



25 August 2017

Bishop James Foley's reflections on the Same Sex Marriage Plebiscite.

Recently there was a radio interview with a Jewish rabbi on the Hebrew Scriptures' teachings on same sex attraction and action. That is an important moral distinction between attractions and actions.

In the Book of Leviticus, which gives an extraordinarily detailed list of every conceivable human action and ritual acts, there is a brief statement against same sex intercourse. *You must not lie with a man as with a woman. This is a hateful thing.* (18/22). Lev. 20/3 declares this a capital offence. Yet, as the rabbi persuasively pointed out, that same Book advocated the absolute primacy of Godliness and the dignity of every person: *For it is I, who am your God. You have been sanctified and have become holy because I am holy.* (11/44).

The other biblical incident which may have more influenced religious thinking is the *Sodom Story* (Gen. Ch. 19). Yet, when you read the whole chapter, it is a *text of terror*. It may have had more to do with ancient customs of hospitality and protecting strangers and guests - than judgements about particular sexual activities.

Significantly in the Christian New Testament it is only from Paul, not from Jesus Himself, that there comes censures of sexual practices found, not in Jewish, but more in pagan Greek and Roman societies. (Romans 1/ esp. v. 26-27). These pagan practices are extensively listed in 1 Cor 6/9 and the *Pastoral* I Tim. 1/10.

Yet that same complex character, Paul, upheld the absolute primacy of love:

*Love is always patient and kind; love is never jealous; , it is never rude
It is always ready to make allowances, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes.* (1 Cor: 13:4-7)

So from these very few references we may conclude that various places and different times have been more or less tolerant or intolerant of homosexuality.

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Greek and Roman pre-Christian societies recognised, accepted and may have even encouraged same sex relationships. It was assumed that owners and slaves, teachers and students, coaches and athletes would be sexually active with each other.

Yet there were also strictly enforced expectations: that the superior – the master – in such relations would always be the active one over the younger or inferior partner. (the *minion* - quite literally) (See *Michel Foucault* (1926-1984) The History of Sexuality: Vol. I 1976/78; Vol. II 1984/85; Vol. III 1984/86 (the second date is that for the English translation. Publisher: Penguin Books.)

It was also the universal social expectation that every man would be in a marriage with a woman, which would produce children, if not mutual love!

Every society, and among all sub-sets within larger social groupings, down to particular tribes and even the family unit, have had their own particular and often markedly different relationship *mores*.

Some readily accept same sex activities, whereas for others (even near-neighbours) any such behaviour was utterly taboo and severely, even fatally, punished.

While studying philosophy in Louvain, Belgium, in the 1970s, my *lifeline* to the English speaking world was the B.B.C. World Service. One day it reported on a scholarly criminological survey: In England men were more likely *to cheat on* and to kill their wives or lovers. In France the very opposite obtained: it was women who were more frequently unfaithful and more given to killing, usually by poisoning, their husbands or lovers.

In a third European country (better left unnamed) there was a significantly greater occurrence of more unusual sexual practices: sex with the dead or with animals, and also rather more bizarre forms of murder such as cannibalism.

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It is only quite recently that people have been classified or have self-identified themselves according to their sexual orientation - as homosexual or lesbian.

In other times and places people who engaged in some same gender sexual activities were regarded as ordinary people, who, occasionally, *did things* with members of their own gender.

This was the attitude adopted in the Church's *Penitentials* – guides for confessors from the earlier Middle Ages.

It was only in the later 19th and early 20th centuries that psychiatric practitioners, such as Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and Carl Jung (1875-1961) discerned deeper factors at work in same sex attraction and actions, such as strained and unresolved relations between a child and the parent of either gender.

In 1979, in Louvain, I attended a defence of a highly controversial and finally low graded moral theology doctorate entitled Lesbian Love – is it Christian? The candidate was severely criticised by one of the examiners for applying/transposing the Freudian account of male homosexuality (the *Oedipal complex* – father-son rivalry) to the lesbian female same sex attraction, which at that date had not been researched to the same extent as had male homosexuality.

