

AUGUST 1, 2019

No Parish for Real Men

BOB SULLIVAN



Voiced by **Amazon Polly**

https://3m7ajlsrzj92lfd1hu16hu7vc-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/amazon_polly_88960.mp3?version=1564637739

There's a crisis of manhood in the American Church. You know it; I know it. But if our bishops are anything other than totally oblivious, they're playing it cool. In July of 2017, I attended a USCCB convocation in Orlando, Florida. Its stated goal was finding new ways to spread the joy of the Gospel in this country. Prior to the meeting, the USCCB developed the theme: making every single Catholic into a missionary disciple.

This all sounded fine to me, until I started looking at the breakout sessions for the convocation. There was one for women, one for Latinos, one for youth, one for immigrants, one for the poor, one for victims of sexual abuse... but not one session, curiously, on the role of men in the Church.

Of course, there are some obvious male roles – the priesthood, for instance. But the USCCB is apparently unaware that, outside of Holy Orders, men are a minority in the Church. That makes us the [second-most feminine](#) religion in America after Buddhism. I contacted the USCCB to see if they still had time to add something for men, but it was too late. All the decisions had been made.

If this crisis of masculinity is even on the bishops' radar, it ranked lower than 66 other issues deemed more relevant to the American Catholic Church. The oversight is especially egregious, given the fact that the group which garnered the most attention during the convocation were the “nones” – youth who have no religious affiliation. Our bishops must know that youth follow the example of their father in matters of faith. If a man is faithful, his children are [more likely](#) to be faithful as adults. How, then, can the USCCB offer zero discussions on the importance of male role models?

☞

Then there's the problem of our increasingly effeminate clergy. When young men don't find role models at the altar, they seek them elsewhere. Meanwhile, religion becomes the domain of wives and daughters, who are eager to serve at the Mass, fill the adoration hour, and teach the religious education at the parish and in the home. Wouldn't such a Church serve as an even greater attraction for effeminate men?

Two years after the USCCB convocation and one year after the homosexual sex abuse scandal, the Church is doubling down on feminization. Cardinal Reinhard Marx of the nearly defunct German Catholic Church, wonders if lay people should be allowed to preach at Mass – a practice already allowed in some German parishes, albeit improperly. The Amazon Synod is being led by prelates (principally Germans) who are proponents of female deacons, if not women-priests.

Recently, the Jesuit review *America* published an article [bemoaning the fact](#) that lay women aren't allowed to preach at Mass. The article was written by a woman who was, at one time, allowed to deliver homilies in her parish on a regular basis. The article's author admitted: "Of the 13 lay preachers in our parish, 12 were women." Feminization anyone? The article also notes that Archbishop Rembert Weakland readily allowed lay women and lay men to deliver sermons during Mass, somehow omitting the fact that Rembert was [disowned by his own diocese](#) for his notorious [homosexual affairs](#).



Of the altar servers in your parish, how often are your servers are girls and not boys? Of the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at Masses in your parish, do the women outnumber the men? When you go to Mass, are the majority of adults in attendance women or men? Who is the director of religious education in your parish – is it a woman or a man?

Answer the question truthfully and you probably won't be too surprised to learn that non-Catholic churches, where females are allowed to serve as ministers or pastors, often [ordain more women](#) than men.

I can go on and on, but the point is this: there are more women engaged in the Faith than there are men. And, while a few exceptions exist – most notably Cardinal Raymond Burke – influential members of the hierarchy are, by and large, either blatantly engaged in the feminization or they are apparently oblivious to it.

The good news is, Catholic men aren't at a loss for proper role models. We can still go back to the masculine faith demonstrated Sts.. Peter and Paul, Thomas More, Louis Martin... and, of course, Jesus Christ, the Son of God: not, incidentally, the daughter.

[Photo credit: Shutterstock]

Tagged as [Archbishop Rembert Weakland](#), [Cardinal Reinhard Marx](#), [masculinity](#), [women priests](#)



By [Bob Sullivan](#)

Bob Sullivan and his wife Carmen are the parents of five daughters. They live in Hastings, Nebraska, where they attend St. Cecilia Catholic Church. When he's not practicing law, Bob writes and speaks about faith and the teachings of the Catholic Church. He writes a column for the [Southern Nebraska Register](#) and has had several articles appear in Catholic Answers Magazine. He blogs at [www.bsullivan.org](#) and [www.thosecatholicmen.com](#). You can follow him on Twitter (@BobSullivan87) and Facebook (bob.sullivan.10004).