
Blessed Sacrament Weekly Email - August 23, 2024

Fr. Dwight Longnecker is a former Anglican minister who entered the Roman Catholic Church alongside his family in 1995. Fr. Dwight is an author, speaker, and Pastor. This excerpt from a column this summer provides much to consider. This article and my homily this weekend make a good topic for discussion. You are invited to stay after Mass this weekend for some lively conversation. “How best to deal with the disappointment, disgust and dismay one sometimes feels about the Church. . .”

- First to have the right priority. Your focus is on Jesus not other Christians.
- Second, get real—a paradigm shift is an act of will. Decide to be realistic in your expectations. Hope for the best, expect the worst.
- Third, don't get too focused on your church leaders. Let them do their job. You do yours. Support them if you can, avoid them if you can't.
- Fourth: focus on the ordinary people in the pew. They're more likely to be the saints you are looking for.
- Fifth: live local, love local. What's the old saying, “Nothing is real if it is not local.” Getting involved with the struggles, the triumphs and tragedies of your local Christian community and local extended community is where it gets real. If you meet a Christian failure at that level you are far more likely to be sympathetic and if your sleeves are already rolled up in action you're likely to be able to do something about it and more likely to forgive and help that person.
- Sixth –look in the mirror. Very often we blame others most vehemently when their failure is something we are also struggling with. PS: it's called “projection”
- Seventh – don't forget a sense of humor. Humor is linked with humility and believe me, one day we will see the foolishness, failures and frailties from the divine perspective and understand that “all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose.”

In this Sunday's gospel, as many disciples decide to abandon Jesus, he turns to the apostles and asks, “*Do you also want to leave?*” In my preaching, I will explain why I have remained Catholic despite my disagreement, disapproval, and disappointment with the Roman Catholic Church. After each Mass this weekend, there will be an opportunity for comments, questions, and discussion.

- [LINK: <https://dwightlongnecker.com/for-those-who-are-angry-with-the-church/>]

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This Sunday's Readings
Wednesday Bible Handout
This Sunday's Bulletin

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<https://www.blessedsacramentwv.org>
<https://faithinwv.org/latest-bulletin/>
<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/082524.cfm>

News Now

●●●●●● **Blessed Sacrament Symposium** ●●●●●●

Following all Masses on the weekend of August 24-25, there will be a discussion about the disillusion, disappointment, and disapproval with the scandals created by a small number of priests and the coverups undertaken by their bishops. In the Sunday gospel, as many disciples decide to abandon Jesus, he turns to the apostles and asks, “*Do you also want to leave?*” After each Mass this weekend, there will be an opportunity for comments, questions, and discussion. You can read the follow article to help fuel the discussion. Besides Fr. Paul, one of our deacons, and another person or two will acts as a panel.

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A SAINTLY WITNESS

[Editor’s Note: Knowing the topic of discussion this weekend, a parishioner sent this to me from the Universalis website. She points out, “We tend to think that we in this generation are the only ones who are confronting the reality of corrupt and sinful church leadership, but people have always fallen short of perfect love. Always. And God always offers us divine mercy. Always. Thank you, Lord God!”

Saint John Eudes (1601-1680) was born and died in Normandy. He was ordained priest and spent many years preaching parish missions. He organized a congregation of nuns that grew into the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, dedicated to the care of women rescued from a disorderly life, and a congregation of priests dedicated to the running of seminaries.

In his time the Church in France was corrupt and in many ways a source of evil rather than grace. The higher clergy were rich and privileged, and enjoyed and guarded their privileges (the country was run, and wars were waged, by a cardinal). The lower clergy were ignorant, and the common people were poor, superstitious, and oppressed as much spiritually as materially. To this mix was added the poison of Jansenism, which taught that human nature was corrupt, original sin rampant, and perfection was both necessary for salvation and practically unattainable. In such circumstances, setting up seminaries to ensure the proper education of priests becomes itself a revolutionary act.

Over and over again in the lives of the saints we find the Church sick and corrupt. Perhaps it must always be so, journeying in a fallen world and staffed by sinners who are as fallen as the rest of us and subject to worse temptations. And over and over again we find God’s grace acting through people like St John Eudes. They do not stand outside and complain or run campaigns, they go in and do things, removing the mold of worldly corruption and putting back, bit by bit, the leaven of grace. They will always be needed, until the world ends.

[Editor’s Com: To paraphrase something Gandhi never actually said, “Be the change you want to see in the Church!”]

POEM

Lord of the universe, who reigned
before the birth of any thing –
When by his will brought all things made
then was his name proclaimed King.

And when all things shall cease to be
he alone will reign in awe.
He was, he is, and he shall be
Glorious for ever more.

He is One, there is none else,
alone, unique, beyond compare;
Without beginning, without end,
his might, his rule are everywhere.

He is my God, my Redeemer lives.
He is the Rock on whom I rely –
My banner and my safe retreat,
my cup, my portion when I cry.

Into his hand my soul I place,
when I awake and when I sleep.
God with me, I shall not fear;
body and soul from harm will he keep.
– a poem attributed to Solomon ibn Gabirol (1021-1058)

MYSTIC MORSELS

Who is going to save our Church? Do not look to the priests. Do not look to the bishops.
It's up to you, the laity, to remind our priests to be priests and our bishops to be bishops.
–Blessed Fulton Sheen (1895-1979)

Maybe the greatest threat to the church is not heresy, not dissent, not secularism, not
even moral relativism, but this sanitized, feel-good, boutique, therapeutic spirituality
that makes no demands, calls for no sacrifice, asks for no conversion, entails no battle
against sin, but only soothes and affirms.
–Cardinal Timothy Dolan (1950-

CARBONATED GRACE

Poem called "The Perfect Church," written anonymously.

I think that I shall never see
A church that's all it ought to be;
A church that has no empty pews,
Whose preacher never has the blues;

A church whose deacons always "deke",
And none is proud but all are meek;
Where gossips never peddle lies
Or make complaints or criticize;
Where all are always sweet and kind
And all to other's faults are blind.

Such perfect churches there may be,
But none of them are known to me.
But still we'll work, and pray and plan
To make our church the best we can!

If you could find the perfect church,
Without one fault or smear,
For goodness sake, don't join that church -
You'd spoil the atmosphere.

If you should find the perfect church,
Then don't you ever dare
To tread upon such holy ground -
You'd be a misfit there.

But since no perfect church exists,
made of imperfect men,
Then let's cease looking for that church
and love the one we're in.

Of course it's not a perfect church
that's simple to discern
But you and I and all of us
could cause the tide to turn.