

## MY ONLINE COMMENTS ABOUT IRELAND'S MARRIAGE EQUALITY REFERENDUM

Response to "good Catholic" Daniel O Donnell asking for a yes vote in Ireland's Same Sex Marriage Referendum

The Church is telling the truth that Jesus was against gay relationships never mind marriage. Jesus did not repudiate the commands his God gave demanding that homosexuals be stoned to death but proclaimed the book that made these rules the infallible word of God. If he did away with such laws, he did not clearly say so. Even if he did change the law, he did not say it was wrong before. Such laws need to be explicitly rejected and he didn't do that. Honoring the Bible is implicit homophobia. Even if same sex marriage is not wrong in itself, God can ban it for one of his strange purposes. The point I wish to make is that people must see that if same sex marriage is not allowed then this is discrimination and that means that the Church is discriminating by not allowing or facilitating it. The Church will have to allow it or lose its members. I am voting yes because yes is not only a vote for same sex marriage but a vote for running this country sensibly instead of worrying about what Jesus or any religious figure who claims to be speaking for God says. Religious leaders cannot claim to be God for they will be laughed at so they do the next best thing - they say God knows best and we don't so he appointed men to speak for him and deliver his revelations to the sheep.

Some questions for Ger Brennan, Dublin footballer who advocated No in the Same Sex Marriage Referendum in 2015

Why do Christians who oppose same sex marriage and civil partnerships all claim to have gay friends? Many people do not have gay friends.

Why did he write for Alive! which is a trashy religious tabloid full of hate and abuse for gay people and atheists and which is notorious for refusing to correct its lies?

If he is such a strong believer, what does he think of God's alleged declaration in the Bible that a man lying with a man is an abomination and they have nobody to blame but themselves for being stoned to death? Jesus took responsibility for writing this for he said he agreed with the Old Testament and that it was God's infallible word. Jesus if he claimed to be God claimed to be the divine author. Also Jesus said that the Old Testament would not be done away but toughened up and that whoever relaxed its rules would be cursed in the kingdom of Heaven. What about the New Testament teaching which is even more savage than the Old Testament and claims that gay people who engage in sex commit a sin so bad that it merits being banned from any happiness after death and indeed will result in that unless it is repented? Ger is lying about his homophobia for he certainly knows of these dark and harsh and twisted teachings and though he isn't violent he still tacitly supports the evil commanded by his Bible. We must remember too that evil has to look good to succeed so don't chip in with, "But Ger is such a nice person despite his belief in the Bible." Human nature is notorious for enabling evil with a smile. A truly decent person does not even contemplate honouring an evil book as the word of God. He throws it away. The good bits are a reason for rejecting it not accepting it. Something that advocates good and teaches good and then teaches its opposite is worse than something that means well but does little else but damage. Evil needs to be softened by having lots of good put into the mix. That way it does more harm than shamelessly blatant and undiluted evil.

It is homophobia Ger to lie that this referendum is about children when it is not. Don't use children to get your way. The referendum merely wishes to see two people of the same sex recognised as family in the eyes of the law just as the law already would recognise a heterosexual couple who are too old to have sex or reproduce as married. It says nothing about a right to have children. It is not asking anybody to have children.

## TO GAY COMMUNITY NEWS GCN

In the run-up to Ireland's same sex marriage referendum, campaigners need to emphasise that how the law defines marriage is its own business and/or that of the electorate. Thus it is not right to expect the law to define marriage the way the Church would. The law's job is to look after the people as people and not as religious people. Only that guarantees equality. We must remember too that life is about compromise. Most jobs require you to support or engage in things you may consider immoral. But you have to get on with the job. The Church recognises this as it seeks a relationship even with the state when it allows things the Church considers to be intolerable on religious or ethical grounds. That the Church will not comply if required by state law to facilitate same sex marriages indicates a refusal to compromise. The Church will base the refusal on moral grounds but this is hypocritical. The refusal indicates direct and indirect hate for same sex couples - same sex marriage must be a worse evil than making arms in a factory if that refusal is warranted. The Church is paid good money by the flock to nourish it spiritually. It is wrong for the Church to refuse to care what the majority want when their money makes the church exist. The Church implies this logic is correct for it says, "Most taxpayers are Christian so it is mere justice for the state to finance Church schools with their money". Christianity must be willing to serve the people instead of putting anybody's wishes first - even those of Jesus Christ. Happiness matters more than obedience to Jesus. Jesus did say

that God prefers mercy to the sacrificial. Finally we need to ask if protecting marriage is the same thing as protecting the family? It is not for the family can be legally protected without it.

