

# *My Father's House*

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## **From Infidelity to Fidelity**

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### **Summary of History**

The whole of the history of mankind can be summed up in the challenge that God gave to Moses and to Joshua: "If you will obey my commands and stay faithful to my ordinances, you will live." Otherwise, you will surely die. So whenever Israel was faithful to God, they prospered. When they were unfaithful, they were led into captivity and bondage. Once in bondage, God would send prophets to ask them to repent. They would repent and God would free them and bring them back to the promised land and set over them a righteous judge or king, who would entreat them to stay faithful to God and His commands. When they did, they prospered. When they did not, the cycle repeated itself.

### **The History of Every Human Life**

Not only is this the cycle of history but also, it is the cycle of governments, institutions and individuals. When a person follows the spirit of God and is faithful to Him, they will prosper and be holy. When they do not, they fall into sin and begin to experience that the wages of sin is failure and eventually death. St. Paul is a good example of this. In Romans 7, as an ego-controlled Israelite, he discovered that he was incapable of doing good. But then he met Jesus and was knocked off his ego and discovered that every single thing was working out for the good.

### **Through the History of the United States**

The United States was founded upon the laws of nature and the laws of nature's God (the Bible) and the God-given unalienable dignity and right to life of every American citizen. Because of this, the United States prospered as no other nation in modern times has prospered. Then, in 1962, we did what the communists did in Russia, the Fascists did in Italy and the Nazis did in Germany: we not only threw away God's law but also eventually the right to life of every American citizen (1973). Since then, the United States is overflowed with pornography, divorce, sodomy, prostitution, obscenity, and violence. Our media has become pagan. Most programs, articles and magazines are anti-God, anti-church and anti-life. Our young people are living in a quagmire of sin. Over 90 percent have been abused by the time they are 18. Most adults at least passively condone it. Teen pornography is a multi-million dollar industry. Worse than that, 'tween' (ages 8-12) pornography, especially coming through the Internet, will rival their older brothers and sisters. Our children are being paganized and sexually abused at the fastest rate in history. It is extremely heroic for a young man or young woman in America to be truly Christian or even a good conservative Jew.

### **The History of the Church in America**

The Catholic Church in America has followed the same pattern as most Americans. Before 1962, Catholics overwhelmingly believed in and tried to obey the 10 Commandments, went to church on Sunday and were against abortion, pornography, sodomy, and promiscuity. Our school children, many of whom were attending Catholic schools, had a strict dress code, were taught to go to communion frequently and confession often. Even steady teenage dating was frowned upon and most of them were taught to pray to Mary for purity of heart and holiness. Most of them had devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to Mary as their mother. Most girls were part of some sort of “Children of Mary” programs.

### **The Church’s Demise**

Then came the ‘60s, and with it, secular humanism replaced Judaic Christianity as the religion of America. At the same time, in came the pill, Elvis Presley, the Beatles, Woodstock, Vietnam War, Watergate, liberal politicians, and wide-spread dissent to the teachings of the Church, especially after the Encyclical of Pope Paul VI on artificial contraception. By the end of the ‘60s, great havoc was done in the minds and hearts of many faithful Catholics.

### **God’s Answer**

God’s answer to all this was the Second Vatican Council, which reiterated the universal call to holiness; the sacredness of marriage, women and sexuality; a more active liturgical life; and a more universal call to evangelization. Those who followed the official teachings of the Second Vatican Council prospered. Over 120 million lay Catholics took the Life in the Spirit Seminar and were introduced to a full life in the Spirit. Other millions became involved in other renewal movements including the Cursillo, the Better World, the Foculare, Opus Dei, Koinonia, the Marian Movement, the House of Prayer and Retreat Movement, Marriage Encounter, the Young Christian Workers, Young Christian Students, the Jocists, and a score of other lay apostolic movements.

### **Now, Two Kinds of Catholics**

Catholic life was now divided between those who were faithful to the teachings of Christ and His Church and those who were not. The liberals were called the dissenters. The conservatives were called faithful Catholics. You can tell by their fruits. Many priests openly disagreed with the official teachings of the Church, especially on moral issues. The most famous dissenters were Fr. Charles Curran, Fr. Hans Kung, Fr. Richard McBrien, Fr. Andrew Greeley, Fr. Anthony Patovano. We saw the rise of the ‘Call to Action’, Catholics for a Free Choice and the liberalization of many CCD programs, high schools and colleges. Today, most Catholic colleges are unwilling to teach “from the heart of the Church” (*Ex Cordae Ecclesiae*). On the conservative side, we saw the rise of faithful colleges such as the University of Steubenville, Thomas Aquinas, Ave Maria University, and Magdelene College. Even the bishops were split. On one side of the spectrum were bishops like Fabian Bruskiewicz, Eldon Curtis. On the other side you had bishops like Weakland, Gumbleton, Utiner, Hunthausen.

