

Fr. Perozich comments —

While I send these articles and comments to my brother priests, mostly I send them to the lay faithful to keep you moored to Christ, and not set you adrift by ambiguous teaching from those who have worked their way into positions of authority giving such persons a wider audience and power and influence over Christians. If they err, they can no longer assist in the formation of the conscience of the faithful, rather they would deform conscience and lead me away from Jesus.

Some are using the word conscience with their own definition of it to promote their ideologies, not Jesus's truth.

I am subject to authority. I desire to learn, to obey, to follow, to be led by authority. Jesus is the authority. He has given His authority and truth to men. Those over me in this world must be subject to Jesus if they are going to lead me to Jesus.

I give a hearing to the leaders in the Church.

In matters of simple discipline and governance I can listen to them: what parish assignment to take, what meeting to attend, when to close and open churches, how to mark off 6' spaces, sanitizing rituals, communion reception style, even if I do not agree.

In matters of faith and morals which concern my eternal salvation, I give them a hearing, weigh their statements with Scripture and Tradition, consult not with my idea of God, but with THE God in my conscience, and follow Him when the heralds preach their own God, their own faith, their own ideas. If my conclusions from the encounter in conscience fail to agree with Scripture and Tradition, my conscience would be formed by my desires and not God's truth. I would be in error.

Fr. Brian Mullady, OP, says that all errors in theology are the result of errors in philosophy.

In Plato's dialogues, his method was to use his character Socrates in debate with another regarding some proposition. Socrates would first demand that the two of them define terms.

The meaning of language, the concepts of language are being changed today by leaders who use their positions to promote their own ideas unmoored from Scripture, Tradition, true conscience, and from God.

Deacon James Toner gives examples of the errors first.

Then he moors the reader once again in the truth of the Bible, the Sacred Tradition, language, philosophy, and right theology.

The bold highlights are mine

Conversations with ‘Their God’

By [James H. Toner](#)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023

The episcopal wars over Catholic faith and morals have only just begun. Much of the current debate turns on theological abstractions far distant – or so, at least, it seems – from the daily duties of most Catholics. A single word, however, captures the gist of the controversy swirling around the recent arguments of Cardinal McElroy, for instance, who is anxious to crown conscience (of a kind) as king of our moral lives.

Cardinal McElroy implicitly declares **“conscience” as godly because, in his judgment, our perspective on right and wrong, noble and noisome, virtue and vice, reigns supreme. We have become gods, knowing good from evil. (cf. Gn. 3:5)**

He would no doubt contend that I have caricatured his position. He knows and preaches that one’s conscience must be formed: “As Pope Francis has stated, the church’s role is to form consciences, not replace them. Categorical exclusions of the divorced and remarried and L.G.B.T. persons from the Eucharist do not give due respect to the inner conversations of conscience that people have with their God in discerning moral choice in complex circumstances.”

The single word that discloses the cardinal’s heterodox belief here is the simple possessive adjective ***their***. “The inner conversations of conscience that people have with ***their God***.” This clearly suggests that we do not simply belong to God; rather, in some unspecified sense God belongs to us.

St. Paul taught something quite different: **“You do not belong to yourselves but to God.” (1 Cor 6:19; cf. 7:23)** Similarly, the *Catechism* reminds us that **“The education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are. . .tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject authoritative teachings.” (#1783; cf. #2526)**

Cardinal McElroy's view about consulting our own god is analogous to the contemporary nostrum, "What would Jesus do?" in this or that circumstance. Surely, we will all follow the right, noble, and virtuous path. But how is it that this **asking ourselves about the Lord's Way seems so often to result in full approval of what we already wanted to do or say anyway?**

At an even deeper level, this harks back to an earlier heterodoxy – the contextualism or situation ethics of Joseph Fletcher (1905-1991).

In 1952, Pope Pius XII condemned situation ethics. He pointed out that proponents of moral leniency **erroneously hold that "the Church, instead of fostering the law of human liberty and of love, and of demanding of you that dynamics which is worthy of the moral life, instead bases itself almost exclusively and with excessive rigidity, on the firmness and the intransigence of Christian moral laws, frequently resorting to the terms 'you are obliged', [or] 'it is not licit.'"**

Sound familiar?



