



ELEPHANTS IN THE LIVING ROOM

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FR. DONALD COZZENS
ST. LOUIS
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INTRODUCTION

Bishop Tom Gumbleton

Good afternoon. I would like to introduce you to Fr. Donald Cozzens, someone whom I admire as a priest, and whom I cherish as a friend. And, I must say, it is a special blessing for all of us that he is here today; because, just a week ago, he called me and told me he had recently had a rather serious automobile accident, and that he was injured, and was still in therapy; but he wanted to come, and said he would. We really want to you for that extra effort! But Don is well known to many of us, I'm sure, because he has been here twice before, back in 2006, and then, later on in 2017. Don is a priest who challenges the status quo with wit, wisdom, and an unflinching integrity. By the time of the scandal of abuse and cover-up that surfaced in Boston back in 2002, he had already written books on the crises of the priesthood. His *The Changing Face of the Priesthood*, published in 2000, and his *The Spirituality of the Diocesan Priest* in 1997, named the critical issues that impact on priests today.

Those who know Fr. Cozzens well, know him as a gentle and kind person. Yet, this soft-spoken man speaks and writes with courageous candor about the dangers of clericalism, the importance of integrity, and the inability of a hierarchical and medieval Church structure to meet the needs of people today. It is within this system that the abuse and cover-up have occurred. Fr. Cozzens's credibility is based, among other things, on his experience as vicar for the clergy in the Diocese of Cleveland. During the six years that he served in that capacity in Cleveland, he came face to face with the ugly face of sex abuse. He sat across a desk and listened to either a victim or a priest abuser, and felt a great sadness. It was often his place to inform a parish that a priest had been reported of misconduct and would be leaving. The stunned silence and shocked disbelief on the people's faces are logged firmly in his memory. Even more painful were his visits to the homes of victims. Fr. Cozzens's books continue to articulate what has been left unspoken. He names crucial concerns in books such as *Sacred Silence: Denial and the Crisis in the Church*, *Faith that Dares to Speak*, *Freeing Celibacy*, and most important *The Changing Face of the Priesthood*.

More recently I've read two books that I was surprised that he had written. They are mystery novels. But they incorporate in those two books many of the issues that have occurred, and that he knows about so well, in this sex abuse crisis. The books are *Master of Ceremonies* and *Under Pain of Mortal Sin*. Those two books, now we didn't have those today, but I tell you they are really good; and they are easy to read, but they also teach us a lot. So, I hope you might find them on your own.

We respect our brother in faith Fr. Don Cozzens for being a model of ecclesial loyalty and personal integrity, authentic in words and actions - and an inspiration to priests and laity alike. So I ask you to please welcome Fr. Don to help us explore the root causes of the sexual abuse crises and show us the way to bring conversion and healing into our Church. (Applause)

THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE SEXUAL ABUSE CRISES

Fr.

Donald Cozzens

Thank you, Tom; and thank you for coming; and good afternoon to you all. I am scared, really scared, because the title of my talk that Bishop Tom Gumbleton gave me is The Root Causes of the Sexual Abuse Crises. And to be honest with you, that is above my pay grade. (laughter) I mean, you really have to be a nervy son of a gun to say, "Okay, I will try to identify the root causes of the sexual abuse crises.

I could say to you, "The root cause of the sexual abuse crises is the human condition; and also, thank you very much for coming; I have a plane to catch. So ..." (more laughter) No, but I would like to say a little bit more - not that I'm convinced that what I am going to say is really going to be enlightening - but I am going to share with you what's in my head and what's in my heart. And after I speak a little bit about the root causes of clergy sexual abuse - nervy son of a gun that I am - I'm going to talk about where we might go from there. And I think we've heard more than we want to hear about the sexual abuse of minors by clergy and other church personnel; and let's get beyond that.

Before we try to get beyond that, here is my take on the root causes of clergy abuse of minors and children. I don't have to tell anyone here that we live in a polarized Church. I think if I were an active pastor today, one of the things that would be heavy in my heart is knowing that my parishioners are more or less divided into maybe progressives, who feel excited about the renewal started at the Second Vatican Council, who understand that the Church is all of us who are baptized; and then, another segment in the parish, sometimes a smaller segment, but a very vocal segment, and in some diocese is supported financially in ways that we can't quite imagine. And so this segment of the parish feels the Church is really static. They don't like the word reform. They like the word renewal a little bit better than the word reform, because the Church is the only, holy, catholic church; and it really doesn't develop, it really doesn't change.

