



George Weigel | Cardinal Pietro Parolin



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St. John Paul II's biographer: 'The Catholic Church doesn't do paradigm shifts'

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 1, 2018 ([LifeSiteNews](#)) – St. John Paul II's biographer George Weigel criticized Cardinal Pietro

Parolin's recent assertion that Pope Francis' teaching in *Amoris Laetitia* represents "a paradigm shift" for the Church

"The Catholic Church doesn't do "paradigm shifts," the Catholic theologian wrote in a [First Things column](#) this week.

"A 'paradigm shift' signals a dramatic, sudden, and unexpected break in human understanding—and thus something of a new beginning," wrote Weigel, adding a little later that such a "shift" in the Catholic Church is impossible.

Cardinal Parolin had described the pope's controversial 2016 exhortation on marriage and the family as a "paradigm shift" in an [interview](#) with Vatican Radio published January 11.

The Vatican Secretary of State had said that "at the end of the day, *Amoris Laetitia* has emerged as a new paradigm that Pope Francis is conducting wisely, prudently and also patiently."

Parolin said the "difficulties" generating from the document and which "still exist in the Church, beyond certain aspects of its content, are due precisely to this change in attitude that the Pope is asking of us."

"It's a paradigm shift," he stated, "and the text itself insists on this, that's what is asked of us — this new spirit, this new approach!"

Cardinal Parolin is one of the most powerful Curial officials and has been regarded by Vatican watchers as positioned to succeed Francis.

Weigel called Parolin's use of the phrase "unfortunate."

He argued that while there is genuine "development of doctrine" rooted in the revelation that ended with the death of the last apostle, there can be no "paradigm shift."

"So the evolution of the Church's understanding of the gospel over the centuries is not a matter of 'paradigm shifts,' or ruptures, or radical breaks and new beginnings; it's a question of what theologians call the development of doctrine," he wrote.

"And as Blessed John Henry Newman taught us, authentic doctrinal development is organic and in continuity with "the faith

once . . . delivered to the saints” (Jude 1:3). The Catholic Church doesn’t do rupture: that was tried 500 years ago, with catastrophic results for Christian unity and the cause of Christ.”

Weigle noted that where something reminiscent of a radical break is occurring is in the exhortation’s dissimilar implementation by dioceses throughout the world – making the Catholic Church look like the Church of England’s fragmented present-day incarnation, “and this is ominous.”

“The pastoral implementation of *Amoris Laetitia* mandated in Malta, Germany, and San Diego is quite different than what has been mandated in Poland, Phoenix, Philadelphia, Portsmouth, England, and Edmonton, Alberta,” he noted.

“Because of that,” he said, “the Catholic Church is beginning to resemble the Anglican Communion (itself the product of a traumatic “paradigm shift” that cost John Fisher and Thomas More their heads).”

“For in the Anglican Communion,” continued Weigel, “what is believed and celebrated and practiced in England is quite different from what is believed, celebrated, and practiced in Nigeria or Uganda.”

“This fragmentation is not Catholic,” Weigel said. “Catholicism means one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and unity is one of the four distinctive marks of the Church.”

“That unity means that the Church embodies the principle of non-contradiction,” he explained, “such that a grave sin on the Polish side of the Oder River can’t be a source of grace on the German side of the border.”

Amoris Laetitia has been a continual source of consternation for lay Catholics and clergy since its April 2016 promulgation due to its ostensive granting of Holy Communion to “remarried” Catholics.

Various bishops and cardinals say that allowing the sacrament to unrepentant couples living in so-called “irregular” unions equates to an effective rejection of the Church’s

established teaching on the indissolubility of marriage, adultery, and worthiness to receive Communion.

Varying bishops' conferences worldwide have implemented the document in drastically different ways. Some insist it does not depart from Church teaching on marriage. Others, however, interpret the exhortation's ambiguous language as allowing Communion for couples living in objectively sinful situations.

Weigel suggested a way to stop the current "fragmentation" experienced by many within the Church.

"Something is broken in Catholicism today and it isn't going to be healed by appeals to paradigm shifts," he said.

"In the first Christian centuries, bishops frankly confronted and, when necessary, fraternally corrected each other. That practice is as essential today as it was in the days of Cyprian and Augustine—not to mention Peter and Paul," he added.

Bishop Schneider: ‘Discernment’ now means to ‘allow to sin’

January 31, 2018 ([LifeSiteNews](#)) – The controversy surrounding Pope Francis’ teaching on marriage and family as found in his exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* can be reduced to allowing Catholics “to sin,” said Bishop Athanasius Schneider in an exclusive interview with LifeSiteNews.

