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My name is Raymond Dubuque. I spent the first 33 years of my life as a very devout Catholic, leading to several years in the priesthood as a seminary professor. I've been a United Methodist clergyman since then, but I am here today to represent two other people.

The first person is a pope who can't be here because he was one of the six powerful liberal leaders of the Catholic Church who all died under extremely suspicious circumstances during a six month period in 1978 and 1979 which began with the fairly liberal Paul VI as Pope, followed by the one month papacy of this, the most Liberal pope in 2000 years, named John Paul the FIRST, and ending with the ultra-Conservative Pope John Paul 2nd in charge .

Among the many blatant lies told by Vatican officials about the 1st John Paul is 1) that he was a very sickly man, and 2) that he was a typical old-fashioned conservative Cardinal. The truth is that Luciani was an extremely healthy, champion Alpine mountain climber, and that he was poised to drag the Roman Catholic Church kicking and screaming into the 21st century.

His views on homosexuality were not just advanced for the last century. They are advanced even for OUR TIME, but 3 minutes won't allow me to get into that, so I urge you all to read the book "Murder in the Vatican" or to explore my web page on the subject at www.CatholicArrogance.org/murderedpope. You will see that this pope was killed to prevent the Catholic Church from finally having to admit that it has been wrong on many issues for centuries, including homosexuality.

I am offering the ideas of Pope John Paul 1st on this subject to counter the impression given by Conservative Catholics that opposition to equality for gays is the only position their church can take.

Long before many of us in this room were even born Luciani was lobbying forcefully in the Italian Parliament to make it legal for unmarried people to adopt, over the objections of those who correctly foresaw that this would enable homosexuals to adopt. Luciani responded. The desire to parent children is a basic human need ... Until the day comes that we can guarantee basic human rights and dignity to the tiniest minority, we cannot truthfully call ourselves a democracy."

During this debate many decades ahead of, our time, in far way Italy, a country then dominated even more by the Roman Catholic Church than is our own state of Conn., when this future pope heard legislators object that "homosexuals are pedophiles. This will put children in great danger," Luciani responded, "Homosexuality has nothing to do with pedophilia; one is sexual orientation and the other is perversion. Yet, in that most cases of pedophilia involve incest, we must consider the question. If our objective is to prevent pedophilia in adoption then the only logical action would be to permit only homosexuals to adopt only opposite sex children."

Within a few years of the passage of that measure, more than a half-million children, who had previously been confined to the streets, were provided loving and economic support by single parents. Some of these were homosexual couples, in which case one of the parents had adopted the child, as it remained illegal for two people of the same sex to adopt as a couple.

Here are ideas which Lucian wrote in diary format.

"Dear Mama, I have for many years counseled a young couple. They have great sexual attraction for each other, yet, beyond that they have nothing in common. I have yet to be in their presence when they have not been arguing between themselves or yelling at their children. . . In that I sanctioned this marriage, I must live the rest of my days with this on my conscience.

Last week, this same couple came to me on a matter of such great urgency that I had to cancel another appointment. They told me of a neighbor - one of the new single parents in Italy - who was a homosexual. As a matter-of-fact, another man has been living with him for many years. I have known of this queer relationship for sometime. Both men are contributing members of the community and spend much of their free time helping out in the parish orphanage. Their two beautiful children, a boy and a girl, are the envy of all who are privileged to experience them. One night as they were leaving, I noticed tears in their eyes. They told me, it grieves them that they cannot take all of the children home with them.

Mama, it is this experience, more than any other, that has caused me to understand the qualifications of a good parent. There is something terribly wrong with a society that thinks that one's sex is what makes one a good parent.

Just three months before his death, Pope Paul VI permitted Cardinal Luciani to address the Vatican cardinals on the possibility that the Church might encourage homosexuals to enter into long term loving relationships as they represented the only population group that was large enough and willing to provide economic and emotional support to millions of children who otherwise would be aborted by women too young or too poor to support them. Luciani argued that the Church's traditional position exiled homosexuals from society, forcing many of them into lives of loneliness and despair. He argued the Church's position was one of prejudice, as medical science had proved that sexual orientation cannot be changed and the Bible's condemnation of homosexual acts was scant compared to its vast condemnation of heterosexual acts.

As a bishop, Luciani once told the Vatican cardinals, "The day is not far off when we will have to answer to these people who through the years have been humiliated, whose rights have been ignored, whose human dignity has been offended, their identity denied and their liberty oppressed. What is more, we will have to answer to the God who created them."

Forty years before the world's psychiatric and medical communities came to the same conclusion, Luciani reasoned that sexual orientation could not be changed by therapy, that the ability to fall in love is a basic instinct. Yet, as the psychiatric community tells us today, Luciani found that unlike sexual orientation, sexual behavior could be conditioned by therapy or other circumstances. He reasoned that there are two forces that drive a sexual act, love and lust. He knew when two people are in love, love tends to drive the sexual act and that when two people are not in love, lust tends to drive the act. He understood then what we are coming to know now; a homosexual male, for example, can be conditioned to have sex with a woman only by changing the motivating factor from one of love to one of lust. It is because he felt strongly that God's children not be products of lust; he opposed this type of experimentation. pp. 58-59

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The 2nd person I want to represent here is a teenager who wrote the following letter to the author of the above book:
("Dear Mr. Gregoire,)

My name is Tommy. I read your book, Murder in the Vatican.

I was born with one eye and had a wrinkled face so nobody wanted me. I think I scared them. Then one day when I was five years old my father showed up and took me home. I remember the kids used to laugh at me in the playground. Then my fathers sold everything they had including the house and I spent a long time in the hospital and the doctors and nurses made me look good. We have still many bills to pay. But now I am quite a ladies man at school. I hit my first home run last summer and this year I am going to hit forty more.

My parents love me. That is, they used to love me. Now only one of them loves me. Because the other one is dead. He gave his life trying to win freedom for Iraq. He died on my fourteenth birthday..

As you know, I won't be getting any benefits from the army or from Social Security to pay for my education or my medical bills, because my parents did not have the freedom to marry, and I was adopted by the father that is still with me. I didn't even get (dead father's) purple heart or bronze star. The army gave them to his parents who hated him and they sold them in a tag sale. I would have liked to have them.

My father tells me not to feel bitter because according to the last census there are more than a million children in gay families, and they are in the same boat. But, of course, I am not listed with them because of the 'don't ask don't tell' policy. My father says that there are also over fifteen million other children in single parent families, many like me who are of gay parents who are not counted in the census, because they are fearful of losing their jobs too. So we are talking about a lot of children here, millions of them, not just me.

I was planning on being a baseball player. But your book has made me change my mind. Instead I am going to study hard and I am going to become president. Well, maybe not president, but I am going to help other people like me."

Signed "Tommy"