



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on December 11, 2012

Notre Dame University Will Allow Campus Homosexual Group

Following several months of consideration and review, Notre Dame, one of the nation's most high-profile Catholic universities, announced that it would move toward adding "a student organization tasked with providing services and support to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (GLBTQ) students and their allies," reported the university's student newspaper, the [Observer](#). The paper said the move came after years of lobbying by homosexual activists for a "Gay-Straight Alliance" at the university.



On December 5, Notre Dame's president, Father John Jenkins, signed off on recommendations from Notre Dame's Office of Student Affairs to "expand and enhance the support and services for students who identify" as GLBTQ. According to the *Observer*, Jenkins said the plan "grows out of our mission as a Catholic university [and is] directed by that fundamental mission in a profound way."

A Notre Dame [press release](#) explained that the plan for the initiative came after "a study of Catholic doctrine and teaching, listening sessions with Notre Dame students, and an examination of student clubs and structures at other Catholic universities." The release insisted that the plan is "rooted in Catholic teaching on sexuality and gender identity," and "calls all Notre Dame students to cultivate chaste relationships and to support one another in a community of friendship."

Among Notre Dame's plans for supporting homosexuals are:

- The establishment of a "support and service student organization for GLBTQ students and their allies that will produce activities consistent with Notre Dame's Catholic allegiance and commitments."
- The launch of an advisory committee of students and staff to address the supposedly unique needs of students who identify as homosexual, transgender, or "questioning."
- The appointment of a full-time staff member who will serve as a liaison between "GLBTQ" students and other Notre Dame departments.

Father Jenkins said he thought "if people look carefully at what we're doing and really, in a thoughtful way, evaluate it, I think thoughtful people will see that this makes sense. It makes sense for a Catholic university like Notre Dame to provide such structures to serve their students effectively." He added that he was confident "this multi-faceted, pastoral approach represents the next step in advancing our efforts toward this aspiration for our GLBTQ students."

However, noted the [Cardinal Neuman Society](#) in its coverage of the announcement, "at least one Vatican official has expressed reservations about a Catholic college organizing any student activity centered on homosexuality." The Society was referring to a 1992 comment by Cardinal Pio Laghi, then-Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, who expressed his opposition to a homosexual club



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at Seattle University. “At a Catholic university, support can be given only to Catholic teaching on homosexuality and Catholic pastoral practice to help homosexual persons morally, ascetically, and spiritually,” said the cardinal, adding that a Catholic university’s “responsibilities towards homosexual persons, doctrinally and pastorally, should find their expression in courses in Catholic theology.”

Similarly, William Dempsey of the [Sycamore Trust](#), an alumni group that exists to preserve and strengthen Notre Dame’s Catholic character and heritage, recalled that the university had previously rejected a homosexual student organization as being incompatible with the school’s Catholic convictions. “Few will be credulous enough to think that the school finally got around to considering the matter carefully,” Dempsey wrote in a December 6 e-mail in response to the university’s announcement.

A [commentary](#) on the Sycamore Trust website predicted that the new homosexual “support” structure at the school, “whose organizing principle is same sex attraction,” will likely become a forum “for opposition to the Church’s teachings about homosexuality. It may also become an instrumentality in the student ‘hookup’ culture.”

The commentary noted that there “are disquieting signs” that Notre Dame is moving in the direction feared. “The principal student spokesperson for this cause is also a public supporter of gay marriage,” the article continued. “And a number of homosexual students “spoke quite openly about ‘hookups’ among gay students — an effort that would be aided by the university’s new GLBTQ” structure.

The article applauded Notre Dame for going “to great lengths to fulfill its obligation of affording homosexual students a full measure of justice and charity.” However, added the article, the school could now best serve such students, “not through a club that defines them by their sexual identity in a secular way, but by encouraging the establishment of a chapter of the Catholic Apostolate [Courage](#), which provides fellowship and support in the move ‘beyond the confines of the homosexual identity to a more complete one in Christ.’”

In November [LifeSiteNews.com](#) reported on a survey by [TFP Student Action](#), a Catholic organization committed to defending traditional moral and family values, that found 52 percent of Catholic colleges and universities in the U.S. now sponsor pro-homosexual student clubs that violate Church teaching. Many of these clubs “act as platforms of Catholic dissent, advancing the idea of same-sex ‘marriage,’ the acceptance of homosexual lifestyles, gender confusion, and the rejection of Catholic teaching,” reported LifeSite.

In announcing its survey TFP Student Action recalled comments Pope Benedict XVI made in 2008 to Catholic educators at the Catholic University of America. “Teachers and administrators, whether in universities or schools, have the duty and privilege to ensure that students receive instruction in Catholic doctrine and practice,” declared the Pope. “This requires that public witness to the way of Christ, as found in the Gospel and upheld by the Church’s Magisterium, shapes all aspects of an institution’s life, both inside and outside the classroom.” The Pope warned that drifting from this vision “weakens Catholic identity and, far from advancing freedom, inevitably leads to confusion, whether moral, intellectual, or spiritual.”

TFP Student Action director John Ritchie said that “at the heart of so many famous Catholic universities, a real dictatorship of ‘tolerance’ is sidelining the truth, throwing 2,000 years of Catholic teaching right out the window. More and more students are confronted with visible, active, and well-funded pro-homosexual clubs that openly contradict natural law and undermine good moral values.”

LifeSiteNews noted that thus far some “24,000 students and concerned parents have signed a [protest](#)



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[petition](#) drafted by TFP Student Action, urging Catholic university presidents to disband pro-homosexual clubs within their institutions.”



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