

Jaszver Bauzon Extended Interview OwningOurFaith

Background

My name is Jaszver Bauzon, I'm 30 years old, I was born in the Philippines, but raised in LA. I now live in New York City and now work in corporate financial communications. I was born in a region that is about 3 hours north of Manila called Pangasinan. Came here to the US when I was about six year old. Pretty much raised in LA. My dad is a region called Pangasinan, my mom is Ilocano. Given all that, as American as I may appear with my native English I think I am equal parts Filipino. I think some of the best breakfast foods that I look forward to waking up to are smelly friend fish and I think the best jokes are said in our dialect.

Coming Out

I would say in my pre-teens, I would see guys and would take notice of say their nice hair and like wow like I wish I had nice hair like that or wow that guy dresses really well. I want to have his style. It came to a point where I was like wow that guy is really handsome - I want him.

Sexuality & Faith

Around my teens when my peers were going through confirmation, it also coincided with the time when I was figuring out my identity. I didn't think it was right, nor genuine for me to do confirmation to go through the motions. Getting confirmed for the sake of getting confirmed. And it wouldn't have been fair to me, or the Church and I would say for a time I did fall from Church. I would say I was border line agnostic. I didn't go to Church for a number of years. Then one day, my senior year of college, it was a random Sunday. I woke up and I just had this urge to go to mass. And I did and I slowly started trickling back to Church and I think God works in mysterious ways that way. You know fast forward many years later, I moved to NY I wanted to find friends who are not only ambitious but spiritual and I found it in a Church here in NYC with a gay and lesbian ministry.

I remember my confirmation day it was a sunny day, spring of last year. I wore my barong which is umm formal traditional Pilipino attire. The same one that I wore to my grandparents' 50th wedding anniversary in the Philippines a couple of years ago, so it has very special meaning to me. For confirmation I chose one of my dear friends through Church um and through our gay and lesbian ministry to be my confirmation sponsor. His name is Santi. Through him he represents I guess the intercession of the Church the ministry and the friends who I consider family that brought me back to the Church. To me it was a very special moment when I sit up and I receive the oil on my forehead to have Santi's hand over my shoulder and to turn around and see the aisle with all my friends. It was very special to me

Conclusion

It wasn't like I just found the Church, I was born baptized and raised catholic, but the timing for me to get confirmed when I was ready was when I'd figure out my identity and

I think now, having waiting and going through the journey of you know falling away from the church and coming back, means that being a confirmed Catholic is very special to me. I would say you know there is not a day that goes by where I am not thankful to Christ for what I have and what I've done. You know sometimes when I'm early to work I'll go a couple of blocks out of my commute to drop by a local church and say a couple of prayers and just be thankful.

I feel like a lot of people are surprised when I tell them that I'm Catholic, or that I'm gay or that I'm both. But you know here within my Church, um I can be both and I feel like I'm more my true self. Most of my friends, if not all of them I know through Church. And for the first time in my life I would say being my true self I have found a family within the Church.

I would tell someone who is reconciling their faith with their sexuality that God loves everyone and he'd never turn his back on anyone. I would say that his love for everyone is you know fundamental and intrinsic to my foundation in the Catholic Church. If you feel that you've fallen away, from you know the Church, there are Churches out there that are open to gays and lesbians who are open, equally open being gay and lesbian and Catholic so there's a family for you out there.