



*Bishop Juan Antonio Reig Pla.*



*Martin M. Barillas* [Follow Martin](#)

Thu Apr 11, 2019

# **Bishop says he's prepared for 'martyrdom' as Spanish gov't probes his 'illegal' program to help gays**

## [Conversion Therapy, Homosexuality, Juan Antonio Reig Pla, Lgbt Tyranny, Spain](#)

MADRID, April 11, 2019 ([LifeSiteNews](#)) — Worshipers filled the cathedral in Alcalá de Henares in Spain to show solidarity with Bishop Juan Antonio Reig Pla, who called on bishops and priests to be ready for martyrdom while the [government pursues a probe](#) into alleged illegal “conversion therapy” for homosexuals that it says is offered by the Catholic Church.

On April 6, after praying the Rosary with hundreds of people who filled the pews in the historic church near Madrid, [Bishop Reig Pla explained to them](#) what he told his fellow bishops on April 4 when they gathered at a plenary meeting. Speaking without notes, as is his custom, the bishop referred to a government probe into the diocesan Center for Family Counseling and whether its guidance to persons with same-sex attractions is in violation of laws prohibiting so-called conversion therapies.

The leader of Madrid’s regional government called upon the government’s Council on Social Policy to investigate the Diocese of Alcalá de Henares after a reporter posed as a homosexual earnestly seeking counseling at the counseling center. For an article published April 1 by *El Diario*, the journalist attended a session at the Regina Familiaee family counseling center on March 21.

In Spain, therapy that is labeled “homophobic” is illegal, and those found in violation may face fines of as much as 45,000 euros. Bishop Reig Pla and others denounced the law in 2016, saying it is “an assault on the freedom of expression and religion.” On April 4, [Spanish bishops issued a statement](#) reiterating Catholic teachings with regard to sexuality while also insisting on the freedom of the Church to preach.

“They are harming our children,” Bishop Reig Pla said. “We cannot allow it,” he added, in reference to LGBT activists and their advocates in government.

About his fellow bishops, he said, “I began by telling them: Dear brother bishops. I ask nothing for myself. I pray the Psalms with you, and say ‘My soul finds rest in God alone’ and not in the conference of bishops. My rest is in God. But they are harming our children. They are harming a mission of the Church, which are the Centers for Family Counseling, and we cannot allow it.”

#### THE BISHOP’S HOMILY IN SPANISH ON YOU TUBE

<https://youtu.be/h1mJNvTXAIU>

“This is not about going against anybody, but it is about safeguarding the liberty of the Church, of safeguarding religious liberty, and to commit ourselves even unto martyrdom if it is necessary in order to serve those who suffer and expect a word of hope from us, the shepherds of the Church. We must not abandon them,” the bishop said.

“What do we do at the Center for Family Counseling? We assist those who come freely to seek help, whether it is personal, marital, family, and any other sort of situation that requires a word of counsel, of aid: pastoral, spiritual, offering accompaniment, in whatever situation,” the bishop said.

Reig Pla said it is a “miracle” that young people who have been helped at the diocesan counseling center have expressed their support, which he said is a “novelty,” because “education in affection, masculinity and femininity is taboo in Spain. That there are courageous young people and adults who give witness to the good that the Church does for them in helping them mature in their masculinity, femininity and the vocation to love is something new. As the Prophet Isaiah said, our God opens roads in the sea.”

“Today, tomorrow and forever, this bishop will proclaim just one thing: the religious freedom to preach the Good News that the Lord is with us, that he opens up paths in the sea,” Bishop Reig

Pla said. “God is the only one who can mend a heart, not the health professionals.”

“The Center for Family Counseling operates upon many keys: one of them is forgiveness, which is also for those who have caused you truly great wounds, who may have been your father or a brother, or who abused you in your childhood[.] ... Even with help from human science, if it is not with the help of God that a new heart is made, things will not be mended.”

In light of a society that does not forgive, the bishop offered the example of Jesus’s transformative love. “The others say ‘the adulteress must be stoned’, ... but Jesus looks upon the sinner and does not say, ‘It’s okay, don’t worry.’ He looked at her with a glance that pierced her soul. And He said, ‘Woman, no one condemns you. Go and sin no more.’ What is in the eyes of Jesus that changes men’s hearts? We must also forgive those who persecute us, the ones who assail us, because they know not what they do. They don’t know what we do in the Church and the Center for Family Counseling.”

Finishing his homily, Bishop Reig Pla said that when people ask whether the accusations against him and the Church cause him to suffer, he acknowledged that he is not a rock that is immovable. “But the Lord is my hope. When one lives that way, he then has the freedom of spirit to do great things.”

He acknowledged that praying the Rosary that day was not his initiative, but organized by the faithful. The bishop called on seminarians. “Never abandon your flock. Be ready to suffer for it, to give your life for it.”

Finally, addressing the flock, Bishop Reig Pla said, “You are at the very heart of your shepherd. You must pray that your bishop is ready to give his life for you, even unto martyrdom.” At the end of the bishop’s remarks, the members stood and applauded.