

OPEN AND RESPECTFUL INTERPELLATION DIRECTED TO HIS EXCELLENCY, THE MOST REVEREND CHARLES JUDE SCICLUNA, ARCHBISHOP OF MALTA

H.E. The Most Reverend Charles Scicluna
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May 23, 2019.

Your Excellency,
The Maltese Society for Christian Civilisation – Pro Malta Christiana, presenting its respectful greetings to Your Excellency, requests the attention of Your Excellency regarding the content of the opinions uttered by the Rev. Father Kevin Schembri on the XARA-BANK discussion programme aired on Malta's state television on March 8 last. It was made clear by the producers of this television programme that Rev. Fr. Schembri was sent by Your Excellency to state the teachings of Holy Mother Church on the question of same-sex attraction and homosexual relations.

We have prudently waited more than two months for Your Excellency to publicly disassociate the Maltese Church from the scandalous propositions contrary to Christian faith and morals put forward by Father Schembri on this television programme. Given the mysterious silence from your Archdiocesan Curia on this grave matter, it is felt that a public and open interpellation directed to Your Excellency is warranted at this critical juncture in order to express the sadness, bewilderment and legitimate disappointment felt by innumerable Catholics in Malta at Your Excellency's silence.

We humbly take the liberty of reminding Your Excellency that as the Catholic Church has taught constantly over two thousand years, the primary duty of a Bishop is to publicly defend, protect and promote the sacred deposit of the faith against all heresies, errors and scandalous propositions. This is a duty, Your Excellency, which cannot remain unfulfilled, regardless of the circumstances in which the shepherd of the flock finds himself.

Heterodox and Heretical Views based on Revisionist Scriptural Exegesis, False Theology and Absurd Pseudo-Science

Over the course of the television programme in question, Maltese Catholics were regaled with the spectacle of a priest stating that God "created" people as homosexuals, and that homosexual relations are not condemned by the Church, but are seen as legitimate forms of "love". According to this priest, "It (homosexuality) cannot be something bad because He created it. God created it, and he created it in His plan" Father Schembri further added that persons with homosexual inclinations do not need to change their ways and practice chastity as the Catholic Church has taught for two thousand years.

In this respect, Your Excellency's designated clerical representative stated: "No, if he recognizes that he is a gay person as created by God, he does not need to change. Rather, I would say, he would be harming himself if he tries not to accept himself or herself as they are as a gay person, this is where internalized homophobia comes in". Father Schembri thus attributes to God's creation that which is intrinsically disordered. Adding insult to injury, Father Schembri also stated that homosexuals can have a relationship of

love when it is a sincere relationship, as much as it would be good, when it is sincere and based on love between heterosexual couples.

As Your Excellency is – presumably – well aware, Father Schembri professes a pseudo-science by stating that homosexuality is neither pathological nor reversible, but a genetic and biological trait. This is nothing but a parody of science and has been conclusively demolished by all the major systematic studies, the most recent being the detailed report jointly prepared by John Hopkins University epidemiologist Dr. Lawrence Mayer and psychiatrist Dr. Paul McHugh in 2016 and published in *The New Atlantis* scientific journal (Number 50, Fall 2016). Basing on the biological, psychological and social sciences, this study makes it irrefutably and overwhelmingly clear that a homosexual, lesbian, or "transgender" genetic marking does not exist and that nobody is born homosexual.

Sacred Scripture (Gen 18:20; 19:12; 24–25, 27–28), Catholic Tradition and the Magisterium have condemned few sins more consistently or severely than sodomy. Indeed the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah established a measure of evil by which sins are judged, as recorded throughout the Holy Bible.

The impossibility of true homosexual love

Father Schembri has advanced the heretical proposition that true homosexual "love" is merely a variant on par with true natural love reserved to heterosexuals. As taught by St. Thomas Aquinas and by Holy Church, the properly human form of love is called *love of friendship (amor amicitiae)* or *volitional love*. It resides above all in the will and results from affinity between human beings. In its highest state, this *love of friendship* requires that the person come out of himself and love another not for his own enjoyment and interest but for the other's good. However spiritual love may be, it still affects his sensibility, as an emotion or sentiment.

Thus emotion or sentiment cannot dominate the properly spiritual nature of true love, something which tends to infinity. This is why practicing the virtue of temperance keeps the balance between the spiritual and sensitive components of true love. Without the moderating effect of this temperance, this love of friendship becomes distorted into a love of desire. Hence the more a relationship is dominated by a love of desire and thus the sensibility, the farther it is from properly human love.

