

restriction or abolition.

Recently the executive secretary of the AMA, Dr. James Sammons, recipient of over \$600,000 per year in annual salary, resigned under pressure following the disclosure of highly questionable use of pension monies and participation in real estate deals involving the use of AMA funds to purchase homes and guarantee loans for various AMA staff members. In leaving office, Dr. Sammons pointed proudly to the fact that the organization had assets of \$25 million when he assumed office and \$193 million when he left office. This is the kind of boast one might expect from the CEO of General Motors where profit and loss are the purpose of the franchise. The AMA is a *professional* organization however. While its staff was accumulating capital (largely by increasing dues), the AMA was in decline as an influence in the community. Its prestige has never been lower. Constant and systematic intrusions of government into the practice of medicine have escalated in the past decade, and the AMA's influence in lobbying against such intrusions has been totally ineffective and even ludicrous at times. The percentage of physicians in the United States who are members of the AMA is at its lowest point in history. The *AMA Journal*, once one of the most influential medical publications in the world, has been exposed as having publication policies for the exclusion of papers on one side of controversial issues (such as abortion) and has published totally discredited studies on the epidemiology of the AIDS virus. The publication of the incredible article "It's Over, Debbie" was the ultimate disgrace for a once proud journal. After publishing the account of the murder of a patient by a house officer, the editor claimed the freedom of the press privilege of concealing the identity of the author thereby leaving him

free to practice exterminative medicine at some other time and place.

For these and many other reasons, it is time for physicians of conscience to withdraw support from the American Medical Association. Those of us who have spent endless hours in organized-

medicine, holding offices and serving on committees at the local and state level, must now sadly conclude that the AMA is too corrupt to be reformed from within.

- Eugene Diamond, M.D.

The "Gay Rights" Cover-up

The psychologist M. Scott Peck says that the two principal sources of human evil are narcissism and laziness. This is pretty obvious in the case of the so-called "gay rights" movement, where we see, on the one hand, the terrible need of certain people to protect their narcissism against a reality which, if acknowledged, would force them to face intolerable truths about themselves, and, on the other, the spiritual laziness, the sloth, which makes them unwilling to accept the pain and hard work involved in facing themselves. What the gay rights movement is about is the refusal of homosexuals to acknowledge the presence of disorder in themselves. The movement really has nothing to do with the demand for "rights." The real point is to get the whole of society to support them in their project of denial. Real spiritual and emotional growth for them would require precisely that they overcome this denial, yet they demand that the whole world conspire with them to sustain it, harmful though it is.

The "gay rights" movement is thus a movement to shore up the narcissism of homosexuals. The right they are asserting is not the right, for instance, to homosexual

marriages, to freedom from job and housing discrimination, and so on, *ad nauseam*. It is the right to have their narcissism supported by others. They are in effect demanding to be protected from having to look in the mirror, since, as we know from social psychology, the perceptions of others are a kind of mirror in which we see ourselves. They are demanding, thus, that others perceive them other than as they are, like the emperor who demanded that his subjects perceive him as wearing new clothes rather than parading around in his birthdaysuit. Of course, it took the power of an emperor even to try to bring this about, and that hasn't changed. In order for homosexuals to bully others into perceiving, or pretending to perceive them, as something other than disordered, deformed people, they have to have political power, and that is why the movement, from the very beginning, has so strongly stressed organizing for such power. It is fundamentally coercive in nature. Homosexuality is a terrible distortion in the order of creation, and it is a deep instinct for all people, even the homosexuals themselves, to recognize it as such and recoil from it in disgust. That response, so very natural a one, can only be forcibly sup-

pressed, through political power, and, increasingly, brainwashing, in the media, in the schools, and in the churches.

Of course, this kind of thing isn't exclusive to homosexuals. It is intolerable, or nearly so, for any of us to look at the ugliness of sin in ourselves, the terrible deformity of the spirit which sin entails. So we form movements for the principal purpose of getting others not to hold the mirror to us. The proabortion movement is a fairly obvious example. To have killed one's own baby is not only terrible for the baby, but is a horrendously deforming thing for the woman who does it, as well as for the so-called physician who actually wields the murder weapon, and they will do nearly anything to avoid looking at the corrupt and deformed creatures they have turned themselves into. Hence their need for the abomination known as the "abortion rights" movement. They are a little like the Dufflepuds in C.S. Lewis's *Narnia Chronicles*, who got the magician to make them invisible because they were so ugly (or at least thought they were) that they couldn't stand to see themselves. In a more serious vein, they are the people St. John speaks of: "And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, lest his deeds should be exposed" (John 3:19-20).

While all sins involve us in this process of deception, both of others and of ourselves, homosexuality is as classic and clear a case as it is because it involves issues so very central to human life. There is no escaping it: God created us male and female. Sexuality is absolutely central to our whole sense of selfhood and to our very ability to love and be loved. There is probably no sector of the human personality which is separable from this central reality of being

male and female. Each of us is, at the very center of his or her personality, irreducibly a man or woman. As a result, a wound or deformity in this area is an unimaginably horrible thing: it is something that people experience as intolerable and hence to be covered up at any cost.

In its psychological and spiritual roots, the "gay rights" movement is such a cover-up. As long as only homosexuals are involved in the cover-up, the deception isn't really effective. It is a basic principle of social psychology that our self-perception is grounded in the way others, especially "significant others," perceive us. That is why we see militant homosexuals so anxious to convince their parents, their siblings, their "straight" friends, and so forth, of the harmlessness and naturalness of their perversion. It is why they push so hard for laws which publicly acknowledge homosexuality as merely a variation, a social difference analogous to race or ethnicity, which, like these, entitles one to protection against discrimination, and, in the current atmosphere, to some sort of certified victim status. And it is certainly why they find it so crucial to load school sex-education programs with prohomosexual propaganda to teach defenseless children that perversion is just an alternative lifestyle.

