

We felt the need to address the historical and present trauma caused by the Pope and his predecessors as the head of the Catholic Church. While we believe our community needs justice, acceptance, respect and myriad other things, we recognize the desire of some who also need to reconcile their faith with their gender identity and or sexual orientation. There seems to be a lot of praise for this Pope simply because he seems to be *less* hateful and bigoted than his predecessors. Less is not enough for our community any longer! If the Pope is truly open to change and progression then his holiness should be offering an olive branch. Is that not what "Jesus" would do?

Spending time with the publicans and sinners was part of Jesus' mission: "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." If Jesus was to reach the lost, He must have some contact with them. He went to where the need was because "it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick." Jesus may have broken some societal taboos, but His presence there shows that He looked beyond culture to people's hearts.

The Pope, on his bigger-than-life visit to our diverse and progressive city, should be sitting *with* members of the LGBT community not condemning us, ignoring us, or referring to us Trans folks as "Genetic Manipulations" as he did in this quote from a book he wrote:

"Let's think of the nuclear arms, of the possibility to annihilate in a few instants a very high number of human beings," the Pope says. "Let's think also of genetic manipulation, of the manipulation of life, or of the gender theory, that does not recognize the order of creation."

We are all sinners if you believe in Christianity as a whole. But if sinners were good enough to sit with Jesus, are we not good enough to sit with a man who believes himself to speak for Jesus? If Jesus looked at our hearts, is that not what the Pope should do and perhaps look into his own?

As the Pope walks in his truth, it is time for us to demand they walk with us in ours! We will walk for our truths on October 10th at The Philly Trans March. All are welcome and we hope some day, the catholic church will do the same.

TransHealth Information Project