



**On Being a Good Catholic and Receiving the Eucharist
November 7, 2021**

I very rarely do this, but I am not going to speak on the readings of the day, something I assure you I would much rather do. I am speaking to you today about something that I believe is very topical, urgent and necessary.

I received this letter last Friday (10 days ago). I found it very disturbing and have been thinking and praying about this, and discussing it with others, for the last ten days. I use this letter with the permission and support of the person who sent it.

Hello Fr. Bob,

I just felt so disheartened I thought I would send you an email.

I just saw the news.....that the Pope told President Biden he was a "good" Catholic and to continue to receive the Holy Eucharist....which I truly don't understand.

I try; I tell my kids, stay in a state of grace, go to confession to reconcile, and only then receive the Eucharist....I thought that's what we are supposed to do. But when the Pope says that a (professed) Catholic who actually advocates abortion for all, literally the killing of unborn children....that person should receive communion ... without first reconciling or amending or any change.....what does that mean for the rest of us?

I honestly don't mean this in any political way - I'm truly confused.

It almost seems silly for me to go to confession, or encourage the kids to get in a state of grace before receiving the Eucharist - when the Pope is saying just receive - it doesn't matter - the Eucharist is good for you - take it often. When (my son) missed a Mass on vacation over the summer, I told him he could not receive until he went to confession ...and now he thinks I'm crazy because the Pope told President Biden to continue to receive the Eucharist.....never mind the whole abortion thing.

Do you see the confusion Father? I wondered your thoughts.



Do you understand why this concerned me so much? *It almost seems silly to go to confession ... my son thinks I am crazy*

Let me be very clear. There is no direct confirmation that the Pope actually said these words. The only Vatican comment has been that the long meeting between the President and the Pope “**was a private conversation and it is Vatican policy not to comment on these discussions.**” This is a good policy. At least until one party gains international notoriety for reporting scandalous things attributed to the Pope.

Let me also be very clear about this. This comment was the biggest international news story of the day. It is still big news over a week later. Some of the world was shocked. Much of the world was delighted. Rightly or wrongly much of world is now under the impression that Pope Francis thinks President Biden is a good Catholic and should continue to go to communion. If this is true then this is one of the most scandalous attacks on the integrity of the Catholic Church in my lifetime.

Pope Francis: I make a public and impassioned appeal to you to tell the world if this impression is true or false. Please say something more than no comment.

Pope Francis: If someone reported, after a private meeting with you, that you said that priests and bishops that abuse young children are good Catholics and should continue to have access to young children, I very much doubt that you would leave the world with slightest possibility of thinking this was actually true. Your silence is very confusing and disheartening to millions of faithful Catholics.

Now let me be very clear about something else. I do not know the conscience of President Biden. I do not judge the culpability he has for the formation of his conscience. I cannot judge if his conscience has been wrongly formed by church leaders who then bear a **greater responsibility** for his actions than the President himself.



But I do not need to know the state of the president's personal conscience. I do not judge the state of his soul. But we do have indisputable and extensive evidence of his public actions. We know that he aggressively and unapologetically uses the great power at his disposal to do things directly contrary to **authoritative** biblical and church teaching, things like: Unrestricted access to abortion. Gender theories that sabotage the truth that God created us male and female. Laws that allow minors to get abortions and sex change operations without the permission, or even the knowledge, of their parents I could go on, but I won't. The point is clear enough.

It is inconceivable to allow the current worldwide impression to continue—the impression that these are actions of a good Catholic and that such a person is invited to partake of the precious body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ without repentance and change of behavior.

Why am I saying these things? I am saying them because I am your pastor. And because I am responsible before God for teaching and defending the Catholic faith. If I did not speak out with clarity about these urgent matters then I believe that I myself would be under judgment. Shame on me if I am silent. You could think me complicit. I am not.

I am speaking now because at least one parent, and I suspect many more, are confused and are not sure what to tell their children. I have to support parents that continue to teach their children to believe what the Church teaches and to practice what it preaches.

This is the sixth point of our parish vision that is written on our walls on our hearts: *We believe that it is normal for Catholics to be missionary disciples – and missionary disciples are faithful Catholics in belief and behavior.*

To parents and children. Good Catholics still believe and obey the Church teaching that you should be in a state of grace to receive Holy Communion. Confession is necessary for the forgiveness of serious sin prior to receiving the Eucharist. We consciously disobey these teachings to the peril of our eternal soul.



Pope Francis meets with world leaders all the time. He continuously meets with leaders that actively promote evil things of the highest order. I believe this is good and that he should continue to build bridges to work on important things like care for the poor, good stewardship of the earth, arms reduction, world peace, just immigration, financial equity, and many other elements of the common good. We need as Catholics to engage the world on these issues because the love of Christ compels us.

But, Pope Francis, please, do not let world leaders highjack the truth of your Church and speak false things in your name for their own political gain. I implore you. You must be clear. Can Catholics who publically advocate for and defend, in your own words, hit men to murder children, be good Catholics? Can they go to communion without repentance and change of behavior? If you did not say these things then it is unconscionable to allow the world to continue to believe you did say these things.

I know that many of the issues that I am raising (abortion, marriage and family, gender identity, religious freedom) are very divisive issues. I believe that we must engage the world with compassion and wisdom, genuinely sensitive to the good of the human person. We must build things up rather than tear them down. We need to acknowledge and accompany those we disagree with as far as we can go.

But we cannot let the confusions of the world run wild in God's house.

This homily is not about engaging the world. This homily is about the order of our own house. We must be clear. Pope Francis: it is obviously the devil's intention to use the words President Biden attributed to you, true or false, to attack and confuse God's Holy Church. Speak to the Church of which you are the successor of St. Peter, speak loudly and clearly the truth about these matters. You have spoken so compelling that the devil is real, the most insidious enemy of the Church. If you remain silent the devil wins.

Brothers and Sisters. Pray for Pope Francis. I do daily. Actually, considering multiple daily Masses, morning and evening prayer, and personal prayer, I pray for the Pope many times a day. I want to support him.



I am trying to understand and defend him. I do not want to judge him so that I may not be judged. That is way above my pay grade. I pray that God blesses his strengths and protects him in his weaknesses. Please join me. Pope Francis has the most difficult, and most important, job in the world. I am not against Pope Francis, I am for him.

Pray for President Biden. I pray the Lord bless the good he does and arouse his Catholic conscience to protect life and the common good as his Church understands these things.

By the way. I would not be saying these things if this parent did not write me. I listen to what you say. Help me be a good pastor.

In addition to the regular livestream of the 10:30 Mass, we will have this homily available on our website as both an audio and a video copy. Monday we will send the text to all those for whom we have an email address. Please feel free to share this homily with your family and friends. If you do not have email and want a hard copy, let me know and we can make copies available at the welcome desk.

I sent a copy of this to Bishop Battersby. I believe he supports me in this. I will send a copy to Archbishop Vigneron.

I have already asked for support to get this to the Vatican, and, by some mighty miracle, to Pope Francis.

Please pray for the next meeting of the U.S. Bishops, starting Monday, November 15. On these issues God needs to heal great divisions.

Come Holy Spirit. Bring great good out of these things.