

This is an "urgent message"?

By [Adam J. Copeland](#)

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Last week, the Catholic Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis endorsed the Republican candidate for governor of Minnesota—well, not really, but it only takes a little reading between the lines to draw that conclusion.

If you're Catholic and you live in the Twin Cities area, you've received or will soon receive a DVD explaining the church's teaching on traditional marriage and supporting a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. Didn't get one? Try your neighbor—they sent 400,000.

Until now, the question of gay marriage has drawn very little attention in Minnesota this election cycle. The Democratic-Farmer-Labor and Independent Party nominees both support it, while the Republican nominee supports an amendment banning it. But this year in Minnesota, as around the country, same-sex marriage is largely a fringe issue due to more pressing concerns. Minnesota projects a six billion dollar deficit in the coming fiscal biennial. That's *six billion* dollars.

According to Archbishop John Nienstedt, an anonymous donor gave the funds for the DVDs. Nienstedt doesn't know their cost. The DVD label says, "View now for an urgent message." But in a [long interview](#) with Minnesota Public Radio, the archbishop refused to accept the notion that the DVD is overtly political.

I'm a pastor. I understand the difference between preaching about a political issue and advocating for a specific candidate. I get that it's a thin line sometimes.

What infuriates me here is that the DVD addresses, of all things, same-sex marriage—not teacher

layoffs or cuts to local government aid. Not the unemployment rate or the thousands of children living in poverty. Not the six-billion-dollar deficit. Apparently these issues don't deserve a single DVD, let alone 400,000 copies.

Many Twin Cities-area

Catholics have joined social-media campaigns to send the DVDs back unopened. Eric Celeste [suggests](#) putting them in the offering plate. Maybe that's a campaign Archbishop Nienstedt can speak to clearly.