

An Open Appeal to the Catholic Bishops of the World

Dear Archbishops, Bishops and Brothers in Christ,

Some influential voices in the Church are using a “new paradigm” to justify forms of behavior long recognized as contrary to the precepts of the Divine and Natural Laws. As I [recently wrote](#):

“The ‘new paradigm’ — although never explicitly saying it — allows priests and bishops simultaneously to affirm that they accept the Church’s moral teaching and yet to liberate ‘individual consciences’ that are not living by that teaching to continue not living by it, while approaching the Table of the Lord.”

We see this in places where Catholics living in objectively sinful unions are being freed to return to Holy Communion without a sincere resolution to amend their behavior. The “new paradigm” effectively makes permissible actions rejected by Christ and St. Paul in the New Testament and by the Church for 20 centuries. In Germany, Argentina, Malta, and elsewhere we now have “Catholic divorce and remarriage” and “Catholic adultery.”

Unless you intervene to prevent the “new paradigm” from being brought to bear upon the wider body of Catholic moral teaching, its logic will *surely* be applied to contraceptive acts (despite the Church’s ancient teaching reaffirmed in [Gaudium et Spes](#) and [Humanae Vitae](#)), to homosexual behavior (despite the teaching reaffirmed in [Persona Humana](#) and the [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#)), and to other traditionally rejected behaviors.

And defenders of the “new paradigm” will say: “All we’re doing is *applying* Church teaching with greater pastoral sensitivity by paying heightened attention to the complexity of concrete ‘circumstances’ and by according greater respect to the dignity of ‘conscience’; the settled moral doctrines themselves are not in question.”

The interventions of laypeople and faithful priests are important, but are unlikely to influence the decisions of the Pope. Only fraternal episcopal interventions can now hope to avert what is sure otherwise to be a spiritual catastrophe for the Catholic Church. For if the “new paradigm” is officially applied to contraceptive acts, all the norms of Catholic sexual morality will fall like dominos. Great evil will occur. And many souls will be lost. God, of course, will bring good out of it. But not without immeasurable loss.

Therefore, to all Catholic bishops — East and West — who believe that the “new paradigm” is and will continue to be used to justify forms of behavior traditionally judged contrary to the divine and natural laws, I respectfully ask that you consider taking action in the following four ways:

1. To privately write to the apostolic nuncio of your country and ask him respectfully to make known to the Holy Father your concerns about the “new paradigm” and especially to urge him to refrain from applying it to the teaching of *Humanae Vitae*.

2. To privately write to Pope Francis himself fraternally expressing these same concerns and respectfully asking him to teach unambiguously the moral truths of the Catholic faith, especially on matters pertaining to the Fifth and Sixth Precepts of the Decalogue, and to correct the pastoral errors to which some of his teachings have given rise.
3. To *officially promulgate* for your diocese a set of norms pastorally addressing the sensitive issues raised in *Amoris Laetitia* (especially Chapter 8), norms consistent with the teachings of John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Catholic moral and pastoral tradition.
4. To privately liaise with like-minded bishops and consider constructive ways to use your magisterium to carry out the episcopal duties affirmed by the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

“It is this Magisterium’s task to preserve God’s people from deviations and defections and to guarantee them the objective possibility of professing the true faith without error. Thus, the pastoral duty of the Magisterium is aimed at seeing to it that the People of God abides in the truth that liberates” (890).

When you address the “new paradigm” in your correspondences, you might consider a form similar to what John Paul II used when addressing Proportionalism in [Veritatis Splendor](#):

“Such theories [in this case ‘paradigms’] are not faithful to the Church’s teaching, when they believe they can justify, as morally good, deliberate choices of kinds of behavior contrary to the commandments of the divine and natural law. These [paradigms] cannot claim to be grounded in the Catholic moral tradition” (76).

It would be easy to say: “I’ve done all I can. It is all in God’s hands. We must be content to leave it there.” Please see that you are Jesus’ hands for addressing this very grave situation.

I am willing to assist you in any way I can — with summaries of concerns, talking points, diocesan guidelines, etc. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very respectfully yours in Jesus,

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