



Boston Catholic Journal



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The Emptiness that Follows when Catholics are not Catholic



**“Train up a child in the way he should go:
and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Prov. 22.6)**

It has become increasingly “correct” not only to ignore the past, but to repudiate it — even expunge it (except, of course, when the past provides fodder for grievances that may have once existed, were redressed, and are no longer authentic) — in this sense it is the *sine qua non* of the liberal/progressive mindset — which is intolerant of any tolerance of intolerance. What had informed us as a nation articulated in moral terms inseparable from its Christian origins has not simply become banal but abhorrent. “This is not the America we knew,” we may say in any nostalgic review of the present state of this country. It is a different America that has become the symbolic and ultimately hollow statuary of an increasingly secular, liberal, and elitist hegemony of powerful and wealthy institutions and individuals.

This especially pertains to the role of religion in the public polity ... if it is allowed at all in public discourse — and increasingly it is not; and not just religion in general (as we find, say, in China and North Korea), but specific religions: Christian religions in general and Catholicism in particular. Islam — because it is feared by our politicians and policy-makers — is largely exempt and accrues to itself a special protected status much like the “protected-class” of homosexual citizens — against whom alone incivility is actionable, falling under the protection of special “civil-rights” not accorded other citizens.

That the Catholic Church (not the largely corrupt and disaffected bishops, priests, Religious, and nominal Catholics who populate administrative offices in the dioceses and dicasteries) is the primary obstacle to many of the pernicious policies of recent administrations is unmistakable. The Catholic Church is (or at least was) the sole moral impediment to the corrosive perversities (social, moral, and political) that are legislated against the American people. There *are* brave and uncompromising bishops and Catholics ... but relatively speaking they are few.

52%

It is significant that up to 52 % of Catholics voted for Barack Obama and Joseph Biden and endorsed the platform of the Democratic Party in the last three presidential elections. This platform endorses abortion, genital mutilation, wide-spread contraception, the propagation of the homosexual (LGBT) agenda, the *HHS Mandate* which violates the most fundamental principle of the rights of conscience, radical feminism, judicial activism and legislation, embryo destructive research, human cloning, and had rescinded (refused to enforce) the *Defense of Marriage Act* (DOMA) describing it as unconstitutional (in their twisted opinion) — to name a few.

In so many words, *more half of all Catholics turned their back on their Faith in favor of prevailing social sentiment*. Perhaps this is too broad a statement: let us say, rather,

that those who identified themselves as Catholics did so — largely due to their deeply misinformed and dissident understanding of their own Catholic Faith. That is to say, many of those who identify themselves as Catholic (those who adhere to authentic teachings of the Catholic Church) ... really are not. This statement will infuriate these “Catholics” who bitterly (and illogically) contend that their Faith and their politics are separable; that the authority of the Church and the teachings of Jesus Christ do not extend to the political polls or, for that matter, to their own sexual lives; that there are civic and personal boundaries beyond which neither Christ nor His Church may trespass, and beyond which they possess no competent authority.

Just as there is a separation of Church and State in America, there is a separation of Faith and politics —and most fundamentally (and most illogically) a separation between Faith and the very articles and dogmas specific to it and which themselves inform it as a specific, a unique, religion distinct from any other. These “Catholics” are, we may say, “partly-Catholic” — they “agree with some, or few, but not all” of the Church’s magisterial teachings.

They are Catholic in much the way that the new capitalist entrepreneurs in communist China are Communist. That Capitalism and Communism are incompatible economic and political models does not appear to influence what they think and believe, let alone what they do. In what sense, we are forced to ask, are

they Communists at all if everything they do is predicated on what is clearly Capitalism? A rich communist is the equivalent of a poor capitalist — or an atheist Catholic. It is an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms.

Catholics, Communists, and Capitalists

It is not that we fail to recognize this contradiction (logically we cannot), but that we deliberately refuse to recognize the incompatibility at all. It is, at best, a thin but resilient veneer much like the meniscus enclosing a bead of water upon a smooth waxed surface: were logic permitted to penetrate the social meniscus that supports this bead of otherwise mutually exclusive ideologies it would collapse under the artificial and unsustainable contradiction. By policy and a presumed social expedience, we deny the needle of logic its due, even legislate against it, because it would be inconvenient to and incompatible with the purpose (the policy, really) at hand.

There is only one way to reconcile incompatibilities: *ignore them*. That is the preference of 50% of Catholics at the polls: “I am a faithful Catholic, but in the way of social issues I am an atheist.” It is the same logic we see at work in China: “I am a faithful communist, but in the way of monetary issues and real estate appropriation I am a capitalist.” Wang Jianlin, originally of Sechuan, reportedly has \$15.1 billion in assets. According to Forbes magazine, “China boasts a record 152 members of

the 2014 edition of the annual Forbes Billionaires ...” China is officially a communist country; indeed, the largest ... and *wealthiest*. What of the dissonance between the official and the actual? We ignore it, insisting that China is a Communist country. The *Leadership Conference of Women Religious* (LCWR) in America and the Chinese billionaires appear to have much in common. They are both among “the faithful” of their putative ideologies, however irreconcilable their conduct is with their ostensible professions (one political, “I am a committed communist ... billionaire,” and one religious, “I am a professed Catholic Religious ... Pro-abortion sister”).

Ignorance as the Propaedeutic to Policy

As we had said earlier, the only one way to reconcile incompatibilities is to ignore them. Of course, this is not reconciling them at all ... it is merely methodologically suspending them. Acknowledged incompatibilities paralyze us. We can only move beyond them by suspending them. This, of course, is the implicit acknowledgment that we *recognize* them — and therein lays the guilt.

