

Christians banned from foster care over gay views

by [Al Webb](#)

March 1, 2011

LONDON (RNS) Two senior judges have banned a Christian couple from any further foster care because they oppose homosexuality, a stance that the judges said has no place in the laws of a "largely secular" Britain.

Owen and Eunice Johns, of Derby, England, have already fostered 15 children, but the High Court in London ruled that they can no longer continue the practice because their anti-gay views are legally wrong.

In their decision delivered Monday (Feb. 28), Lord Justice James Lawrence Munby and Justice Jack Beeston said that under 21st-century British law, the rights of homosexuals "should take precedence" over the rights of religious faiths, including Christians.

The two judges decreed that Britain had evolved into a "largely secular," multicultural society whose laws "do not include Christianity."

Eunice Johns, a retired nurse, called it "a sad day for Christianity."

The judges said that "although historically this country is part of the Christian West, and although it has an established church ... which is Christian, there has been enormous changes to the social and

religious life of our country over the last century."

The Pentecostal couple had fostered children since 1992 until taking a break. When they reapplied in 2007 to resume fostering, they were told that their attitudes toward gays violated Britain's new sexual equality laws.

Eunice Johns argued that "all we were not willing to do was to tell a small child that the practice of homosexuality was a good thing."

Gay-rights campaigners applauded the court's decision to put "21st-century decency above 19th-century prejudice."