

**Transcript of Homily and Remarks at 10:00 a.m. Mass
Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church – San Francisco
June 19th 2005**

Brian Bromberger:

[inaudible – something about becoming a deacon.] Please join me this afternoon at 3:30 pm at St. Mary's. I know many of you have been praying for us during our 5-year formation period. There were many times that we relied heavily on those prayers and the faith you had in us to make it through this demanding diaconate program.

While my ordination may be a milestone in my own spiritual life, more importantly it's a significant event in the life of our faith community here at MHR. I'm a symbol. I symbol of service which reveals everyone's reliance here on our Lord Jesus Christ as his disciples.

On Thursday night I attended our ministry appreciation night and I'm happy to report that Ellard Hall was filled. I looked through that room and I saw people that I've known for years, but also new folks I've to meet all volunteering time treasure and talent here at MHR to fill our mission of drawing people from isolation to community, from indifference to concern, and from fear in the midst of adversity to faith and hope in God. I realized at that moment how blessed we are to have so many gifted and loving people in ministry here. If I could be as welcoming, nurturing and inclusive as all of you have been in the work of God I will have a successful diaconate here MHR.

So my entrance to the diaconate is really a celebration of the vibrant life of the Holy Spirit who is alive and thriving at MHR and who animates all of us to make the gospel a vibrant indispensable presence in our city which is why I cordially invite everyone here to attend my ordination this afternoon.

Homily - Fr. Jose Pimentel:

I will make my homily very short. [Something (inaudible) about being a drama queen]

I want to talk about pride. Pride in this community. What it means (inaudible). It's not the fact that we can gather together in this wonderful family... and be who we are... **It's not that we can walk up and down the Castro or Market holding hands, and be at peace and comfortable with that. It's not that anyone of you can date as much as you want and not be concerned and fearful about anything. It's not that we enjoy so many more freedoms than ever before. Or that we have incredible leaders like Harvey Milk who put their lives literally on line in service of the community and fight for rights and justice and freedom.**

I believe that this gift, what we call pride today, has a deeper root and that it's when we come terms in our very hearts with the idea that God loves us. That God made us to be who we are. That God knows us so intimately that he can count every single hair on our heads;

that we matter; that there is purpose and meaning in our lives; that the fact that we are different in the eyes of the rest of society is not important to God. But that we know in our hearts that he loves us and is concerned for us, and that he walks with us on our journey - in the struggles and in the doubts – in those fearful moments - in those times when we are indeed insecure. The knowledge, the awareness and confidence that we know this God is with us, to me that is the source of pride.

That's what we as a people gathered here this morning to give thanks. This is the secret that we know and that we need to proclaim from the rooftops. Be not afraid. Know who you are. Be happy; be joyful and confident, in this knowledge. Our God is a God of love and in the readings today, and these are not some special readings we chose just for this day just because we're beginning **Pride Week** – these are the readings from ordinary Sunday – the 12th Sunday of the year. But they fit so well, don't they? As often as the readings do. Because they speak directly to us and they assure us again and again “know that I am your God, you are my people” because I care for you and I know you. My brothers and sisters, that is our source, that is the core of our pride. Let us celebrate this day and throughout this week, and this month, and let us leave this place joyful and proclaim this joy, this pride indeed from the rooftops. (Applause)

Father Meriwether:

For those of you who are visiting, I'm Steve Meriwether, the pastor of MHR. (Applause) **Among the things that we have to be proud of this week, and always, is our Catholic faith, which we will witness during the parade.** It is a term that was popularized by St. Ireneus – Catholic, meaning universal, and not simply geographically universal, but rather Ireneus wanted to point out that the Church was for all people - people of every race, of every language, of every state of life, and personal history. So we have no reason to be ashamed of our faith. We are a living example of that universality. Now it's true that we, like anyone [know]... how small minded people who aren't able to grasp the concept of universal, but I would stress Catholic embraces everyone. **And so it is with great pleasure that I introduce to you today our supervisor and a great advocate of gay and lesbian rights in this city and county, Supervisor Bevan Dufty, who is going to kick off pride week for us.**

Supervisor Bevan Dufty:

[Transcriber's note – speaker's style is very choppy and at times inaudible.]

I just want to start out saying that I know your congregation has suffered great losses this week (inaudible)...

I'm so honored to be here and I woke up this morning ... I consider Patrick Mulkehy an angel – sort of a different kind of angel... being a Jew as you can tell, most of you probably think that I dressed for Easter rather than Pride this morning (laughter)... I think sometimes maybe an angel is making miracles ... the thing that I loved about Patrick was that he enabled people to make their own miracles I think many of you know I've had the privilege of working with him over the past year and a half to try and house and home some of the young adults who come to the Castro seeking refuge and I'm so grateful for the work MHR does ...

And so I want to start off by saying I'm really proud to be here at MHR and I think that you are an incredible beacon to the world about what Catholicism and faith and community can be and as I speak of Pride I really want to reach out and talk to those who are not members of the LGBT[lesbian gay bisexual transgender] community... I think it's so wonderful and courageous and such a testament to all of your character that you find faith here with others who see people for who they are for that diversity ...

