

FILIAL CORRECTION OF
BISHOP ROBERT MCELROY
Diocese of San Diego

Your Excellency Bishop McElroy:

We are moved to write to you because of our fidelity to our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, our love for the Church, and the salvation of souls. Additionally, out of respect for your office, we are compelled to address a correction to you on account of the propagation of heresies that you are introducing into our diocese.

We are permitted to issue this correction by the law of the church, specifically Canon 212, which says, “According to the knowledge, competence, and prestige which they possess, they have the right and even at times the duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the church and to make their opinion know to the rest of the Christian faithful, without prejudice to the integrity of faith, and morals, with reverence towards their pastors, and attentive to common advantage and the dignity of persons.”(1)

As the lead shepherd of the San Diego diocese, you have been entrusted with the responsibility to teach the Catholic faithful of this diocese the teachings of our most holy and blessed Lord, and the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and not your opinions or other false doctrines. We now wish to list some examples of these false doctrines and teachings to your Excellency to demonstrate how you have deviated from the teachings of our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ and the infallible doctrines of the Catholic Church.

On May 11, 2016 you had already decided that you would convene a diocesan synod to consider how to embrace the Holy Father’s apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*. (2) The diocesan synod took place from August 20, 2016 to October 30, 2016. At the conclusion of the synod, on November 8, 2016, you emailed the 99 San Diego parishes, and you stated in the fourth paragraph, “The synod spoke movingly to the need for the church to reach out to divorced men and women at every moment of their journey, to support them spiritually and pastorally to help them move through the annulment process, and to assist those who are divorced and remarried and cannot receive an annulment to utilize the internal forum of conscience in order to discern if God is calling them to return to the Eucharist.”(3)

The decision about whether to allow divorced and remarried Catholics to receive the Eucharist does not come from you or the unrepentant sinner, but from our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ who has handed down his teachings to the Apostles and their successors. For example, in Luke 16:18, our Blessed Lord says, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery”.(4) This teaching of our Blessed Lord is also found in Matthew 5:32 (5) and Matthew 19:9, “Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual

immorality, and marries commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”(6)

Additionally, Saint Paul makes it very clear in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29 that “therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lords body.”(7)

Our Blessed Lord’s teachings in the scriptures are consistent with the laws and doctrines of the Catholic Church. The Council of Trent 13th session, Canon XI, concerning the Eucharist also says, “If any one saith, that faith alone is sufficient preparation for receiving the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist; let him be anathema. And for fear lest so great a sacrament may be received unworthily, and so who’s death and condemnation, his holy synod ordains and declares, that sacramental confession, when a confessor may be had, is of necessity to be made beforehand, by those whose conscience is burdened with mortal sin, how contrite even so ever they may think themselves. But if anyone shall presume to teach, preach or obstinately to assert, or even in public disputation to defend the contrary, he shall be there upon excommunicated.” (8)

It is further understood by our Church that the apostles were given their sacred commission, and it is written in John 20:21-23, “Peace to you! As the father has sent me, I also send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”(9)

Our Blessed Lord gave the power to the apostles and their successors, the bishops, to forgive and retain sins, and you have the power and authority to forgive sins or retain them, but in order for any clergy to forgive sins of any sinner, that sinner must repent. If he remains unrepentant of those sins, then his sins cannot be forgiven by you or any other priest. If any divorced and remarried Catholics continue to live as husband and wife, then this demonstrates that they have not repented, and you cannot allow them to receive the Eucharist. This teaching of our Blessed Lord has been understood for 2000 years, and it has been codified into canon law, and nobody has the power to change it.

For example, Canon 916A says, “A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to celebrate mass or receive the body of our Lord without previous sacramental confession unless there is grave reason and there is no opportunity to confess, in this case the person is to remember the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition which includes the resolution of confessing as soon as possible.”(10)

You do not have the authority or power to change church doctrine or to compel any priest to confess the sins of any unrepentant sinner. Canon 1389 states that, “A person who abuses an ecclesiastical power or function is to be punished according to the gravity of the act or omission, not including privation of office, unless a law or precept has already

established the penalty for this abuse.” (11) The offense committed is indeed very grave, and that is why the Catholic Church established these penalties into canon law.

The Church has been called holy because it was Christ himself who established his Church when he told Simon Peter, “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.” (12) (16:18) If the Church is considered to be the bride of Christ, therefore what can be more holy than the Church? The answer to that question is our Blessed Lord himself! If indeed Jesus is the holiest, He should command our respect, reverence and adoration. Our Church since the beginning has always taught that the Eucharist is indeed the body, soul and divinity of our most blessed Lord Jesus Christ. It is written in Luke 22:19, “Then he took the bread, and said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them saying, this is My Body which will be given to you, do this in memory of Me.” (13) The Church, therefore, has codified canon law 898 which says, “The Christian faithful are to hold the most holy Eucharist in the highest honor, taking active part in the celebration of the most august sacrifice, receiving this sacrament most devoutly and frequently, and worshiping it with the highest adoration. In explaining the doctrine about this sacrament, pastors of souls are to teach the faithful diligently about this obligation.”(14)

It is your obligation, Bishop McElroy, to teach all of the faithful how to treat our Blessed Lord with respect and how to worship him. You cannot allow the unrepentant sinner to receive Him unworthily. Furthermore, it is your solemn obligation to teach the truth about the teachings of Christ, and not your own personal opinions, or quoting a teaching from only one papal document, *Amoris Letitia*, to the exclusion of the other infallible doctrines of the Catholic Church. When a papal document such as *Amoris Letitia* contradicts the teachings of Christ, then it is not an infallible doctrine, but a personal opinion of the author.

