

## Canon XXI amendment.

I am a licensed lay reader in the Parish of Douglas and Nashwaaksis, Diocese of Fredericton.

How many times have priests told us laity that if we are overwhelmed facing a problem or situation for which there seems to be no ready answer, to place it in the hands of the Lord, to ease our minds to enable us to carry on the daily chore of living.

I see this situation as just such. I believe the Lord has made us in his image and has given us the intelligence to develop science. I believe in science. It has given us much advancement in combating and understanding diseases. It is the very reason that I am still alive today. If we believe and trust science in these matters then we must believe when they tell us that persons are born fully heterosexual or homosexual and in all actually may also fall at some stage between the two. No “choice” is involved in where you may fall in this process.

How do we “solve” this dilemma?

It is very obvious that we cannot. God made everything and declared it as good. Who are we to judge God’s work? It should be left in God’s hands to resolve at the parousia. We are only required to love one another and to make life as easy as practicable for each other.

I would not want any real or perceived bias on my part to cause our Christian brothers and sisters to feel that suicide would be the only way for them to “resolve” their situation for me. A situation that we never chose but have to live with.

We have some experience within our extended family in this matter and have watched the individuals resort to rebellion, abuses and alienation from their families. Thankfully they lived to reach a point of understanding and have been able to reclaim their lives and be reconciled to their families. No one should have to endure that in a life that is hard enough as is.

I am reminded of the parable of the wheat and the tares. Like the wheat and tares we should exist side by side and at the end let the Lord be our judge. Trying to separate us has torn up the roots of the church just as the Lord said it would.

All of the following questions, posed by this Commission, are irrelevant and remind me of the Pharisees trying to catch Jesus in a mind trap. All of these are things that are thought up by men to muddy the waters and cloud the issue and try to make it “complicated”. It is always complicated when you try to force others to “think like I do”.

- How do you interpret what scripture says about marriage?
- How do you understand the theological significance of gender difference in marriage?
- Is there a distinction between civil marriage and Christian marriage?

- The marriage canon describes “the purposes of marriage” as mutual fellowship, support, and comfort; the procreation (if it may be) and nurture of children; and the creation of a relationship in which sexuality may serve personal fulfilment in a community of faithful love. What is the theological significance of:
  - companionship in marriage?
  - bearing and raising children?
  - the relationship between marriage and sexuality?
- What is the difference between marriage and the blessing of a relationship?
- How do you understand the sacramentality of marriage?

As to this last question, it was answered long ago by the Articles of Faith, specifically Article XXV.

“These five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, **Matrimony**, and extreme Unction, are not to counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not like the nature of Sacraments with Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper, for they have **not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.**”

### **Abortion**

The Church has much more serious problem than this one concerning marriage and it should also be resolved as quickly as possible.

Unrelated to the above is the bigger picture of abortion. How can the church say it is pro-life and state that a fetus is an individual person at conception but do not council parents who have endured miscarriages to hold a funeral service for their undelivered child?

If we can amend our attitude on marriage then we should definitely change our attitude on the “disposal” of miscarried fetuses.

My wife and I had the misfortune of having two miscarriages when we started out on our marriage 48 years ago. It wasn’t until much later after gaining life experience and years of attending church that we realized that two of our babies were “disposed” of without benefit of a Christian burial. After all these years I still can’t think of it without crying. I would give anything to have those two babies whether they were heterosexual or homosexual.

The highest authority in the Anglican Communion should make a declaration of greatest apology and instruct the clergy to perform funeral rites for all undelivered children. Only then can the church cleanse their hypocritical support of pro-life and stand on moral ground with their pro-life stance.

I am totally pro-life and if the church declares that a fetus is a fully human being and a person at conception then they have no recourse but to give that person a Christian burial.

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