

Catholic Schools Firing Lesbian Teachers For Marrying, Buying Homes, Getting Pregnant



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From Missouri to Michigan to Montana, Catholic schools are firing teachers who are lesbian for doing what straight families have done for centuries: marry, buy a home, get pregnant.

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For over a century, the American Dream for many has been to land a good job, get married, buy a house, and start a family. Though that dream may have changed over time, at its center has always been family. But for some Catholic school teachers who happen to be lesbian, their employers are turning that dream into a nightmare.

Olivia Reichert and Christina Gambaro (image) live in Missouri, and traveled to New York in July to marry. They bought a house, but when their employer, a Catholic all-girls private school was sent their mortgage application, they were asked to resign.

The school, Cor Jesu Academy, "said the couple had violated the moral contract faculty are required to sign as part of employment," the *Star-Tribune* reports.

"We understand that, as a Catholic institution, Cor Jesu has an obligation to ensure that its employees serve as Christian role models. However, because they do not enforce the witness statement in any other way, this is a blatant case of discrimination," Reichert said in a statement.

And in Michigan, a Detroit-area Catholic school chemistry teacher, Barbara Webb, who is gay, was fired after becoming pregnant. Webb, who taught at Marian High School for nine years, told the school she was expecting in July. She was fired last month.

Webb "says her termination letter didn't give a reason for her firing," CBS Detroit [reports](#). "However, her contract with the school apparently prohibits her from being public with anything that is contrary to Catholic doctrine." Via Facebook, Webb said she believes she was fired "for no other reason than for being pregnant and getting pregnant outside the Catholic way."

“My job can’t be saved but the torment that the poor LGBT students at Marian must be feeling (right let’s be real they exist too) the other LGBT staff (again let’s be real people) and those that are silenced by fear can be helped,” Webb wrote in her post. “Speak out against hate wherever you see it.”

Webb and her partner, Kristen Lasecki, are both 33. The couple have been together for over five years.

While she may not believe she was fired for being gay, were she pregnant but married to a man, it's likely she would still be employed.

In Montana, Shaela Evenson is suing her former employer, Butte Central Catholic Schools, who fired her after she became pregnant with her partner, Marilyn Tobin.

"Evenson contends the district breached its contract with her and discriminated against her because she was pregnant and because she is female," the Montana Standard [reports](#). "The suit contends the district broke both federal and state laws."

As a result of the firing, she has incurred damages including lost wages, benefits and emotional distress. She is asking for back pay, compensatory and punitive damages — and a jury trial.

Evenson taught sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade literature and physical education at the Catholic school for nine years. She was dismissed Jan. 10 after the Helena Diocese received an anonymous letter about her pregnancy.