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At a meeting of the Australian bishops in Rome, in 1993, with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, I recalled that doctoral defence incident as an example of how careful the Church needed to be in its consideration of homosexuality and its causes in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which underwent various revisions, until finalised in the Latin official text in 1997. The English translation, because of the issue of *inclusive language*, had a complex, drawn out history.

When published it cautiously stated that homosexuality *has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained.* (2357)

That same section goes on, however, to use some terse technical language, which sounds so harsh and condemnatory than rather more ordinary language. This unfortunate phraseology has been much criticised and easily misunderstood¹.

Yet the further two sections return to a more pastoral and caring tone:

The number of men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible. This inclination, which is objectively disordered, constitutes for most of them a trial. They must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God's will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition. 2358

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 now current acronyms *LGBTI* reflect this considerable and complex range of sexualities.

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Since first writing this, two more acronyms, *Q* and *Q*, have been added: for *Queer* and *Questioning*.

¹ *Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved.* 2357

These phrases *acts of grave depravity*, which are *intrinsically disordered*, are derived from classical Natural Law theory in moral theology. Their use here, in an otherwise pastorally sensitive paragraph, is jarring. This sharp dissonance may reflect some uneasy compromise among the drafters of this section.

The term *intrinsically disordered* is similar to its cousin *intrinsically evil*, which sounds like the worst of all possible sins. Yet a trifling *white lie* is also *intrinsically evil* in the strict technical sense in that it contradicts The Truth. It obscures God Given Reality.

Even a small *white lie* denies the right order of things. Hence such a seemingly slight sin, a lie, is *intrinsically evil*.

The first has always seemed a particularly negative and a very strange and hurtful word especially to apply to oneself.

The second, *Questioning*, is more helpful. Perhaps there are very few people who have never wondered at some time about or *questioned* their own sexuality.

A few years ago I was at Mass in London's Westminster cathedral. The bishop preaching quoted the late Cardinal Hume (1923-1999) as saying that: *there are as many spiritualities* (= ways of believing and praying) *as there are or ever have been human beings!!*

That got me thinking that there may also be as many unique and intensely intimate human sexualities - as there are or ever have been human beings on the face of the earth!

To intensely personalise this: a doctor, with a keen interest in medical history, said to me that it is a shame that there is not a computer *memory stick* on which we could download all the information and memories in our brains. That seemed like a very good idea at the time, though probably not yet technically achievable!

I too have a great deal of local historical data and oral accounts from those now deceased tucked away in my memory-bank, which may be lost forever - upon my own demise!

However upon further reflection, such technology would require considerable filtering or censoring devices.

There is not one of us who would want every one of our critical judgements or negative opinions of others – especially of those closest to us, let alone our own *bad thoughts*, especially the sexual ones, to be for ever available in the public domain.

