

Whose outrage?

By [Kari J. Lundgren](#)

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Yesterday, just in time for Pride, *The Boston Globe* ran an article titled “[Canceled Mass outrages gays.](#)” From the contents of the article, it seems to have been mis-titled. A more appropriate headline may have run, “Parish’s ‘All are welcome’ Mass outrages anonymous conservative Catholic bloggers.” Because the story the article actually tells is quite different.

Susan Donnelly, a member of the parish council of St. Cecilia Parish, said the scheduled Mass had not sparked controversy at St. Cecilia’s. She said the criticism has come from outside. [She said,] “I find it hard to believe that Christians don’t believe the great variety of people as God made them is a lovely thing,” she said. “Nobody’s trying to celebrate people living in denial of what the church is teaching; it’s more we’re trying to celebrate the people who sit next to you in the pew. There’s no agenda other than that.”

The article goes on to tell of the conservative Catholic blogger who spearheaded the campaign against the inclusive Mass and who, by going to the archdiocese with complaints of relativism, was able to disrupt a local community’s religious expression, declaring with apparently no sense of irony that “There’s not a place for a Mass like that in the Catholic Church.”

Opposition to the Mass grew out of a post by a local blogger who writes under the pseudonym Joe Sacerdo and who has criticized the Archdiocese of Boston for what he describes as “relativism” and deviation from doctrine... “I think it’s the right thing to do,” [Sacerdo] said yesterday of the archdiocese’s decision [to cancel the Mass]. “There’s not a place for a Mass like that in the Catholic Church.”

But anonymous self-appointed doctrinal police don’t make for nearly as sexy an image as irate gay folks during this season — after all, isn’t that why gay folks march at Pride? To threaten all values and order that heterosexuals hold dear? And surely an inclusive mass is simply meant to subvert the Catholic Church, not to provide spiritual succor and community for an often marginalized group of Catholics?

It’s disappointing that, faced with such eloquent expressions of faith as supporters of the Mass at St. Cecilia’s offer, the archdiocese would instead bow to disgruntled outsider pressure like this. It’s also disappointing that the *Boston Globe* would play up the ‘angry gays’ image. But overall this was a fine piece of

reporting, telling an important, if sad, story.

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