A pinknews comment said the government should let religious people refuse to perform same-sex marriage

The comment goes "religious people should not interfere in anything concerning same-gender civil marriage" - but they can and will through voting and running for public office and influencing voters and any public representatives who care to listen.

The notion that the state must exempt religion from the law violates the separation that needs to exist between religion and the state. The state must see its citizens not as religion or religions but as individuals. It treats the person as a human being not as a religion. Thus while registrars must be given the right to refuse to perform any marriage, if they won't do same sex marriages they are in the wrong job. Also, they perform marriages in the name of the state not their own name. So it is nonsense to imagine that a Christian who is registrar at a same sex marriage is enabling something he or she sees as sin. Yet that is what the Christian will claim - that they are being asked to agree with what their conscience forbids. They are being asked to uphold the law not to violate their conscience. The law is not about their conscience.

The main thing about conscience is that it should be about obeying the law of the land for the common good. For example, if the law commands registrars to perform same sex marriages - even if they think it is wrong - then the registrars should obey. Conscience cannot be an excuse for disobedience. Obeying the law takes precedence over any other moral difficulties the person may have with obeying the law. We all have to compromise our consciences and the law. For example, you pay your taxes though they might be used to wage an unfair war. We all compromise so why can't registrars and doctors who are anti-abortion? The law has the right to make registrars and doctors do things they claim are wrong - period!

I believe Christians condemning gay and lesbian activities as a grave sin are insulting the love exhibited by same sex couples living together. I don't know why we are so tolerant of such condemnations. In some ways, condemning love is worse than condemning skin colour. That is the reason after all racism is so bad - it lacks love.

People say that beliefs should be respected when they held deeply. But who decides how deeply they are held? Who decides what deeply held beliefs need to be taken account of by the law and which ones are not to be? What about people who pretend their beliefs are deeply held? What if the beliefs are obviously wrong - such as that a gay person is bad enough to go to Hell forever? Is it not wiser to call beliefs that are too silly to deserve refutation delusions? And what happens when a person deeply believes the registrar should officiate at her and her girlfriend's wedding and the registrar does not? Does the deepest belief come first? It could be argued that as the lesbian's belief in her love is more fundamental than the registrar's religious belief that same sex relationships are wrong that her belief comes first. Belief in love has to come before belief in religion which might be proven false or which the person might turn away from. Love and life matter more than religion or religious faith. Faith matters more than specifically religious faith. The law of the land must recognise that religious belief alone is not a reason to let the holder of the belief discriminate against others or get exemptions from obeying the law. If it is, then only strong belief, should be a reason. But the state cannot be an arbiter of how strong or believable a person's faith is. It would mean that the state would have to examine the evidence for why a religious belief seems to be true and be a complete violation of the secularism.

The law will be arbitrary in what "deep" beliefs it protects. To protect a person's deep belief that homosexuality is wrong is homophobia because the person's deep belief that atheist books should not be published without a theological rebuttal will not be respected. And yet as Christ said God comes first meaning that if there is a choice between protecting belief in God and protecting belief that homosexuality is a sin then choose protecting belief in God.

When a law comes in, it not only tells you what to do but it implies other things as well. For example, if any deep beliefs are to be respected then all are - period. A door is opened even if there are restrictions for the restrictions are not logical.

Notice that to say that your deeply held beliefs must be heeded by the law is to say that deeply held beliefs are sacred. But that makes no sense. Why stop with deeply held beliefs? Why not just any belief? If it is about how deep a person feels about belief then it is not about protecting belief but prejudice and hysterical immaturity. Beliefs should only be sort of sacred if they are true or if they are fact-based or in so far as they try to be fact-based. Some say that facts should be sacred not beliefs. I would say facts should be more sacred than beliefs. If you have to honour facts or belief and have to choose, then honour facts instead of belief.

In reality, those who protect the deeply held beliefs of religious people who want exemptions in the law so that they can discriminate against people are enablers of bigotry. They have a bit of it in themselves which is why they want to protect it. Also, "You can't give offence. You can only take it."

