



# DIOCESE OF DALLAS

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August 18, 2011

Office of the Bishop

Dear brother Priests and Deacons,

We are fortunate in our Diocese to have a support group that serves the needs of those Catholic men and women who struggle homosexual attractions. The name of this ministry is Courage. Courage DFW is the local branch of an international ministry serving those with same-sex attractions and their loved ones. At present, there are more than 100 chapters in the United States and beyond. This ministry has been endorsed by the Pontifical Council for the Family and by the Servant of God, Pope John Paul II, who said of this ministry, "*COURAGE is doing the work of God!*"

This ministry began in North Texas in 1999 and is presently under the spiritual guidance of Father Jim (James) Gigliotti, T.O.R., the pastor of St. Maria Goretti Parish in Arlington. The goal of this ministry is to provide a place where those who struggle with homosexual attractions may find mutual support and the guidance of the Church as they seek to live chaste and holy lives. Meetings take place on a bimonthly basis and consist of prayer, educational presentations and mutual sharing within a strictly confidential setting. Individuals are accepted as they are, where they are; the only requirement being that they express a willingness to strive, with the help of God, to live according to the teachings of Christ as received in the Catholic Church.

We encourage you to support this important ministry by making it known. Please share the brochures provided with anyone in your parish that may find this ministry helpful. More brochures will be made available upon request. You will see that they include a voice mail number and email address through which anyone may contact Courage DFW.

Fraternally in Christ,

Most Reverend Kevin J. Farrell, D.D.  
Bishop of Dallas



DIocese OF FORT WORTH  
THE BISHOP'S OFFICE



August 3, 2011

Dear Friends in the Lord,

Greetings in Christ! I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the ministry of *Courage*, spiritual support group for Catholic men and women and their families who are striving to live chaste lives in accordance with the Catholic Church's teaching on homosexuality, chastity, and holiness. The DFW Chapter of *Courage* sponsors regular meetings in the Dallas-Fort Worth area under the patronage of Saint Joseph and under the leadership and guidance of their chaplain, Fr. Jim Gigliotti, T.O.R., who is also the pastor of St. Maria Goretti Church in Arlington. These are held every Friday evening at the University of Dallas and have produced much healing and conversion in the lives of those who have participated in this ministry which was supported and approved by both Bishops Delaney and Grahmann years ago. In addition, Bishop Mark Seitz, now the Auxiliary Bishop of Dallas, was the chaplain of *Courage* for many years.

*Courage* is an apostolate of the Roman Catholic Church whose purpose is to minister to those with same-sex attractions and their families. In these days, it is not unusual for us to know friends and family members whom we love and care about with this particular struggle who seek to find the grace and love of Christ in His Church to live with this. Founded in 1980, this organization is recognized and supported by the Holy See. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches:

"Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection." (2359)

The five goals of *Courage* are solidly based upon this teaching of the Church and seek to bring about a life of chastity and healing for those who are struggling with same-sex attraction. These goals are as follows:

1. Chastity: Live chaste lives in accordance with the Roman Catholic Church's teaching on homosexuality.
2. Prayer and Dedication: 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.
3. Fellowship: Foster a spirit of fellowship in which all may share thoughts and experiences, and so ensure that no one has to face the problems of homosexuality alone.
4. Support: Be mindful of the truth that chaste friendships are not only possible but necessary in a chaste Christian life and in doing so provide encouragement to one another in forming and sustaining them.

THE CATHOLIC CENTER

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5. Good Example: Live life that may serve as good examples to others.

Using these five goals which promote lives of virtue, holiness, and service to others and the vision of its founder Fr. John Harvey, OSFS as its foundation, *Courage* sponsors a support group for friends and relatives of men and women with the struggle of same-sex attraction. This group, called "Encourage," works and prays to develop a truly Catholic outreach to their sons and daughters, their brothers and sisters, their friends and neighbors who struggle with homosexuality. Each year, *Courage* also holds a National Conference where hundreds of men and women gather to pray, to study and to support each other. As I stated above, the DFW Chapter of *Courage* sponsors regular meetings that are held every Friday evening at the University of Dallas, Irving, from 7 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. and I have, on occasion, attended a meeting when possible. To contact *Courage* DFW, e-mail [CourageDFW@catholic.org](mailto:CourageDFW@catholic.org). The National *Courage* website is [www.CourageRC.net](http://www.CourageRC.net).

As stated in my opening paragraph, both the Dioceses of Dallas and Fort Worth have hosted this local *Courage* chapter for ten years. It is my hope that *Courage* be made further known in the DFW area, and in both of the Dioceses. Also, I strongly recommend and encourage all clergy and parish staffs to refer those who seek such support to seek further information and come and see what this Catholic ministry has to offer. In addition, there has as yet to come about a *Courage* Group for women. Please pray and discern that a similar effort will be brought about for our sisters who would also certainly benefit from a *Courage* women's chapter.

Thank you for your prayers for all of the efforts of our local *Courage* chapter and please join me in not only supporting *Courage* but also spreading the word about the work of *Courage* throughout both of our Dioceses as I truly believe that the work of this ministry and outreach is truly the work of the Lord among us.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin W. Vann".

Most Rev. Kevin W. Vann, J.C.D., D.D.  
Bishop of Fort Worth

KWV/jv