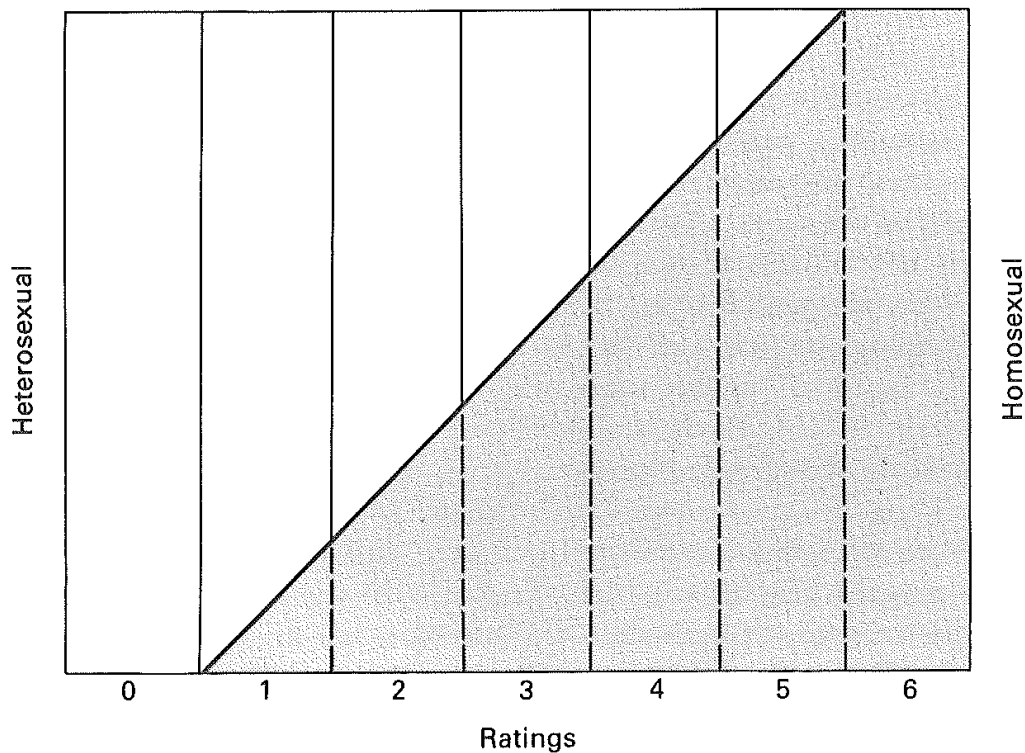
Each one of us is unique. In no other part of life are we more distinctively individual than in our memories and in our prayers; our friendships; our affections; our life's experiences and especially our fantasies – ambitious, romantic, sexual, or whatever!!!

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However the particular times and cultures which each person happens to inhabit, do have strong influences and may exert powerful inhabitations upon or supports for our sexual orientations and actions.

Alfred Kinsey's (1894-1956) survey: The Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male (1948) proposed a range, a scale of zero (0) to six (6) degrees in sexual orientation. At either extreme ends are those exclusively heterosexual or those exclusively homosexual.

The implication here is that, between those two poles, many people may be *Questioning* or variously perplexed and personally ambivalent, perhaps ever altering along this broad moving spectrum.



Based on both psychological reactions and overt experience, individuals rate as follows:

- 0 Exclusively heterosexual with no homosexual
- 1 Predominantly heterosexual, only incidentally homosexual
- 2 Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual
- 3 Equally heterosexual and homosexual
- 4 Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual
- 5 Predominantly homosexual, but incidentally heterosexual
- 6 Exclusively homosexual

FIGURE 1.1 Heterosexual—homosexual rating scale
(Kinsey et al. 1948: 638, fig. 161)

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From all of the above, we may conclude that this is neither as clear nor as simple an issue as either side in this discussion on *SSM* (same sex marriage) may at times suggest.

To return briefly to the Jewish rabbi: he spoke of same sex attraction as an issue faced as frequently in orthodox as in liberal Jewish families.

This too would accord with my own pastoral experience over now forty-four (44) years in various parishes.

² Kinsey's several surveys, however, have been rightly criticised, based, as they are, on voluntary participation, presumably of people more likely to be more sexually involved, rather than representing the general population.

In every parish in which I have worked and in every place where I have lived there has been an acceptance, usually unspoken, of two people, unrelated, of the same gender, sharing a home together.

Growing up in suburban Brisbane in the 1950s and 60s it was not at all uncommon (and then usually uncommented upon) for two women, unrelated, though close friends, to be living together, probably and primarily for companionship and for domestic economic and very practical security reasons.

It was no one else's business to enquire further!

Yet for two unrelated men to share a home was less usual and perhaps regarded with more curiosity or suspicion. However I was never then aware of any social ostracism or open hostility or ridicule towards these people within their parish community.