And so I think that you know that ... **as I heard them mention Pride Parade ... you talk about that being hot and the waiting and fighting to get into the parade... and I think what is so much more important is the opportunity that MHR has to affirm people and I think that for those of you who have never been in the parade to what an incredible experience this is for people who are in pain because they wanted to be Catholic, to be part of this community and felt at times that they couldn't be either from messages from up high or from what they might received from their local parish.** So I hope for some of you, you might see as less a day to put on feathers and more a day to a higher calling to let people know how wonderful it is that ... not only is there a place here whether they come to services here or not... that they know that you exist ... that it is possible to bring this all together in such a beautiful way... it's truly a miracle...

For me I want to say as a Supervisor that this is a job of a lifetime... being a Jew you do feel a lot of guilt and pray for God (inaudible, laughter)... I don't always do this job as wonderfully as I might want to...I struggle with missed phone calls, with those who are more in the know, I struggle with the badlands issue ... with the sense that some people do not feel welcome in this community because of race or being a woman and sometimes straight people, I really struggle sometimes with heterosexual couples that have kids in window displays ... I don't know what to do about that sometimes.... I can't solve all the problems as much as I might try... in whatever small way, but I do want to say that I do consider it a job of a lifetime ... and [I] have been very involved with Catholic churches here in my district ...

...[I] have been the auctioneer for two years at St. Philips at their school... what a wonderful experience it has been for me... to go out and auction things off and to go to St. Paul's and to be involved in all the different churches and find that they think there is a place for me...

I'll tell one little story that has been my favorite experience since I've been a Supervisor... as you know Immaculate Conception Academy is located 24th and Guerro and I was invited to celebrate their 120th anniversary ...

As I do, I had my proclamation in hand and I did my serious part. But I love speaking to young people and **so I looked at 250 young women from the 9th to the 12th grade** and I felt they kind of looked at me ... and I wasn't as snazzy as I am today ... and so they probably thought that I couldn't relate to where they were at and I looked at them and I said ... **"You know, when I'm speaking to young people I like to say that there is a 14-year old girl trapped inside this body** (uproarious and sustained laughter) ... they giggled and were a little nervous... and I said, **"Well you know what that means, I watch too much MTV and I worry too much about my weight and boys"** (laughter). And I said to them, **"Don't worry, the boys I worry about are ALOT older than the boys you worry about"** (uproarious and sustained laughter).

Immediately after I sat down 3 teachers who I know to be gay and lesbian ran up and hugged me and said how grateful they were that I had come and spoken that day and then I took a tour of the school to look at the new facilities and what not and then Sr. Janice invited me into her office (laughter)... I watched enough Halley Mills movies to know this wasn't a good thing (laughter)... so I sat down and Sister gave me her welcome, and ah [looks at Fr. Jose Pimentel]... **Fr. Jose you did say drama queens** (inaudible, laughter)...

And she thanked me so much for coming and she said, "You know I'm just troubled that I have to let you know that I'm very upset that you felt the need to tell the students that you were gay".

And I said "well you know Sr. Janice, one of the great things about being an elected leader of this city, the most diverse in our country, perhaps in the world is, is that I'm comfortable with who I am, and if I let people know that I am comfortable with who I am then you know that I honor and celebrate who you are... and this has been at that time, and still is, a difficult time in the Catholic Church and you read the newspapers every day and so I think for me to be someone who can understand that the Catholic Church helps the poor, educates and creates a sense of community, **I think a gay Jew is one of the best things you have going for you right now"** (uproarious and sustained laughter)

So with that she looked at me and said that "you really have thought about this"... and I said "yes I really have thought about this"... and so I said "I'll understand it if these youngsters don't get in touch with me ... or you don't let me take them on a tour of city hall or any of those things and I'll respect and understand that, but if you do at some point, then I'll know that we really do understand each other."

And about 6 months after that, a group of about 50 of the students came for a tour of city hall and it was during the month of marriage [transcriber's note – 'marriage month' refers to the month when gay marriages were performed at City Hall of S.F.] so I took them into the board chambers and they just started peppering me with questions about marriage and I would discuss the Old Testament and the New Testament ... I was kind of trying to keep it kind of light as much as possible, and I looked at the girls and I said you know it's taken 6 months for Sr. Janice to forgive me... and I'm trying now to look at this.

And then we went over to the mayor and we spent about 45 minutes with them... and then what do you know? - my picture was in the Catholic weekly next week (laughter)... I had to laugh (laughter)...

And so let me just say one more thing... listening to Father's remarks this morning one of the things that I am working on is many of you may know is that we have a GLBT historical society in San Francisco ... it's not in a very visible place... it's on the 3rd floor of a building at Mission and New Montgomery... and so you will see me working very actively with this because I think we do need a place in our community ... a cultural destination in the Castro that people have ... for people who come here... and they come because what they know about MHR or what the Castro represents ... but there is no place that really interprets that history and talks about all the things that we've done and the struggles that have taken place before us to arrive at this wonderful city and neighborhood that we're so proud of so I'm hoping at some point you'll engage me on that and I'm so honored that you let me be with you and stand here very proudly at MHR. (Applause)

Fr. Meriwether:

You like to tease me that I have every title in the Archdiocese, so let me don one of them now. **As the director of the Office of Ecumenism and Inter Religious Affairs I would like to induct Bevan Dufty as an honorary parishioner of MHR** (laughter and applause). [Fr. Meriwether presented Bevan Dufty with an MHR Pride 2004 t-shirt – see attached picture)

Bevan Dufty:

I feel very honored to have this and it matches (laughter). Thank you.