[Bishop Schneider: 'discernment' now means 'allow to sin' \(highlights\)](#)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O66WzO4jLBU> www.youtube.com

The auxiliary bishop of Astana Kazakhstan said that phrases such as “discernment,” “pastoral accompaniment,” and “change of paradigm,” while sounding “beautiful” amount to a concession to sin. He said it was similar to how Moses allowed the Israelites to sin by allowing divorce because of their “hardness of heart.”

“The suggestion is that now, after 2000 years, the Church has discovered the subjective aspect of the truth — that until now the Church has only been presenting the objective part of the truth, and now [is presenting] the subjective [part of the truth],” he said.

“But this language, the so-called ‘discovery of the subjective part of the truth’ is none other, when you translate this into common sense language — for every man who still has common sense — it ultimately means ‘to allow to sin’ – to give permission to sin, as Moses gave because of the hard-heartedness of the people,” he continued.

This language...ultimately means ‘to allow to sin.’

“And Jesus Christ condemned this. How can the Apostles and the Successors of the Apostles today introduce a pastoral norm which is in substance what Moses did?” he added.

Amoris Laetitia unleashed moral mayhem into the Church upon its publication in the spring of 2016. Leading Church prelates and various bishops interpreted the teaching as allowing Holy Communion to be given to “remarried” Catholics engaging in sexual relations with one another. The teaching has also been used to push homosexuality ([here](#) and [here](#)) within the Catholic Church. It has also been [used to suggest](#) that the Church’s teaching against contraception as set forth in *Humanae Vitae* needs to be overturned.

Amoris Laetitia’s moral core [has been called](#) a “theological atomic bomb” that has the capacity to destroy all Catholic moral teaching.

[READ: Bishop Schneider invites world’s prelates to sign Profession of Immutable Truths](#)

Schneider said in his interview with LifeSiteNews that behind the push to allow adulterers to receive Holy Communion is really a hidden agenda to introduce divorce into the Catholic Church.

Advocates for Communion for the “remarried,” he said, are “using this as an implicit tool to introduce divorce into the Church, and to introduce...permission to have sexual activity outside of a valid marriage.”

This is to “introduce the spirit of the world today” into the Church, he added.

Following the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church has always taught that the marriage bond validly contracted between a husband and wife cannot be broken “till death do us part.” This teaching is largely based on the words of Jesus, who

taught that “what God has joined together, let no one separate” (Mark 10:9).

The Church teaches that those who engage in sexual relations outside of a valid marriage commit adultery, which is prohibited by the Six Commandment. The Church furthermore teaches, following St. Paul, that the one who receives Communion with grave sin on his soul commits sacrilege and brings “judgment upon himself.”

Schneider said that giving Holy Communion to those who intentionally perform sexual activity outside a valid marriage “is a cruel medicine...a false medicine.”

“This is confirming them in their disease to continue to live against the will of God, against Revelation. And this will never bring the subjective part of the truth to them. This is distorting the truth. This is not pastoral love,” he said.

The Escalating War Against Orthodox Catholicism

 onepeterfive.com/the-escalating-war-against-orthodox-catholicism/

Steve Skojec

February 2, 2018

When it was [announced](#) last year that Fr. James Martin, SJ, was being brought in as a “consultor” to the Vatican’s communications team, reactions were predictably on a spectrum ranging from deeply perplexed to blood-vessel bursting outrage. Known for his role as editor-at-large for the far-left Catholic rag *America Magazine* as well as his boundary-pushing views on the Church and homosexuality, Fr. Martin is the kind of name that gets an instant reaction when brought up in any conversation. And among orthodox Catholics, it’s decidedly not a positive one.

Fr. Martin became the second high-profile Jesuit to join the Vatican's propaganda arm, joining "papal mouthpiece" and editor of *La Civiltà Cattolica* (LCC), Fr. Antonio "2 + 2 = 5" Spadaro. Together, the two wayward spiritual sons of St. Ignatius have a media audience of some 60,000 souls baked right in, just based on print circulation. Online, *America* and LCC are globally ranked #25,181 and #838,795 respectively by Alexa.com. This means *America's* footprint is far larger in the digital age, but LCC's status as a 150-year-old Jesuit publication with direct oversight from the Vatican's Secretariat of State gives it a unique prestige.

Still, since he's joined the team, Fr. Martin's role seemed fairly subdued. While Fr. Spadaro made a bit of a name for himself going after the pope's "enemies" online (joined by Fr. Thomas Rosica of Salt & Light TV, papal biographer Austen Ivereigh of *Crux*, and Villanova "theology" professor Massimo Faggioli), Martin has continued to wage a one-man media war to promote his own books, his own causes, and his own unique vision for a decidedly different Church than any the popes and saints of old would have recognized. And with a gigantic social media audience (174,000 Twitter followers; 561,848 Facebook fans), he has the clout to move opinions.

But he's been getting a lot of pushback.