Once when I was doing door-to-door visiting, as one could still do in a parish in the 1970s, in one of the more sedate up-market streets in that suburb, I was informed by a very proper matron, naturally living at the top end of the street: *You will find this a very interesting street. We have here two manses* (=residences of Protestant ministers) *and two pansies living together* (who incidentally just happened to occupy the neatest house in that very tidy street).

For those of us around from the middle of last century (that is the 20th – not the 19th!), name calling such as *pansy*, *poofter*, *fairy* or *homo* may have been heard in the high school yard, but were never uttered in front of your mother!

Nor were these ever topics of conversation in polite or mixed company.

Back then activities such as *poofter bashing* and police entrapment did occur, but these generally went unreported and were only occasionally sensationalised in the press, if it was some high profiled person in the community caught in some seriously compromising situation.

In my last year of secondary school at Marist, Ashgrove in 1966, there was a particularly violent assault, with a broken beer bottle, upon a suspected *gay* (that word was not then in use) man by a pack of young thugs, late at night in a dark park in the neighboring suburb of Bardon. This horrible event shocked all of Brisbane and marked something of *a loss of innocence* for that wider community.

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Would those of us of that vintage ever have thought then, that now, only a generation later, such matters would be front and centre of public discourse and that everyone's opinion on *Gay Marriage*, would be officially canvassed in a Federal plebiscite?

I am reliably informed that homophobic *hate speech* and actual harassment: *hooning past* and throwing rocks and rubbish at homes where two men (less likely two women) reside, is now quite common in certain neighbourhoods.

So attitudes and actions have shifted markedly and in different and contradictory directions within our own lifetimes.

While many more homosexual relationships have *come out of the closet* and into the clear light of day, in doing so they may also have become much larger and more obvious targets for *hate crimes* and for dark scorn, than ever they were in times past.

There is also some speculation that assertive *homophobia* may itself be an indicator of unresolved or unaccepted sexual ambivalence.

So to sustain the metaphors: these wells may be very deep and ever darker in all of this field!

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It is also utterly too simplistic to propose that all *Religious* people are on one side of some very clear divide - while all *LGBTIQQ* people are on the other.

This is a matter which does engage each of us and involve all of us.

The Jewish/Christian commitment is to care deeply for every person, especially those who differ from myself, (*The Good Samaritan [Lk 10/29-37]*) with the absolute primacy above all other Commandments of loving of God and loving of all others.

On these two Commandments hang the whole Law (including Lev. 18/22 and 20/3) and the Prophets also (Mt. 22/40).

In Christian speech there can be no place for *hate speech*.

Yet it is tragically paradoxical that *hate speech* may now be occurring on and around such *sacred ground* as deep loving friendships and particularly about that most sensitive and intimate of all human experiences: loving sexual expression!

It is such a pathetic irony that loving friendship would ever become a *battlefield* for hurting or worse hating.

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So, given all of the above, where do each of us stand on the plebiscite question of *Marriage Equality*?

How will I vote in the plebiscite?

Unsurprisingly, even quite predictably and probably expectedly, I will vote *No* and I will advise others to vote likewise.

I say and do this not to attack and, hopefully, not to affront to the *LGBTIQQ* community or anyone else who may decide to vote *Yes*.

My basic reason for voting *No* is to uphold the institution of marriage as it has been here-to-fore recognised and lived out in most societies and in most epochs of human history.

Now the following example may seem odd, or may even seem to trivialise this matter of deep human concern:

I am an avid collector of old books on history. Some time ago I found one (1) of the two (2) volumes of the Aldine History of N.S.W. (1888). More recently in a Sydney antiquarian

bookshop I discovered another single volume of this same set. But then I found to my disappointment that we both had the same one - volume II. This caused me to remark, spontaneously, *Oh well, what a pity, we can't arrange a Marriage here!*

That may seem a rather *throw-away* remark. Yet it does capture a substantial truth. Marriage is a union of opposites and hopefully an enriching complementarity of differences: male and female.