So, trying to minister to people who feel the way these two groups more or less feel can be very challenging; and I know it is hard on pastors who have a lot of their psychic energy drained from these two groups of really good people. I mention the polarization, because, if you talk to progressive Catholics, they might say, if you ask them, "What do you think the cause of the clergy sexual abuse crises is?" They might say, "Clericalism!" You know, the fact that we have a two caste system in our Church, the ordained and the lay; and they seem to be able to talk about pastors who were pretty arrogant to them, or seem to be leading their parishes with a mindset of legalism, and dogmatism, and moralism. So they might say, "I think that clericalism of the clergy, which Pope Francis has spoken about regularly, is a major factor."

If you talk to more traditional Catholics, more conservative Catholics, they don't speak about clericalism that much. Maybe it is because they feel it's really difficult to exaggerate the dignity of the ordained person. And so, "If Father acts in a way, that he speaks of entitlement and privilege, well that goes with the nobility of being an ordained minister of Jesus." The conservative Catholics that I have read and spoken to say, "The real root cause is not clericalism, but it is the fact that we that we have a higher percentage of gay men in our seminaries, in our presbyteries and in the episcopacy; and so, if we could really just do our best to make sure that we are not ordaining men who are homosexually oriented, then we wouldn't have this problem of clergy sexual abuse." And they like to say that, "Research shows that maybe 80% to 85% of victims

of clergy sexual abuse have been young boys.” There is a real danger here that we are scapegoating our sisters and brothers who are lesbian or gay; and that is why I am not buying into that explanation of what is the root cause.

I am going to throw my weight behind the position that says, if clericalism isn't a root cause of clergy sexual abuse, it's really close to being that. And so, I am going to spend the first part of my talk today saying something about clericalism; and at the risk of not offending my good friend, Tom Gumbleton, I am going to say something about the clericalism of bishops, (laughter) and I have a living example of the opposite of that; (applause) and so, I hope you understand that.

Tom Gumbleton mentioned in his very, very generous introduction - and I really didn't write it - (laughter) I know a bishop who said, I was introducing him when I was rector of our seminary, and he said, “ I am going to send to you the introduction that you are to use in introducing me.” And I got a two page, single spaced, letter saying, “Here is what you are to say.” Well, when I introduced him, I paraphrased what he gave me. I actually used what he gave me, but not to the letter, see. And two weeks later, I received a letter from him telling me how disappointed he was that I didn't stick, word for word, to the introduction that he wanted. Well I learned something from this bishop - no, I didn't - I learned what not to do. But Tom mentioned in his introduction a book that, in a sense, changed the direction of my ministry and priesthood; and that book is: *The Changing Face of the Priesthood*.

As Tom pointed out, that book was published in the year 2000. I was rector of St. Mary's Seminary in the Graduate School of Theology in the Diocese of Cleveland; and the book was either applauded or condemned. And the author was either applauded or condemned. Fr. Andrew Greeley saw me shortly afterwards - well it wasn't shortly afterwards, it was about a year later, - and he said, “Well, you were fired as rector of the seminary;” and I said, “No Andy, I wasn't fired. I went into to see the bishop, and said, “I would like to go back to college, teaching.” Now, I won't deny that the bishop was happy to hear that, (loud laughter) but he did not fire me. But this book came out while I was rector, and few priests read it. A few seminarians read it. But they read a review in the Cleveland newspaper that highlighted the two neuralgic chapters of the book. I had chapters on the priests' identity, issues of integrity, loving as a celibate, tending the word, trying to be physiologically a healthy person. And then, I had a chapter on clergy sexual abuse; and in 2000, you wouldn't believe the denial. It wasn't until the Boston scandal broke in 2002 that people finally said, “We have an issue here, a serious issue which is impacting thousands of the young people.” And then I had another chapter, simply reporting as carefully as I could, that we do have a higher percentage of gay men in our seminaries, in the priesthood, and by extension, you could say, in the episcopacy. I had some gay seminarians and gay priests thank me for writing that chapter. They said it is good that people understand the reality. And yet, there were people that feel we shouldn't be speaking about that.

