



## **Veritatis Splendor central theme of conference on same-sex attractions, gender identity questions**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The 25th anniversary of Pope Saint John Paul's prophetic document, *Veritatis Splendor*, will be the focus of an upcoming formation event for clergy, religious, and professionals who minister to persons who experience same-sex attractions (SSA) and questions about sexual identity.

The conference will center on the theme "**Proclaiming the splendor of truth with love**", and will feature presentations from acclaimed theologians, including **Dr. Janet Smith, Dr. Mary Healy, and Fr. Paul Sullins**. Participants will also hear witness testimonies from two Courage members featured in the documentary *Desire of the Everlasting Hills*: **Paul Darrow** and **Rilene Simpson**.

The gathering will take place **October 22-24** at **St. Thomas Seminary Conference Center, in Bloomfield, Connecticut**. This will be the fourth Truth & Love conference to date.

Clergy, religious, and anyone working in pastoral ministry, education, or the healing professions are invited to attend.

The event offers an opportunity to learn about SSA and sexual identity questions from experts in the fields of pastoral ministry, theology, philosophy, psychology, and health care.

Registration will open summer 2018.

Updates and registration information will be made available on the official page for the event: [www.truthandlove.com/conference2018](http://www.truthandlove.com/conference2018)

*Truth & Love* is an initiative of [Courage International](http://www.courageinternational.org).

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## NOTES FOR EDITORS:

### **Background on *Courage International* and *EnCourage***

***Courage International*** is an apostolate of the Catholic Church which offers support to persons experiencing SSA who have chosen to live a chaste life. It was founded by Fr. John Harvey, OSFS at the request of the late Cardinal Terence Cooke. The first Courage chapter meeting was held in New York City in 1980, and it was this initial group which developed the Five Goals of Courage: Chastity, prayer and dedication, fellowship, support, and good example/role model. Fr. Harvey was succeeded as executive director by Fr. Paul Check, who held the position from 2008-2016. Fr. Check was succeeded by Fr. Philip Bochanski in January, 2017. Today, Courage has over 150 chapters in fourteen countries. Courage International received canonical status in the Roman Catholic Church as a diocesan clerical public association of the faithful on November 28, 2016.

***EnCourage*** is an apostolate under the Courage umbrella which provides support for families and friends of persons with SSA, and aims to teach them how to reach out to their loved ones with true compassion. The group was first formed in 1987 by families in search of guidance and understanding for supporting their loved ones with SSA. In 1992, this group adopted the name EnCourage. Currently, their chapters can be found in the United States, Canada, Costa Rica, Mexico, Brazil, Australia, Italy, and the United Kingdom.

For additional information, please visit us at [www.couragerc.org](http://www.couragerc.org) and [www.truthandlove.com](http://www.truthandlove.com)

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