Someone, who has been happily married for decades, recently remarked to me that he finally, and rather wistfully, has come to the conclusion that the only thing women and men have in common is that they both stand upright!

Women and men do think, emote, act, speak and love, so very differently.

Perhaps nowhere is this more obvious than within bodily and genital differences. These mysteriously complement each other in a most intensely intimate manner.

Hopefully, this loving sexual union may result in the conception to a new person, who is that unique blend of the characteristics of father and mother.

So, given these essential differences the very phrase *Gay Marriage Equality* becomes in itself problematic - if not a contradiction in itself.

Yet to defend the ideal of marriage inevitably risks becoming a critique, even a *put-down*, of those calling for *Marriage Equality*.

By defending one, you may offend the other!

Yet for physiological, biological and psychological reasons such an *Equality* can never be achieved between two people of the same gender.

There are extraordinarily wide varieties of sexual activities, which seek to express human intimacy and/or curiosity.

There is the deeply understandable desire of each person to procreate – to create a new life - as the actual embodiment of that loving couple. Yet for those of the same gender this may require resorting to such procedures as blending semen, artificial insemination, surrogate implantation etc. etc.

These very efforts to reproduce carry within themselves inevitably a degree of clinical distance. There may then arise a sense of unfulfillment or frustration for each of the people variously, yet unequally, involved in these procedures.

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However, as acknowledged above, there are few families or extended families who do not have among them those of *LGBTIQQ* orientations.

Rather than a disdain or ridicule, there ought to be only a deep *fellow feeling* and a respectful, not a condescending concern, which eliminates any harsh judgement or attempts at exclusion.

Rather there should be a shared sense of humane pathos in the complexity of human relationships and loving.

Are those, whom we know and care for, to be condemned to possibly a loveless, isolated, lonely life with, at best, occasional, passing, impersonal, sexual encounters – or worse - a life of risky promiscuity?

Where is the love, to which we all aspire, to be found in that?

Surely there must be something better!

People may be surprised, even scandalised, by what I am about to reveal. This may also be perceived as typically hypercritical or another *double standard* on the Church's part.

I also recognise that there is a disconnect and a dissonance between what the Catechism, quoted extensively above, so objectively and clearly teaches – and what I am about to say more subjectively and pastorally.

There is an age-old pastoral adage: *A lion in the pulpit and a lamb in the confessional.*

There has always been a distinction between the ideals we preach and try to live and that understanding which we frequently extend to our own selves and to those others struggling with living and loving. *Who is to throw the first stone?* (John 8/7)

There is also that wise saying, though not biblical, but none-the-less so very true: *That the Perfect may be the Enemy of Good!*

There is a long-established, very discrete confessional practice: to help to guide people's consciences, *before God*, who find themselves with a settled, deeply seated, exclusive same sex attraction.³ Perhaps, providentially, they may have found someone to love. They might have entered into a permanent, stable, life-long relationship. In time, like in so many marriages, this may become less physically and sexually centered and be gradually transformed into an ever deepening union of loving friendship and a shared life together.

As a young priest ministering at the death bed of a mother of six (6), her husband said simply, but profoundly, at the moment of her death: *I have just lost the best friend I ever had.*

This does share that vision, that ideal, held up in that section of the Catechism (2359).

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There may then well need to be legal and social adjustments to protect and to respect the distinct nature of such relationships (like *next-of-kin* status), which none-the-less would need necessarily to be quite different from those appropriate to the union of husband and wife.

For example, for sound reasons of genetics, there are clearly legislated (though recently civilly revised/modified) *prohibited degrees of consanguinity* which exclude marriage between blood relatives - extending to first cousins.

³ A wise old parish priest, with whom I worked years ago, long before this became such a central issue, held that people should never fix on their sexual orientation until their mid-twenties (20s) or early thirties (30s). With such rapid changes in culture and from so many known instances of later, mid-life, *comings out*, this time-frame may need to be adjusted considerably upwards.