Only reason can authentically rule human love. A special form of this love, namely *conjugal love* with its fecund and selfless plenitude resulting in the begetting and raising of children can only exist between persons of the opposite sex. While satisfying the natural propensity of man's instincts, it is not blindly dependent on them. Hence *conjugal love* is a selfless, altruistic love of friendship, while also useful and pleasurable.

Contrary to the absurdities uttered by Father Schembri, love in its proper sense is a benevolent, altruistic sentiment guided by reason and the will. His endorsement of so-called "Homosexual love" is tantamount to endorsing something that is impossible because it seeks to transform the love of friendship between people of the same sex

into conjugal love. Father Schembri hence failed miserably by omitting to state that conjugal love requires psychological and physical complementarity, and this can only exist between opposite sexes.

Immutable Catholic teaching on the issue of homosexuality is clear: "Acts of grave depravity"

It is opportune to recall the Church's teaching on homosexuality, expressed in the current *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as follows:

"2357: Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction towards persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. The psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. 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."

One could be forgiven for wondering whether the current wave of political correctness that maintains a stranglehold on our island warrants that we maintain silence on matters relating to public morals, the island's Christian cultural identity and the family, to promote a vaguely-defined social justice "Gospel" more in keeping with the tenets of Karl Marx rather than the immutable truths taught by Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Your Excellency had little difficulty in publicly disassociating the Church from faithful Maltese Catholics who prayed the Rosary as an act of reparation

In light of your public inaction over the scandal caused by Father Schembri's utterances, a related episode concerning Your Excellency's *modus operandi* is relevant to the issue at hand. In September of 2018, Your Excellency's Curial Communications Office made it clear that our society – which had the effrontery to offer the prayer of a public rosary to God in reparation for the annual Homosexual Parade in Valletta – was "not part of the Church in Malta" and ought to "shoulder responsibility for its actions".

Your Excellency thus saw fit to disassociate the Maltese Church from a group of Catholics for the "sin" of praying the rosary begging God's forgiveness for the sordid, vulgar and anti-Christian spectacle of the activist homosexual pride march in Valletta last year.

It is legitimate and opportune to recall the words of the late Pope Saint. John Paul II, who, on the occasion of the first homosexual public "Pride" parade held in the eternal city nineteen years ago, stated the following during an address to the faithful in St. Peter's Square on July 10, 2000:

"In the name of the Church of Rome, I cannot refrain from expressing bitterness for the affront to the Grand Jubilee of the year 2000 and for the offense to the Christian values of a city that is so dear to the hearts of Catholics across the world. Homosexual acts go against

natural law. The Church cannot silence the truth because it would not live up to its faith in God the creator and would not help discern what is good from what is evil."

Does the Church in Malta dissociate itself from these words uttered by the late Pontiff?

Even if, *argumentandi gratia*, our public action could have been construed as an act against prudence (which it clearly was not), how much more scandalous is it that a similar public act of disassociation on Your Excellency's part has still not taken place more than two months after the doctrinal debacle caused by Father Schembri's statements on television?

Why are Maltese Catholics being subjected to such evident double standards by those entrusted with the mission to "teach, govern and sanctify" the faithful? These are questions Your Excellency would do well to ponder.

Public counter-measures are indispensable

On the basis of the foregoing, the Maltese Society for Christian Civilisation is certain it reflects the desires of thousands of Maltese in asking Your Excellency to disciplinarily silence Rev. Fr. Kevin Schembri and to make a public pronouncement disassociating the Church in Malta from the heterodox opinions he expressed.

Your Excellency's recent appointment as Adjunct-Secretary for the Vatican's Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith imposes an added critical responsibility on your shoulders to ensure that heresy is publicly combated in the archdiocese that Your Excellency governs.

These measures, Archbishop are the only ones which can right this wrong to the Maltese nation, and our Roman, Catholic and Apostolic religion. In addition, this public stance we respectfully ask of Your Excellency is, more importantly required for the salvation of souls.

Having brought to the knowledge of Your Excellency that which is a vindication of all who love the Maltese family based on an indissoluble union between one man and one woman, we ask its favourable acceptance by Your Excellency. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Malta and our spiritual father Saint Paul guide you in your ecclesial mission.

With the expression of all the consideration which we render to the ecclesiastical dignity with which Your Excellency is invested in the Church of God, I remain,

Very truly,

Philip M. Beattie
President of the Executive Council.

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