

What We Believe... Why We Believe It

By
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How to Respond to Scandal

As I write these words, the Church is in what is perhaps the biggest scandal in her two thousand year history. I'm talking about the most recent sex scandal, of course. At the core of the scandal is the disordered action of homosexuality. While I intend to address this particular scandal, this article is intended as a guide for lay people on how they should respond to all scandals within the Catholic Church. The reason for this is that I don't know when any given parish will read this article. Depending on when they subscribe, you could be reading this next month, next year, or five years from now, because these are written in serial way ahead of time.

People are angry about the scandal—really angry. I get that. And I don't blame them, because I'm angry too. We have a right to be angry, but there are a lot of things involved here that we *don't* have a right to.

I have spoken to scores of laypeople, and probably about a dozen priests, since the scandal broke. Believe me when I tell you that the priests I know are just as angry as we lay people. Apart from anger, as one would expect, the laity have an altogether different attitude than priests about the scandal. (HINT: Theirs is better!) Unfortunately, what I hear the vast majority of the laity saying to me is not very good for the Church or for them. There have been three basic attitudes and approaches that the laity have conveyed to me.

The least of the approaches has been very simple and to the point. These members of the laity are telling me that they are simply going to quit; they're leaving the Church for Protestantism or nothing at all. Their “solution” shows a definite lack of understanding about the nature of the Church Jesus established.

A more common but less prevalent solution than the worst one for these lay people is even simpler still and, to my way of thinking, cowardly. They are simply giving up. They are not leaving the Church, but rather they are not going to do anything with their Catholicism. It's sort of like smacking a hornets' nest down, then just standing there immobilized with fear while the hornets sting you. This, too, demonstrates a strong ignorance of the nature of the Church Jesus established, as well as an ignorance of the things He said.

The most prevalent solution mentioned is actually beginning to grow into a movement—a movement that is really quite scary. These members of the laity are calling for the formation of a task force of lay leaders in the United States to investigate, identify, and rout out the homosexual bishops, those who have been involved in a cover up, and those who explicitly or implicitly approve of or promote the LGBT agenda. Then they want to move on to the priesthood. Far from being a solution, this is actually a witch hunt.

Apart from the fact that the movement I just described is really nothing more than a witch hunt that would ensnare good priests and bishops along with the bad, this also demonstrates a gross misunderstanding of the divine nature of the Catholic Church. Jesus set up the Catholic Church so that men possessing the character of Holy Orders would be the only people in charge. This gross misunderstanding, of course, is a consequence of the state of catechesis since post-Vatican II traitors took over the diocesan chanceries.

We're Americans. We have that good old American can-do attitude. I get that. This attitude, along with our fallen human nature, leads us to adopt a way of doing things that basically says, "Alright, God, You can sit down and relax now. We've got this." But this is wrong on so many levels.

Homosexuality is a perversion of human nature, natural law and divine law. No Catholic in good standing disputes that. But for lay people to assume even a quasi authority over priests and bishops is every bit as much a perversion of the divine nature of the Church as homosexuality is of human nature. Promoters of this movement are perverts as much as homosexuals.

If we can't force the pope and bishops to do the right thing, and if we can't temporarily take control ourselves, how are the laity to answer Ven. Fulton Sheen's prophetic statement that it would be the laity who save the Church? Well, much like the way we have done it historically.

I won't go into the historical details here, rather leaving you to read up on it yourselves, but I will say that the laity were largely responsible for the convocation of the Council of Ephesus in A.D. 431, when the Church declared Mary the *Theotokos*. The Church's episcopacy and priesthood were engulfed in the Nestorian heresy, which was doing much damage to the Mystical Body of Christ... *until the laity had finally had enough*.

Our first response is to clean up our own house. Prayer and penance should be the hallmark action in all our lives. It is hypocritical and personally corrupt to demand the pope, bishops and priests do the things they're supposed to do if we aren't doing what Jesus expects of us. Take a lesson from the woman caught in adultery in John 8:3-11.

Like the laity of the 5th century, we can do things to let the bishops know we mean business. It's more difficult to have a face-to-face with our bishops than it was for our 5th century ancestors, but in our modern age of technology we can still make our voices heard. For one thing, you can start a respectful online petition drive expressing your concerns and demanding specific solutions. A specifically Catholic petition site is <http://lifepetitions.com/>, a site owned by LifeSite News. For another thing, you can refuse to financially support the diocese (*never your parish*), and inform the bishop of your refusal of financial support and *why* you refuse. In fact, you should tell him there will be no financial support from you until the corruption is gone and there is transparency established for the diocese.

We are not without remedy to motivate change within the hierarchy. We need to remember, though, that we're not in charge, and Jesus never intended lay people to be in charge. Therefore, it is our responsibility to demand change with appropriate and due respect. That's What We Believe... Why We Believe It.

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