When people say that deeply held beliefs are to be protected by the law they are talking about religious beliefs. You never

hear of a historian saying he finds who deny the existence of Jesus to be offensive and that they must be silenced by the law. To protect some beliefs is to give those who say they hold them a privileged position in the law. Christians were able to suppress atheists by making the law discriminate against and even penalise those who espoused atheism. If you are going to be offended then be offended by attempts to stifle free speech. Those who want it stifled want us to be afraid to speak our minds. We cannot trust anything we are told except in a society that encourages free inquiry. And expressing opinions helps us work out the truth and sometimes when an opinion is wrong there is still a little truth in it. The mathematical calculation giving the wrong result it can still be half right with regard to the equations.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10914768/Christian-beliefs-need-balancing-with-equality.html>

The main thing about conscience is that it should be about obeying the law of the land for the common good. For example, if the law commands registrars to perform same sex marriages - even if they think it is wrong - then the registrars should obey. Conscience cannot be an excuse for disobedience. Obeying the law takes precedence over any other moral difficulties the person may have with obeying the law. We all have to compromise our consciences and the law. For example, you pay your taxes though they might be used to wage an unfair war. We all compromise so why can't registrars and doctors who are anti-abortion? The law has the right to make registrars and doctors do things they claim are wrong - period!

June 2014

## RELIGIOUS BASED DISCRIMINATION AGAINST LGBT

<http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2015/07/23/this-bill-could-outlaw-anti-lgbt-discrimination-in-all-50-states/>

Religious based discrimination against LGBT people and those who sympathise with them is a huge problem. Christians can destroy the career say of a teacher who marries somebody of the same sex and they destroy it claiming they are exercising their right to disapprove of same sex relationships. They want special rights and special protection for their religious beliefs and there is no concern if the teacher's non-religious belief is that same sex marriage is a fundamental human right. One belief has to be treated like dirt while the other is treated like gold.

Do we really want a country where those who say LGBT people should have equal rights to straight people get the same hearing as those who would deny them those rights on religious grounds? What about women needing their rights to run for political office, to have access to abortion, birth control and divorce?

Many argue that though religious beliefs should get no special protection, it is unfair to deny them a fair hearing in the public and governmental sphere. They say it is unfair to ignore or reject one belief in favour of a rival belief. If they are right then it is clear that beliefs opposing homosexuality are going to cause bother for those who labour for LGBT rights. A debate can delay justice and anything that makes a debate too long or too complicated is a worry. Debate is hard enough without the babel of religious voices. Suppose people are trying to decide if LGBT people should have more rights. They will examine what harm homophobia does. They will ask if gay sex is in any way necessarily harmful? They will ask if the problems that sometimes come with straight sex occur in gay sex too and consider the significance of this. What about diseases? What about mental health? When you are asking these questions you do not want to hear, "Okay for me the main thing is that God said it is seriously wrong in my holy book the Koran." Listening to that means you have to listen to those who object because the Prophet Joseph Smith said something or the Pope or the Venusians or whatever. There are as many different scriptures, sects, theologies and faiths out there as there are people. Those people are starting with doctrine not with trying to see how LGBT people live and what they need.

We must remember that if a religion opposes some freedoms for women or LGBT people, that it may debate without even mentioning religious doctrine. It may look at it in an earthy way. Nobody says that their views are to be excluded from debate then. Just because a religion is saying it does not mean it is speaking doctrinally. You need to hear their arguments even if they are rubbish for it helps you serve the truth better. Truth is not about what is true only but about rejecting what is nonsense. You need to hear nonsense in order to help the truth be seen.

The state does not have the time to listen to all the different religions and different factions within each religion so all must try and discuss the matter on humanitarian grounds and forget about religious doctrine.

The problem with religion is that it considers its beliefs because they are religious and spiritual to matter more than any secular or non-religious beliefs. For the believer, the God belief will always trump belief in evolution or vaccination. The believer tolerates non-religious belief and has no deep respect for it. So if the believer does not mention God or faith in his arguments they still proceed from faith. It is hard and often impossible to know if a religion is really speaking as a religion or speaking to man on the human level. It is hard to be confident that the religion is not speaking from faith.

Not all beliefs are worth listening to. Some are more worthy of attention than others. This implies that if you think a religion is speaking from faith despite appearances then its arguments in the public sphere should be listened to but not

given the same weight as rational and sensible and humanitarian arguments.

Ultimately the only way to unite humanity more so that discussion can flow faster and better and lucidly is for people to stop supporting religion. If people discarded their supernatural and magical beliefs there would be no problem. They would agree with each other better. Human rights would be recognised faster and more securely and their protection would be assured.

The state must not encourage religious faith. It should be afforded tolerance but not endorsement or devotion.

Secular beliefs are the only true protectors of human rights.

