

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**American National Catholic Church
repudiates Rome's rejection of gay seminarians**

On December 7, the Vatican issued a document, “The Gift of the Priestly Vocation,” which bars men “who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called ‘gay culture’” from entering the priesthood. Although avoiding the Roman Catholic Church’s usual insistence that homosexuality is an “objectively disordered” condition, the document insinuates as much, sandwiching as it does its rejection of gay seminarians between sections discussing mental illness and child abuse.

In response, Presiding Bishop George Lucey, FCM, points out that the American National Catholic Church “differs from our Roman sisters and brothers on this issue. We were encouraged by the Roman Pontiff’s 2013 ‘Who am I to judge?’ when asked about gay, lesbian, and transgender people. We in the ANCC are in full sympathy with the full import of the pontiff’s stance, preferring to allow God to judge so that we’re free to love.”

Bishop Lucey emphasizes that the ANCC “sees all dimension of our lives as gifts given to us by God to be used in the service of furthering God’s Kingdom.” The Vatican’s latest rejection of gay ministry, he believes, comes at an especially inappropriate time. “I can’t help thinking during this holy season of Advent, when waiting is so infused with hope, how disappointing this news must be for gay seminarians and priests. So we say to them, you are welcome in the ANCC to celebrate who you were fully created to be. Rome is only one expression of Catholicism. She doesn’t speak for all Catholics, and we in the ANCC feel it important to speak with a different Catholic voice.” Bishop Lucey pointed out that the Church, until recent times, has always been a place for everyone.

For more information on the ANCC’s position on gay ordination, contact Fr. Kerry Walters, Director of Communications, at the above e-address and phone number.