

*Fr. Perozich comments —*

*Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone calls Catholic leaders and laity to proper education.*

*Before Catholic leaders and laity can educate others, they themselves must be educated out of the secular mindset which has reached the highest levels of the church and emanates now from the Vatican itself and the Vatican offices and pontifical organizations.*

*Start with the Bible and the deposit of faith in the catechism before current leaders change it to fit their life experience over God's revelation.*

*When Rev. James Martin, SJ, is given free reign and meets with the pope, and then goes out with his sexual experience over revelation to propose error, he should be ignored.*

*When Cardinal Robert McElroy speaks his own political experience and secular beliefs of radical inclusion, he should be ignored.*

*When Cardinal Hollerich speaks his own personal experience of homosexuality to be praised and honored with blessings, he should be ignored.*

*When Cardinal Joseph Tobin speaks his own and the democrat party anti gun message he should be ignored.*

*Where is the teaching on the foundation of Jesus Christ in the sacramental life, the bible, charity in protecting life from conception to natural death, of marriage between man and woman and continence for us outside the sacrament of Holy Matrimony, of no to cloning, embryonic stem cell research, and euthanasia? Where is the moral teaching on the centrality of the family, of charity in clarity rather than silly accompaniment in ambiguity?*

*I no longer look to the leaders for any doctrinal or moral teaching unless it is clear from the bible and the Tradition of the church.*

*Their personal experience theology cannot form me or anyone else to follow Jesus.*

*The archbishop can reach out to his brother bishops, and maybe he will convert one. I reach out to my fellow priests and to you lay faithful.*

*Pray. Go to Mass. Read the Bible Receive Penance frequently. Vote for those who clearly state what they will do in office. Run for office as the archbishop suggests. Run AWAY from personal opinions of church leaders, and run TO Jesus Christ in word, sacrament, and charity in prayer to find His truth, not the opinions of those who have assumed high office in the church, the government, NGOs, education, medicine, science, and other authoritative positions.*

*Jesus must be our way, truth, and life.*

# **US Catholic Church under explicit attack, archbishop warns — but says there's hope**

Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of the Archdiocese of San Francisco says **Catholic leaders and laity must engage in proper education**

By **Timothy H.J. Nerozzi** | **Fox News**

**FOX DIGITAL EXCLUSIVE — The [Catholic Church](#) is experiencing a crisis of direction in the United States. Laity is less educated on the faith than previous generations, and its institutions hold far less political power than in previous decades.**

Amid increased tension with federal government agencies and a surge in vandalism against Catholic churches, many see the religion as stuck in a perpetual defensive position.

[Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone](#) of the Archdiocese of San Francisco told Fox News Digital in an exclusive interview that properly educating Catholics and organizing around critical social issues is the only way for the Catholic Church to make headway back into the modern cultural arena.

**"In our own Catholic Church, we're in a struggle about living our faith in a world that's become very secularized — but secularized not in the sense of apart from religion, but with a value system that's hostile to some basic values that we have," the archbishop said. "How do we live our faith with integrity?"**



*San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone attends the completion ceremony for the Salesforce Tower in downtown San Francisco. (Michael Macor/San Francisco Chronicle via Getty Images)*

The Catholic Church's hard-line stance on tense [social issues such as abortion](#), gay marriage, transgenderism, capital punishment, euthanasia and immigration has made the institution a central political entity over centuries in the United States.

As such, social teaching against the death penalty and supportive advocacy for illegal immigrants often places the Catholic Church at odds with conservative politicians and

voters. At the same time, the church's strict opposition to abortion and LGBTQ lifestyles makes enemies with progressive communities.

Cordileone says he has hopes that his church can find a place outside the country's increasingly rigid political divide.

"In the polarized society we're living in, it's hard to break through. But I think we have a very deep intellectual tradition, and there's a lot to draw on in terms of our understanding of the human person, what our role is — being created in God's image, that gives us this intrinsic category. And so I think we do have a lot to bring to the table," the archbishop insisted.



*Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone walks in a funeral procession at St. Ignatius Church in San Francisco. (Paul Chinn/The San Francisco Chronicle via Getty Images)*

The Catholic Church's social power has been on the decline for decades. Compared to many other [religious voting blocs](#), such as the Evangelical and Mormon

communities, Catholics have been unable or unwilling to meaningfully organize for political goals.

**The reason for the lackluster solidarity is apparent, he suggested. Catholic voters across the country cannot find meaningful consensus with each other, even on dogmatic proscriptions.**

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, an authoritative reference for Catholic doctrine, **"Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion, that is to say, abortion willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law."**

A May 2022 Pew Research study found 53% of surveyed U.S. Catholics believed abortion should be legal in all or most cases. By contrast, only 42% of Catholic respondents believed abortion should be illegal in most or all cases.

These results shifted drastically — but not entirely — when Pew accounted for regular worship; 68% of Catholics who attend weekly mass believed abortion should be illegal in all or most cases, compared to 30% who believed it should be legal.





*Pope Francis, right, greets Archbishop of San Francisco Salvatore Joseph Cordileone during the mass and imposition of the Pallium upon the new metropolitan archbishops for the Solemnity of Saint Peter and Paul at Vatican Basilica in Vatican City. (Franco Origlia/Getty Images)*

**"We have a high percentage of Catholics on paper, but we haven't done a very good job of forming our people well in the faith and helping them understand the faith and love it and live it out,"** Cordileone told Fox News Digital. "Unfortunately, there are a lot of Catholics who don't really follow everything our church teaches because **they probably were never taught what it really does teach and the wisdom that's underlying it.**"

He continued, **"So their lives aren't informed by the faith. Even though they identify as Catholic, the way they live their life, their priorities, their instincts — even to some extent, perhaps, their values — are influenced more by the secular society than their Catholic faith.** And I think that has

caused a weakening in terms of the social influence that the church should have and trying to contribute to the common good.”



*Grace Community Church in Marblehead, Massachusetts, was vandalized with graffiti. (Google Maps)*

Cordileone believes sentiments against the Catholic Church have sharpened and become more antagonistic.

"When we were younger, there was much more goodwill in the society. There was much more disposition to listening to the other and trying to work together, come to kind of a mutual understanding that we can agree on and live together — where there is much more of that kind of give-and-take with an openness and a goodwill," Cordileone said. "In my lifetime, I've seen that disappear. There's very little of that left."

Since May 2020, there have been approximately 348 attacks against U.S. Catholic churches, according to a tracker from CatholicVote.

The organization found evidence of an arrest in only 25% of incidents.

**"We have to realize that we're being explicitly attacked.** When I was young, that didn't happen. I mean, our properties are being attacked, our sacred symbols are being desecrated. We're being explicitly insulted, and that's been championed and celebrated in the culture. So this is a new reality that we're still trying to adjust to."

However, Cordileone warned against belligerent or antagonistic mentalities among Catholics, saying picking the correct battles is essential.



*The St. John Neumann Catholic Community Church in Reston, Virginia, was covered with graffiti while vandals attempted to start a fire on the grounds in 2022. (WTTG)*

"I think we can't be overly bombastic either. I mean, we have this idea of discernment. Where do you have to draw a line and take a strong stand? Because that can't be overdone either — because after a while, one will lose credibility, and it might have a reverse effect," he insisted.



**For Catholics unable to find political representation or candidates that adhere properly to their ethics, the archbishop suggests they seek offices themselves.**

**"It's the role of the laypeople to be participating in the political process," Cordileone said. "So run for office — run for local school board, their city council — and work up the system."**

**Perhaps most important, Cordileone believes, is raising faithful children "so that they can be well-formed, intellectually-rooted and able to pursue a career of community service or even in politics — to be the force that changes the culture by their own participation."**

*Timothy Nerozzi is a writer for Fox News Digital. You can follow him on Twitter @timothynerozzi and can email him at [timothy.nerozzi@fox.com](mailto:timothy.nerozzi@fox.com)*