The Cleveland Presbyteral Council called me before them; and each member of the council told me what he feels the priests in his district were thinking. Well, at the end of that session, which was as you can imagine a little bit painful, the verdict was that what I had written was true. I was raising real issues; but I shouldn't have written that book while I was a sitting rector. I want to say, that's the best time, isn't it? In fact, Pope John Paul II said our seminarians should be told everything that is real about the priesthood. That was what I was trying to do.

However, I am thinking of another book, not titled, *The Changing Face of the Priesthood*, but titled, *The Changing Face of the Episcopacy*; and I'd like to say a little bit about that. A number of you here are familiar with Lord John Acton's famous maxim: "Power tends to corrupt; and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Now that's a maxim. I think there's truth in that, but I think we all know people who exercise power, and they are not corrupt; but that doesn't negate the maxim. Here's something I think Lord Acton also could have said: "Status tends to corrupt; and absolute status corrupts absolutely."

When I was ordained in 1965, people looked upon me as a man with status. And in 1965 a son, a priest, a daughter, a nun, that Catholic family had status. What if we could also say, it's not just power that corrupts, or status that corrupts, but privilege has a tendency to corrupt, and absolute privilege corrupts absolutely. Power, status, privilege: these are the root building blocks of clericalism and an attitude of entitlement. "Nothing is too good for Father." Well today people can take that two ways. Nothing is too good for Father; he doesn't deserve anything. (laughter) But we all know that the Catholic ship, you know, is being tossed in a sea of controversy; and lately, it's the Pennsylvania report, of the Attorney General of that state. Yes, the breathe of the clergy sexual abuse scandal has not yet been fully brought to the surface; and I think we are going to have other states following the lead of Pennsylvania. And other states already have done that. I think there might be at least a half dozen states that are conducting their own investigations; Michigan for sure, and I believe Illinois, and a number of other states.

So, we are wrestling with: "Isn't this ever going to end? Isn't this ever going to stop?" And how can men who have studied scripture for say 4, 6, 8 years in the seminary, how can men who have taken courses in moral theology, been trained in ethical thinking, who have been trained to be pastors, and preach the gospel, so behave that they have injured people? They have been called to bless, and to heal, and to instruct, and to lead. When I was rector of our seminary, I felt that maybe it would be good for the faculty to consider asking our seminarians about to be ordained to take the Hippocratic oath: "I swear and promise to do no harm." Unfortunately, some of our priests, some of our bishops – absolutely, not the majority, please God - I am right when I say that, have done harm, serious harm, the kind of harm that can lead to someone taking his or her own life. We are scratching our heads saying, "What's going on with this Church that has produced such great saints and marvelous people, so committed to injustice and the poor. What's going on in this Church?"

And then, almost like another bookend to the Pennsylvania grand jury's attorney general's report, we have the sad tale of Theodore McCarrick. Now, I don't know how Theodore McCarrick went from Archbishop of Newark to Archbishop of Washington D.C., when a number of clergy, and I want to include bishops, knew of his behavior? In fact, twenty years ago, as a new rector of St. Mary's Seminary, I was attending a meeting on the East coast of seminary leaders, and I heard of the then behavior of Archbishop McCarrick. And I have got to tell you something, when I returned to Cleveland, I heard from a priest who said, "I am a priest of the Archdiocese of Washington. The rumor is that we are going to get Archbishop McCarrick as our new archbishop; and he said, "I and other priests are really anxious about this, because we have heard that the archbishop takes seminarians to his beach house, and I think he read of the little scenario - 5 seminarians - we have 4 beds, who gets to sleep with the archbishop?" That's exactly what this priest told me. Twenty years ago, if Don Cozzens

from the Midwest had heard of this, I would like to say we would be naive to think that there were not other priests and prelates, especially on the East coast who knew of this. And then, after being named archbishop of Washington DC, Ted McCarrick who is appointed to the College of Cardinals.

