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Pope offers fluid response to rainbow nun

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Rainbow correspondence between the Pope and Sister Jeannine Gramick. The latter has been a champion of LGBT rights for years and it was for this very reason, that Pope Francis met her last October and praised her work. Notably, the once Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in a Notification of May 1999, declared the nun's positions 'regarding the intrinsic malice of homosexual acts and the objective disorder of

homosexual inclination doctrinally unacceptable because they do not faithfully transmit the clear and constant teaching of the Catholic Church on this point'.

Now, Sister Gramick has decided to express her reservations on the radical-liberal website New Ways Ministry regarding the Declaration of the Dicastery of the Doctrine of the Faith Dignitas Infinita, because of the criticism in the document against the so-called gender theory. Gramick writes: 'the section on gender theory, which condemns "gender ideology", is harming the transgender people I love'. Hence, according to the rainbow nun in the article, her decision to write directly to the Pope. Francis replied - and we will quote his reply verbatim later - stating that 'gender ideology makes everyone equal', as expounded in Dignitas Infinita.

Gramick then - she continues her story - wrote back to the Pope reminding him that 'unfortunately in the United States (and other parts of the world), "gender ideology" has a different meaning. It does not mean nullifying or disrespecting differences. Indeed, the opposite is true'. In short, the American nun argues that gender theory preaches sexual difference because homosexuality would be a particular variant of sexual orientation and transsexualism would identify special psychological sexual identities. And thus sexuality would be a rainbow colour palette of multiple tones. From this perspective, gender ideology would privilege differences, not iron them out.

The Pope, on the other hand, rightly states that homosexuality and transsexuality eliminate differences and does so for moral and theoretical reasons (the 'respect for personal history' evoked by the Pope is irrelevant). On a moral level, homosexuality would have equal ethical value to heterosexuality and the will to 'change' sex would have equal dignity to the will to live according to one's biological sex. On a theoretical level, a gay 'marriage' would be equal to a marriage between a man and a woman; homogeny would be identical to education by a father and a mother; a trans 'woman' would be equal to a biological woman. If we have the same moral judgement on different realities, they eventually equate in terms of reality. And so, at the end of this rainbow parable, we arrive at sexual indifference and neutrality, at genderlessness.

Sister Gramick's article goes on to defend transsexualism: 'a transgender person [...] realises that his body does not correspond to his soul'. In short, biological sex could be a mistake. It would not be the mind that is deceiving itself.

Let us now turn to the response given to Sister Gramick by the Holy Father, a response quoted in the same article by the nun: 'Gender ideology is something different from homosexual or transsexual people. Gender ideology makes everyone equal

without respect for personal history. I understand the concern about that paragraph in Dignitas Infinita, but it does not refer to transgender people but to gender ideology, which nullifies differences. Transgender people must be accepted and integrated into society'.

While the mention of the theme of gender ideology's nullification of differences is to be commended, unfortunately some significant omissions in the Pope's response open the door to dangerous ambiguities. With regard to homosexuality and transsexuality, the moral judgment concerns at least three areas.

The first concerns gender ideology or gender theory, which, in extreme synthesis, preaches that homosexuality and transsexuality are ethically good conditions. Hence the endorsement of gay 'nuptials', homogenisation, sex 'change', gender indoctrination in schools, rainbow legislation, etc. The second area concerns the individual's homosexual condition and conduct or his or her choice to 'change' sex. The third area concerns personal responsibility in engaging in homosexual conduct and the choice to 'change' sex.

Let us return to Pope Francis' response. He condemns only the first sphere, namely gender ideology. He writes: "Gender ideology is something different from homosexual or transsexual persons. While it is true that the two realities are distinct, it was necessary to specify that the conditions specific to homosexuality and transsexuality are also to be censured, as is the related conduct. Otherwise we run the risk of embracing a dichotomous approach: the gender phenomenon elevated to a system of thought is to be rejected, while personal choices marked by homosexuality and transsexuality - the 'personal history' as Francis put it - would be to be respected because of a misunderstood idea of mercy. Conversely, the condemnation of the gender theory (first sphere) should necessarily also lead to the censure of the homosexual condition and conduct and the choice to 'change' sex (second sphere), adding, if anything, a dutiful distinction on personal responsibility (third sphere).

Francis' response, in perfect assonance with his previous statements, could therefore sound like this: to criticise those who make homosexuality and transsexuality an ideological banner, respect instead the personal choice of practised homosexuality and transsexuality. Whereas, for logical consistency, these choices should also be criticised. It is like criticising someone who praises theft, while have nothing to say to the thief.

In short, homosexuality and transsexuality elevated to theory are to be banned , while personally experienced homosexuality and transsexuality are to be accepted. The

contradiction is obvious also because it is the widespread phenomenon of homosexuality and transsexuality that generated the theory, crystallising and organising the social phenomenon itself in thought. There would be no gender theory without praxis. So why isn’t the praxis also criticised?