

Dr. George Pell, Archbishop of Sydney, Australia : people who reject Church teaching not entitled to Holy Communion...

"My Son is much grieved, My child, in the manner in which many come to Him in His House. They come with disrespect. They do not have love for Him in their hearts. My child, please, they lead themselves onto the road to satan. They must not accept My Son with sin in their hearts. Many do not go to Our representatives. They accept My Son with sin on their souls! Shout it, My child, from the roofs: you must honor the Eucharist!" - *Our Lady of the Roses, November 23, 1974*

Catholic Archbishop George Pell drew wide media attention when on Pentecost Sunday he refused to give Communion to openly homosexual and lesbian activists of the Rainbow Sash movement. The Archbishop made this statement on May 19, 2002:

"The Catholic Church offers good will to all sections of society and offers the promise of prayer and practical help where possible. We pray in particular for those in prisons not of their own making and for those who can only struggle slowly towards the truth.

"While I accept that people may hold views on the appropriate expression of their sexual life and identity which differ from the Church's teachings, I deeply regret that such people -- who profess the Catholic faith -- would choose to mount an ideological demonstration during Mass, and especially at Communion time. This is inappropriate.

"Receiving the sacrament is the ultimate expression of our Catholic faith, an intensely personal matter between communicant and Almighty God. An unworthy communion, willfully made, is a serious matter.

"It's not a question of refusing homosexuals or someone who is homosexually oriented. Sexual orientation is morally irrelevant. The rule is basically the same for all Catholics.

"A person who publicly defines himself at any given time as supporting or practicing activities contrary to Church teaching in a serious matter is not entitled to receive Holy Communion.

"This would apply, for example, to a married person openly living in or advocating adultery. Similarly, persons who openly declare that active homosexuals should be able to receive Communion take a position which is contrary to the teaching and discipline of the Universal Church.

"Also, a person who is not a member of the Catholic Church has no right to Catholic communion, except in exceptional circumstances.

"The Church's view on sexuality I have explained many times before. It is clear and unequivocal, and derives from natural moral law, which we believe is unchanging. Such moral law governs all people everywhere, in precisely the same way, regardless of the

circumstances under which they live. God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve and important consequences follow from this.

"I do not seek these confrontations and I rarely speak publicly on these matters. However, this incident allows me to explain the centrality of the Catholic teaching on marriage and family. I will continue to dialogue privately and publicly with those who think differently. Our Judeo-Christian religious tradition allows men and women sexual expression within the bounds of family life, a sexuality which is life-giving. Homosexual acts are contrary to the natural law; they close the sexual act to the gift of life. These teachings are givens from our Christian point of view.

"We have had these protests before. Probably they will be with us for quite a time yet. I will pray for the protesters. I do not promise to speak publicly on the theme at every protest. But the protesters must realize that the Church's teaching on this matter cannot, will not, change.

"Although human weakness is universal and God's mercy infinite, the path to happiness and heaven for a Catholic does not lie in seeking to re-interpret what is right and wrong.

"Rather, one should commit oneself, in good faith, to the Church and its teachings and work towards following these teachings as closely as possible."

George Pell
Archbishop of Sydney
May 19, 2002