The other false doctrine that is undermining the faith and morals of the Church deals with our brothers and sisters in Christ who are attracted to the same sex. The diocesan synod which you convened accepted the view of LGBT families even though according to God’s design a family is considered to be a union between a man and a woman.(15) (Genesis 2-24) Nowhere in the diocesan update and in reports on the synod does one see that there was any mention of, much less emphasis on, the sinful nature of same-sex relationships.(16)

On the first day that you began to work full-time as the lead shepherd in the Diocese of San Diego, on April 16, 2015, you were informed that the University of San Diego had been hosting a drag queen show.(17) It is important to note that USD had been hosting a drag queen show since 2012. Many Catholics, especially alumni, had complained to the university, but the university continued to host the drag queen shows. As a result, attorney Charles Limandri, an alumnus of USD, and Thomas McKenna, the President of Catholic Action for Faith and Family, filed a petition to the Vatican’s Congregation for Catholic Education.

Concerning the drag queen show, Thomas McKenna indicated that “he witnessed many examples of behavior and statements on moral issues which contradicted or ignored

magisterial teachings. Not only were the Catholic Church teachings ignored but they were mocked.” (18)

The Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education determined that a Catholic university hosting a drag queen show was a scandal, and it said the following, “In view of the gravity of the case it is worth mentioning that in light of the show and the scandal that it caused, this congregation intends to act through administrative channels to the competent ecclesiastical authority in San Diego.”(19)

When this scandalous behavior that was occurring at a Catholic university within your jurisdiction was brought to your attention, you took no corrective action. This was a teaching moment for you. It was your duty to instruct the young adults at this university, which is in your diocese, that their behavior violated the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. USD has since continued to host drag shows with no consequences being imposed by you.

To add more confusion to this issue, on October 7, 2017, you and auxiliary bishop John Dolan concelebrated an “Always Our Children” Mass at St. John the Evangelist dedicated to LGBT members and their families. (20)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church in paragraph 2357 states that homosexual acts are acts of depravity, and under no circumstances can they be approved. (21) It was our blessed Lord who taught on Matthew 19:4 “Have you not read that he who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So then, they are no longer one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no man separate.” (22) Our blessed Lord was merely repeating what was in the Scripture in Genesis 2:24. (23)

Concerning the language written in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, you have been quoted as saying that, “labeling homosexual acts as intrinsically disordered as very destructive language that I think we should not use pastorally.” (24) Additionally; you have also publicly defended Father James Martin in America Magazine dated September 18, 2017. (25) Father Martin regularly affirms homosexual activity to same sex-attracted individuals, despite the Catholic Church teaching that homosexual actions are sinful and all people are called to be chaste, that sexual intercourse is reserved for marriage, and that marriage can only be between a man and a woman. (26)

Your Excellency, you seem to pick and choose which parts of the catechism that you like. You dislike the language of paragraph of the CCC 2357, but you mention CCC 2358 which says, ”Those with same-sex attraction must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity and every sign of discrimination should be avoided.” (27)

We agree that our brothers and sisters in Christ that have same sex attraction should be treated with respect and dignity because we are all made in the image and likeness of God. (28) (Genesis 1:27) But if we truly love our brothers and sisters in Christ then we

have to share with them all of the truth of salvation, and about keeping our Heavenly Father's commandments, so that they can attain the holiness necessary to someday be with their Father in heaven. Failure to teach these truths to all of us is not fulfilling the obligation that has been entrusted to you. We have to speak the truth to them out of love, and not just pass judgment on them because only God can judge whether anyone merits Heaven.

The Catholic Church is supposed to teach the truth about faith and morals because Jesus said, "I am the truth and the life." (29) John 14:6. Thus, you cannot teach anything contrary to the teachings of our most holy Church and our Lord Jesus Christ. If we love God's creation, we must follow not just the laws of nature, but God's commandments, because he provided us with these laws for our well-being. If you are not teaching this truth, then you are not being a faithful steward. All of us in the church have the responsibility to evangelize and to speak the truth, but you are the lead shepherd of this diocese and have a greater responsibility to spread the teachings of our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Your failure to teach these truths to the sheep that have been entrusted to your care, and that we have outlined in this filial correction document, will result in the further loss of souls into perdition. We therefore ask you to publicly repent and renounce your heretical views concerning what constitutes a family, who can receive communion, and concerning the sacrament of reconciliation and your views on adultery. We pray for you and for the clergy that will follow your incorrect views on these issues we have outlined, and for all the faithful that will be misled.

Respectfully Yours in Christ,

THE LAITY OF THE DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO

Sources:

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6. Matthew 19:9
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9. John 20:21-23
10. Canon 916A
11. Canon 1389
12. Matthew 16:18
13. Luke 22:19
14. Canon 898
15. Genesis 2:24
16. Tradition Family and Property Article dated 12-16-2016, Bishop McElroy's implementation of Amoris Laetitia: Embrace LGBT families, page 2.

17. Cardinal Newman Society, San Diego University drag queen show snubs Vatican, challenges new Bishop, April 17, 2015.page 1
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26. LifeSite News, Four US Bishops endorse Fr. James Martin’s Pro-LGBT book, Oct. 11, 2017
27. Catechism of Catholic Church 2358
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