

Feast of Saints Peter & St. Paul.  
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### Reflection for LGBT Pride Weekend

My dear Brothers and Sisters, Here at All Saints Church we have dedicated a short period of time to raise consciousness about a prevailing social evil, of a grave injustice: the condemnation and persecution of all forms of non-heterosexual orientations and relationships. As to this homophobic persecution, the word that comes to my mind is ARROGANCE. Like the persecution of the Jews in the Nazi regime by the arrogance of national superiority: The Übermensch. Arrogant is the one who is self centered, who thinks to be better than others, but the whole idea is simply based on ignorance. Self centered ignorance is the source of all forms of arrogance. How many times have we seen arrogance in human history, including the history of Christianity with such examples as crusades, inquisitions, witch hunts, male superiority, and homophobia. I am a scientist and I have my expertise in certain fields of the life sciences including genetics. So from this area I would like to say a few words about the arrogance of homophobia in our time.

Some people still think that sexual orientation is a matter of choice. Yes, in very rare circumstances, this is true. But normally, sexual orientation is part of a bimodal distribution including a majority and a minority. Between the two groups are a very few who are bisexual. These are the ones who may have a choice, but not the rest of the distribution. In other words, to my view, sexual orientation is a natural given, that is a created given. The genetic background of sexual orientation is polygenic, including many genes in each individual genome. A polygenic system determines the range of possible development, and the environment determines where in this range the actually experienced orientation will be expressed. It is the genetic foundation that has the bimodal character.

The best source of information about actual sexual orientation is each individual person. And in this regard I would like to remind us that we owe a great deal of respect toward God's special creation in each one of us. What comes to my mind are the words from the Dutch catechism on the education of children. "*Education is service. To regard children as objects which can be turned into copies of one's own person and desires is self seeking. The parents should serve this new life, to set it free to be itself.*"

Some people would disagree with some of the things I mentioned here up to now. So I would like to provide a soothing example that is less controversial and easier to see but it is, genetically speaking, similar to the inheritance of sexual orientation. The example is handedness. The prejudice against the left hand goes way back to the classical times. Even the names show this prejudiced bias. Dextera is the Latin word for the right hand. The one that is able: 'dexterous;' and sinistra, the left hand that is hidden under the toga, the 'sinister' one. I remember, in the elementary school in Hungary, when we were taught how to write, we were not allowed to use the left hand for writing. Our teacher would hit the hand of the child who tried to use the left hand. Fortunately, today the prejudice against left handedness has diminished considerably.

Genetically speaking, it is amazing how similar is the genetic structure of the inheritance of handedness, and the inheritance of sexual orientation. The distribution of handedness is also bimodal. There are very few who are ambidextrous, and are able to use both hands for all tasks, including writing. Can you change your handedness? Can you sit down and begin to write with your left hand? Taken as it is, a created given, the answer is no. You may improve it with practice, but it will never be the same. It simply does not come naturally. Even if you learn it, it is not the way you really are. In addition, the similarity of the comparison fails beyond this point because sexual orientation is far more complex genetically than handedness. The way you are born is the way you really are, and that is the way you should be, that is the way you should find life fulfillments, and that is the way you should be loved and respected by all.

Amen.