



Cardinal Gerhard Müller, prefect emeritus of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith Diane Montagna/LifeSiteNews

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Faithful Catholics being ‘pushed out’ of Church: German Cardinal

SAN FRANCISCO, June 28, 2018 (LifeSiteNews) — The former head of the Vatican’s doctrine office has accused fellow German bishops of giving up on the New Evangelization. Despairing of Christianity’s role in the contemporary world, they are watering down doctrine so the Church can survive. Those who disagree are punished.

“The faithful who take Catholic doctrine seriously are branded as conservative and pushed out of the Church, and exposed to the defamation campaign of the liberal and anti-Catholic media,” Cardinal Gerhardt Müller told Catholic World Report.

Appointed by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012, Müller was the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith before he was dismissed last July by Pope Francis. In a recent interview, he told CWR that there are German bishops who want to lead the Church into “modernity,” seeing St. John Paul II’s call to convert the world as a losing battle.

“One group of German bishops, with their president in the lead, see themselves as trendsetters of the Catholic Church on the march into modernity,” he said.

The president of the German Bishops Conference is Cardinal Reinhard Marx.

“[These bishops] consider the secularization and de-Christianization of Europe as an irreversible development,” Cardinal Müller continued. “For this reason the New Evangelization—the program of John Paul II and Benedict XVI—is in their view a battle against the objective course of history, resembling Don Quixote’s battle against the windmills.”

Their solution? Capitulation to the world.

“They are seeking for the Church a niche where it can survive in peace,” said Müller. “Therefore all the doctrines of the faith that are opposed to the “mainstream,” the societal consensus, must be reformed.”

He explained that this is why some German bishops are demanding Holy Communion for non-Catholics and Catholics in mortal sin. Also on the agenda, Cardinal Müller revealed, are a host of other radical departures from the faith:

“... [A] blessing for homosexual couples, intercommunion with Protestants, relativizing the indissolubility of sacramental marriage, the introduction of *virī probati* and with it the abolition of priestly celibacy, approval for sexual relations before and outside of marriage,” he enumerated.

Calling these bishops’ agenda “a blatant process of Protestantizing,” the Cardinal said that doctrine to them is secondary to their real love: power politics.

“To many bishops, the truth of revelation and of the Catholic profession of faith is just one more variable in intra-ecclesial power politics,” he told CWR.

“Some of them cite individual agreements with Pope Francis and think that his statements in interviews with journalists and public figures who are far from Catholic offer justification even for ‘watering down’ defined, infallible truths of the faith.”

The Cardinal observed that wanting to be loved by the media and the world goes against the spirit of the first apostles.

“Today, for many people, being accepted by the media is more important than the truth, for which we must also suffer,” he reminded his interviewer. “Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom for Christ in Rome, the center of power in their day. They were not celebrated by the rulers of this world as heroes, but rather mocked like Christ on the cross. We must never forget the martyrological dimension of the Petrine ministry and of the episcopal office.”

“Conversion to the world, instead of to God”

Asked about the condition of the faith in Germany, the Cardinal said that many felt “abandoned and betrayed” by pastors who court worldly popularity.

“Being popular in public opinion is nowadays the criterion for a supposedly good bishop or priest,” Müller mourned. “We are experiencing conversion to the world, instead of to God, contrary to the statements of the Apostle Paul: ‘Am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of God’ (Gal 1:10).”

The Cardinal indicated that the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith is devalued today, for doctrine has been “subordinated to the requirements and conditions of earthly power plays.”

Illustrating how dangerous obsessions with power and prestige are, Müller pointed out how they blind people to theological truths about priesthood and marriage.

“If priestly ministry is understood as a position of power, then this doctrine of the reservation of Holy Orders to Catholics of the male sex is a form of discrimination against women,” the Cardinal said.

“But this perspective of power and of social prestige is false. Only if we see all the doctrines of the faith and the sacraments with theological eyes, instead of in terms of power, will the doctrine of the faith regarding the natural prerequisites for the sacraments of Holy Orders and of marriage be evident to us also,” he continued. “Only a man can symbolize Christ the Bridegroom of the Church. Only one man and one woman can symbolically represent the relation of Christ to the Church.”