



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on September 24, 2014

New York Cardinal Criticized for Participation in Parade With Homosexual Group

When the organizers of New York's St. Patrick's Day parade agreed to allow an openly homosexual group to march in the annual Irish-American event next March, many faithful Catholics thought that Cardinal Timothy Dolan (the Archbishop of New York) should have withdrawn his agreement to be the parade's grand marshal.



While no one has questioned the right of individual homosexuals to march in the parade that has been held on St. Patrick's Day since March 17, 1762, they have previously done so as part of another contingent. For example, a homosexual police officer or fire fighter would march as part of a police or fire organization.

What has changed for next year's parade is that the parade committee has approved the application of OUT@NBCUniversal, a lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender resource group from NBC, to march under their own banner.

The decision outraged a number of Catholic (and other) laymen who maintain that having the chief prelate in the Archdiocese of New York lend the dignity of his office to a parade that accords official status to a homosexual contingent sends the wrong message about the church's teaching on homosexuality.

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In an online article posted on September 4, Phil Lawler, the editor of the online *Catholic World News*, took strenuous exception to the decision to allow the homosexual group to join the parade. Wrote Lawler:

Next year there will be only one story-line of interest to the reporters who cover the annual parade in the world's media capital: the triumph of the gay activists. Photographers will be competing for the one "money" shot: the picture of the contingent from OUT@NBCUniversal marching past the reviewing stand at St. Patrick's Cathedral, under the benign smile of Cardinal Timothy Dolan.

And the media will be right to concentrate on that story line, because this is a significant advance for homosexual activists, a significant retreat for the Catholic Church. A generation ago, the late Cardinal John O'Connor said that it would be impossible to include proponents of homosexuality in a Catholic event.

In defending Cardinal O'Connor's past policy, Lawler noted: "In resisting demands from gay-activist groups to be included in the parade, the New York archdiocese was not judging homosexuals. It was



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simply observing that it would be absurd to include, in an event honoring a saint, a group dedicated to public acceptance of a moral disorder.”

The St. Patrick’s Day parade is not a church-sponsored event, but is organized by New York City St. Patrick’s Day Parade, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. However, since the overwhelming majority of Irish Americans are Catholic and it honors a saint canonized by the Catholic Church, it might be said that the parade is “culturally Catholic.” As such, Dolan’s highly visible participation presents both an opportunity or a pitfall for the cardinal, as Lawler points out.

“If this really is a Catholic event, it cannot include a group defined by its opposition to Church teaching,” said Lawler.

But “if it is not a Catholic event,” there should be “no sign of Church sponsorship” and “Cardinal Dolan should step aside as grand marshal.”

Rod Dreher, a former Catholic who became a member of the Orthodox Church after he asserted that the sex abuse scandal in the Catholic Church was not so much a “pedophile problem” but that the “sexual abuse of minors is facilitated by a secret, powerful network of gay priests,” wrote a column for *The American Conservative* on September 4 headlined, “You’ve Been Dolanized!” He noted:

In recent months, Catholic officials have tried to emphasize the church’s acceptance of gays and lesbians as individuals, while defending the church’s opposition to same-sex marriage. That rhetorical shift has been embraced by Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, who will serve as grand marshal for the parade next year.

“I have no trouble with the decision at all,” Cardinal Dolan said at an evening news conference announcing his appointment as grand marshal. “I think the decision is a wise one.”

Among other journalists who were critical of Dolan’s willingness to continue his participation in the parade was Pat Archbold, a blogger for the *National Catholic Register*, owned by the Catholic EWTN network, who wrote: “Cardinal Dolan must publicly reject the offer to be grand marshal and encourage the organizers to cancel the parade rather than accede to the demands of NBC.”

A report from CNS cited a statement on the NBCUniversal Diversity & Inclusion webpage:

OUT@NBCUniversal Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Straight Ally Employee Alliance (OUT) is a volunteer organization with a goal to attract, develop and retain Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Straight Ally employees and help NBCUniversal’s businesses effectively reach the LGBTQ community.

OUT@NBCUniversal attracts new employees by being visible in the local LGBT community and building a reputation as an employer of choice.

CNS noted that NBC is the network that broadcasts the parade.

Cardinal Dolan posted a statement explaining his position on the Archdiocese of New York website on September 3:

The Saint Patrick’s Day Parade Committee continues to have my confidence and support. Neither my predecessors as Archbishop of New York nor I have ever determined who would or would not march in this parade (or any of the other parades that march along Fifth Avenue, for that matter), but have always appreciated the cooperation of parade organizers in keeping the parade close to its Catholic heritage. My predecessors and I have always left decisions on who would march to the



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organizers of the individual parades.

While Dolan and his predecessors may not have determined who would or would not march in the parade, one such recent predecessor, Cardinal John Joseph O'Connor (1984-2000) supported the decision by the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) to exclude the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization from marching as such under its own banner in the parade.

Because of the strong criticism launched against O'Connor and the AOH by "pro-gay" voices, the Hibernians soon afterwards withdrew as the parade's organizer, turning control of it over to the Saint Patrick's Day Parade Committee.

In defending his decision to oppose having a homosexual contingent in the parade, O'Connor said in 1993: "Irish Catholics have been persecuted for the sole reason that they have refused to compromise Church teaching. What others may call bigotry, Irish Catholics call principle."

As for what church teaching on homosexuality is, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, in part:

Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved.

CNS News quoted Michael Voris, an outspoken Catholic layman who has never been known for pulling punches on controversial issues:

[Dolan was] more than giving the appearance [of condoning the LGBT group]. He is actually legitimizing it. This is not a question of can a person who has same-sex attraction march in the parade. That has probably been going on since 1762 [when the parade first started]. That's not the issue.

The issue is of people saying, "I identify as somebody who has sex with somebody of my same sex." And when a cardinal archbishop says, "that's great," and you can publicly say that in a parade that is associated with Catholicism, then that blends those two worlds together and makes it look like the Catholic Church is endorsing active homosexuality.

In his statement about the parade controversy, "Explaining My Decision to Serve as Grand Marshal," posted on the archdiocesan website on September 17, Dolan said, in part:

You will recall that I in the past often expressed support for the former policy — that the only banners and identification to be carried was that the group was Irish — and that I found it logical and fair....

I did not oppose the former policy; nor did I push, condone, or oppose the new one.

Spoken with the mind of a true politician! He supports the former policy, yet neither opposes nor condones the new one. Since the two policies are contradictory regarding an important moral issue, it is difficult to explain how a leading church figure can remain neutral on the subject. Perhaps Dolan has been taking lessons in logic and public speaking from Secretary of State John Kerry, who was once famously quoted, while he was a senator, as saying that he "actually did vote for the \$87 billion before I voted against it."

Photo parade viewers: "St Patricks Day Parade Montreal" by jpmipmontreal -



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