

of the distinction commonly drawn between the homosexual condition or tendency and individual homosexual actions," the latter which are "intrinsically disordered" and "in no case to be approved of" (no. 3).

2. Since "[i]n the discussion which followed the publication of the (above-mentioned) Declaration . . . an overly benign interpretation was given to the homosexual condition itself, some going so far as to call it neutral, or even good," the Letter goes on to clarify: "Although the particular inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin, it is a more or less strong tendency ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil; and thus the inclination itself must be seen as an objective disorder. Therefore special concern and pastoral attention should be directed toward those who have this condition, lest they be led to believe that the living out of this orientation in homosexual activity is a morally acceptable option. It is not" (no. 3).

3. "As in every moral disorder, homosexual activity prevents one's own fulfillment and happiness by acting contrary to the creative wisdom of God. The Church, in rejecting erroneous opinions regarding homosexuality, does not limit but rather defends personal freedom and dignity realistically and authentically understood" (no. 7).

4. In reference to the homosexual movement, the Letter states: "One tactic used is to protest that any and all criticism of or reservations about homosexual people, their activity, and lifestyle are simply diverse forms of unjust discrimination" (no. 9).

5. "There is an effort in some countries to manipulate the Church by gaining the often well-intentioned support of her pastors with a view to changing civil statutes and laws. This is done in order to conform to these pressure groups' concept that homosexuality is at least a completely harmless, if not an entirely good, thing. Even when the practice of homosexuality may seriously threaten the lives and well-being of a large number of people, its advocates remain undeterred and refuse to consider the magnitude of the risks involved" (no. 9).

6. "She (the Church) is also aware that the view that homosexual activity is equivalent to, or as acceptable as, the sexual expression of conjugal love has a direct impact on society's understanding of the nature and rights of the family and puts them in jeopardy" (no. 9).

7. "It is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the object of violent malice in speech or in action. Such treatment deserves condemnation from the Church's pastors wherever it occurs. It reveals a kind of disregard for others which endangers the most fundamental principles of a healthy society. The intrinsic dignity of each person must always be respected in word, in action, and in law.

"But the proper reaction to crimes against homosexual persons should not be to claim that the homosexual condition is not disordered. When such a claim is made and when homosexual activity is consequently condoned, or when civil

'True prophets' needed to oppose 'culture of death'

John Cardinal O'Connor of New York called for the emergence of "true prophets" to oppose the "abomination of desolation" in abortion, euthanasia, and assisted suicide, in remarks made in three talks on June 27 at the Canadian Pro-Life Conference in Toronto. He warned the pro-life conference of the common "threats to human life by way of euthanasia and assisted suicide. Euthanasia, you see, has begun with little things—we call them unborn babies. The language of denial by those who would threaten the life of anyone who does not meet their arbitrary standard of 'quality of life' now includes 'death with dignity.' It's all so nice and sterile. It's like calling abortion health care."

In a second talk the same day he remarked: "We are in enormously grave danger of becoming a culture of death as has never been known in history. Neither you nor I can ever be convinced that tearing a baby from his mother's womb, or encouraging a cancer-ridden elderly woman to commit suicide, are 'natural deeds.' Society has developed a truly unnatural culture that fulfills the prophetic 'abomination of desolation.' If ever in the world, if ever in history, true prophets were needed, we need them desperately today."

In condemning the movement to legalize euthanasia and suicide, the cardinal declared that similar attacks may soon be waged against the sick, the aged, the elderly frail, the retarded, and the handicapped. Such attacks, he said, "are really attacks on Christ, who refused to equivocate the truth, refused to be ambiguous."

legislation is introduced to protect behavior to which no one has any conceivable right, neither the Church nor society at large should be surprised when other distorted notions and practices gain ground, and irrational and violent reactions increase" (no. 10).

8. "What is at all costs to be avoided is the unfounded and demeaning assumption that the sexual behavior of homosexual persons is always and totally compulsive and therefore inculpable. What is essential is that the fundamental liberty which characterizes the human person and gives him his dignity be recognized as belonging to the homosexual person as well" (no. 11).

9. "In assessing proposed legislation, the Bishops should