



# CNI



## **NEWS FOCUS**

- Church of Ireland rector rescinds invitation to controversial anti-LGBT speaker**
- Statement by Changing Attitude Ireland**

## **Church of Ireland rector rescinds invitation to controversial anti-LGBT speaker**

**The Church of Ireland Archdiocese of Dublin and Glendalough has said that the rector of one of its churches in Co Wicklow has rescinded an invitation to a controversial guest speaker who has written of "rewiring" the psyche of a gay man correctly "to enable him to feel like a man again" - RTE News**

Confirming the decision, a diocesan spokesperson emphasised that Dr Ed Silvosio is visiting the country to address a conference organised by a different church group.

The decision to rescind the invitation to Dr Silvosio to be the special speaker at Redcross Church of Ireland's Sunday Service in three days' time follows protests by a Cork-based activist Fiona O'Leary against his attitude to LGBT people.

Rector Roland Heaney, who has ministered in Redcross for 26 years, is part of the Evangelical wing of the Church of Ireland.

As recently as last Monday afternoon his church was promoting Dr Silvosio as the special speaker at Sunday morning's service.

However, following the removal of the Facebook posting, the spokesperson for the Archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough, Dr Michael Jackson, told RTÉ News that Redcross's Rector had taken the decision.

Dr Silvosio is a leading member of the New Apostolic Reformation, which preaches dominion theology. In one of his books, Dr Silvosio writes in an account of a baptism ceremony he witnessed: "As soon as the now ex-gay man came up from the waters [baptism], he was struck by the power of God, evicting the demonic forces that had controlled him for so long and rewiring his psyche correctly to enable him to feel like a man again." (- Transformation, page 167).

The Church of Ireland spokesperson said that the genesis of the invitation was that Rector Roland Heaney had been alerted by a representative of Dr Silvosio's to his visit to Ireland this week and was informed he was available to speak to the Co Wicklow congregation next Sunday morning. She said the rector had already attended a talk by the doctor

who is a leading member of the international New Apostolic Reformation movement.

The spokesperson said that following Rector Heaney's invitation to Dr Silviso to speak at his church in three days' time, concerns were expressed to the diocesan authorities by Ms O'Leary.

The spokesperson said the Church of Ireland authorities in Dublin and Glendalough called the Reverend Heaney to a meeting after which the controversial invitation was rescinded. She could not say at this stage whether Archbishop Michael Jackson had attended the meeting.

The spokesperson added that RTÉ News did not know the context in which Dr Silviso was to have spoken at Redcross and that she understood he was not going to address the topic of gays and lesbians. She said she believed he was expected to speak about prayer and encouraging people to be the light and salt of their communities. She said he would have focussed on how to transform the world by being part of the community.

One of Dr Silviso's promotional videos, "Transformation in Uganda", presents pastors allied to him in the East African country who are

in the vanguard of the evangelical crusade against gay rights there.

One member of Dr Silvoso's Uganda "transformation" team is Julius Oyet, who claims to have helped conceive the 2009 bill that promoted the death penalty for Ugandans found guilty of homosexual acts.

It has emerged that the nephew of the Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has been quoted as highlighting "a close intellectual and mentoring relationship between people like Dr Silvoso" and himself and different Christian leaders in Uganda.

In the book "Colonizing African Values. How the U.S. Christian Right is Transforming Sexual Politics in Africa", Joseph Okia tells the author, Kapyia John Kaoma: "Definitely there is a link between conservative Christians in America and conservative leaders in Uganda. And a lot of strategic geopolitical thinking that is pioneered by pioneered by people thinking of leading Christians in Uganda ... For sure there has been a close intellectual and mentoring relationship between people like Ed Silvoso and myself, and different Christian leaders in Uganda"

For a number of years, the Church of Ireland has been publicly, deeply divided over attitudes of its clergy and other members to gays and lesbians.

An ongoing dialogue within the Church is designed to heighten each side's awareness of the other's sensitivities on the matter.

But the evangelical wing - which includes a number of senior clergy - firmly supports the Church's definition of marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman.

## **Statement by Changing Attitudes Ireland**

Scott Golden, Chairman of Changing Attitude Ireland, this afternoon welcomed the news that the Church of Ireland Dublin Archdiocese has announced that the Revd Roly Heaney, Rector of Dunganstown Union of parishes in Co. Wicklow has withdrawn his invitation to Dr. Ed Silvosio to speak at Redcross Parish Church this coming Sunday, 22nd May.

Dr Silvosio, the controversial Argentinian Evangelist who is in Ireland to speak at another event in Bray on Saturday, is well known for his controversial and offensive views on LGBT

issues and particularly gay men. He has been linked to the hard-line stance taken in Uganda, recently, on gay men and in particular the proposed death penalty for gay men who are found to have been in continuous relations with other men.

Silvoso has also been widely known to propound the idea that those with personality disorders, including autism, as well as LGBT people are demon possessed and to have practiced 'deliverance ministry' in which it is claimed demons are cast out of the sufferers.

Mr. Golden commented that for such a divisive figure as Silvoso to have received an invitation to speak in an Anglican Church in Ireland was regrettable, particularly in light of the developments within the Church of Ireland over the last number of months with the publication of the report from the Select Committee on Human Sexuality that has introduced the ongoing discussions at diocesan and parish levels, on the issue of LGBT involvement in Church life, but welcomed the withdrawal of Dr. Silvoso's invitation to speak in a Church of Ireland venue. He also expressed the hope that Dr. Silvoso would not be given a venue in any other Anglican

venue either north or south of the border again, given his links with the discredited regime in Uganda.

**GET CNI HEADLINES EACH DAY**

**Facebook and Twitter**

**Click on logo at CNI Home page**

**[www.churchnewsireland.org](http://www.churchnewsireland.org)**

**+ Please share CNI with your friends**

**[www.churchnewsireland.org](http://www.churchnewsireland.org)**