### **The Watershed**

When Cardinal Patrick O’Boyle of Washington, DC in the late ‘60s disciplined 90 of his priests who openly dissented from *Humanae Vitae*, some clerics in Rome did not back him up. Many of the priests were reinstated. Many US prelates got the messages that they were not to discipline

dissenters, whether they were in the Church or in politics. We saw the rise of very liberal Catholic politicians such as Kennedy, Biden, Daschle, Dodd, Leahy, and others. In the world at large, we saw an influx of permissiveness, especially in the media, movies, the newspapers, magazines, and songs.

### **Floodgates Wide Open**

By 1980, the floodgates were wide open, not only in the nation but also in the Church. Satan had not only infiltrated our country but our Church as well. Not only was there widespread sin, but more horrendously there was widespread acceptance of it. We entered into ever deepening levels of evil. We descended from sinners in the '60s to rationalizers of sin in the '70s when we no longer called abortion a sin but "choice". We no longer called sodomy the sin that brought down Sodom and Gomorrah but "alternative lifestyle". We no longer called adultery the sin that destroyed marriages, but now "consenting adults".

### **The Courage to be Catholic**

Nobody articulates this enlightened point of view more cogently than George Weigel. In his latest book, *The Courage to be Catholic*, he reviews some of the key historical moments that mark the victory of the culture of dissent in the Church.

### **Catholic Lite**

Weigel has a name for what the dissenters have been selling and what the bishops have been tolerating, if not promoting, and what seminarians and the laity have been imbibing. "Catholic lite," he calls it. It is a clever moniker and captures something of what has gone on - but I fear that the label is too innocuous. Catholic lite is not simply a bland, unexciting and nonnutritious version of the Catholic faith. It is, in fact, toxic and carcinogenic. Dissent from *Humanae Vitae* led people to think that sex just for pleasure - sex without respect for the procreative meaning of sexuality - is moral. If heterosexuals can have sex just for pleasure, what's wrong with homosexual sex or masturbation? And if one isn't risking having babies, what's wrong with sex outside of marriage? Sometimes logical consequences become real-life consequences.

### **Poor Formation in Seminaries**

In deciding to treat the current crisis as one of policy - as one of the proper treatments of sexual-abuse charges - the bishops are in danger of treating a cancer that has already seriously metastasized through the body of the Church as nothing more than an ugly boil that needs to be lanced. The Vatican discerned one pocket of the cancer: poor formation in seminaries.

### **The Cancer of Dissent**

The cancer of dissent, of individuals in places of influence and power who do not accept Church teaching is, however, rampant in Catholic educational institutions and hospitals. It's also present in chancery offices. The majority of Catholics contracept and seem not to know about the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, to cite just two examples of woeful disconnect between Catholics and their Church. In the sphere of Catholic education, it is fairly clear that *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*'s mandatum will not be an effective vehicle for ensuring that Catholic professors teach Catholic doctrine. Perhaps bishops could resort to the personal touch and meet with presidents and boards of Catholic colleges and universities, and impress upon them how important it is that those who study at their institutions will be learning the fullness of the Catholic truth and not

being initiated into the culture of dissent.

### **Areas of Reform**

Weigel offers good advice for many areas of the Church needing reform - from selection of bishops to the relationship of bishops to their priests to living situations for priests and more. Were the bishops to take his advice, we would have a much-improved Church. He recommends that the bishops yearly ask every priest a set of questions about their personal life, such as: "Do you sleep alone?" and "Do you make use of pornography?" The need for this kind of direct confrontation with priests should not be underestimated. No matter what policies are put in place, one-on-one works with priests is essential to restoring the priesthood.

### **A Homosexual Subculture**

Precise numbers are not there for the crunching, but it is more than a little likely that some dioceses and orders have significant numbers of active homosexuals in their midst. These men were likely not taught how to achieve chastity during their formation and may well have been affirmed, if not encouraged, in their homosexuality in the seminary. Homosexuals often lead a double life. They become accustomed to pretense and many of those skilled at pretense rise easily in organizations. It is not implausible that some of those highly placed in the Church - vocations directors, rectors and even some bishops - are, or have been, active homosexuals. How often must it be the case that bishops are not getting good information about sexual abuse by priests because their vicar general or secretary is protecting fellow homosexuals?

