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A Vulnerable Church Can Not Afford to Forget Its Enemies

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The 1960s were extremely hard on the Catholic Church. The damage done by relativism, contraception, abortion, no-fault divorce (summed up as the Sexual Revolution) and Cultural Marxism has resonated for five decades. When dissident priests such as Fr. Charles Curran advocated for a distorted version of social justice in Catholic colleges and universities, the prophetic teaching of *Humane Vitae* and the true intent of the Vatican II documents were mutilated by the secular media as well as by many Catholic writers and theologians who misused their skills to attack the kingdom of God.

At a time when sound catechesis and evangelization could have impacted the largest generation of high school and college aged Catholics in the history of the US, misinformation, confusion and outright heresy prevailed in many classrooms and too many Catholic churches across the country.

“Catholic” schools have now churned out hundreds of thousands of graduates who have little or no concept of what the Church actually taught, much less the sound reasoning, science and scriptural basis for her teachings. Some of these graduates are now tenured teachers, department chairs at colleges and universities, some are in the hierarchy of the Church in the US, and some are at very high levels of our state and federal governments. Many more are the parents and grandparents to generations who received their catechesis and evangelization through the words and deeds of people who live lives of little or no witness to an orthodox Catholic faith.

Some faithful Catholics made it through the 1960s, 70s, and 80s with a firm and authentic Catholic faith, but as we look back on the decline of Christianity in the US since 1960, we see that these Catholics are the exception to the rule. Yet these faithful Catholics have been our lifeline to orthodox Catholicism.

In 1965, there were about 46 million Catholics in the United States and 55 percent of whom attended Mass on a weekly basis. Today, we have about 73 million Catholics in the country and only 23 percent of us attend Mass on a weekly basis. If you do the math, you will find that there are over 8 million fewer Catholics at Mass this weekend, than there were on the same weekend in 1965. If you compare today to 1950, the numbers are even more depressing. Some sources say the weekly Mass attendance in the 1950s was more than 70 percent.

Catholicism has been on a 70-year slide in the US. We have more people who identify as Catholic than at any time in our history, but we have less than ½ of the sacramental marriages and baptisms we had in 1965. There has also been a 37 percent decrease in the number of priests since 1965 and a 75 percent decrease in religious sisters (nuns). If the American Catholic Church was a publicly traded company on the stock exchange, our shares would be extremely cheap if they had any value at all.

The vultures sense that the Church is weak. Because we are so weak, we cannot forget the things of the past. In 2016, WikiLeaks released emails from John Podesta, which confirm that there were groups specifically formed to cause the corruption and/or destruction of the Catholic Church in the US. The email exchange was between Sandy Newman at Voices for Progress and John Podesta in his capacity as Chairman of the Board of the Center For American Progress, a progressive think tank in Washington, D.C. Their brief email exchange is set forth below:

On February 10, 2012, Newman wrote:

Subject: opening for a Catholic Spring? just musing...

This whole controversy with the bishops opposing contraceptive coverage even though 98% of Catholic women (and their conjugal partners) have use contraception has me thinking... There needs to be a Catholic Spring, in which Catholics themselves demand the end of a middle ages dictatorship and the beginning of a little democracy and respect for gender equality in the Catholic church. Is contraceptive coverage an issue around which that could happen. The Bishops will undoubtedly continue the fight.

Does the Catholic Hospital Association support of the Administration's new policy, together with "the 98%" create an opportunity?

Of course, this idea may just reveal my total lack of understanding of the Catholic church, the economic power it can bring to bear against nuns and priests who count on it for their maintenance, etc. Even if the idea isn't crazy, I don't qualify to be involved and I have not thought at all about how one would "plant the seeds of the revolution," or who would plant them.

Just wondering...

On February 11, 2012, Podesta responded:

Re: opening for a Catholic Spring? just musing . . .

We created Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good to organize for a moment like this. But I think it lacks the leadership to do so now. Likewise, Catholics United. Like most Spring movements, I think this one will have to be bottom up. I'll discuss with Tara. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend is the other person to consult.

The “Tara” referenced by Podesta was likely Tara McGuinness. On February 12, 2012, McGuinness had an article published by New Republic which fit in perfectly with the musings of Newman and Podesta. In the article, McGuinness says that “Mine is a family in which priests and nuns outweigh any other profession except nurses.” In the article, McGuinness (who does not claim to be Catholic herself) was trying to use her Catholic affiliations in order to attack USCCB’s opposition to the contraceptive coverage in the Affordable Care Act.

Notice that McGuinness’ article was published within on day of John Podesta’s response to Newman.

But let’s look at the emails a little closer to see what has been going on in the powerful circles at the highest level of American politics and government. First, we have an email that calls for a “Catholic Spring.” If you recall December 2010 through 2011, gave us the “Arab Spring” in numerous North African and Middle Eastern countries which resulted in the total overthrow (often through extreme violence and chaos) of established power in those countries. Podesta’s reference to “a moment like this” indicates he was familiar with the term and the concept.