To a man who defended Catholicism despite being gay on Pink News - he said that gay and educated Catholics are happy to stay in the Church and support it and that those who tell them to leave are bitter

Would you please learn what Catholicism is about before you promote it and defend it?

If there are really sincere and educated Catholics out there, they are not highly or properly educated in religious matters. There is no excuse for the evidence that Catholicism and other religions are man-made is easily enough got online. It is you who is the bitter one for Truth above simply meant that if a religion does not suit you or teaches grave errors or seriously rejects you then walk. In fairness to Catholicism, it says it is a sin to stay in the Church if it makes grave errors for God wants all people to be in the religion - whatever it is - that protects and is the pillar of the truth.

And Christianity is just a man-made religion. A yes to Jesus is a yes to indirect and implicit homophobia. Jesus even if he did stop the stoning of an adulteress to death did not apologise for or repudiate the stoning of anyone prior to that. In fact he said the Law of Moses was written by God meaning the cruel command to stone adulterous people and practicing homosexuals came from the God (see Leviticus 20:13 where God is quoted as saying that if a man lies with a man they are to be stoned to death. God says it is an abomination to have gay sex - abomination means morally and extremely detestable) he put forward as a sign of perfection to be emulated and worshipped. He supposedly claimed to be that God! No Christian has the right to say Christ did not engage in such killings when he was on earth for nobody knows anything about the most of his life. As a good Jew who supported the law it is possible that he did participate.

It is an insult to the people murdered as a result of the Leviticus law to say, "We don't do that now so it is okay".

When you praise the Bible as being unerring in its teaching and doctrine, you are saying it is right to say that God commanded that homosexuals be stoned to death. That is to mention one evil out of many that it commands. This is extreme evil. Respecting and approving of it makes you no better than those who picked up the stones. To praise the Bible is to indirectly respect and approve the evil. To praise the God of the Bible is to implicitly respect and approve the evil. The evil being implicit or indirect does not make it any less bad. It is still as reprehensible and intolerable. In one way, you are worse than the killers for they had more chance of feeling bad about it than you!

Catholic teaching is that God revealed everything we need to know and that the Catholic Church alone protects that revelation fully and properly for the infallible Jesus guides and permeates the teaching of the Church. Thus any change of doctrine such as to embrace homosexuality would be to deny this. Even more so if the Church abandons its doctrine that sex outside marriage or that same sex marriage is impossible in the eyes of God. The doctrinal ban on gay sex and sex outside marriage is very basic to Catholicism. The Church teaches gradualism - that any respect shown say to a gay person is intended to bring them to full acceptance of Catholic doctrine one step at a time. Kindness to gays is a strategy for destroying the "sin" of homosexuality. The gay person who is in the Church and who practices homosexuality, is in fact helping the Church to do its work. It is passive support if you are not in the Church and if you never bother challenging its teaching. Membership even if lapsed counts as active support whether you like to admit it or not. You have to decide if you wish to be a cafeteria Catholic and thereby enable and be complicit in hypocrisy or if you wish to be a proper Catholic and enable the Church to do what it does, including the discouraging of gay love. Most people would say that to enable hypocrisy and to make it attractive is worse than to enable Catholicism even if they feel Catholicism when practiced consistently and with full and proper obedience to the Church is dangerous. Hypocrisy is the ultimate cancer in society.

Nothing is as irritating as the gay person who supports and enables the Church.

Re same sex marriage rejected in Northern Ireland by the Assembly 2014, posted on Belfast Telegraph

I worry that marriage itself is a declaration that families made by parents who are not married to each other are somehow inferior and unworthy of the same protection as families based on marriage. We all know cohabiting couples who raise their children far better and are far happier than many families with married parents. It is commitment that matters not a ceremony. A ceremony cannot make a commitment but can only recognise a commitment that already exists. I believe

Christians condemning cohabitation as a grave sin are insulting the love exhibited by couples living together. I don't know why we are so tolerant of such condemnations. In some ways, condemning love is worse than condemning skin colour.

Mr Silvester claimed that the storms that brought the UK to its knees at the end of 2013 were divine punishment because the state brought in same sex marriage

UKIP said the views expressed by Mr Silvester were 'not the party's belief' but defended his right to state his opinions.

But did he say they were opinions? An opinion is something that is up for debate and that asks for it. If he was stating what he stated as fact and if we can know he is right then the implication is that whoever works for same sex marriage is hateful and doing a lot of harm. They are provoking God to hurt others. Would he get the same right to declare his "opinion" if he said that all non-Christians should be shot as they were making God angry?