

# Where Are the Bishops Who Will Defend Faithful Priests?

## **Fr. Perozich comments before the article below:**

It is my opinion that homosexuality has reached a critical mass of the number of men in the hierarchy of the church from the Vatican to the western nations, particularly in the United States. By this I mean that there are enough men in power now to promote homosexuality without criticism, oversight, or correction from the pope, the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, the Congregation of Bishops, the Congregation for the Clergy, the Congregation for Education etc. It took years for these men to get here, but they are now in charge. It is their moment, and they are taking advantage to promote their ideas to the church while they can.

1. Unless this is your issue, there is no reason to promote it or defend it. Homosexuality is a disordered desire. Under no circumstances can it be approved. Catechism of the Catholic Church
2. Fr. James Martin is the mouthpiece for homosexuality. He was appointed by someone at the Vatican in its communications division.
3. Fr. Thomas Rosica working in the Vatican constantly repeats the mantra that the catechism has to be changed. He used the synod interviews to introduce homosexuality even when it was not a major them in the synod on the family. He, however, recently canceled his appearance at a Mass promoting this issue.
4. Pope Francis' remark, "Who am I to judge", to justify his appointment in Rome of an infamous priest from the diplomatic corps in Uruguay failed to teach the need for repentance, conversion from homosexuality.
5. Bishop Stokes in Lexington Kentucky has promoted "LGBT" in the parishes.
6. Cardinal Tobin has said that the church needs to catch up to the world regarding homosexuality, rather than preaching repentance, conversion, and directing souls to Christ for conversion.
7. Bishop Robert McElroy in December 2015 told the San Diego Union Tribune that in his new years wish list were the acceptance of gays and lesbians in the parishes, the acceptance of the children of gay and lesbian families in our Catholic schools. He also has publicly signaled that the catechism needs to change because the phrase disordered is philosophical and offends "gays and lesbians", words he constantly uses rather than men and women with same sex attraction.

8. The Office for Marriage and Family life in San Diego has been replaced with the Office for Family Life and Spirituality. Parishes with their pastors and lay representatives will gather at a fall meeting to promote welcoming attitudes, not repentance or conversion as preached by Jesus Christ.
9. In a private meeting with Bishop McElroy, I challenged his assertion that men and women with same sex attraction (my term vs. his of LGBT) were not welcome in parishes. He retorted that in his experience (of 1 year at the time in San Diego vs. my 22 years here) "gays" were not welcome. I responded that every one is welcome who wishes to convert. He lividly repeated, "They don't need to convert, they don't need to convert."
10. Bishop McElroy told me that my teachings were not Catholic, anti gay, and that I was not to publish my thoughts in the parish bulletin which beside the homily is one of the best ways to evangelize the parish.
11. I have heard nothing yet from Martin, Rosica, Stokes, Tobin, McElroy condemning McCarrick's homosexual behavior.
12. For the first 22 years of my priesthood in San Diego, I like the author below, worked to promote chastity in Natural Family Planning, Holy Matrimony. When I was spiritual director to Courage and Encourage in San Diego, there were other homosexual affirming ministries from priests at their parishes in the diocese allowed to function under Bishop Brom who is now retired.
13. The new technique of silencing is to remove a priest from office such as has been done with Fr. Frank Phillips in Chicago, Fr. Jack Harrington in Massachusetts, and Fr. Haley in Virginia
14. I bless the priest below in his youth to keep working for the faithful as I did in my younger years in love with God and the faithful. It is tiring to swim against the tide and to suffer the criticism of those in authority while others are allowed or encouraged to promote their agenda. I pray that God frustrate the evil designs of some in the church, convert their hearts and bring them to full conversion to Christ. I pray for changes in leadership so that faithful leaders be raised up, and those who are faithful speak up. May young men like this priest rise up to take over for those of us who fought before them.
15. His last paragraph reflects my experience that I now put into the past tense: ***I was here because I loved you. We loved you. You were worth the scars, the neglect of the hierarchy, the scorn of peers, the ridicule, and the immense loneliness. This love of the Lord and love of you brought far more joy than this mess could ever hope to extinguish. We love you, we are here for you, and above all, Jesus Christ is Lord!***

AUGUST 9, 2018

# Where Are the Bishops Who Will Defend Faithful Priests?

[A DIOCESAN PRIEST](#)



