



***Very soon it will not be possible to state that homosexuality, as the Catholic Church teaches, is an objective disorder in the structuring of human existence.***

-Pope Benedict XVI

Dear Friends in Christ,

A resolute and well-funded voice, which desired simply to be tolerated a few years ago, now stands quite *intolerant* of any dissenting views. Consequently, men and women who suffer with same sex attraction (SSA) may often have the impression that they are faced with only two choices: to accept painful isolation for fear of revealing their situation, which leads to loneliness, *or* to embrace the so-called “gay lifestyle,” which leads to sadness and even misery. In the popular mind, Christianity in general and the Catholic Church in particular have nothing to say on the topic of homosexuality other than the word “no.”

Courage offers *hope* to men and women who have SSA that there is another choice. Courage assures them that the Church understands their condition and provides practical assistance to help them live the virtue of *chastity*, thereby guiding them to a deeper intimacy with Jesus Christ. EnCourage reaches out to parents and family members.

In the past year, the main office of the apostolate has been engaged in several projects, all of which are ultimately directed to the formation of new chapters of Courage and EnCourage, or the strengthening of existing groups, especially through clergy education.

This year, we conducted clergy conferences in Covington, KY; Winona, MN; Lafayette, LA; Kansas City, KS; Kansas City, MO; Hartford, CT and Culpepper, VA. We gave a series of talks here in CT to the Sisters of Life. Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons and I participated in the National Catholic Bioethics Center biannual conference for bishops in Dallas in February. Before year’s end, I will travel to Minneapolis-St Paul for talks and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in Winona, MN. On the schedule for next year already: Seminary of the Immaculate Conception, Huntington, NY and Mount Saint Mary’s Seminary, Emmitsburg, MD; the Minnesota Dioceses of Duluth, New Ulm, Crookston, and the Diocese of Springfield, IL.

Our annual conference at Mundelein was dedicated to the memory of Fr. John Harvey, O.S.F.S., and several of the main talks will be available through the Courage website, to include those by Cardinal Burke and Bishop Olmsted.

Our website itself has been renovated and updated, with new material added frequently. Very soon, we will make available new pamphlets for Courage, for EnCourage and for young people. The Courage handbook is under revision.

Media and technology, which have been very effective means of propaganda, can also serve to convey the truth in love. In 2012, we are planning to embark on a bold two-part project to make the work of Courage better known and to further its work among all people of good will.

The call for Courage continues to spread overseas. This year, I once again participated in the Courage-Latino conference in Guadalajara, Mexico. In addition to our friends from Latin America, representatives from Australia and Canada attended the annual conference. We have received inquiries from Croatia, France, Germany, and Italy.

Within local Courage chapters offering Christian fellowship, men and women suffering from SSA, and their family members, can find the “yes” of Jesus Christ and reliable information about homosexuality. We know that there is an ever increasing urgent need for Courage’s distinct voice in the broad cultural fight for truth --- and its vital healing ministry for souls.

I decided to make only one solicitation for financial support from you, our Courage and EnCourage family, this year, trusting in your commitment to the apostolate that has been, please God, a source of grace for you. **Once again, I am asking you, as a special Christmas gift to Courage, for at least \$50—or for \$100, or more, if you can afford it—but any amount you are able to give will be very helpful and greatly appreciated.**

Our plans for 2012 are very ambitious but necessary if we are to offer the hope, the assurance, and the assistance many people seek from Courage and EnCourage as they strive to live the fullness of the truth of our humanity and of our Catholic Faith. Your financial support is indispensable to the achievement of these plans.

Please help Courage and EnCourage to do the work that no one else is doing.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "(R.) P-N. Check". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rev. Paul N. Check  
Executive Director