

Fr. Perozich comments —

Other than Michael Voris' report, I have not heard of Sean Hannity's decision to leave the church.

Voris' end statements are telling. Hannity has not left America because he is educated and rooted in who and what America is in her civics, in spite of corruption at all levels of government and society.

Voris implies that Hannity is leaving the church because he does NOT understand who and what the Catholic Church is due to lack of formation for a man of 57 years growing up in the new American church of his experience.

Carl Olson speaks in the article that follows of the Nones, the increasing number of people who are not affiliated with religion. He quotes an article by non Catholic Timothy Beal which lists empirical evidence, collection of witness statements by some nones, and his conclusions which Olson then criticizes very well.

My synthesis of these two articles are that Sean Hannity and the nones were not formed in the faith of Jesus Christ, rather their faith was formed by secular ideas which are rampant in the church today, having grown louder in the past 10 years so that the true message of Jesus' salvation from sin and death for transformation into His image and eternal life has been muted by the worldly concerns.

Today we hear of the sex scandals, financial corruption in the church. While these need to be expressed, they need correction, and do not serve as a reason to leave.

We hear from bishops of climate change, homosexual rights, transgendered rights, nuclear weapons, gun control, ecology, rights, justice, fairness, equality, women's ordination for fairness, listening sessions from people who have no foundation in the faith to express a real opinion, and on and on. If this is what a person receives as formation, then the deep truth is lacking, and Hannity and the nones do not know the truth of Jesus and His salvation.

Continue to preach Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected, who saves from sin, who transforms us by Word and Sacrament in His Holy Catholic Church, even if many of the clergy do not do so because not an insignificant number either do not believe or have been overcome by sexual sin. Bishops are silencing priests who preach the truth rather than these secular ideas which are adopted at synods and national meetings.

All you can do is your part to live the true Catholic faith and to pass it on to your children, grandchildren and all who have ears to hear.

Romans 10: For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” But **how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent?** As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring [the] good news!”* **But not everyone has heeded the good news;** for Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what was heard from us?” Thus **faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.** But I ask, did they not hear? Certainly they did; for “Their voice has gone forth to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.” But I ask, did not Israel understand? First Moses says: “I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a senseless nation I will make you angry.” Then Isaiah speaks boldly and says: “**I was found [by] those who were not seeking me; I revealed myself to those who were not asking for me.**” But regarding Israel he says, “**All day long I stretched out my hands to a disobedient and contentious people.**”

In our church today have many disobedient and contentious people at all levels. In our society are indeed disobedient and contentious people. Their voices recently have been louder than our Catholic voices of truth.

We Catholics do not need to shout the word of God, rather we need just to pass it on. The truth has the power to penetrate the soul.

Live that truth of Jesus through preaching, teaching, and example. It will convert souls of disobedient and contentious people and will convert those who are not even seeking God.

Here are links to the actual articles that follow the links:

https://www.churchmilitant.com/video/episode/vortex-the-crisis-goes-mainstream?mc_cid=455e55137f&mc_eid=567c2c9d97

<https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2019/11/18/enough-none-sense-lets-settle-for-nothing-but-truth/>

THE CRISIS GOES MAINSTREAM

**But not the crisis you think of
every day.**

December 16, 2019

TRANSCRIPT

If there was ever a question of the Catholic crisis not being mainstream, those questions can now be laid aside.

Sean Hannity, the dominant star of prime-time cable news commentators, has made it official.

He is leaving the Catholic Church, and his reason — as stated in an interview published three days ago in the Christian Post — is the Catholic Church has "too much institutionalized corruption," adding that it has not been rectified.

The 57-year-old Fox News star, to be certain, had already been on record years ago saying he disagreed with Church teaching on birth control, as was famously revealed in a 2007 Fox News interview with then Fr. Thomas Euteneuer.

But before we pigeonhole him and his latest announcement about leaving the Church into a specific box, we need to learn something here.

Given the near-daily reports now of corruption, it's easy to think of the crisis in terms of these unfolding scandals of homosexual priests abusing teenage boys, or bishops covering them, or Vatican officials ripping off billions, using money for gay lovers, or misdirecting money donated for charity for investments or administrative costs. The scandals show no signs of abating.

But those scandals are only symptoms of the greater crisis — a crisis as Church Militant has been saying for nearly a decade — is of supernatural faith within the hierarchy.

Of course, when you lose your faith, all these horrible, sinful, wicked, evil things are going to happen. And how has that trickled down to the average Catholic, like Hannity in this case?

The lack of faith among the hierarchy has been an issue for decades now, and it would be preposterous to not understand the massive falling away from the Faith this has caused.

The dominant effect of the crisis has been this: the Faith not being transmitted to the laity. And that stands to reason; one of the first principles of philosophy is: You cannot give what you do not have.

So how could a clergy and hierarchy that no longer possessed the Faith themselves transmit it to a laity being besieged by a culture attacking the Church on every side?

At the very moment the laity needed fathers to stand and protect them, these men deserted them. But more than deserting, they also betrayed them by setting in motion the machinery to perpetuate the evil for generations to come.