And so a number of people are saying, "What was going on here? How did he continue to rise, when there were so many rumors?" Now, why didn't I say anything to my bishop, or to the faculty that I was leading? Because what I heard was gossip. And I didn't hear it from anybody else. And I thought I had an obligation not to share it with anyone. I believe, in conscience I could have share it with my bishop; but I didn't; and I'm not sure why I didn't. I mention Theodore McCarrick, the Pennsylvania Attorney General's report, because I do think there is a changing face of the priesthood today; but there is also what we are witnessing, there is the changing face of the episcopacy. I am sad to say that I feel many of our bishops have lost their credibility. They don't have street creds. I think they have lost the respect of a lot of Catholics today.

I have written about the humbling of the priesthood which, I think, is a good thing. We men who are priests should be humbled by the fact that we have, like front row seats, witnessing the hidden ways of the Holy Spirit, and watching the hidden drama of grace in the lives of people, especially as we celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation. It is humbling to be a priest. And a priest who is caught up in clericalism doesn't seem to get it. I don't think he is humbled by the goodness of the people to whom he ministers. But, if there is a humbling of the priesthood, there is a humbling of the episcopacy; and I'm not sure how many of our bishops are getting it, you know? The people are looking to them for real pastoral leadership and witness. I'm not sure.

A number of years ago a scripture scholar, a nun, I'm not going to mention her name, because I am going to tell you what she told me; and it might be kind of me not to mention her name. She said, "Don" and she was a seminary prof too, and I was moving from being vicar to the seminarians; and she said, "The Church, you know, you have to admit it; it's corrupt." And I was thinking, "Well, there are pockets of corruption in the Church. You could say the Church is corrupt." I still can't say it. But I think there might be corrupt structures and corrupt systems; that you can take a normal healthy person, and you put them into this situation, bye and bye, you know, they come to think the way the institution thinks. I think that is true of all of us who have been through a seminary system.

Now, sometimes, it doesn't rub off on us; and that's a miracle of grace. I think it is due to family and friends, because a healthy family will not let their son, who is ordained a priest, think too highly of himself. (laughter) My brothers are very good at that. They were proud to have a brother a priest. They said, "We know what you do on weekends Don, but what do you do during the week?" I said, "That's none of your business. I'm working on my homily," or, well anyway they were pulling my leg. I think we are witnessing at least dimensions of corruption in the Church; and it's not only clergy sexual abuse, sometimes financial abuse. I think we see corruption when there is true arrogance; when there is what we have tried to name as clericalism.

Do you know what I think the exceptions are? You, the laity. You are challenging your ordained leaders in a very powerful way, and especially the vowed religious that I have had the privilege of working with. You know Walter Burkhardt, the Jesuit, who wrote this wonderful essay in America Magazine, I think 15 years ago about. He said, "I love

this Church. I've never seen anything more corrupt though." (laughter) But then, he said, "And I'm reasonably corrupt myself." See, if I am going to say the Church has pockets of corruption, then I have to admit my own pockets of corruption, because I'm finite, because I am human. And so, I don't think we should be scandalized that there are pockets of corruption. I think we should be challenged to make sure those pockets of corruption don't subvert this wonderful Church, that I think is light to the world, and a real source of freedom, gospel freedom.

I see the changing face of the episcopacy along these lines. The first chapter of the *Changing Face of the Priesthood* was on identity. The Vatican II led priests, that if they were serious about Vatican II, led them to have an identity crises. Because Vatican II said, "I am not a man set apart by ordination. I am a man set in the middle of a community who, by his way of life of simplicity and humility, is a living witness of what a person who is trying to live by the gospel looks like. I think our bishops are undergoing and identity crises. "Nobody wants to kiss my ring anymore. (laughter) It's been weeks since I have been called Your Excellency."