Newman saw the contraception issue as a potential spark for the destruction of the Catholic Church in the US. But due to his lack of familiarity with the Catholic Church, he turned to Podesta, who represents himself as a member of the Catholic Church. Newman wondered who could “plant the seeds of the revolution.”

Podesta drew on his apparent knowledge of a longstanding effort to destroy the Catholic Church, which is a strange interest for someone who claims to be Catholic. He informed Newman of at least two organizations who were founded for the specific purpose of starting a revolution in the American Catholic Church: Alliance For The Common Good and Catholics United. But he had his doubts as to their potential for success due to what he deemed to be weak leadership. Instead, he recommends “Tara,” who is likely the author of the article which shows up the following day, and Kathleen Kennedy Townsend.

Who are all these people and organizations?

You probably recall that John Podesta was Hillary Clinton’s campaign manager and would have likely been her Chief of Staff had she won the election.

Sandy Newman was simply a non-Catholic progressive who wanted to advance the progressive agenda by destroying the Catholic Church. Newman founded Voices for Progress in 2009.

Tara McGuinness was the Senior Vice President for Center for American Progress Action and Communications in February, 2012 (at the time her article was published by New Republic).

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend is the oldest child of Bobby Kennedy. In 2012, she was chair of the American Bridge, an organization which raised funds for Democratic candidates and causes. She was also on the board of directors of the Center for American Progress. On February 13, 2012, she appeared on C-Span, speaking out against the Bishops’ opposition to the contraception mandate in the Affordable Care Act. It does not appear to be a coincidence that her television appearance took place two days after Podesta’s response to Sandy Newman.

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good (CACG) was started by Alexia Kelly after John Kerry’s failed bid for the presidency in 2004. Kelly was Kerry’s religious outreach coordinator during his campaign. CACG has received substantial funding from George Soros and was closely affiliated with Podesta, Catholics United, Catholics for Choice and other organizations who falsely claimed to be Catholic. CACG’s primary objective was to advance access to contraception and abortion. At this time, CACG appears to be inactive, but the people behind it and the agenda it embraced are anything but inactive. Since Kelly once worked for the USCCB’s Catholic Campaign for Human Development, we can expect to see her involved in something similar to CACG in the near future.

Catholics United (CU) aggressively promoted same-sex “marriage” as well as numerous other issues which contradict the Church teachings on morality. CU’s executive director is James Salt, who used to work for Kathleen Sibelius, a self-described pro-choice Catholic and the former Secretary of Health and Human Services under President Barack Obama.

We are all wise to respect passages such as Proverbs 6:16-20,

There are six things that the Lord hates,
seven that are an abomination to him:
haughty eyes, a lying tongue,
and hands that shed innocent blood,
a heart that devises wicked plans,
feet that hurry to run to evil,
a lying witness who testifies falsely,
and one who sows discord in a family.
My child, keep your father’s commandment,
and do not forsake your mother’s teaching.

Here is the point of all of this. In today’s fast-paced world of constant information and distraction, we are prone to forget important things that happened less than a few days ago, much less years ago. One tragedy replaces another, one atrocity casts its shadow over the prior atrocity... We don’t want to think about Stephen Paddock, Anthony Weiner, Abdelhamid Abaaoud or Jerry Sandusky, and we don’t have to because they will be superseded by a new mass murderer, pervert, terrorist or pedophile before we know it.

As Catholics, we need to remember that there are well-connected and well-funded people who were trying to dismantle the Catholic Church right here in our very own country. We need to realize that these people have not gone away, nor have they given up. At best, they have taken a break until they are called into action once again. More likely, they have been working quietly, sowing seeds of revolution in the hope that revolutionaries will spring up as soon as the moment is right.

We must remain diligent and make sure that the USCCB is not employing the likes of Alexia Kelly, that people like Jeannine Gramick are not welcomed into your parish as legitimate “Catholic” speakers and that groups like New Ways Ministries or Catholics for Choice and publications like the National Catholic Reporter, are not mistaken for trusted sources of Catholic information.

As we can see, a simple email exchange can result in the publication of propaganda within 24 hours and a television appearance within 48 hours. The power of those who hate the Church is capable of spewing out propaganda at a moment’s notice. Such is the benefit of not needing to be accurate or true.

The poor catechesis and evangelization after the Sexual Revolution of the 1960s has resulted in a lot of very devious people who claim to be Catholic, yet they plot revolution against the Church’s teachings. It is our job to make sure the influence of these people does not give rise to a revolt against those bishops, priests, institutions and lay Catholic leaders who remain faithful to the Church on matters of faith and morals.

We must remain familiar with the names of these individuals and these organizations as well as their tactics so we can spot illegitimate claims and propaganda when we see it. We must also keep other faithful Catholics informed, so people are not duped into trusting a wolf in sheep’s clothing.

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