In addition to just themselves, they also recruited thousands and thousands of other homosexual and faithless men into seminaries. They populated the seminary faculties with gay abusers. They kept orthodox men out of the seminary and ordained active homosexuals to go out into the parishes and corrupt the minds of the faithful.

These wicked men stood in pulpits and worked out their own psychological trauma instead of teaching the Faith, slowly perverting congregations and turning them away from the Faith.

Sean Hannity is responsible for his own choices. No one is saying anything else. But — and it is a big but — his public apostasy has not happened in a vacuum, as it hasn't for tens of millions of other American Catholics who have also left the Church.

Interestingly, Hannity says since leaving the Church he is "closer" to God. That would be the expected response from any Catholic who was taught next to nothing as a child, and then has witnessed nothing except a steady flow of one story of corruption after another pouring out of the Church.

Of course, the correct response is to remain in the Church and fight for Her. But Hannity — like so many other Catholics, it would appear — apparently was never taught what the Church actually is — Who She actually is.

So he has no concept of staying and fighting for something because he doesn't see the "something" worth fighting for.

One final thought: There is a parallel case here for Hannity. American politics and journalism are rife with scandal; the country itself is being transformed into a socialist state. The nation itself is transforming into something it was never destined or designed to be.

Yet Hannity doesn't throw in the towel on America and become a Canadian, for example. Why? Because he has sufficient "catechesis," if you will, in what America is. He is schooled in the founding documents; he is schooled and educated in the country's history and so forth.

He understands it's worth fighting for. But in the case of the Church, he has little to no understanding. He was trained in the Faith by faithless men — by men who were, in reality, actual enemies of the Faith.

His move away from and now out of the Church can hardly be a surprise.

Enough Nones-sense—let's settle for nothing but Truth

Away with the notion that a relativistic, hyper-individualized, and subjective way of living and thinking is somehow a way out of the current morass.

November 18, 2019 Carl E. Olson



(Florian Pérennès @florian_perennes | Unsplash.com)

There has been a fair amount of discussion and commentary among Catholics in recent years about “Nones,” notably the work of Bishop Robert Barron, **who last week** “outlined five paths Church leaders should take to re-energize the religiously unaffiliated.” The same topic **was taken up** a few days ago in the *Wall Street Journal* (full article is behind a pay wall) by Timothy Beal, a non-Catholic and a professor of religion at Case Western Reserve University who is, I discovered **on his Amazon.com**

page, married to a “Presbyterian shaman”. Beal’s “take” is both informative and, I think, quite misguided—and thus misleading.

Beal provides some of the **basic data**: “Nones”—people who don’t identify with any religion—have increased in number from 16% in 2007 to 35% in 2018, and 44% of Americans aged 18 to 29 are Nones. He notes various reasons for this: there is “less social pressure to identify as religious, especially among young adults”; in fact, the opposite is now true—there is commonly more pressure to justify one’s religious beliefs than being None. Also, more and more children are born to parents of differing religious beliefs: “Children in such families are often raised with exposure to both identities and left to decide for themselves which to adopt. In many cases, they eventually choose neither.”

There is also a rise in “new communities” that, Beal notes, we might call “alt-religious,” which revolve around various interests: physical fitness, outdoor activities, and so forth. These movements all have a certain “myth” and various “rituals”; these all point (and this is my observation, not Beal’s) to the fact that humans are liturgical creatures, made for worship and contact with something or Someone that is other and transcendent. Beal’s main point, however, is that in addition to these external factors, there “are things about religion, as [Nones] perceive it, that are actively driving them away.”

The two most significant reasons they give, according to a 2018 Pew poll, are that they “question a lot of religious teachings” (60%) and, relatedly, “don’t like the positions churches take on political/social issues” (49%).

Based on my own experience with hundreds of young adult Nones in my classes over more than two decades, I’ve found that the specific “religious teachings” and related “positions” they object to most often concern sexuality and science. Many of

them question what they perceive as religion's negative views about women's reproductive rights and non-heteronormative sexuality, especially same-sex marriage and transgender rights. And they question religious teachings that appear to fly in the face of scientific research, especially with regard to evolutionary theory and climate change.

Again, not too much of a surprise here. But it's still worth pondering for a moment, if only to note this fact: such Nones, in questioning traditional beliefs about sexuality and embracing trendy or wide-spread beliefs about evolution and climate, are undoubtedly relying upon certain sources and accepting—either knowingly or unwittingly (my bet is solidly on the latter)—the authority of those sources. This is hardly rocket science: if a 20-year-old man has been told continually and from numerous mouths and screens, from the time he was a toddler, that “love” is whatever consenting adults say it is and that the oceans are rising because of trillions of straws being dumped in them (along with other man-made factors), well, it's hardly surprising he'll believe just that.

Yes, of course it's true that many young adults leave “conservative religions” and embrace more liberal, trendy views. But, again, a lot of that is due to the dominant culture, which truly dominates nearly every outlet and space, to the point that (again, as Beal notes) those who adhere to traditional views are usually the ones made to answer for being out step with the times. I was young once, and I experienced it—and I know it's worse now in nearly every way. One key factor, and this is hardly news, is that far too few young Catholics (just to focus it on something I know a bit about) are well educated and deeply rooted in a robust understanding of the Faith that avoids both pietistic clichés and pugilistic rants.