<https://www.crisismagazine.com/2018/bishops-will-defend-faithful-priests>

*August 4, 2018*

*The Memorial of St. John Marie Vianney.*

**It is hard to communicate to people** the life of a priest. The inexpressible joys that we experience every day are so difficult to express, as is the privilege of journeying with people through the dark valleys in their lives with hope that we can be the shepherd who brings them comfort. In light of

the current ecclesial climate, I would like to share my story—not so much my biography, though elements of it are mentioned in several places. I would like people to know where my heart is. It is tired, and it is broken—I can physically feel pain in my chest. While I know there is hope in Christ our light, and while I know that this is his Church, and that the harvest is at hand, in which one day the weeds and wheat will be separated, it would be foolish at present not to address my hurt and my frustrations. I think others can benefit from hearing as well, so this writing is my feeble attempt to share my story—our story, the story of an American priest.

First, I must say that I love being a priest. I have always loved being a priest. This is my vocation; it's my love, to serve the people of God. God made it apparent to me from my youth that I was called to be a father to many and to spend my life for love and service of the Church in a way which is single-hearted. He granted me a love for the Eucharist and a passion for preaching the truth. I attended parochial school. In my teenage years, I was moved particularly by the voice of John Paul II to respond to the call of the Lord. This call was fostered by Steubenville conferences and Lifeteen events, and my love for truth was fed by EWTN, along with the writings of the pope who would become a saint. I even spent several years in lay ministry (one as a missionary) before entering seminary in the fall of 2002.

At the time I thought I knew what I was getting into. I knew that my love for the truths of the Church as proclaimed by John Paul the Great was not shared by many of the American clergy. Year after year, as my peers were ordained, the disdain of Baby Boomer clergy for these “young” priests became known. “Rigid,” “Conservative,” and “Pre-Vatican II” were among the favorite buzz words used to describe the

emerging clergy of the day. I also knew the environment of my home diocese: my parish was rocked by a scandal involving a priest and one of my teenage peers; the long-time pastor of my home parish was known for having multiple affairs (one mistress was known personally to my mother)—it even was long-rumored that he had personally funded several abortions; and another priest at a church near my home was seen in public with apparent male lovers. And yes, I knew about the sex abuse scandals; I entered seminary in their shadow. My classmates and I, we knew what we were dealing with.

The Dallas charter came along and the criticisms were clear: there was still no bishop-accountability. Yet, we were filled with hope. There was a new era, a freshness in the Church. The moral laxity of the 1970s was drying up and the people of God were hungry for truth. New bishops came, appointed by an informed John Paul II and his successor (I remember crying tears of joy when Benedict was elected, despite the open contempt of Boomer clergy). Gone were the days when men such as Weakland, Untener, Gumbleton, and Imesch were rising to the episcopacy despite their open dissent from the magisterium. There were new bishops who wanted solid, orthodox priests to teach people about the truth and beauty of the authentic message proclaimed by Christ to his Church.

I knew there would be resistance—*we* knew there would be resistance, but we would have the backing and support of our spiritual fathers. They would protect us and stand up for us. Even though we may be lambasted by our brothers (many of whom were living deviant lives—both hetero and homosexual), we knew the men to whom we pledged respect and obedience would protect us.

We were wrong.

In my years of priesthood I have learned what the greatest good is for a bishop: to address as few complaints as possible. So, if a priest is having a gay affair, if he has a serious drinking problem, if he is sleeping around with women, if it is clear that he has mental disorders that inhibit him from overseeing a parish, if he is wicked and cruel, if he regularly abuses the liturgy, if he preaches heresy, if he contradicts the bishop, or if he teaches counter to the moral teaching of the Church, as long as there is no traceable record of complaint, or continual outcry from the people, then all remains the same, as long as the sins remain mostly occult. If a bishop can legally turn a blind eye, he will. Because otherwise, he may have to do something unpleasant.

To some extent this intentional and willful ignorance is understandable. I think I know why these men act (or don't act) as they do. Whenever a bishop takes action against a priest, there is outcry. Especially if it is a popular priest who preaches what people want to hear. I know of so many situations where a bishop has justifiably removed a priest, only to be met with a deafening, unyielding chorus of disapproval. Letters are written (both to the press and to the Nuncio). Petitions are signed. Websites are created. Tweets are formulated with trending hashtags. All detail the plight of a kind-hearted priest being persecuted by a malevolent bishop for no apparent reason. It has to hurt the morale of other priests trying to do the right thing. This is a terrible thing to do your job and be persecuted for it—within the Church, despite the words of our Lord: “The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.”

