

# The Suicide of Catholicism

We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW get loads of mail, faxes, and phone calls from our readers, and one story we hear over and over again goes like this: “My wife and I scrimped and saved to send our six children to Catholic schools, all the way through college. We did everything we could to give our kids a solid Catholic upbringing. Now three are married (two outside the Church, one inside) and three are shackled-up. Only two of our kids show any interest in the Faith — ironically, two of the cohabiters. They take Communion without any qualms when they happen to be in church, and show no interest in straightening out their lives. All our kids are ‘pro-choice’ and ‘pro-gay.’ And, oh, we have no grandchildren.”

The folks who tell us these stories are heartsick, feel betrayed, even worry about their children’s souls.

What went wrong? Over the last 30 or so years many religious educators across the nation have in effect stopped teaching Catholicism and have basically been teaching religious humanism instead. Kids haven’t been taught much of anything about the authority of Scripture, Tradition, and Magisterium, about sexual morality, Transubstantiation, the consequences of sin, and the reality of Hell. Instead, they have learned about tolerance of neighbor, self-esteem, and little else. They are victims of spiritual censorship — but the ACLU isn’t rushing to their defense. Meanwhile, many pastors have been taking the same approach in their homilies and parish “renewal” programs.

People fed this pabulum who haven’t simply dropped out of the Church now seem to constitute the bulk of Catholics in certain dioceses. Is Milwaukee one such diocese? It certainly sounds like it, given what its liberal Archbishop, Rembert Weakland, admits.

He reports in an article in *America* that the majority of Catholics in his jurisdiction “seem to ignore much of the church’s teaching on sexuality,” and “the word ‘magisterium’ is not in their vocabulary” and wasn’t part of their religious instruction. They perhaps “dabble a bit in some New Age thinking,” but “have read nothing” written by the Pope. They want a spirituality that doesn’t “put guilt trips on them” and a Church that’s “more flexible” than it already is. Is Weakland troubled by this? Hardly. He regards these slothful Catholics as the “vital force” in his archdiocese, and he’d like his “pastoral leaders” to “model the flexibility” being called for by these people!

You don’t have to be a rocket scientist to see a pattern: Liberal religious educators and pastors dumb down Catholics, and then liberal bishops redefine ignorance and sloth as “vitality” and call for more “flexibility” — i.e., more ignorance

and sloth. This is a prescription for the suicide of Catholicism.

We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, an orthodox Catholic monthly magazine, are mounting an offensive to restore the full splendor of truth — and true vitality — to Holy Mother Church. Subscribe today, and we’ll make your heart glad!

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