Back to Beal and to his central assertion:

Rather, what many Nones have in common is a tragically narrow understanding of religion—namely, that a religion is a fixed set of teachings and positions, and that to be religious is to submit to them without question. It is presumed that religion is authoritative, univocal and changeless, and that religious identity is essentially a matter of passive adherence.

The Pew poll itself promotes this idea of religion with some of the response options it provides for identifying as None: “I question a lot of religious teachings” and “I don’t like the positions churches take on political/social issues.” The implication is that being religious means not questioning religious teachings and sharing the positions a religious organization takes on current issues.

But questioning religious teachings and positions has always been an essential part of religion. No faith is fixed or changeless. On the contrary, reinterpreting inherited scriptures and traditions in light of new horizons of meaning is critical to the life of any religion. Think of Jesus or the Buddha; think of the Baal Shem Tov, the 18th-century founder of Hasidic Judaism, or Dorothy Day, who helped to create the Catholic Worker Movement. Religion’s ongoing vitality depends on those who question and challenge inherited teachings and positions. Without such engagement, any religious tradition will die from the inside long before it begins to lose adherents.

I find that when my students, including the majority Nones, are given access to religion not as a set of teachings and positions but as a space for active engagement with enduring questions, they lean in. Indeed, they find this way of thinking about religion a refreshing change from their generally polarized political interactions and personalized newsfeeds.

Several points could be made here; I'll stick to three:

(1) I think Beal is partially correct in identifying how many young people view religion: as an oppressive, even coercive, set of beliefs that cannot be questioned. But I think he also sets up a false conflict between “a fixed set of teachings and positions” and the possibility of asking questions. The questions here, I insist, are both simple and fundamental: Can we know truth? Does truth exist outside of ourselves? And, if so, shouldn't we want to know it?

Catholicism, for its part, says, “Yes, yes, and yes!” to these questions—which is to say, it insists there are fixed teachings (it's **called dogma**) about God, man, life, death, and so forth, *and* we should ask plenty of questions while being receptive to hearing good and true answers. “The Catholic,” wrote Chesterton, “is much more certain about the fixed truths than about the fixed stars.” Along the same lines, Catholicism is indeed “authoritative, univocal, and changeless” in certain, essential ways—but that doesn't lead to “passive adherence.” Or, at least it shouldn't. Love of Truth, which is ultimately love of Jesus Christ, is about an active, transforming relationship with the Triune God; it is only “passive” in the sense that God always initiates and we respond, in both humility and love. Alas, yes, Catholicism can be practiced in a manner that either obscures or crushes in on this inner dynamism, but that's a somewhat different matter.

(2) Is it not revealing that Beal, from what I can tell, accepts without question various secular/skeptical dogmas about religion, without ever applying his same questions and criteria to secularism and skepticism? After all, secular humanism (using the term broadly but, I think, fairly) has a very fixed set of teachings and positions, and there's plenty of evidence that it demands full acceptance and passive adherence! The Reign of Gay is an obvious example, as well as the growing Tyranny of Trans, never mind the Cult of Climate Change, the Church of Borderless Nations, and the Fellowship of Non-Judgmental Multicultural Bliss. Beal himself, not surprisingly, lauds the ridiculous and radical books of Nadia Bolz-Weber, author of *Shameless: A Sexual Reformation*, **a book** which "urges us to take antiquated, sexist ideas about sex, gender, and our bodies and 'burn them the f*ck down and start all over.'" Frankly, that sort of puerile nonsense (dangerous, yes; nonsensical, also yes) is dull and boring. The perpetual insistence that pursuing genital pleasure while flipping off The Man is edgy and exciting is actually just old and shallow, no matter how many tattoos and piercings are involved.

(3) "What we need," says Beal, "is sustained conversation in a context that allows and even welcomes different experiences and points of view. What do you mean when you self-define as religiously None? What is the story behind that box you checked? What are the teachings and positions that you question? Did you always question them, or did something in your life lead you to think differently?" On one hand, these are legitimate questions. But they are also quite self-serving and mostly lead to navel-gazing dead ends.

Again, I think we need to insist on the ancient and perennial questions: What is truth? Do I desire it? How can I find it? And then, more specifically: What do you say about Jesus Christ? Who is He? What do you do with Him? For Catholics, Jesus Christ is the Fixed Teaching and Teacher, the Alpha and Omega, the Way,

the Truth, and the Life. He is fully God, fully man. We declare it in the Creeds—which are, by the way, fixed rules of faith.

Beal, in short, is trying to sell the notion that a relativistic, hyper-individualized, and subjective way of living and thinking is somehow a way out of the current morass. In fact, that's the very essence of that morass, which has old roots (Satan's rebellion, gnosticism, sexual deviancy, etc.) and is always trying to dress up in new clothes. "Error may flourish for a time," wrote Saint John Henry Newman, "but truth will prevail in the end. The only effect of error ultimately is to promote truth."



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