If I may, I now speak for myself and my peers directly to the American prelates: Bishops, we can appreciate how you feel when attacked for doing what is right. We can appreciate the hurt, the desolation, and the immense loneliness. We can appreciate it, because we live it as well. We live it when we preach a homily defending the Church's teaching on marriage, and are chastised by you for "upsetting the people." We live it when we express how difficult it is to live with someone who drinks himself into a rage every night, and we are told by you that we need to "get along with our pastor." We live it when you let our brothers mock us behind our backs over cocktails with benefactors. We live it when we are chastised for legitimate liturgical expressions and our brothers who preach counter to the faith are given plush parishes and diocesan offices. We live it when our peers call us names, and paste misplaced quotes of Pope Francis on our doors. We live it when we see seminarians leave because a priest made an advance on them and you do nothing about it after we report it. We live it when our family and friends part ways with us because of Church abuse scandals. We live it when we are insulted in public. We know that it is difficult to do what is right in the current climate.

We often look to you, our spiritual fathers, for solidarity and support. We need someone to stand with us to be "shining lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation." But we remain alone. At best, you ignore us, and, at worst, you punish or reprimand us. We don't always get it right, especially when we are newly ordained, but think of this: Is it fair to berate a young priest for overzealous imposition of Latin, when you know his pastor is cruising gay bars and do nothing? Is it prudent to rebuke a son for preaching on an unpopular topic, while his colleague regularly openly endorses

contraception? Is it fair to continue to punish us for honest mistakes while our colleagues live an open life of dissipation, which you ignore?

We are resolved to “Celebrate faithfully and reverently, in accord with the Church’s tradition, the mysteries of Christ, especially the Sacrifice of the Eucharist.” We are resolved to “exercise the ministry of the word worthily and wisely, preaching the Gospel and teaching the Catholic faith.” Yet, we are criticized while those who live a wanton lifestyle, at the expense of the people of God, and at the cost of the salvation of souls are not. Can you imagine how this grieves us? Can you imagine how alone we feel?

We can no longer find consolation in our spiritual fathers. When I was a young seminarian, I could find consolation in the words of the pope. Those days are gone. Pope Francis often says things that confuse the people of God and appear to contradict the very material we preach; even more distressing, he joins the ranks of his generation who label and stereotype younger clergy. He now gives them permission to call us “little monsters,” and provides them with cliché adages to use out of context, such as “Who are you to judge?!” This has created an environment of intense loneliness.

Bishops, we want to stand with you. We want the corruption gone, without counting the cost. We want to fight against the lavender mafia and immorality in the ranks of the priesthood. We are willing to take the hits with you! We are willing to defend you! We are willing to stand up! We are willing to pick up the slack if you need to remove men from ministry. We are ready to console and pastor those misinformed souls that will be hurt if you take the right action. It’s time to stand up to all of this. It’s time. It’s past

time. It sadly is too late for many—but not all. Enough is enough. We want to be in solidarity with you. Are you in solidarity with us?

Every scenario you have read in this reflection is true and born out of my personal experience. The corruption in the Church is real. I can tell you this, if you feel hurt or betrayed, please know that I do, too. If you have been hurt by a priest such as me, who is well-intentioned but fallible, I implore your forgiveness and beg your mercy. If you have been hurt by the abusive behavior of a priest, words cannot express my sorrow. Please let us help you. I remain in the Church not because she is free of corruption, but because she preaches the Truth of Jesus Christ, the Truth that I know makes us free. He has promised that the gates of hell, let alone human corruption, will never prevail against her. Know that these truths, along with one other essential factor, are what keep me doing what I do and enduring this nonsense.

That other essential factor is love. I do what I do because of Love. I love the Lord, who gave me this call. But that doesn't keep me here, in the diocesan priesthood; I could love God in a quiet, beautiful monastery or hermitage somewhere far removed from this nonsense. ***I am here because I love you. We love you. You are worth the scars, the neglect of the hierarchy, the scorn of peers, the ridicule, and the immense loneliness. This love of the Lord and love of you brings far more joy than this mess could ever hope to extinguish. We love you, we are here for you, and above all, Jesus Christ is Lord!***

St. John Vianney, Pray for us!

*Editor's note: Pictured above are U.S. bishops meeting Pope Francis on September 23, 2015. (Photo credit: Alan Holdren / CNA)*