

By
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Rats Jump Ship

I'm writing this just a couple of weeks after Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò released testimony that implicates Pope Francis, former cardinal Theodore McCarrick, seventeen cardinals, three archbishops, one bishop and a monsignor in corruption so vast that it's mind boggling. Add that to the fallout being caused by the Pennsylvania grand jury report and numerous dioceses now falling under investigation by their state attorneys general, the resulting scandal is the worse the Catholic Church has ever known.

Subsequent to the scandal, a mass exodus from the Church has begun. Prior to the scandal, surveys show that 6.5 people were leaving the Church for every one who joined. That figure is drastically changing. It's much too early for any definitive figures to be assessed, but based on my research, the ratio of people leaving the Church to those joining may be as much as triple the amount before the scandal.

The Barque of Peter is sinking and we laity are being left to drown while a corrupt hierarchy float contentedly away in their life rafts! That's not to say all the hierarchy is corrupt. They're not. There is a growing number of cardinals and bishops publicly demanding an investigation and action amidst Francis' silence about the issue.

What about you and me?

When a ship begins to take on water and is in danger of sinking, rats on the ship abandon it and end up drowning anyway. But the crew members stay aboard ship and try to save her. So the question is, will you be a rat or crew member?

The Catholic Church is holy and pure and perfect. No, I'm not about to attempt to offer a defense of Francis and the hierarchy. I cannot and will not do that. But I am offering an argument for why the Church is holy, pure and perfect, just in case you're one of those considering joining the rats and forsaking the crew.

There are a lot of parallels between nature and supernature. Why shouldn't there be? After all, the Supernature created nature. Supernature chose to make it so a married couple would cooperate with Him in order to generate a new life. He did essentially the same thing when He established the Catholic Church—He ordained that men cooperate with Him to advance His mission through His Church. Even from the beginning, though, He had trouble from the men He chose initially to accomplish this. First there was Judas, a close friend who betrayed him to be murdered for thirty pieces of silver. Then there was Peter, the man chosen to be our first pope who abandoned Jesus and denied even knowing Him. With the exception of John, all the other apostles followed Peter's lead and

abandoned Jesus. Why did these things happen from among the handpicked men Jesus chose to rule the new Church He had just established?

The apostles, with the exception of Judas, are all revered saints. Yet they abandoned and denied Christ. Well, they're but mere men. As such, they were all subject to the effects of original sin, just like you and me. Although we face a much greater scandal today than the scandal of Jesus' hand-picked pope and bishops abandoning Him, the sin of the apostles was actually greater than the sin of those among our hierarchy who are corrupt, because the apostles had just spent three years living with the Second Person of God—God the Son.

We have a right to be angry about the direction the Ship has been sailed under this pontificate. No one denies that. But we don't have a right to abandon the Ship or its Owner. Jesus established the Catholic Church (Matthew 16: 18-19), thus making it a divine institution, and because it is divine in its very nature it is holy and pure and perfect. But nowhere did Jesus promise that His Ship's captain would be competent. Indeed, even popes who have become saints made terrible blunders when steering the Church. A book could be written just highlighting those blunders. After all, they were mere men who were subject to the effects of original sin like the rest of us.

So again I ask, are you or your family members or your friends going to be among the rats who abandon the Ship, or are you going to be among the crew members who work to save the Ship? I'm guessing that since you're reading this, you have made the decision to remain a crew member. But if you're like most Catholics who have decided to remain crew members of the Ship, you're probably wondering what contribution you can make to saving it.

I'm going to make a bold statement. In fact, my statement will make many of you question my sanity. Just as God turned Satan's greatest victory into his greatest defeat on Calvary, so too will God turn this victory of Satan into defeat. It is this: Now is the greatest time in history since the first century for advancing the cause of Christ and making millions of converts!

Rather than feel demoralized and defeated and humiliated by the current scandal, now is the time to get excited and work like we've never worked before. Archbishop Fulton Sheen said, "Who is going to save our Church? Not our Bishops, not our priests and religious. It is up to the people. You have the minds, the eyes, the ears to save the Church. Your mission is to see that your priests act like priests, your bishops like bishops and your religious act like religious." What the venerable bishop was telling us was that it's up to us to save the Church. Do you want bishops, priests and religious to act according to the vocations they have? Then start acting like the Catholic you're supposed to be.

A couple of years ago, I heard a priest in his homily ask, "If you don't want to become a saint, why are you a Catholic?" Try to become a saint. It's simple; hard but simple. I promise you that if we collectively begin trying to live as Jesus wants us to live (become saints and share the faith, making Him and the Church the most important things in our lives), our bishops and priests will rise to the occasion. This is not an insurmountable task. It may be hard to accomplish, but there isn't one thing in life worth having that is easy.

Begin today. Your priest will help you. I know this because he gives you this column every week, so he wants you to become holy and share the faith. I'll help you too. Just visit JoeSixpackAnswers.com and make up your mind to attend the weekly free webinars I host on the very things talked about in this article.