



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 23, 2010

Women-Church Convergence Calls On Catholic Bishops to Stand Against Anti-gay Hate Crimes

Member organizations of Women-Church Convergence (W-CC) are disheartened by the recent suicides of 5 young people caused by harassment over their sexual orientation. Tyler Clementi, Seth Walsh, Billy Lucas, Raymond Chase and Asher Brown were young people faced with harassment and bullying by their peers.

In a society reeling from violence and anti-gay tactics, W-CC hopes the Roman Catholic Church could model Jesus' message of love and nonviolence by providing pastoral care to youth seeking guidance and protection from bullying. Unfortunately, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has not chosen to stand with the members of diverse faith communities to condemn acts of violence and hatred that have stimulated the violence against lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and queer (LGTBQ) community. Where are the voices of the Roman Catholic bishops?

Further, W-CC is appalled by:

- the recent mailing of 400,000 DVDs by Minnesota Bishop John C. Nienstedt urging voters to support a state constitutional amendment to preserve the traditional definition of marriage.
- the denial of Communion to 24 Minnesota Catholics wearing rainbow ribbons to Mass by John C. Nienstedt, the Archbishop of MN.

W-CC opposes the use of the tactics by some bishops to push ballot initiatives that jeopardize the fundamental civil rights of LGTBQ U.S. citizens. We assert that using Eucharist as a weapon against those who prophetically dissent from the Church's teachings is unjust and immoral.

W-CC calls for the USCCB to come forward and take a stand against the hate crimes against the LGTBQ community. The Gospel message compels all Christians to condemn the crimes of hatred that are fueled by silence in the face of egregious actions.

W-CC affirms the dignity, value, and human rights of all persons. When it comes to matters of sexual orientation the dignity of every individual is at stake. W-CC strongly suggests that the USCCB consults their own papal documents which deal with the dignity of the individual and the call to consult their conscience.

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For more information, visit our website at

www.women-churchconvergence.org

Women-Church Convergence (W-CC) is a coalition of autonomous Catholic-rooted organizations / groups raising a feminist voice and committed to an ekklesia of women which is participative, egalitarian and self-governing.

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