

# Anglicans in Scotland: No bar to gay priests: First statement on issue from Scottish bishops

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Leaders of the Scottish Episcopal Church have added fuel to a controversy dividing the worldwide Anglican Communion by declaring that in their church practicing homosexuals are not barred from becoming priests.

They also criticized the leaders of the 78-million-member communion for seeking to isolate Anglican churches in North America following the consecration of an openly gay bishop in the U.S. and the introduction of a blessing for same-sex couples in a part of Canada.

“The Scottish Episcopal Church has never regarded the fact that someone was in a close relationship with a member of the same sex as in itself constituting a bar to the exercise of an ordained ministry,” the denomination’s College of Bishops said last month in a statement. A spokeswoman said it was the first time the bishops had expressed their policy on gay ordinations. *-Ecumenical News International*