There are also long-established sociological restrictions or deeply seated instinctive taboos covering degrees of *affinity* between married couples. You may not marry a parent-in-law or an adopted child.

Until recently (1984) Church Law, curiously, it may now seem to us, had prohibited the marriage of a godparent and a godchild. This was because in former times, with much shorter adult life expectancy, the godparent at Baptism would often become the adopting/fostering parent of the godchild upon the early death of its parents.

These are practical physiological and sociological considerations, which have long been recognised and have been widely accepted, which in themselves do tell against the *equity* of a marriage between two people of the same gender.

To venture into even more intimate considerations in Church Law, (and, until relatively recently, also in civil law): a marriage was not consummated until vaginal intercourse occurred. Despite the exchange of vows at the wedding ceremony, the marriage was only validated when it was so physically consummated.

A more arcane law, though not totally irrelevant in this context, forbade sodomy – anal intercourse - between a husband and wife. This was considered an abuse of conjugal rights and a physical violation of the other, which was regarded as so unusual and so *un-natural* that it become grounds in English law to annul a marriage – already otherwise consummated. The romantic poet, Lord Byron (1788-1824) found himself in these then scandalous circumstances with his wife.

A scene in the film *Brokeback Mountain* also more than hints at this particular tension in the intimacy between a husband and a wife.

Now, by this stage, you may be thinking *too much detail!* - *too much sex!*

From at least the late 1960s there was the cry: *the Church should get out of the bedroom!*

Clergy, particularly celibate clergy, ought be very circumspect in their utterances about married life!

However, I have mused that as the Church was exiting those bedrooms, it passed by *the World and his Wife* – not to mention the World's media – entering those same bedrooms!!

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Now there also seems to be an emerging level of confusion surrounding and conflating the questions of religious freedom and that of the impending plebiscite.

As marriage celebrant I am only authorised to do so *according to the Rites of the Catholic Church*. I can not act as a civil celebrant. I, like all other religious celebrants, can only celebrate a marriage which exactly conforms to the doctrine and discipline of one's particular religious tradition.

This may be an arrangement peculiar to Australia.

Since the Napoleonic Code (1804), in much of continental Europe, a town hall civil ceremony and legal registration always precedes any religious rite.

In England, all licensed clergy of the Established Church (Anglican) become official marriage celebrants⁴. Catholic and other clergy may now apply for that status – or they may choose to have a civil registrar (who it has not been unknown to seem to be already *under the weather* on a late Saturday afternoon!) present at the wedding to record the exchange of vows officially.

In the U.S.A. a state marriage license from the local court house is required before any religious ceremony takes place.

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If there were to be any attempts to change this current Australian arrangement, it would run up hard against Section 116 of the Constitution.

The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth.

The exclusion of any *religious tests* is of particular and peculiar historical interest. In a collection of official documents of Australian history, the very first ones cited are Governor Phillip's (1738-1814) rejection of the Catholic Eucharistic doctrine of Transubstantiation; then followed his assent to the post-Stuart royal succession.

Phillip, having landed on the 26th January, 1788, then on the 13th February had to swear again to the *religion test* against Transubstantiation⁵. This was particularly paradoxical for he himself, as an *Enlightenment gentleman*, who seems to have had little interest in or personal commitment to any particular Christian belief.

Sect 116 was carefully drafted, apparently with some input from Sydney's then Cardinal Moran (1830-1911).

⁴ It seems that at least until the Catholic Relief Act of 1793, Catholics in England could only be married (and be buried?) legally by Anglican clergy. Even the Catholic Vicar Apostolic, Bishop Richard Challoner (1691-1781) was buried in a vault in the (Established) parish church by the Anglican rector of Milton, who noted in his register

Anno Domini 1781, January 22. Buried the Reverend Richard Challoner, a Popish Priest and Titular Bishop of London and Salisbury, a very pious and good man, of great learning and extensive abilities.

