“Putting Words into Action – Rebuild the Church”

The Challenges Facing the Catholic Church Then and Now

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WHAT IS A CRISIS?



A CRISIS IS A CRITICAL MOMENT IN WHICH A PERSON OR COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES A DISRUPTION OR DEVIATION OR THREAT TO ITS FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE OR MISSION. FOR THE CHURCH THE CRISIS IS THE EXTERNAL OR INTERNAL THREAT TO ITS SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSE TOWARDS THE SALVATION OF SOULS.

13th Century Catholic Church



13TH CENTURY CATHOLIC CHURCH CRISIS

1. Church Wealth…Money…Power!
2. Clerical Corruption: Power vs Piety
3. Lack of Effective Basic Doctrinal Teaching of Catechesis
4. Priority: Political Power Against Focus on Spiritual Aspect of Church Ministry
5. Spiritual Lukewarmness and Decline of Christian Life
6. Heresies and False Religious Movements
7. Desire for Changes or Reform in the Catholic Church

13TH CENTURY CATHOLIC CHURCH

CHALLENGE (1):

Church Wealth…Money…Power!

SAINT FRANCIS' RESPONSE:

VOLUNTARY AND EVANGELICAL POVERTY

CHALLENGE (2):

Clerical Corruption: Power versus Piety

SAINT FRANCIS' RESPONSE:

SIMPLE AND DISCIPLINED RELIGIOUS LIFE. PERSONAL HOLINESS AND FIDELITY.

13TH CENTURY CATHOLIC CHURCH

CHALLENGE (3):

Lack of Effective Basic Doctrinal Teaching or Catechesis

SAINT FRANCIS' RESPONSE: TRAVELING, PREACHING AND TEACHING.

CHALLENGE (4):

Priority: Political Power Against Focus on Spiritual Aspect of Church Ministry

SAINT FRANCIS' RESPONSE:

DIRECT SERVICES TO THE POOR AND MARGINALIZED PEOPLE. SERVICE TO THE LEPERS.

13TH CENTURY CATHOLIC CHURCH

CHALLENGE (5):

Spiritual Lukewarmness and Decline of Christian Life

SAINT FRANCIS' RESPONSE:

RADICAL POVERTY

CHALLENGE(6):

Heresies and false religious movements.

SAINT FRANCIS' RESPONSE:

ALL OF GOD'S CREATION IS GOOD. BRO SUN, SIS MOON, BRO WIND, SIS WATER AND BRO EARTH. HE LOVED ANIMALS AS WELL.

13TH CENTURY CATHOLIC CHURCH

CHALLENGE(7):

Desire for Changes and Reform in the Church.

SAINT FRANCIS' RESPONSE:

HE DID NOT TRY TO DESTROY OR SEPARATE HIMSELF FROM THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. HE DEMONSTRATED THAT REFORM MEANT A RETURN TO THE BASIC CHRISTIAN IDEALS OF POVERTY, HUMILITY, LOVE, AND SERVICE. PRAYER WAS HIS SPIRITUAL WEAPON.

21st Century Catholic Church

WELCOME TO THE 21ST CENTURY - SIMILAR CHALLENGES AND MORE


TH
21ST
CENTURY
Microsoft
Google
TESLA
ebay
NETFLIX
101
101-HIGHWAY
everything is connected
Microsoft
Google
NETFLIX
101
THE FUTURE WILL BE BRIGHT

21st Century Catholic Church

Let us begin with a sample of data (demographics) findings from Pew Research (in the US):

20 % of US adults identify as Catholics

9% identify as ‘cultural Catholics’

9% are former Catholics

47% of US adults have personal or family connection to Catholicism

21st Century Catholic Church

The Crisis of Doctrine and the Practice of the Faith

Pray daily	50%
Attend Mass weekly	28%
Confession at least annually	23%
Do all three (above)	13%
Seldom/never attend Mass	40%
Never go to confession	47%
Does Not Read the Bible	67%
Pro Abortion Catholics	60%
Support Homosexual Marriage	70%
Does not Believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist	70%

21st Century Catholic Church Challenges

1. Shortage of Priests and Decrease in Vocations for the Priestly and Religious Order
2. Internal Polarization and Ideological Division
3. Clery and Sexual Abuse
4. Decline of Youth & Young Adults
5. Secularization and the Crisis of Faith (Morality)
6. Modern Ideological and Cultural Shifts
7. Failures and Lack of Financial Transparency
8. Lack of Clear Understanding of the Role of Women in the Church
9. Christian Nationalism and Ideological Ideas
10. Emerging Technological and Scientific Threats
11. Lack of On-Going Conversions to the Catholic Church

