

Catholic Action Group (C.A.G) responds to biased Times Newspaper Article 4 Apr 05

Submitted by: Catholic Action

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The steps an incoming Pope must take to modernise the Catholic Church

The Catholic Action Group (C.A.G) wishes to publicly respond to the unbalanced and extremely biased article written by the non-Catholic religious correspondent – Ruth Gledhill in the Times – 4 April 05.

For those interested, and we fully respect that many are not, the Catholic Church claims to be from the Christian view, the One, True, Universal and Apostolic Church. An objective reading of History and a reading of the Early Church fathers will affirm this. All other Christian Churches are offshoots. The pontiff, the successor of St Peter (The Rock on which the Church was built - Mt 16:18) is its visible Head as it is a visible Church, just as Jesus Christ was a visible divine person.

Those who are interested in Truth, will find it safeguarded in the Catholic deposit of faith and morals, protected from error by the Holy Spirit. For the enquirer, we recommend reading the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC). This revised version issued in 1992 was one of the great undertakings achieved during John Paul II's pontificate. It is available online at www.vatican.va . This Catechism provides clear guidance on Catholic teaching and empowers the laity to witness and stand up for Catholic truth (CCC 905). For web users, we suggest you go to Catholic Answers at www.catholic.com. This is a good independent resource for the Catholic position on things.

If as faithful Catholics believe, the gates of hell will not prevail against the Rock of Peter (Mt 16:18-19), no Pope, will be allowed by God to teach error, as the gift of infallibility to the Pope ensures this (CCC 891). It is therefore inconceivable that the Church can reverse its two thousand year teaching and position on contraception, which was simply affirmed by *Humanae Vitae* in 1968. Every other Christian Church saw contraception as evil up until 1930. What has changed as God has not?

For the ill-informed, faithful Catholics believe the Catholic Church teaches Truth and simply affirms God's law in love. It is most definitely not a democracy and never claimed to be. Whilst forgiveness is available to all who genuinely repent of their sins, the Church has no authority to redefine an evil as a good but does have the authority to forgive sin. For this reason, the "Good News" is that the Church, if it is the True Church can never officially teach that an evil is a good or that one can do an evil so good may come (CCC 1789) , but it has Christ's authority and can forgive the greatest of sinners if they repent.

On more technical points, it was Christ himself who instituted marriage as a sacrament and forbade divorce, so there is no room for movement on that issue. After all, England was sadly lost to Catholicism on that main issue during the reign of Henry VIII. With regard to women priests, John Paul II has logically shut the dialogue on that. Interestingly, Judaism never had women priests and Christ himself only chose twelve male apostles. John Paul II affirmed it simply can never happen as the church has no authority to override God's will.

Contrary to popular belief, the Church's sole aim is for the salvation of souls and to be a roadmap for salvation. The Church must worship in both Truth and deed. It remains visibly obedient to the will of God, not to the whims of man and cannot therefore affirm sins such as sexual impurity, contraception, fornication, sodomy, co-habiting. It can however offer hope to sinners and request that they repent, amend their lives and aim to live a God centred life so that they can rightfully gain eternal salvation and avoid eternal hell fire (CCC 1874).

Whilst C.A.G accepts that non-Catholics obviously disagree with our faith, and we respect their use of freewill on this, it is not for them to tell us it needs changing as its faith and morals cannot go opposite to what has already been defined as dogma. Imagine if we as Christians told Jews to eat Pork or Muslims to drink alcohol, it is not our place. They sincerely believe this to be correct. For those nominal Catholics who want a licence to sin, the licence will never be granted, but hope is there as the forgiveness is always on hand should they repent before they meet Christ once again as the Just Judge.

Faithful Catholics cannot remain silent about these truths as souls are at risk, not just sentiments. Christ himself in the Gospels has told us that the road to Heaven is narrow and few take it. If Christ is God, he does not lie. The Catholic Church shows all that road to Heaven, like a lighthouse in the darkness of the world. For Catholics, John Paul II was that lighthouse. On the moral front, we pray for more of the same please.

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