

NOVEMBER 11, 2007
SUPPORT FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING SAME SEX ATTRACTIONS

Recently, there was an article in the *Catholic Spirit* about homosexuality. There was one important piece of information absent from the article. It is the support group supported by the Archdiocese, at the specific request of Archbishop Flynn, and under the direction of the Archdiocesan *Office for Family, Laity, Youth and Young Adults*.

The support group is called *Faith in Action*. It is spiritual support group for people with same sex attractions that helps them live chaste lives according to the teachings of the Catholic Church. The group meets every week in the Twin Cities. *Faith in Action* is a *Courage* support group.

Courage was founded in 1980 in New York by Fr. John Harvey, OSFS, with the help of Fr. Benedict Groeschel, CFR, at the behest of the Servant of God Terence Cardinal Cooke. *Courage* is endorsed by the *Pontifical Council for the Family*, and John Paul II said of this ministry, "*Courage* is doing the work of God!"

The following are the five goals of *Courage*, which were composed by the members of *Courage* themselves upon the founding of the organization. The goals are read at the start of each meeting and each member is called to practice them in daily life.

1. Live chaste lives in accordance with the Roman Catholic Church's teaching on homosexuality [See the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2357-2359]. (**Chastity**)
2. Dedicate one's life to Christ through service to others, spiritual reading, prayer, meditation, individual spiritual direction, frequent attendance at Mass, and the frequent reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. (**Prayer and Dedication**)
3. Foster a spirit of fellowship in which all may share thoughts and experiences, and so ensure that no one will have to face the problems of homosexuality alone. (**Fellowship**)
4. Be mindful of the truth that chaste friendships are not only possible but necessary in a chaste Christian life and to encourage one another in forming and sustaining them. (**Support**)
5. Live lives that may serve as good examples to others. (**Good Example**)

There is also an Archdiocesan support group for family members, relatives, and friends of persons with same sex attractions. It is called *Encourage*. This group meets monthly. In this group, one will find spouses, siblings, and friends of persons experiencing same sex attractions.