You know, I have to tell you this, little example, and I don't know to lose my train of thought here. But I had a friend, who had a Cardinal staying in his rectory, in fact the Cardinal was the head of a major Dicastery in Rome - a really, really big shot. Well, the Cardinal came down for breakfast; and he really came down, I think, for a cup of coffee and maybe a piece of toast; and then he was going to go upstairs and dress. But he had on black pants and a white t-shirt, like his underwear, okay? a white t-shirt, black pants, but he was wearing his Pectoral Cross. (loud laughter) I don't think this guy wears his Pectoral Cross to bed. And the Cardinal acted as if, "Well, here I am outside my bedroom. People might not know that I am a member of the College of Cardinals." But here is what is happening for many of the bishops, who, I think, if we could get to know them, we would respect them, and care about them, and love them. I think these bishops understand that they are moving from being a prince to a shepherd. They are moving from being an aristocrat to a servant leader. And they are moving from a royal consciousness to a baptismal consciousness.

I'll tell you what I am talking about with this last shift here. Many of you know who Walter Brueggemann is. He is the author of the classic, *The Prophetic Imagination*. If you want to know one of the roots of clergy sexual abuse, or one of the roots of clericalism, read *The Prophetic Imagination*. In that book Brueggemann is talking about now, the Hebrew Bible, and those centuries that comprise the Hebrew Scriptures. He writes about a royal consciousness. You know, the patriarchs and the kings, they think differently. That is what he means by a royal consciousness. I mean, you are just born to lead; and it's all kind of given to you; and he said, "The people who don't have a royal consciousness, they see things differently. I think, in our Church we've had two kinds of consciousness. We have had a kind of Episcopal consciousness, like a Vatican consciousness, "We've got to hold everything together; we have to be controlling, we don't believe that the Holy Spirit is loose in the world."

I think it is. I think she is. I'm not sure, but I would bet on that, you know? Because, sometimes we Catholics think we have a corner on the market. I mean, the Holy Spirit, it's true, works through the Catholic Church. Sometimes the Holy Spirit's grace overflows into other dimensions. (laughter) But a bishop who has a baptismal consciousness understands that his first identity is that as a baptized person. That's what makes us members of God's holy people. You remember when Pope John XXIII

said famously, "The best day in my life" - he was talking to his mother - "was not the day I was elected Pope, not the day I was named a cardinal, not the day I was named an archbishop, not the day I was ordained a bishop, not the day I was ordained a priest, but the day of my baptism. That was the most important." Pope John XXIII got that. He didn't have a royal consciousness; and he scandalized so many people, because he trusted in the Holy Spirit, that it wasn't working just through him.

Now, I want to say something about clericalism, because, first of all, I probably need to confess my own clericalism. Seldom, when I was a younger priest, did I ever go into a car dealership to buy a new car without letting the salesman know I was a priest. So, maybe, I got a clerical discount. I was stopped once by a policeman for going just slightly over the speed limit; and he looked at my driver's license. I wasn't dressed in a collar, and he said, "This address, is that St. Anne's Parish on Coventry?" And I said, "Oh, yes, officer, and, yes, you're right," really perceptive. "Are you a priest?" he said. And I said, Good, this is going to go well." I said, "Yes, I am a priest." And he said, "Well, I went to Benedictine High School, Father. I really loved those Benedictine monks;" and handed me back the license, and he said, "I'm sorry for stopping you."

Now I can rise above my principals; and that's exactly what I did there, I think. But let me say a little bit more about clericalism. And I have often thought of clericalism as primarily an attitude of superiority and exception. That has been inculcated through my years in the seminary, and being a member of a presbyterate, and hanging out with clergy; and then, in a way being treated as if I'm something special by well meaning Catholics, who have been told there is no higher dignity in the world than to be an ordained priest. So, if Walter Burkhardt is going to confess his own corruption, here I am talking about clericalism; and the reason I maybe know a little bit about what I am talking about is, that I am what I am talking about. And yet, I am hoping that by God's grace, and good friends, and a wonderful family that my feet are on the ground. At least I hope they are.

But recently, I came across a book that said, "Clericalism, truly, is an attitude. It's an attitude of exceptional treatment. I am exempt from the way other people think. It is an attitude that puts other people down." But, he said, "It's more than that." And he argues from an historical perspective that we can understand clericalism from the standpoint of a legislation. I never thought of that before. He said, "Take a look at the fourth century." And I think most of you know that in the fourth century Constantine said, "Christianity is going to be the religion of the empire." What he did at that time is legislate that ordained priests and bishops were in a special class; and they were the clerical class. They have a state in life, clerical state. And actually the pagan priests before Constantine converted, were awarded this dignity, this status. They were members of the clerical state. So, priests then started dressing like senators. Maybe we have the origin of our vestments that can be traced back to the fourth century.

