

**BBC Radio WM, 1 May 2011 – Interview with Jack Valero starting at 48 minutes  
and Chris Morgan starting at 2 hours 11 minutes.**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00gbd16>

Jack Valero from Catholic Voices @ 48 mins

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Good morning.

Adrian Goldberg

Jack we've been discussing as well this morning, I know that you're also a representative of the Opus Dei, the Catholic organisation. The National Union of Teachers suggested this week that the rise in faith schools will encourage homophobia and they particularly pointed a finger at the Catholic Church, and said that the Church has discouraged Catholic teachers from proactively challenging discrimination where they see it. I mean it's suggesting that the Catholic Church is intrinsically anti-gay. Is that fair?

Jack Valero

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Well I haven't personally followed the story because I've been away for the last few days but I can tell you that the Catholic Church is against all forms of homophobia, and all forms of unjust discrimination against anybody for what they are. So I'd be very surprised. I mean I think people could have this idea that the Catholic Church is not in favour of gay people or whatever, but that's absolutely not true. The Church is in favour of all people without discrimination.

Adrian Goldberg

But you say that though I mean the Catholic Church you may say challenges homophobia, is against homophobia, but would warn people who practise a gay lifestyle, that in so doing that they are out with the Church's rules.

Jack Valero

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Well what it says to them that this isn't what being human is about, that we should all love each other but sex is for marriage. Marriage is between a man and a woman to form a family and bring the next generation. That's the vision. But it just says that to them, but it doesn't discriminate against them or bear any ill feeling or any hate towards them at all. It warns them, 'look, this isn't what being human is about, we should all love each other,' ...

Adrian Goldberg

Well I mean it says you can't be a Catholic and gay, or a good Catholic and gay.

Jack Valero

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No, that's absolutely not true. I have many friends who are homosexually inclined and are Catholic and are very happy with the Church and practising Catholics and so on. So one thing is the people, and we respect everybody, every single person has full human dignity as a child of God, is created by God with dignity and integrity. And this applies to everybody equally. And then there are behaviours and the Church says, 'well some behaviours are good and some are not good,' but that is the distinction you know and saying 'we don't discriminate against anybody, but we do think, or the church does think, that sex is for marriage,' and that leads to human flourishing and that is to protect the next generation and to bring children in families where they are there with their mother and their father, and they can grow up to be loving, stable people who can form their own families later.

Adrian Goldberg

Jack thank you very much indeed. An interesting insight there from Jack Valero; as I say he's filled in that question pretty much on the hoof because he is primarily talking about the beatification of Pope John Paul II today, but does that satisfy you, the idea that the Catholic Church might say to people, 'look we don't discriminate against you, we don't dislike you, but if you behave in a certain way you cannot be regarded as a good Catholic.' Isn't that, when all is said and done, really, ultimately,

homophobic? Jack Valero says no it's not. It's entirely consistent. The view is that simply sex within marriage is the only permitted sex. But if you're gay how does that make the Catholic Church sound to you. I'm going to throw this question out to believers of all the great religions. Really, can the great religions be compatible with homosexuality?

I'm going to bring in Chris Morgan now from Catholic Voices. Good morning to you Chris. Do you think the Catholic Church has had a particular problem with homosexuality in proactively challenging discrimination against it?

Chris Morgan from Catholic Voice @ 2 hours 11 mins

I don't think the church does have a problem. I'm actually quite glad to hear David say that the NUT doesn't think that this is a particular problem for faith schools, because the articles that I read suggested that that's what they were saying. But if you look at Catholic teaching it's very clear that all discrimination is wrong. Nobody should be discriminated against. The Catholic Church teaches that everybody is a unique individual and has got infinite worth, and we shouldn't be categorising people by any of their attributes, whether it's sexual orientation or anything. So, no, the Church is totally against all discrimination.

Adrian Goldberg

At the same time though, the church does discriminate in the sense that it says that to live an active gay lifestyle is out with the teachings of the church. So I mean the very rules of the church, the teachings of the church say that you cannot be a practising gay man, or a practising lesbian, and a fully paid-up member as it were of the Catholic Church.

Chris Morgan

Well I think we need to be clear here because what the church does is it asks us how can we truly be happy, where is the truth in our life? And as part of that teaching the church has a very positive attitude towards sex and sexual relationships. And what the church says is that a sexual relationship is there so as you can give yourself totally to another person in a lifelong commitment, but is open to life. And therefore a sexual relationship belongs within marriage. It's a totally positive human experience but it is all part of creation...

Adrian Goldberg

Yeah, yeah, but come on Chris, I mean in secular society we now have the principle of civil relationships, effectively gay marriage. You're not telling me are you that the Catholic Church is about to introduce gay marriage?

Chris Morgan

No, because the relationship is about giving yourself totally to another person, including your fertility, and it's about being open to life, then sexual relationship belongs in a relationship between a man and a woman. So the church is not discriminating against people who have a same sex attraction, the church is saying that a sexual relationship belongs within that particular relationship of marriage. So a sexual relationship...

Adrian Goldberg

So it's alright to be gay but you can't have sex.

Chris Morgan

There is absolutely nothing wrong with somebody being homosexual. If that's the way they are, that's just their characteristic. There is nothing wrong with that at all.

Adrian Goldberg

But they can't get married in your church and therefore you're saying it's alright to be gay, but you can't have sex. You must stay celibate.

Chris Morgan

Well exactly the same for anybody who's heterosexual and is not married. In other words, what the church is saying is that the positive thing about a sexual relationship is this total giving to another person, which implies marriage and a relationship between a man and a woman. So somebody who is heterosexual and is not married, again, should not be having a sexual relationship with somebody. And if they are married it should just be with their wife in fidelity and commitment to that one person.

Adrian Goldberg

David, would you be happy if Chris's view of sexuality were taught in schools?

David

It depends what you mean by 'taught'. I think you know it's quite appropriate for if a school has an ethos for the school to discuss what that particular faith's teachings are, but in terms of dealing with sex and relationships' education, I think we need to give children as much, if you like, dispassionate and factual information. I mean it's separating the teaching ... this is what faith's believe, but not driving your school's whole sex and relationship education policy about simply pushing one faith or one group's view about actually trying to give children and young people the information, you know the factual information to actually make up their own mind. So I think it depends on the context of what would you say are taught in schools.