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (1)

Shortage of priests and decrease in the vocation of priestly and religious orders

Legion's Response: We are an extension of the priests and pastors in their role towards the salvation of souls. "The lay apostolate must be considered by priests as a definite part of their ministry and by the faithful duty of the Christian Life."(Pope Pius XI) (LHB Pg. 64)

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (2)

Internal Polarization and Ideological Division

Legion's Response: "Of set purpose of the Legion should aim to combat the division and antagonisms of the world…So let the Legion of Mary think in terms of unity and charity in the Mystical Body of Christ." (LHB pg. 304)

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (3)
Clergy and Sexual Abuse Cover Up

Legion's Response: Restore trust within parishes through transparent leadership, personal integrity, prayers of reparation, and compassionate pastoral care for victims. Reassurance that while there are SOME abusive priests, there are MORE holy priests who we can continue to trust as shepherds. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (4)
Decline of Youth and Young Adults

Legion's Response: Formation of Junior and Young Adult Praesidia and promotion of Marian devotions to the young children and teens.

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (5)

Secularization and the Crisis of Faith (Morality)

Legion's Response: Promote daily devotion to the Eucharist, organize Holy Hours, and bring the Pilgrim Virgin statues to encourage a strong foundation of prayer. Promotion of Traditional Catholic devotions particularly: FAMILY ROSARY AND THE ENTHRONEMENT OF THE SACRED HEART AT HOME.

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (6)

Modern Ideological and Cultural Shifts

Legion's Response: SPEAK THE TRUTH AT ALL TIMES. Conducting gentle, respectful one-on-one explanation of faith, basic doctrine such as the Ten Commandments, Mortal Sin, the Four Last Things, God's Mercy and Judgement etc. through DOOR-TO-DOOR VISITATION AND if feasible during public outreach (Crowd Contact – Bookbarrow). This should be conducted in the spirit of humility, personal dialogue, attentive listening and charity.

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (7)

Failures and Lack of Financial Transparency

Legion's Response: The Legion should continue to set the example, that while financial resources are needed in the Church, its top priority is the salvation of souls. No material relief in the Legion system. Focus is strictly the spiritual needs This prevents transactional relationships and ensures pure motives.

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (8)

Lack of Clear Understanding of the Role of Women in the Church

Legion's Response: "Embodying the spirit of the Legion of Mary which is that of Mary herself. Her profound humility, her perfect obedience, her angelical sweetness, her continual prayer, her universal mortification, her altogether spotless purity, her heroic patience, her heavenly wisdom, her self-sacrificing courageous love of God, and above all her faith, that virtue which has in her alone been found in its utmost extent and never equaled. (LHB pg. 12)

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (9)

Christian Nationalism and Ideological Ideas

Legion of Mary Role: "No politics in the Legion. True devotion to the Nation as proposed by Frank Duff which is a spiritualized service in the community. Not only is that service to be undertaken out of the spiritual motive, but it and all contacts arising from it must be used to promote the spiritual. "(LHB pg. 77)

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (10)

Emerging Technological and Scientific Shifts

Legion's Response: "The Legion handbook reminds us to safeguard the DIGINITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON by doing all that we can to SAVE A PRICELESS SOUL. The Legion must always adapt its methods to the changing battleground of the world, without ever changing its core methodology – PERSONAL CONTACT.

21st Century Catholic Church

Challenge (11)

Lack of On-Going Conversions to the Catholic Church

Legion's Response: "The Seeking of Conversions to the Church (LHB pg. 311). "Make no mistake about it. The faith must be brought to the notice of every person outside the Church. Timidity and human respect and difficulties of one kind and another must be swallowed up in the supreme desire to share the gift of faith TO THOSE WHO HAVE IT NOT."

Legion of Mary's Role
"Rebuilding the Church through EVANGELIZATION"

Final Thought - The Legion and the Lay Apostolate

"The Legion of Mary is apostolic duty decked out in attractive and alluring form; throbbing with life so that it wins all to it, undertaken in the manner stipulated by Pope Pius XI, that is , in dependence on the Virgin Mother of God; insistent on quality as the foundation of membership and even as the key to numerical strength; safeguarded by plenteous prayer and self-sacrifice, by exact system, and by complete cooperation with the priest. The Legion of Mary is a miracle of these modern times."

Cardinal Riberi, formerly Apostolic Delegate to missionary Africa and later Internuncio to China. (LHB pg. 61)