Okay, then, in the tenth and eleventh century, some of you have heard of the Gregorian reform; and I am referring to the legislation of Pope Gregory VII, Hildebrand, who was a monk; and he started saying that priests should really live like monks; and they shouldn't marry. And that led to the Second Lateran Council in 1139 that directed that all Latin Rite diocesan priests, and by extension, bishops, were to be celibate. I say Latin Rite because, I think there are 24 different Catholic rites. The Roman Church, the Western Church, is the big, big brother. I mean the other 23 can't compare to the Roman Rite.

But, I think, that many of you know that celibacy is required of diocesan priests of the Latin Rite. I know one man who felt called to be a priest, and felt called to the sacrament of Marriage. By the way celibacy is not a sacrament, it's a discipline. And we've allowed a discipline to trump a sacrament. I don't like using the word "trump," (loud laughter) but it works here. So you have the Constantinian legislation; you have the legislation of Pope Gregory II; and, then, the third piece of legislation came from the Council of Trent that legislated that men who would like to be priests should be trained in seminaries.

And the author of this historical overview, his name is Joe Holland, and I brought his book with me. With the seminary there, it was legislated by the Council of Trent, so it's institutionalized. And when you live in a seminary for 4 or 6 or 8 or 12 years, something happens to you. There's kind of a change. And it's not that you think you're superior to other people, but you hear in so many different ways, both verbally and kind of by osmosis, that the priesthood is a state in life that has dignity beyond imagination. If you have a clerical state, it soon can become a clerical caste. We have a caste system in the Catholic Church and we are understanding that that is really not reflective of the Gospel. But we've had it for 1700 years; and it's hard to break away from that. And it sounds to some people if you are speaking against clericalism, as Pope Francis has spoken against clericalism, that somehow you are demeaning ordained ministry. I don't think that is the case at all. I think we are trying to lift up the people of God who are ministering to each other all the time.

Recently, I read a book by a lay theologian. This is a man who was a Jesuit for about a year, left the Jesuits, became an attorney, practiced law for quite a few decades, and then retired, and then started studying the Scriptures. And he really is a lay theologian, and a lay scripture scholar, even though he doesn't have doctorates in those fields. What he has done is carefully study the teachings of Jesus. And he has discovered five, and he calls them commandments, of Jesus that are unique to Jesus. I mean, the great commandment of love is not unique to Jesus. I think you understand that. He is drawing from the Hebrew tradition and the Hebrew Scriptures. Here are his five commandments.

1. Do not judge, blame, condemn or exclude any person from your fellowship and love.
2. Forgive all who have offended you.
3. Do not do violence to any person, even in response to violence.
4. Act as a humble servant toward all others.
5. Detach yourself from possessions.

I would love to see those five commandments in the classroom of every seminary in the world. I'd like to see them hanging on chancery walls. Those five commandments, according to this lay person, are unique to Jesus. And, I think, they would be the antidote to clericalism. And, I really think, they would make a difference in our world and in our Church.

Okay, part two, which is going to be much shorter than part one.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Well, if the first part of my talk was above my pay grade, maybe this one is too. And here's what I thought I would do, trying to be a little bit creative. I was going to ask you to consider in your imagination what you would do if you were pope for a day? And then I said, "No! The way Rome works, nothing can be done in a day. (laughter) So, what if you were pope for a week? Well, I need to hit the road pretty soon; so, I am going to tell you what I might do if I were pope for a week. Now, I didn't spend a lot of time figuring these things out, I just let them come to me, so. So, they are not in any kind of order of theological importance.

The first thing I think I would do is restore the use of the Third Rite of Reconciliation: Communal Penance. Boy! did we miss the boat on that one.

The second thing I would do - because I'm a little on the shy side - is I would ordain women deacons, and let the next Pope ... (loud laughter).

