

Dear Editor:

Over two thousand years ago, a man posed a simple question. This simple question, this small query, this beautiful mystery, has, like the man who posed it, worked to transform our world.

This question has started and ended wars, saved countless lives, formed and destroyed powerful governments and has had countless other effects that have continued to echo into life as we know it.

The same question that Jesus Christ posed two thousand years ago, I posed two weeks ago. This question, in all its simplicity, holds the key to a mystery both complex and profound. Just as Christ asked this of Peter, so now we have been presented with the eluding query, this eternal mystery that changed the world. "Who do you say that I am?" [Matthew 16:15]

In this, my third and final editorial aimed to address the Catholic sexual abuse scandal, we can finally answer this burning question.

Are the flaws of corrupt men enough cause to completely wipe out the graces that God has poured out onto the Catholic Church? Or can the medicine of mercy and the power of the Holy Priesthood come together to bring the work that God has begun to fulfillment?

Yet before we can truly, informatively answer this question, we must first determine how to measure the true and fruitful success of any religion. As Albert Einstein once said, "Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity. And I'm not so sure about the former." We can go even further than this by saying that not only is the weakness of man infinite, but so also is the grace and love of God everlasting. One cannot measure a religion simply by the flaws that the media shows of it.

So how do we measure a religion? We must measure a religion in the way that we measure a medicine: by those that take it, as directed. If I gave a person a medicine and they did not take

it, then they proceeded to get sick, I would not say that the medicine is flawed; I would say that the person is flawed.

The Catholic Church does not teach that epebophilic acts are works of holiness, so any of these grotesque acts that are performed do not speak against the 'medicine' that is the Church, but instead, it merely points out what the Church, what Christ, has been saying all along: people are flawed.

One should not look at the terrorist attacks of September 11 and see Islam, one should not look at the Ku Klux Klan and see Christianity, and in turn, one should look at neither corrupt bishops nor sick priests and see Catholicism.

The Church has never claimed that all its members are perfect. Yet what it has sworn is this: that it will bear fruit, and it will bear it in abundance. Thousands of saints have been produced from the Catholic Church.

These brave men and women, the heroes of the Church, not only worked to affect Catholicism, but have also changed the face of the Earth with the Love of Christ. Whether it be Saint Thomas Aquinas, the great philosopher, Saint Augustine of Hippo, the so-called inventor of rhetoric, or Saint Joan of Arc whose bravery transformed a nation, these men and women are truly the fruit of the Church and the gifts of the Heart of Jesus Christ.

So now, with a better understanding of the medicine of mercy, the power of the Priesthood, and the fruits of the Catholic Church, I once again ask the question, that Christ asked Peter two thousand years ago. "Who do you say that I am?" Who do *you* say that Christ is? What do you see when you look at His Church? Do you see the crusades that have fed the whims of bloodthirsty men or do you see the millions of homeless people who the Catholic Church feeds everyday? Do you see the hate and intolerance that gave birth to the inquisition or do you see the thousands of saints and spiritual writers who the Church has given birth to? Do you see the sins that have been committed by corrupt Popes, or do you see the 83 million patients who are admitted to American Catholic hospitals each year? I cannot answer this question for you, I can only state what I see when I look at the Catholic Church.

In the words of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, "We, the unwilling, led by the unknowing,

are doing the impossible, for the ungrateful. We have done so much, for so long, with so little, we are now qualified to do anything with nothing.”

What do I see in the Catholic Church? I see the weakness of man, eternally being forgiven and corrected by the grace of God.

I see men and women giving themselves to others and sacrificing their entire lives because of what one man did two thousand years ago. I see a darkness being filled with light, a doubt being eliminated by faith, and our hate being healed with the irrevocable, everlasting, unconditional love of Jesus Christ, the Divine Physician.

On the third day after His death, Christ rose from the dead. I hope and pray that in this third millennium of its history, the Catholic Church can rise above man’s corruption and continue to do what we have been doing for two thousand years, bring Christ to souls, and souls to Christ. I wish to start here.

I speak for all Catholics when I utter this apology. We, as flawed beings, apologize to our fellow Catholics for what the weakness of man has done; we apologize to the people, and the families of these people who have been affected by these weaknesses. But most of all we apologize to God, to Christ Himself, for taking the grace and love that He has given us through His Church, and using it for our own evil, hateful purposes. Yet as we apologize, we also must acknowledge the beautiful graces God has given the Catholic Church, and for these graces, we are eternally grateful.

I will leave you with a quote from Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. “There are not over 100 people in the U.S. that hate the Catholic Church, there are millions however, who hate what they wrongly believe to be the Catholic Church, which is, of course, quite a different thing.”

What do *you* see when you look at the Catholic Church?

Long live Christ the King. Long live the Catholic Church, His eternal, His beautiful, His everlasting bride.

Murphy Lierley

Grant