

Comparison of marriage equality to communism is creative

Maureen Fiedler | Dec. 21, 2012 NCR Today

L'Osservatore Romano has gone creative -- especially with historical parallels. In an article published Monday, historian Lucetta Scaraffia compared supporters of same-sex marriage to 20th-century communists who preached an egalitarian utopia and thus caused untold damage in the 20th century. LGBT supporters and communists? Say what?

In her view, LGBT advocates are luring us all into yet another damaging "egalitarian utopia."

But since when are visions of equality, economic ones or those based on sexual orientation "damaging"? I thought basic notions of human equality dated at least as far back as the Gospels, when Jesus treated everyone with equal love and concern. And they were certainly echoed in the documents of Vatican II. (See: *Church in the Modern World*, No. 29.)

And today, aren't many commentators highly critical of our economic inequality? Are we not coming to the realization that a person's sexual orientation is God-given and ought not be the subject of discrimination? Scaraffia needs to do some serious study in contemporary economics and psychology.

But in a recent interview, she defended her stance with this gem: "The idea that men have to be equal to enjoy the fullness of their rights and be happy dates back to French Revolution, when they demolished church bell towers because they were taller than other buildings."

Is she saying equality is not essential to the fullness of human rights? That somehow you can be unequal and have fullness of rights? She should check out the civil rights literature by African-Americans in the early 20th century. And the French Revolution? Like I said, this goes way back to Jesus' position.

What about those tall bell towers in France in 1789? She makes it sound like the peasants in revolt were dumb, looking for something "big" to destroy just because it was big. Yet I suspect they knew exactly what they were doing: destroying towers that were symbols of a church that had allied itself with an oppressive and corrupt French monarchy.

Makes me wonder: Does she, does the Vatican, want to return to that church of the 18th century?

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