



# COMMENTARY

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## The freedom of individuals is balanced by the needs of society

By Rev. Ben Wetherill

I am writing in response to an editorial in the Original Irregular's Oct. 21 edition titled, "My vote on question one is NO." I realize that by the time this is published the issue of proposition one will be settled but I felt a response was needed to answer the inaccuracies in the above noted editorial.

The author states that the New Testament of the Bible was not written down until 400 years after the birth of Christ. In reality, most historians agree that the last addition to the New Testament, the Letter to the Hebrews, was written down no later than 100 A.D. and that the first Gospel account, the Gospel according to Mark, was written about 20 years after Christ's death and resurrection.

Unlike most ancient literature, the Bible is probably the most well studied compilation of ancient texts in existence and copies of the New Testament have been traced to less than 100 years of its writing. Compare that to the Iliad that can only be traced to within a thousand years of its origin.

As to the fable of Jesus, he is probably one of the most well attested individuals in history. There are at least as many mentions of him in ancient literature outside the Bible as exist for other individuals such as the emperors of Rome like Caesar Augustus. The quote "Suffer little children to come to me" offered comes from the King James Bible which is written in an antiquated version of English. In a modern version such as the New Revised Standard, the quote from the Gospel of Luke Chapter 18 verse 16 states "Let the little children come to me and do not stop them." It is very clear that the word suffer does not imply in any way the concept of suffering but is an older rendering of the word "let." Yes, the bible can be interpreted in many ways but utilizing the original

language and good scholarship reveals an essentially simple message of God's love for the humanity He created.

As per MSNBC Anchor Keith Obermann's statement that the issue of same-sex marriage is simply a question of love, this is an oversimplification of what is a very complex issue. Despite comments to the effect that you cannot legislate morality; laws are in reality a reflection of the morality and highest ideals held by the society in which they are enacted. Until recently marriage was considered to be a privilege conveyed by civil and religious authority forming the foundation of our society, the family unit. That understanding is based on biblical authority that shaped the founding of our country over 200 years ago, a country founded by the descendants of Christians fleeing persecution Europe. Part of that understanding is stated by Jesus in Chapter 19 of the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus affirms that God created marriage to be the union of a man and woman. He further affirms that marriage is not a right but something that should only be entered into by those prepared for the responsibility. Marriage has been defined by law because it is the foundation of a stable and healthy society. Healthy marriages form a stable environment for raising children who in turn provide for the continuity of our nation.

Yes, all men are created equal but that does not mean that individuals are free to marry whoever and whatever they want. The freedom of individuals is balanced by the needs of society. Will same-sex marriage adversely affect me in the short term? Maybe not but the potential for serious harm to the foundation of our society, the family and to the raising of healthy children exists. It is my hope that all those who voted on Tuesday did so based on this reality and not the gossip fostered by the author of the previous editorial.

*Rev. Ben Wetherill is Deacon at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Rangeley.*

## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

*What Internet function or Web site do you think you visit or use most frequently?*

By David Hart



**Colby Atwood, of New Portland:** "Gotta be Facebook. Hands down! It's the only way to talk to some of my friends."



**Karen Campbell, of Carrabassett Valley:** "NOAA's pilots' weather Web site."



**Clair Lambert, of Kingfield:** "I typically start with Google and link to sports from there."



**Pat Worthley, of Wyman:** "Gotta be Google. Hands down!"



**Stanley Howard, of Salem:** "Facebook."

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Thank you Irregular for providing LE, F.A.R.M.

To the editor:

I can see why the Irregular regularly wins awards for its... uh... regularity in providing us — not only with the local news — but with something to laugh about every week.

It's wonderful to see LE's quirky "A View from the Corner" again. I've missed her!

Surely there's space to tuck both her column and

Karen Pease's "F.A.R.M." in the same issue every week. Both of these women remind us that it's simply a matter of looking in the corners of our lives to find that there's plenty of opportunity for delight buried in our daily humdrum.

**Jo Craemer Eustis**

### Haunted Herbert Hotel a success

To the editor:

A big thank you to everyone who participated in the Haunted Herbert Hotel. With the great help from all the volunteers and Rob letting us use the hotel it was a success.

We look forward to seeing everyone again next year.

**Gifts Of Love Board Member  
Shelby Banks  
Kingfield**

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## Town Office Phone Numbers

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