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In *Veritatis Splendor*, Pope St. John Paul II addressed this question of “complex moral circumstances” (*pace [with due respect]* McElroy) and “The importance of this interior *dialogue of man with himself*” (58) even more fully:

Saint Bonaventure teaches that **“conscience is like God’s herald and messenger; it does not command things on its own authority, but commands them as coming from God’s authority, like a herald when he proclaims the edict of the king. This is why conscience has binding force.”** Thus it can be said that **conscience bears witness to man’s own rectitude or iniquity to man himself but, together with this and indeed even beforehand, conscience is *the witness of God himself*, whose voice and judgment penetrate the depths of man’s soul, calling him *fortiter et suaviter [strong in action, gentle in manner] into obedience. . .*”**In this, and not in anything else, lies the entire mystery and the dignity of the moral conscience: in being the place, the sacred place where God speaks to man.”

And he adds that conscience “formulates *moral obligation* in the light of the natural law. . . .The universality of the law and its obligation are acknowledged, not suppressed.” (#59).

Cardinal McElroy and those whose emphasis on conscience results in *de facto* situational ethics, whatever their protests to the contrary, ignore or traduce the natural moral law and divine positive law, **holding that God’s path is outdated or onerous. Their approaches constitute, we might say, *the Magisterium of Mirror*, reflecting our taste, our temptation, our “truth.”**

Cardinal Robert Sarah has bewailed the absence of leadership, or its corruption, among those who are anointed and ordained to speak truth to power from the pulpits of Christ’s Church: **“The real scandal,” he points out, “is not the existence of sinners, for mercy and forgiveness always exist precisely for them, but rather the confusion between good and evil caused by the tergiversations [*conflicting, evasive, equivocating statements*] of Catholic shepherds. If men who are consecrated to God are no longer capable of understanding**

the radical nature of the Gospel message and seek to anesthetize it, we will be going the wrong way.”

Cardinal Sarah does not quote from Lamentations, but he might well have, for it is there that we find this *cri de coeur* about false prophets: “Their preaching deceived you by never exposing your sin. They made you think you did not have to repent.” (2:14) “It is the duty of priests,” admonished Malachi, “to teach the true knowledge of God. . . .But now your priests have turned away from the right path. Your teaching has led many to do wrong.” (2:7-8)

The theological complexities of episcopal debate may be abstruse, but the main questions in play are as timeless as they are **crucial to the salvation of souls. Whom do we follow? Whose authority do we trust? Who is *Dominus*, the Lord? Shall we accept the moral leadership of. . .ourselves?**

Or shall we **humbly and gratefully accept the counsel and command of Scripture, of Tradition, and of the settled Magisterium of the Church? “Trust in the Lord with all your hearts. Never rely on what you think you know.” (Proverbs 3:5)**

***Image:** [*The Creation of the World and the Expulsion from Paradise*](#) by Giovanni di Paolo, 1445 [The MET, New York]

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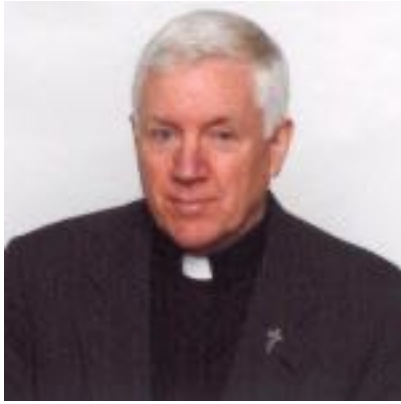
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James H. Toner

Deacon James H. Toner, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus of Leadership and Ethics at the U.S. Air War College, a former U.S. Army officer, and author of numerous articles,



books, essays, and reviews. He has taught at Notre Dame, Auburn, and Holy Apostles College & Seminary. He has also served as “Distinguished Visiting Chair of Character Development” at the U.S. Air Force Academy. He is incardinated in the Diocese of Charlotte.

B p . S c h n e i d e r : Bishops who push 'heresy' know Pope Francis won't punish them

Cdl. McElroy's free reign to promote heterodox statements is 'a manifestation of the deep crisis in which the Holy See is now,' said Bishop Schneider.