Even according to the scandalously liberal National Catholic Reporter (NCR):

“We found that half of adult Catholics (50 percent) know the church’s teaching regarding the real presence and half do not. We also found that

close to two-thirds of adult Catholics (63 percent) believe that “at the consecration during a Catholic Mass, the bread and wine really become the body and blood of Jesus Christ.”²

Upon reading a thoughtfully written article in *Crisis Magazine* titled *Saving Catholic Culture from Destruction* by Michael Tamara, which I encourage you to read, three verses from Holy Scripture immediately come to mind — and one from a very early Church Father:

First, the Biblical:

- “Lay up these my words in your hearts and minds, and hang them for a sign on your hands, and place them between your eyes. Teach your children that they meditate on them, when you sit in your house, and when you walk on the way, and when you lie down and get up.” (Deut. 11.18-19)
- “The Lord hath sworn truth to David, and he will not make it void: of the fruit of your womb, I will sit upon your throne. If your children will keep your covenant, and these my testimonies which I shall teach them: Their children also for evermore shall sit upon your throne.” (Ps. 13.11-12)

- “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Prov. 22.6)

And from St. Ephraim the Syrian (306-373 A.D.)

“Do nothing at all without the beginning of prayer. With the Sign of the living Cross, seal all your doings, my son. Go not forth from the door of your house till you have signed the Cross. Whether in eating or in drinking, whether in sleeping or in waking, whether in your house or on the road, or again in the season of leisure, neglect not this sign; for there is no guardian like it. It shall be unto you as a wall, in the forefront of all your doings. And teach this to your children, that heedfully they be conformed to it.”

The admittedly lengthy preface to this article was been articulated simply as an exordium to a much more important issue, a fundamentally deeper issue that Holy Scripture — and St. Ephraim — bring to relief. It is an issue of failure, specifically the failure to hand on, to deliver, Sacred Tradition, together with the unequivocal dogma and indisputable teaching authority through which it was articulated.

Resolute Refusal

Let us be clear then: since Vatican II, Catholics have not just *failed* to hand on (L.

tradere, as in *tradition*), to deliver, their Catholic Faith to their children — they have resolutely *refused* to. They had lost the Faith, or retained only a diminishing similitude to it, churned their children through useless and often heretical CCD and Catechetical programs in which they learned nothing of it, and then flocked to the polls to support every issue contrary to authentic Catholic teaching. They had pre-marital sex to which their parents turned a blind eye or simply winked, and then had the abortions that followed. Abortions require abortuaries and necessitated the abattoir, the slaughter-house, of Planned Parenthood — which then took the responsibility (which we had abdicated) to teach our children, and subsequently taught them everything ... including every sexual perversity ... from primary school on.

You simply paid the money to psychiatrists and psychologists to help our children sort out a sexual identity crisis that would never have existed had we done our work and kept your Faith instead of leaving it to the government and NGOs. When our children committed suicide, we scratched your head and wondered why; when they developed incurable STDs we paid for the prescriptions; when they had abortions, we drove them there ... and comforted them with lies that their lives would be the same. And if we live long enough to be “could-have-been-grandparents” we may have watched our daughter fall into irrecoverable depression in the prime of her life

... and we may have even waked her at our local funeral parlor. We were “*correct*”
... and she correctly died.

We may have grandchildren we know nothing of because we told our son that condoms were the answer to “safe fornication” and his sexual promiscuity — rather than encouraging him to be chaste. Or perhaps he acquired AIDS from another woman or man or both — because sexual promiscuity and perversion are “correct” in our culture, that is to say, the culture *we* ruined, together, with all that had once accompanied it and which was noble and good and demanding.

We brought ruin to ourselves, and now we bring it to our children that all may equally perish. Wasn’t it all about “equality” anyway ... “acceptance” and “tolerance?” When we decided that there was nothing that was “right” or “wrong” ... only “different” and “acceptable”? Consequences? What are they? Haven’t we genetically engineered them to our liking yet? And there is, after all, no God, we arrogantly proclaim — until you hope that there is when we or our children die.

These are harsh, severe sayings; cruel pronouncements, you say? They are far less cruel and infinitely less harsh than realities that will come to our doors — unless we teach our children as Holy Mother the Church once taught us before we despised Her in our arrogance and vanity; perhaps as cruel as the government and social correctitude that brought us to the sad state in which you find ourselves today.

Emptiness and Despair follow when Catholics are no longer Catholic

When we lost God, we lost everything. Everything. Our children, our country, our freedom, and ultimately our souls. This is the cruelest consequence of all.

But we are “enlightened” “educated” “progressive” ... an “intellectual” — aren’t we? And these are the things of children. Yes? Would that they were only of children
....

The Remedy

Oh, yes! The remedy! Teach your own children better than your parents had taught you. Teach them *authentic* Catholic doctrine, and not the prevailing and perverse social sentiments that have percolated into the Church and which will poison their minds, deplete their bodies, and cost them their immortal souls.

You may have lost yours already. But give your kids a break. “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Prov. 22.6)
... the way that you did.

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- 1 http://www.crisismagazine.com/2014/saving-catholic-culture-from-destruction?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+CrisisMagazine+%28Crisis+Magazine%29
- 2 <http://ncronline.org/news/catholics-america/knowledge-and-belief-about-real-presence>
- 3 <http://www.forbes.com/sites/russellflannery/2014/03/03/2014-forbes-billionaires-list-growing-chinas-10-richest/>



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