowledged that some of his writings on his personal Web site were critical of the bishops (he criticized, for example, the bishops' statements on gay marriage) though he says he was always supportive of "the church itself." But he gives no ground on his pro-Kerry views, particularly when it comes to abortion. Kerry, he says, would fund social programs that would make abortion a less attractive option to women facing a crisis pregnancy.

National Catholic Reporter - March 24, 2004 - ***U.S. Bishops' conference, religious right fund project that critics call an attack effort against gays.*** Catholic University of America has become the home of the Marriage Law Project, the core mission of which is to provide "legal assistance to church-related organizations" that support traditional marriage. Since its inception, the project has had support -- financial and otherwise -- from the U.S. bishops, the Mormon church, as well as many other anti-gay groups. Over the next three years, for example, the Marriage Law Project will receive \$260,000 from the Alliance Defense Fund -- a public policy advocacy group founded by such stalwarts of the religious right as Colorado Springs-based Focus on the Family, Campus Crusade for Christ, and Coral Ridge Ministries.

New York Times, May 11, 2004 - After Newark Archbishop John J. Myers published a letter stating that politicians who support abortion rights and other positions diverging from Catholic dogma are 'dishonest' if they take communion, the governor of New Jersey has decided he will cease taking communion in the Catholic Church rather than bow to the political edicts of the Vatican. The top lawmaker in the N.J. senate has gone a step farther, declaring he will leave the Roman Catholic Church altogether. In addition to abortion, are denial of recognition to same-gender relationships, blocking stem-cell research. So far no one has suggested denying communion to elected lawmakers who approve of the death penalty, who support the Bush war policy, or who curtail social programs for the poor.

Arizona Republic, May 29, 2004 - Rev. Andre Boulanger, the only Catholic priest to decline to remove his name from a statement affirming the rights of homosexuals has been suspended from priestly ministry. Boulanger was one of nine Phoenix Diocese priests to sign the Phoenix Declaration, a statement issued in January 2003 by the organization *No Longer Silent - Clergy for Justice*. The organization is made up of clergy from several Protestant denominations, as well as some Catholic priests.

[365Gay.com Newscenter June 18, 2004](#) - Pope John Paul Friday stepped up his attacks on same-sex marriage saying that heterosexual marriage requires the "maximum protection" of all Catholics.

[Associated Press Friday, June 25, 2004](#) - The president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic bishops on Friday endorsed a proposed constitutional amendment that would ban gay marriage. He urged all Roman Catholics to lobby for its passage.

[The Boston Phoenix - July 16, 2004](#) - The most powerful local opponent fighting against the civil-marriage rights of same-sex couples is the Catholic Church. For months, the state's four bishops — led by Boston archbishop Seán O'Malley — have mounted an unprecedented campaign to sway the votes of Catholic politicians on Beacon Hill. But an even more intensive lobbying effort has taken place behind the scenes. Interviews with 10 state representatives and senators, only one of whom agreed to let his name be used, suggest that the Church has — intentionally or not — fostered a campaign of harassment against legislators who support civil-marriage rights for same-sex couples.

[Los Angeles Times , July 21, 2004](#) - Uneasy over the new government's liberal social agenda and its own declining influence, the Roman Catholic Church in Spain urged followers Tuesday to block Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero's plan to legalize same-sex marriage.

[PlanetOut.com, July 30, 2004](#) - In Bend, Ore., Bishop Robert F. Vasa has published a two-page "affirmation of faith" that requires lay ministers and cantors to accept the church's teachings against same-sex relationships, abortion, contraception and other issues if they want to keep their jobs.

[Religion News Service Aug. 4, 2004](#) - Catholic politicians who support abortion rights in three Southeastern states will be barred from Communion until they publicly recant and receive the consent of their bishop, three dioceses said Wednesday. In an unprecedented show of solidarity, the bishops of Atlanta, Charlotte, N.C., and Charleston, S.C., said unrepentant politicians "are not to be admitted to Holy Communion in any Catholic church within our jurisdictions."

[The Sydney Morning Herald Sept. 16, 2004](#) - Cardinal Pell banned a group of liberal Catholics from using a church venue for a conference, due to the fact that it was to hear from a representative of Catholic gay support group Rainbow Sash. Cardinal Pell also stopped Bishop Power from celebrating mass at the conference and ordered two priests not to attend.

[The Associated Press Oct 12, 2004](#) - A prominent Mexican cardinal denounced legalization of same-sex weddings in an interview published Tuesday, saying it would be like considering cats or cockroaches part of a family. Javier Lozano Barragan complained that defenders of same-sex marriage argue that people living together constitute a family.

[Minneapolis Star Tribune Oct 28, 2004](#) - A Catholic church in Minneapolis known for its progressive stands on social issues has been ordered by the Vatican and the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis to remove Gay Pride material from its Web site and stop allowing unordained guests to speak during mass.

[Washington Post Oct 28, 2004](#) - Detroit Cardinal Adam Maida urged Michigan's 2.25 million Catholics, nearly a third of the state's registered voters, to pass the amendment in an eight-minute videotape that every Catholic church in the state was strongly encouraged to show during Sunday services this month.

[Portland State University Vanguard Oct. 29, 2004](#) - The Catholic Church took out a full-page ad in the Oregonian to "remind Catholics that abortion, homosexuality and same-sex marriage are incompatible with receiving Holy Communion" - not just the acts themselves, but also any support of them.

[www.zenit.org, "The World Seen from Rome." Nov. 4 & 5, 2004](#) - In a two part interview, this Catholic propaganda organization, took a report supporting GLBT families and twisted it into an indictment of LGBT families. Claiming that children of LGBT families were more apt to experience severe attachment disorder. They cited studies published in the Archives of General Psychiatry stating that persons self-identified as homosexual in comparison to the general public had almost double the rate of suicidal ideation or attempts, substance abuse problems and psychological disorders, and suggested that 78.6% of the gay, lesbian or bisexual group suffered from multiple disorders.

*Compiled by Soulforce, Inc. November 10, 2004*