

Ambushed 2

'For love is as strong as death...it burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame.' (S of S 8:6)

Outrageous: Wisconsin just became the 27th state to redefine marriage, the NY Times devotes its entire travel section to 'gay' globetrotters by featuring sexy ads and itineraries for 'family'-friendly adventures, and a popular primetime TV show (8pm) begins with two women having sex then crassly expounding the glory of oral sex and feminine body parts.

Like you, I am tempted to disgust and defensiveness. We cannot stop there. That is precisely what the enemy of our souls wants: for the faithful to retreat into the ark, strengthen her walls, and smugly await judgment on the new Sodom which surrounds us.

Have we forgotten? We are called to be the very hands and heart of servant Jesus who 'did not raise his voice in the street or snuff out the smoldering wick' (IS 42: 2, 3). He promised to make us 'a covenant for the people, to open blind eyes, and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness' (vs. 6, 7). Our challenge: to allow perversion to provoke us. We must forsake disdain for the captives and prayerfully act for their deliverance. Will we finally become the community which fights for the dignity of all and with tender hearts welcomes darkened hearts into the light of the Church?

I recall gay protesters storming into one of our conferences in London with outrageous, frightening tactics. But the kindness of our response prompted one of the seven activists to return to that congregation where, overtime, he was converted. His wife and kids are grateful for the powerful kindness of that parish. Karen entered into the enfolding arms of a loving congregation one night in downtown Denver. She was high on drugs, alongside her lesbian lover, and desperate for Jesus. Ongoing sexual abuse from a male friend of her parents competed with a conservative Christian upbringing. By a miracle of grace, she wanted Jesus still.

The power of the Holy Spirit fell on her that night, sobered her up, and compelled her to return to that church. Jesus won her heart through the Living Waters group that had just started there and the supportive love of many congregants. Her lover left her when it became clear that Jesus had become her primary passion. She continues to serve Him faithfully today, and eagerly awaits His return.

Will we be the Church that conveys that love? We begin by laying down our arms and opening our hearts to the broken. Yesterday I ran a half-marathon and was frankly annoyed by a gay-identified man who wore little more than tattoos and piercings; a good runner, he looked and leapt like a lizard but midway through stumbled, as if distressed, then restarted. I ran into him in the parking lot and wanted to turn the other way. The Spirit convicted me: 'If it wasn't for My mercy, you would not only be excluded from this race, you'd be in hell.' My heart filled with mercy for this colorful man and I initiated a caring conversation with him regarding his well-being.

God cares for him. God fights for him with tender love. Will we be that community that fights in love for the dignity of the oppressed, especially those riding the wave of our cultural delusion? Pray with me that we will see and pray and feel and say the urgent love that is a soul's only hope for deliverance.

'Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.' (Romans 12:21)