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**God Does Not Restrict the Categories of His Call**

*Should the Catholic priesthood be restricted to single, celibate men? Do clergy restrictions based on gender, marital status or sexual orientation make sense these days?*  
  
1.....*The Rev. Alberto Cutie* has had a concubine for the past several years, his church (the Roman Catholic) having forbidden him to have a wife. The first Lateran Council (1123) forbad all clergy to have a concubine, and the second Lateran Council (1139) tightened down even harder against clergy sex: no married man can be ordained, according to "the law of continence and purity," and marriage is to be avoided because of its "impurities." (This in spite of the New Testament's instruction that "Marriage is to be honored by all" - Hebrews 13:4.)  
  
2.....Jesus' Apostle Peter, whom the Roman Catholic Church considers to have been the first pope, was*married*. But gradually, partly in competition with priesthood in some others religions (not Judaism), sex was squeezed out of the ideals and rules of Christian ordination to the various levels of clergy, especially in the Roman Church. The resulting widespread sexual corruption among the clergy was a factor leading to the 16th century Protestant Reformation, all of whose prominent leaders married. Yet as late as 1533, a married man (Thomas Cranmer) was elevated as (the Roman Catholic) Archbishop of Canterbury. A mixed picture, indeed.

3.....All the Roman Church's restrictions on sex have been made exclusively by males, and its intensifying anti-sex has been and is a disgrace to the Christian religion. Forbidden marriage, multitudes of clergy have taken to concubinage, promiscuity, and sexual child-abuse. Forbidden artificial conception control, some 97% of American Catholic married laity have violated their church's prohibition. (If all the sex-decisions had been made exclusively by women, the distortions would be as great. God made men and women to think together.)  
  
4.....Rev. Cutie's bishop, removing him from all his activities (including television) as a priest, declared his behavior a "scandal." He "has millions of followers in the Spanish-speaking world" (CNN.com), and depriving his followers of his ministry is a scandal.Depriving clergy of marriage is a scandal, and against the Bible as well as against nature.  
  
5.....Rev. Cutie says that for thirteen years after ordination to the priesthood, he kept his vow of celibacy (against marriage) and continence (against sex). Then, for two years, he continued his vow against marriage though not his vow against sex - but he was faithful to his concubine (the church's word for it, not his). He says, rightly, "celibacy is good," but only when optional. He and his concubine desire to marry. I hope they do. Their church, and the world, need their witness.  
  
6.....The ordination of clergy is the human response to "vocation," God's "call" to ministry in and through the churches. I consider it blasphemous to give God a list of excluded categories: God is free to "call" men and women - single, married, heterosexual, homosexual - and, I believe, does.

**BY WILLIS E. ELLIOTT  |  MAY 11, 2009; 10:57 PM ET**

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Jesus Christ was celibate. Is it sinful for a servant to imitate his master?

**POSTED BY: WITHOUTHAVINGSEEN | MAY 17, 2009 3:23 AM**

"I consider it blasphemous to give God a list of excluded categories: God is free to "call" men and women - single, married, heterosexual, homosexual - and, I believe, does."

Beautifully stated, Reverend.

**POSTED BY: FARNAZ1MANSOURI1 | MAY 16, 2009 2:16 PM**The comments to this entry are closed.