### **The Fruit of Sin**

Since there is a growing unwillingness to tolerate the presence of the unchaste in the priesthood, priests struggling with or indulging homosexual tendencies are likely now very stressed and more likely than ever to take refuge in homosexual support groups. Many priests and lay people know of, and are demoralized by, their knowledge of active homosexuality among priests. Bishops and superiors simply must find a way to minister to them for their own sake and for the rest of the Church, especially for the sake of their faithful priests and those considering the priesthood.

### **Bibliography of Resources**

Weigel's book is a virtual crash course for those interested in contributing to these efforts. Those who want a more comprehensive unraveling of the tale might want to review James Hitchcock's *The Decline and Fall of Radical Catholicism* (1972), George Kelly's *Battle for the American Church* (1979; revised 1995), Ralph Martin's *Crisis of Truth* (1982), Anne Muggerridge's *The Desolate City* (1986), Dietrich Von Hildebrand's *Trojan Horse in the City of God* (1970; revised 1993), *Creed or Chaos, Why Christians Must Choose Either Dogma or Disaster (or Why It Really Does Matter What You Believe)* by Dorothy L. Sayers; or, more recently, Ralph McInerney's *What Went Wrong with Vatican II, The Catholic Crisis Explained* (1998). Prophets have been among us for some time, but they have been ignored. Perhaps scandal and financial devastation will do what these respectful exposes could not.

We should not doubt that out of these dark times the Holy Spirit can call forth from the bishops the toughness, courage, love and holiness needed to do the job. Lay people, by your prayers and

sacrifices, should strive to win graces for them as they embark upon this necessary reformation.

### **The Question of the Hour**

The question of the hour for a country and Church is which way, up or down. Will we return to the faith of our fathers and bring this once again to a nation under God? Will we allow prayer and the teachings of the commandments to be part of our children's education? Will we allow abortion, public obscenity, sodomy? And will we as Catholic Christians realize that the Church is the light to a dark and broken world and return with the faith of our founder? Will we live lives of holiness, prayerfulness, zeal and justice? In short, as Americans and Catholics, will we obey God and his commandments and prosper, or will we dissent from them and go even deeper into idolatry and sinfulness and thus welcome God's necessary chastisement? God, as always, holds out His way; and if we obey His commands we will prosper. If we disobey, we will not. The question of this hour and every hour is which way, up or down?

## **Part II**

# **Prayer Strategies for Changing Our Church and Our World**

*“If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face, I will hear from Heaven. I will restore the nation and heal their land” (2 Chron 7:14).*

1. Thank and praise God for who He is and for the privilege of cooperating with Him in the exciting ministry of changing the world. That is why Jesus came as its Light. Then thank Him for what He's already done in the nations.
2. Pray for an unprecedented outpouring of the Holy Spirit in revival power to come upon God's people.
3. Pray for God to unite the Body of Christ and family of man, Catholics with Protestants, Christians with Moslems, blacks with whites, young with the old, men with women, believers with unbelievers.
4. We need to humble ourselves before God and acknowledge that the body of Christ in our nation has sinned. We have allowed materialism, promiscuity, violence, and disobedience to overwhelm our land.
5. Try to attend daily Mass, pray the Rosary and make Eucharistic Holy Hours.
6. Pray for leaders that they may follow the inspirations of the Spirit.
7. Be willing to fast on Fridays.
8. Pray that terrorists may be brought to justice as swiftly as possible with a very minimum of violence.
9. Never allow hatred, bitterness or violence to permeate your heart. We are to overcome hatred with love and violence with forgiveness and peace.
10. Pray that the Word of God, once again, will be given its rightful place as the basis for the formation of just laws, and as the standard for moral values and behavior.
11. Unite to make this nation “a nation under God” once again.

12. Meditate upon Scripture and the New Catechism each day. They are God's love letters to His people.
13. Teach our children that we need religion and morality to be the twin towers upon which this nation was built. Let them know that America has been under attack since 1962 when our Supreme Court took God away from our public schools; and since 1973 when our Supreme Court no longer upheld the God-given, self-evident, inalienable right to life of every American citizen, including the unborn.
14. Pray that God will change the movies, the music and the media that have been filling our minds and the minds of our children with so much violence, promiscuity and paganism.
15. Pray that God will send laborers into the fields to form apostolates and circles of prayer.
16. Ask God to stir spiritual leaders to teach people about the need to help the poor and needy.
17. Pray for great spiritual awakening to come upon the unconverted, motivating them to seek God.
18. Ask God to name the major principalities over the nations and cities and wage spiritual warfare as directed by the Holy Spirit.
19. Finish by praising God, declaring faith in His promise to restore our nation and heal our land.
20. Keep on persisting in intercession. Don't let up. God will be faithful if we are faithful.

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