The distortion of sexuality that homosexuality entails is an infected, festering, wound, that, to the wounded person, is intolerable, something that he just cannot stand to look at or let anyone else look at. Yet, in the end, the effort to hide it, to cover it up, is, if possible, more damaging than the wound itself, because it will allow the infection to grow, to spread, until it poisons the personality through and through (the nasty, spiteful personalities of so many "gays" bear witness to this sad reality). Hiding the wound is understandable, of course. Yet it is

justifiable only on the pessimistic assumption that the wound is incurable. If that is not the case, then there is no valid alternative to letting a physician look at the wound, letting him probe it, probably reopen it so it can drain. If it is bad enough, major surgery may be needed. All this is terribly painful, but anyone who truly wants a wound healed has to go through it.

So the real challenge for the unfortunate children of God who, through no fault of their own presumably, have had the hideous wound of homosexuality inflicted on them, isn't to organize a socially and spiritually destructive, disordered movement to cover up the wound, but rather to turn to God for the love and grace which are there for them. God can stand to look at the wound, even if they cannot, and with His love and grace, they too can learn to acknowledge it and to turn it over to God for healing. I am convinced that, in some cases, despite the propaganda to the contrary, the wound can be healed even in this life, enabling the person to function as a normal man or woman. In other cases, to be sure, the wound may go so deep as to rule this out, yet even there, there is the possibility of the person learning to accept his wounded state as a kind of sharing in the wounds Christ himself suffered. There is the possibility, with that acceptance, of a real acceptance of celibacy and chastity, not as something negative, merely to be suffered, but as a deep affirmation, an affirmation in which the person can truly give himself in love to God and to mankind. And in this affirmation, genuine manhood or womanhood is affirmed and built up in a way that can transcend the deformity in the person's sexuality.

It is only where there is no longer any real faith in God that lies and deceptions like the "gay rights" movement become the only

alternative for homosexuals. Before the prohomosexual movement became so popular with our liberal opinion-makers, homosexuals used to go into the closet - i.e., hide their homosexuality. Today, they pride themselves on their new honesty, coming out of the closet, acknowledging their homosexuality, and demanding that others not only tolerate it but affirm it as a good thing. In reality, that is just a deeper form of dishonesty. Now they no longer deny the reality that that they are homosexual, but instead they deny that homosexuality is the disorder, the terrible wound at the very center of one's humanity, which it manifestly is. They have come out of the closet only to retire into a deeper and more inaccessible closet. Perhaps we could say that they have come out of the closet only to go and hide in the basement, where the truth about them is even harder to find. They must not be allowed to do this. The worst thing we can possibly do for homosexuals is accept their homosexuality as normal. For their sake we must force them to look in the mirror and see the true ugliness and horror of their condition. That must be done as lovingly and compassionately as is consistent with getting it done, but it must be done. Beyond that, we can only pray for them that the divine love which alone heals all wounds will come to their aid, enabling them to give up lies and deceptions such as the "gay rights" movement and "come out" into the divine love which reveals all things and heals all things.

- George A. Kendall



Diet Sex

My family was upstairs, dressing for Sunday Mass, and I stayed a few minutes in the kitchen to clear the table before putting on my tie. As I picked up milk and cereals, my gaze fell upon the Quaker Puffed Wheat cereal box, where I read: "Only 50 calories per serving." Perhaps it was the impending trip to receive the Bread of Life, but for the first time in my life, I was struck by how incongruous the notion of "diet food" is.

Food without calories: what a thought! The calorie content of food, its ability to be transformed into heat and hence power our bodies, is the measure of its ability to sustain life - i.e., its degree of "foodness." For example, development economists and nutritionists use the rule of thumb that to be fed adequately a person needs some 2,300 calories per day. From the standpoint of what food is supposed to do for us, a food without caloric content, or of the "local" sort that the diet-conscious regularly build their menus around, is a contradiction in terms. A gastronomic oxymoron!

Yet diet foods are a growth industry in the U.S., and probably in most other developed countries. The local supermarkets here have whole sections featuring nothing but diet foods.

In his economy, God gave us incentives in the form of pleasure to induce us to do the things we need, and disincentives (pain) to avoid what is harmful. We need food to nourish us, and so God made most foods pleasant for us (two-year olds and certain teenagers excepted!). Food also serves an important social function, which is linked primarily with its

ability to give pleasure. The primary end of food, however, is nourishment; the satisfaction of eating, and the social values, are secondary.

One of the manifestations of wealth in the developed world is an abundance of food; most of us take for granted that we have enough to eat. In this environment, the secondary purpose of food becomes primary in our thoughts, and we concentrate on food for its ability to give us pleasure, either individually or socially. We choose among foods on their ability to please us, not primarily for their nutritional value. We seek the pleasure of food so much that one of the characteristics of people in the developed countries is their tendency to be over-nourished, to the extent that they are literally digging their graves with a knife and fork, to use one of my father's favorite phrases.

We may be over-nourished and overweight, but we don't want to be. We are health and appearance conscious, so extra poundage presents a problem. There are two basic solutions to it. One is "moral," involving self-denial, either eating less or consciously selecting simpler, less calorie-laden foods such as vegetables. As all who have practiced self-denial can attest, this is no fun. Fortunately, food technology has come up with a quick fix: diet food. Diet food provides all the pleasure and all the sociability of "real" food but allows the consumer to avoid undesirable nutritional elements, namely calories, fats, and cholesterol. It's the no-pain solution to the sticky problem posed by our desire to eat to our heart's content while avoiding the unsightly side-effect of what