



22nd Sunday Ordinary Time – 03 September 2023

POPE FRANCIS ON REFORM IN THE CHURCH



Pope Francis blasted what he described as groups of "very strong, reactionary" American Catholics, warning against becoming "backwardists" who oppose change in the Catholic Church. "The situation in the United States is not easy: There is a very strong, reactionary attitude. It is organized and shapes the way people belong, even emotionally," said the pope. "I want to remind these people

that backwardism is useless, and it is necessary to understand that there is a correct evolution in the understanding of questions of faith and morals." The pope's comments came during an Aug. 5 meeting with the Jesuits in Portugal during his Aug. 2-6 visit to Lisbon for World Youth Day. His remarks were published by the Jesuit journal *La Civiltà Cattolica* on Aug. 28. In responding to a question from a Portuguese Jesuit who said he had spent last year in the United States – where he often witnessed criticisms of Francis' leadership of the church, including by American bishops – the pope pointed to what he described as "concrete" examples of church teaching evolving over time. "Today it is a sin to possess atomic bombs; the death penalty is a sin, it cannot be practiced, and it was not so before," he said. "As for slavery, some pontiffs before me have tolerated it, but things are different today." Francis went on to point to the writings of the fifth century monk, Vincent of Lérins, who taught that doctrine "may be consolidated by years, expanded by time, exalted by age." "Change develops from the root upward, growing with these three criteria," the pope told the Jesuits, noting that Lérins knew that the understanding of the human person is deepened with the passage of time. "The other sciences and their evolution also help the church in this growth in understanding," Francis said. "The view of church doctrine as a monolith is wrong." Francis, who regularly hosts private meetings with his fellow Jesuits during his international travels, has often used these encounters to speak candidly about challenges facing the church today. Since the beginning of this pontificate, much of the resistance to the Francis papacy has thrived in the English-speaking world, particularly in the United States, where many of its leaders have openly opposed the pope's pastoral priorities, especially when it comes to welcoming LGBTQ people and other minorities into the church and combating climate change. While Francis did not name particular individuals or groups in his meeting with the Portuguese Jesuits, he offered a broadside against what he has frequently referred to as "indietrists" (Italian for "backwardists"). "If you don't change upward, you go backward, and then you take on criteria for change different from those that the faith itself gives you to grow and change. And the effects on morality are devastating," said Francis. "Those American groups of which you speak, so closed, are isolating themselves. And instead of living by doctrine, by the true doctrine that always develops and bears fruit, they live by ideologies," he added. "But when you abandon doctrine in life to replace it with an ideology, you have lost, you have lost as in war." When asked by a Jesuit who works with university students how this applies to gay students who are not living celibately, but are still active in the church, the pope did not demur. "The door is open to everyone, everyone has their own space in the church," said Francis. "How will each person live it? We help people live so that they can occupy that place with maturity, and this applies to all kinds of people." "What I don't like at all, in general, is that we look at the so-called 'sin of the flesh' with a magnifying glass," said Francis. "If you exploited workers, if you lied or cheated, it didn't matter, and instead relevant were the sins below the waist." "We must not be superficial and naive, forcing people into things and behaviors for which they are not yet mature, or are not capable," Francis said. "To accompany people spiritually and pastorally takes a lot of sensitivity and creativity." The pope went on to recount his numerous meetings with transgender people, whom he said felt rejected by the church. "Everyone, everyone, everyone, are called to live in the church," he told the Jesuits. "Never forget that."

*Courtesy Christopher White
National Catholic Reporter*

A Warm Welcome to



Fr. Colin Rothery who is the new Curate in James's St. and Meath St. Over the next few weeks you'll get a chance to chat with him.



Linear Park Opening

Dublin City Council is thrilled to announce the confirmed opening date for phase 2 of the linear park: Monday, September 11th at 10:30 a.m. Please RSVP to Parks@dublincity.ie



Eat The Streets Festival

Are you a novice urban farmer looking for composting tips? Curious about what was served for dinner in 1916 Dublin? Or are you a Climate Campaigner, pondering the future of food? See more: <https://eatthestreets.ie/festival>



Meath Street Re-Vamp

With plans for a new-look Meath Street subject to consultation until 25th September 2023, the design team will host a drop-in/walk-in information event to answer questions on the proposals from 3-6pm on Thursday 7th September in The Little Flower, 11 Meath Street.

22ND SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

Penitential Rite

Our As we begin our celebration, rejoicing in the Lord, let us remember God's immense love and his hopes for us.

You challenge us to be honest. Lord have mercy

You challenge us to be hopeful in the face of despair. Christ have mercy

You challenge us to be creative in facing our life's journey. Lord have mercy

May our loving and creative Lord, give us confidence in his mercy, forgive us our sin and accompany us on the journey of our life. Amen

Jeremiah 20:7-9

You have seduced me, the Lord, and I have let myself be seduced; you have overpowered me: you were the stronger. I am a daily laughing-stock, everybody's butt. Each time I speak the word, I have to howl and proclaim: 'Violence and ruin!' The word of the Lord has meant for me insult, derision, all day long. I used to say, 'I will not think about him, I will not speak in his name any more. Then there seemed to be a fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones. The effort to restrain it wearied me, I could not bear it.

Romans 12:1-2

Think of God's mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do.

Alleluia, alleluia!
May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our mind, so that we can see what hope his call holds for us. Alleluia!

Matthew 16:21-27

Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him. 'Heaven preserve you, Lord;' he said 'this must not happen to you'. But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because the way you think is not

God's way but man's.' Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it. What, then, will a man gain if he wins the whole world and ruins his life? Or what has a man to offer in exchange for his life? 'For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and, when he does, he will reward each one according to his behaviour.

Prayer of the Faithful

God our Father and Mother, through your love, you help us to recognise the dignity of all. We thank you. Lord hear us

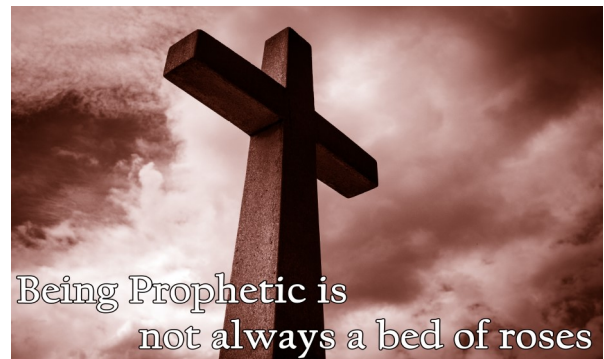
Lord Jesus, you are the Living Word of God, challenging us to serve the world as you did. We thank you. Lord hear us

Courage is not the absence of fear but the triumph over it. As Jesus conquered his fear, so may we do likewise. Lord hear us

In a spirit of thanksgiving, we remember those who have died. We are disturbed by the deaths of those who have died through violence and war, but we live in the hope of being united again in your kingdom. Lord hear us

Like the prophet Jeremiah and Jesus we must learn to challenge the world we live in, so that it becomes a place that embraces truth, love, generosity and compassion. Lord hear us

In silence, we call to mind those who need our prayer and support.....Lord hear us



Reflection

May I have the courage today to live the life that I would love, to postpone my dream no longer but do at last what I came here for and waste my heart on fear no more. May I have the courage to listen to the voice of desire that disturbs me when I have settled for something safe. May I have the wisdom to enter generously into my own unease to discover the new direction my longing wants me to take. May I respond to the call of my gift and find the courage to follow its path. Trust that a richer life awaits me there, that I will lose nothing.

John O'Donohue