

PRIESTS APPEAL TO WORLD'S BISHOPS TO ADDRESS PASTORAL CRISIS

Successors of the Apostles urged to correct harmful errors

(May 2, 2018) Priests from around the world are publicly appealing to every bishop to “reaffirm Christ’s teaching” in response to a pastoral crisis facing the Catholic Church.

The 1500-word Pastoral Appeal and additional background information are available in English and several other languages at www.curapastoralis.org. A copy has been sent to the bishops by email. All priests are invited to add their witness by signing the Pastoral Appeal on the website.

The priests cite the recent revival of “gravely harmful moral errors” regarding the feasibility of living Jesus’ teachings, the nature of conscience, and the role of the Church. They express the hope that “much of the damage could be healed or mitigated if [bishops] were to reaffirm Jesus’ teachings and to correct those errors with the full authority of [their] apostolic office.”

Framed in measured language, the Pastoral Appeal is nevertheless a powerful evangelical witness by ministers who, accompanying their parishioners in the struggle to embrace Jesus and his Gospel, see the suffering and confusion these errors cause.

Given the limited effectiveness of previous efforts to correct these errors, the Pastoral Appeal asks that the bishops now intervene through the formal exercise of their teaching office as Successors of the Apostles.

Acting in communion with the bishops of the world and the pope, the signers present ten specific “affirmations of the Gospel,” including:

- “God is love,” so “fidelity to Christ and his teachings is realistic and achievable, not an abstract ideal needing to be adjusted to circumstances of life.”
- “Conscience is the immediate norm of behavior but not the infallible voice of God. It can misjudge... [and therefore is] in need of being conformed to the Gospel.”
- “Reception of Holy Communion cannot be reduced to a private act based on a subjective judgment of innocence because it is a public witness to one’s embrace of the communal faith and life of the Church.”
- “Jesus...based ecclesial discipline on the objective failure to accord with the Church’s life, not on a judgment of [a person’s subjective] culpability.”
- "Reception of Holy Communion... by those who have divorced and remarried depends on the objective reality of the bond of their first marriage and on the avoidance of sin and public scandal.”

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