Recently, a parish in New Jersey canceled a talk by Fr. James Martin after Catholic group Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) got over 12,000 signatures on a [petition](#) to pull the plug.

Fr. Martin was, to say the least, not happy. Not content to simply accept that faithful Catholics didn't want to hear his heterodox message, he called for a war against those ragged few out there still fighting in defense of the authentic teachings of the Church:



James Martin, SJ



[@JamesMartinSJ](#)

It's time for bishops, priests and lay leaders finally to stand up to the hate-mongering of online groups with no standing whatsoever in the church, who seek to substitute their spurious authority for legitimate church authority, and who seek to run the church by fear and hatred.

As John Zmirak [wrote](#) in response to Martin's comments at *The Stream*:

Have you got that? Bishops should step in and condemn lay Catholics who criticize Fr. Martin. Or else they're complicit in giving in to "hate." Catholics should face public condemnation by their bishops if they dare to disagree with Martin's new, Caesar-friendly stance on same-sex sin.

Think of Martin's position as a special advisor to the Vatican. Of his friendly relations with many bishops. Of his long list of media buddies. (He worked with Martin Scorsese on the movie *Silence*, and appears on Stephen Colbert's show.) Don't be surprised if he finds some takers. He's doubtless hoping to see compliant bishops condemn groups like TFP. He hopes they'll ban them from churches, denounce them in Church newspapers, as if they were indeed some kind of hate group.

Zmirak also made another important point about the rhetoric Martin uses:

When faithful Catholics speak out against him, he accuses them of "hate speech," which in some places is borderline illegal. He casts the organizations that criticize his stance as "extremists,"

even “alt-right.” He’s trying to smear orthodox Christians with the dung-soaked brush of disgraceful racism.

As someone who has been subject to such accusations myself, I can attest to the fact that these labels are applied without the slightest concern for the truth — or the damage done.

Just days after Fr. Martin’s comments, Joseph Bernstein, Senior Tech Reporter for BuzzFeed, published a [piece](#) on Fr. John Zuhlsdorf — known to the Catholic blogosphere as Fr. Z — that was anything but flattering. “Meet the Blogger Priest Firing Red Pills At the Vatican”, reads the headline. “Fr. Z’s critics say he’s an ‘alt-right’ priest. He says they’re snowflakes who should toughen up. His surprising rise to prominence shows that in 2018, even the longest-lasting institution in the Western world isn’t immune to the strains of the social internet.”

Notice the language. “Alt-right priest.” Just the kind of label Zmirak was talking about. And who showed up in the article to comment on Fr. Z? The man himself, Fr. James Martin. Martin had previously had another speech cancelled — this time at Catholic University — in part because of a post Fr. Z had written drawing his reader’s attention to it.

“For me the saddest thing about Father Z’s blog is how cruel it is,” Martin told BuzzFeed News. “It’s astonishing to me that a priest could traffic in such cruelty and hatred.”

Fr. Z told BuzzFeed News that it was not his intention to sic the Zedheads — as he affectionately calls his readers — on Martin, and added that though he did not think it was appropriate for Martin to speak, he, too, had been disinvited from similar engagements for his views.

“I don’t whine about it though,” said Fr. Z. “This isn’t bean bag.”

The zinger from Fr. Z might be a cheering moment for Fr. Martin’s critics, but with characterizations like “the sometimes shockingly antagonistic attitude of Fr. Z and his ilk toward the Vatican and liberal culture has invited comparisons

to the alt-right”, the overall piece is little more than instant wish-fulfillment for Fr. Martin.

The attack on faithful Catholicism is nothing new, but it seems to have taken on a new and dangerous edge. We’ve seen the culture at both Christendom College and Franciscan University — both seen as seedbeds of authentic Catholicism — come under fire from progressive Catholic bloggers in the past month after alleged mishandling of accusations of sexual misconduct. Voices critical of the current Vatican regime have suffered reprisals, from the retributive actions taken against some academics and priests who have signed the various theological critiques of *Amoris Laetitia* to the unjust firing of Josef Seifert for publishing articles questioning that same document to the attacks on the *dubia* cardinals and the Kazakhstani bishops. It seems that suppressing orthodoxy is becoming trendy. And it isn’t going to stop. I received an inquiry from a “journalist” several days ago about our financial records here at 1P5 — a clear indication that if they can find something to use against us, they will. I can’t imagine we’re alone in that.

Strangely, I think we can take this as a positive sign. It means that while we may be outnumbered, we’re winning — or at least heavily influencing — the war for public perception. Nobody bothers to attack someone who doesn’t pose a threat.

Nevertheless, I ask your prayers for all the men and women who are out there courageously standing up for the truth against unscrupulous opposition. The people looking for ways to discredit their critics don’t let the 8th Commandment get in their way. And as anyone who has ever been dragged through the mud knows, it isn’t a pleasant experience.