I would appoint four women to the College of Cardinals: one from Europe, one from North America, one from South America, one from Africa, Asia, South Indonesia. Those four women cardinals could vote at the next conclave - and I am sure they would look better in red than the Cardinals. (laughter)

I would revise the process for the naming of bishops, because, right now, it is kind of a clouded process. We have many, many wonderful bishops; but, I think, we have many bishops who have a royal consciousness. I think some bishops and some priests feel they need two books - two books only: the Code of Canon Law and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. And they would say, "Oh, no! There is a third one, it's the Bible." But those two books for some priests; that's all you need. You don't need to read Elizabeth Johnson. You don't need to read Walter Brueggemann. You don't need to read Richard Rohr. You don't need to read Thomas Merton. It's all in the catechism. And if it isn't in the catechism, it's in the Code of Canon Law. And I think that's unfortunate.

And I would allow what Vatican II said to the conference of bishops: "You have the final say on liturgical books." One of the hardest aspects of the priesthood for me these past years has been the Roman Missal. It is so hard for me to pray those prayers. They are awkward, and they are just unbearable, if I can use that expression.

And then I would hold workshops for priests and bishops; and ask priests and bishops to extend the workshops to the laity, pointing out that the Church, as the Second Vatican Council said, is alive and well; it's organic, not static. Therefore, it's growing and developing, as we have seen the Church grow and develop for the past 2000 years. Now I realize there has also been corruption, darkness, misguided governance for those 2000 years.

By the way, the key to polarization in the Church today is your fundamental understanding of what the Church is. I think most reactionary Catholics feel fearful that something dear to them is being taken away from them. They feel the Church is static and unchanging; and here we are talking about renewal and reform. So, if we understood the Church is alive and organic; and, yes, very committed to its tradition, I think the polarization, that I see as painful, would shrink, and hopefully, maybe even dissolve.

And then the last thing I would do, because it is Saturday and my week is up, that I would take a look at Canon 277, which I write about in *Freeing Celibacy*. This Canon is a tautology. And a tautology, as many of you know, is simply a statement that is true but it doesn't say anything. It doesn't give you any information. I'll give you a classic example of a tautology. Lying is wrong because it is a sin. (laughter) Isn't that right? What more do you know about lying. Nothing. I think that Canon 277 is a tautology. Canon 277 contradicts itself. It begins by saying celibacy for the priest and for the bishop sets a man free to serve wholeheartedly, without the distraction of family life and raising children; and it is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Then, it legislates a gift. How do you do that? How do you legislate a gift? Because it goes on to say, therefore, celibacy is a discipline that all Roman Catholic seminarians need to embrace.

Sister Sandra Schneiders - do you recognize that name? She would be a good speaker for Elephants. She has spoken here? She has. Okay. She taught seminarians for a while; and she said, "You know, trying to teach a seminarian how to lead a healthy, integrated, celibate life is like trying to take someone who can't dance the two-step and train them to be a ballerina." I mean, you have to have the aptitude.

So let me conclude by saying first of all, thank you for inviting me to come back. You give me great hope just to see you are so alive; and you're open minded; and you love each other; and you love your leaders; and you love your parish ministers.

But, I pray that we all might have a faith that dares to speak. Isn't that an interesting statement? A faith that dares to speak, that dares to speak to pastors and bishops and cardinals, the pope.

And then a love that dares to question. A retired bishop, John Heaps from Australia, wrote to me after *The Changing Face of the Priesthood* came out; and he said, "I liked your book very much;" and he enclosed a copy of a book he wrote, and it was titled *A Love That Dares to Question*. And then he wrote about all the questions he has about the Church because he loves the Church.

And then, a loyalty that dares to think. I don't think I was ever really challenged to think as a seminarian. I was challenged to memorize and know what the Church - meaning the bishops and theologians - were thinking. I gave a talk once to priests called, "When a Priest Doubts." Many of us here were taught that if you doubt your faith, it's a sin. I would like to say the opposite of faith is not doubt. The opposite of faith is certitude, certainty. Haven't you heard someone say hey, I'm not perfect, I've maybe committed every sin in the book. The one sin I haven't committed is I've never doubted. I want to say, maybe you have never thought. (laughter) But that's hard to say.

You people have the faith that dares to speak. And I think that faith has sustained the Elephants in the Room for a very long time. Be proud of the witness that you are giving to our struggling church. Thank you. (Applause)

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