Bishop Schneider
LifeSiteNews

Tue Mar 7, 2023 -

([LifeSiteNews](#)) — Bishop Athanasius Schneider has hit back at recent heretical statements made by San Diego’s Cardinal Robert McElroy, saying that prelates who “speak heresy” do so knowing they will not face punishment from Pope Francis.

The auxiliary bishop of Astana, Kazakhstan, made the comments in light of Cardinal McElroy’s two recently published articles in *America* magazine. McElroy [attacked](#) Catholic doctrine on the gravity of sexual sin and demanded that the Church allow “LGBT persons” along with divorced and “remarried” couples to receive the Eucharist while in mortal sin.

A number of U.S. bishops publicly rebuked McElroy, and Bishop Thomas Paprocki wrote in a thinly-veiled [essay](#) critique for *First Things* on Tuesday that the cardinal promoted “heresy,” and may have excommunicated himself.

But McElroy doubled down on his heretical views in [another article](#) in *America* last Thursday, explicitly calling for the Church to give the Eucharist to “sexually active” homosexuals and adulterers.

In light of this persistent attack on Catholic teaching, Bishop Schneider highlighted the manner in which prelates feel emboldened to make such statements, thus adding his voice to those who have already condemned McElroy’s anti-Catholic statements.

“It is very sad, this cardinal and other bishops who publicly speak heresy *de facto*, are unpunished,” he said.

Cardinals and bishops who promote anti-Catholic teachings do so knowing that “they will not be punished, because Pope Francis ... never punished such heretical bishops,” observed Schneider.

On the contrary, he noted how Pope Francis has [enacted](#) a policy of seeming to move against bishops who adhere to the Church’s teaching and who are friendly to Catholic Tradition. Schneider observed that Francis has thus ordered a number of official visitations to “zealous, traditional minded bishops” whose dioceses are now essentially “under control of the Vatican, whereas such openly heretical statements are not punished, even they are promoted to cardinal.”

As noted by Schneider, McElroy’s elevation to the cardinalate is an example of this: “Bishop McElroy was promoted even [when] it was publicly known his statements against the integrity of faith, and he was in some way rewarded for this.”

Indeed, McElroy’s elevation to the cardinalate was a great cause for concern for Rachel Mastrogiacomo, who saw how McElroy protected the priest who abused her. “That McElroy will be setting policy for the Church, and likely be involved in the selection of the next pontiff, fills me with fear,” she [stated](#).

Observing how such prelates enjoy unimpeded freedom to promote heterodoxy, Schneider described it as “a scandal” and “a manifestation of the deep crisis in which the Holy See is now.”

He called on Catholics to “pray that the Pope will again have the illumination of God, the light and the strength to do his task, to strengthen unambiguously all the bishops and faithful in the purity and integrity of the Catholic faith which is divine faith – not invented by human beings.”

Bishop Schneider additionally highlighted a need “to restore the dignity of the celebration of the Holy Mass and the sacraments.” “This should be the task of a Synod,” he said, “to issue norms and teachings unambiguously. And so we have to state this, we have to pray that the Pope will again resume his task.”

As LifeSiteNews has [reported](#), in a lengthy feature for *America* magazine two days after his appointment to the cardinalate, McElroy detailed his goal of a “transformation” of the Church through the [Synod on Synodality](#) and further “sustained synodality.” He has continued to be a vocal proponent of Pope Francis’ Synodal ideology.

But speaking to LifeSite [recently](#), Bishop Schneider warned how the Synod on Synodality is “a tool used to dilute evermore the clarity of the Catholic faith, as we are now observing, dribbling evermore confusion and doctrinal confusion into the life of the Church.”

Far from a Synod simply “listening” to individuals, Schneider stated that a properly ordered synod has clear prerogatives: “The synod is an instrument of the Magisterium, but its first aim is to clarify doctrine without any ambiguity, without any doubt.”

The second task of a Synod should be to “reject the errors of the time,” yet Schneider warned that the current actions of the Synod are allowing “poison, spiritual poisons” to spread. A true synod should also be concerned with “disciplinary” issues to give a “remedy against abuses,” he noted.