⁵ *"I do solemnly and sincerely, in the presence of God, profess, testify and declare that I believe that in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper there is not any transubstantiation of the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ at or after the consecration thereof by any person whatsoever, and that the invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other saint, and the sacrifice of the Mass as they are now used in the Church of Rome are superstitions and idolatrous"*

This oath, taken as a precondition for any major British civil or military official appointment was not abrogated till thirty (30) years later with the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act (in 1829).

So who thinks that an anti-Catholic bias has never been or does not continue to be an aspect of Australian society?

This sector 116, is oddly placed among those parts of the Constitution dealing with the relations between the Commonwealth and the States.

The jurist Henry Bournes Higgins (1851-1929) however did express the view that this section could only bind the Commonwealth and not the State Governments. Strangely, given recent events there, it was only Tasmania which enacted similar provisions following Sect 116.

The headlined article in Thursday's (17/8) Australian *Religious rights threat in state laws* raised this complexity of jurisdictions.

Incidentally, Sect 116 would also be a major obstacle for the One Nation Party's call for a ban on Islamic migration – clearly a Commonwealth responsibility.

Sect 116 mutually benefits and separates both Church and State. Marriage law is also a Commonwealth competence.

However, while religious celebrants may be adequately covered, the situation of civil celebrants, public servant registrars and the proverbial *butcher, baker and candlestick maker*, may be less straight forward.

Yet the realities *free market forces* may here come into play. To paraphrase a recent correspondent to the Australian: would you really want an unfriendly confectioner fiddling with your wedding cake?

Regarding freedoms to speak, teach or preach: Divorce has long been part of the law of the land, as too has available abortion, contraception etc. etc. Yet none on this has yet prevented us from promoting our Catholic position on these issues.

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On another related matter: I have come to see that the wording of the plebiscite question may be slanted (hopefully, unintentionally) in favour of a *Yes* response:

Should the law be changed to allow same sex couples to marry?

In the immediately preceding sentence, introducing the legislation specifying this wording for the plebiscite question, the Prime Minister did state: *This has been designed to be as fair and transparent as possible, scrupulously fair.*

After citing the precise wording of the question, the P.M. added: *This is a simple question. It does not presuppose any particular view.*

However, would it not have been more usual, fair, or proper to pose the question in terms of the current legal and social *status-quo*:

Should marriage continue to be between a man and a woman?

This would reverse the *onus on proof* on *Marriage Equality* (sic). It would transpose the positions and alter the perceptions of the protagonists (who hopefully are not antagonists) on either side, swapping the positive and negative, those inevitable moral and rhetorical *high* and *low grounds*!

This would significantly re-focus the campaign – giving the positive presumption to those favouring the marriage ideal as it has been here-to-fore appreciated.

In human affairs there are always complexities, exceptions and reservations.

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The *Yes* or a *No* vote does need further qualification and deeper reflection.

The argument that most other countries, like our own, have passed legislation for *Marriage Equality* need not necessarily be all that compelling.

At the societal level there does need to be a degree of *majority moral* consensus and cohesion.

Yet, at the deeper level of personal ethical decision making, the opinion of the majority may not always help the perplexed individual conscience.

John Locke (1632-1704) a founder of liberal political and social thinking, living through one of the most convulsed and polarised periods of English history, made the unpopular yet incontestable observation: *It is more likely that one lone individual may hit on the Truth – rather than for a whole nation to do so!*

In other words, personal moral reasoning may require more than popular, even majority, public opinion or sanction.

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Love, divine and/or human love, does not easily fit within the constraints and limitations of *The Law* - either civil or religious.

The Gospels and St Paul stress this liberating Truth of *the Freedom of the Children of God* (IJohn3/1-3).

+ **James Foley**
BISHOP OF CAIRNS