

# CELIBACY IS A HISTORICAL ILL WHICH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH MUST IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAW

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The church around the world today is witnessing a sharp reduction in the number of celibate priests and nuns. This also draw from a growing realization that the universal requirement to celibacy within the church was forced upon the clergy in the year 1123 and then again in 1139. Historically, there is no explicit commandment in the New Testament of the Holy Bible which states that the disciples of Jesus Christ must live a life of celibacy. Stances positioned in defense of celibacy by the theologians is merely a superficial interpretation refined with dogmas of asceticism and layered with

eschatological theology. Until the 11<sup>th</sup> century the Catholic church had not imposed celibacy and much of the concept was utopian. This slowly seeped in through vested interests eventually and this historical wrong has not been corrected to this day. Celibate religious are not in sync with the modern world, they see any suggestion provided as a direct threat to their own interests and find it extremely difficult, if not suspicious to align with the ways of Christ, if not the Church at large which is inspired by the faithful laity. In a modern world, celibacy has limited merit and has turned contrary to what was envisaged. Rather authoritarian views held by hierarchical ranks have pushed the priestly celibate to pursue everything in professional spheres leaving limited time for actual spirituality, thus naturally the dogmas that inspired celibacy no longer serve any purpose, if common sense exists.

It is very much possible to live a life of meaning and goodness, engage in spiritually enlightened living and respond to God's call of a beautiful life without celibacy. I believe as also seen through

oceanic evidence available that, people engaged in godly worship with families are more humane, more concerned, more empathetic, more giving and filled with love and life through the eternal design, than those who resort to hierarchical celibacy thrust upon. In-fact those who are subjected to celibacy, eventually are unable to strike a balance of compassion and become emotionally bankrupt which is contrary to God's love.

## **Why celibacy is a historical ill**

The beauty of life originates and stems from the journey of Adam and Eve as interpreted by God's design. When God in all greatness and wisdom choose to bring together a man and a woman in favour of life and a better world, the catholic church went astray by interpreting forms of life differently, came in conflict with biology, forced several doctrines and continues to turn a blind eye to logic. Vatican needs to discover life amidst the dark clouds that have surrounded Rome for too long. Vatican has grown so thick skinned that sweeping changes in Vatican stands glaringly in need of a miracle from above. My interactions over the years with Cardinals, Bishops, Priests, Nuns serve to only tell me that the Church must change, the Church must embrace family centric priests and nuns, the church must no longer see priesthood as being royal and laity as being faithful, but put together, all the children of God, must be of collective service, where prayer, worship, solidarity and love reigns supreme. I would also like to argue that perhaps, Jesus Christ would have inspired beautiful family values, if his life was not cut short too young because of a jealous community that conspired to kill him and orchestrated a day-light murder of a divine man who inspired and healed the human race forever by crucifying him on a cross besides two robbers.

The inner reservations of the Church often stem from an inward process of looking at God, than to embrace Christ in all his fullness. Mere looking at history serves to inform us that Saint Peter, The First Pope of the Catholic Church was married. The church has had married priests and leaders until celibacy was forced. The second Lateran council that sat in 1139 enacted the first written law bringing about an order for the Universal Church. This broke open the Church of Man Vs the Church of Christ. The Second Lateran council was wrong as it decided to split what God united under the garb of "sacredness."

To achieve this, in many places, coercion and enslavement of clerical wives and children was involved in the enforcement of bringing about celibacy. "The earliest decree in which the children born of clerics were declared to be slaves and never to be enfranchised seems to have been a canon of the Synod of Pavia in 1018. Similar penalties were promulgated against wives and concubines (Synod of Melfi, 1189 can. Xii).

If we superficially look at people who have so decisively influenced human life on earth, it is often those who are married or those who enjoy the warmth of families which enables wisdom to march forward. Attaining wisdom, both worldly and spiritual is a matter of practice and commitment. You

can be married and still do miracles for the world; you can live a life of celibacy and take cover being sacred and yet do nothing for God's people. In-fact not many have been able to really do anything worthwhile being in the bondage of celibacy. The politics of celibacy, thrives on establishment of superiority, seniority and dominance. It suppresses the human ability of goodness and benevolence. I know of some of the most talented priests and nuns whose energies could have enkindled a new fire for humanity & for Christ's love, but they are suppressed as ideological prisoners in a hierarchy which is often unable to be of service to the people of God. On the other hand, there are so many married priests, pastors, deacons who enjoy the different gifts ( Seven gifts) from God which hardly any celibate priests and nuns are able to secure. There are so many non-celibate people of God (laity) who are co-heirs in God's kingdom because they have a clear vision for the world and continue to champion God's work on earth.

The notion of "Holy celibacy" as a gift from God is a narrative crafted to guide people who cannot always use reason and logic. I have come across more good being done by men and women of honor with family values who subscribe to the loyal and divine faith of God's love bestowed upon them, moved with empathy and determination to build an egalitarian society than when compared to those who showcase to live a life of celibacy. Jesus Christ guides us to inspire energies into the Church and this can only be championed if the Church embraces to abolish the slavery of celibacy. Many Churches in Europe and North America are being converted to historical institutions and museums. The catholic faithful are dangerously disconnected from the Church and many prefer to either be Sunday Christians and at times outstanding Christians, because the gap has widened to internalize Christ as if he solely is the property of the Church alone. I call myself a believer, a proud disciple of Christ, and in my life's quest if I can do even 1% work for God's people, this is to have lived blessed with God's abundance of walking in grace and mercy.

### **Priestly celibacy & the reality of intellectual bankruptcy:**

As a human institution engaged in primary spirituality, it is imperative to be subjective to reforms, updating timely and not be simply covered in the light of a historical ill garnered under the assumption of grace. Anything that chooses to divide one human from another, cannot be God sent. When a priestly institution has clear boundaries that ensure the divine faithful people are separated and kept at arm's length, it's the founding cracks in a steep departure from God's true call, Christ's true benevolence.

The Kingdom of heaven is open to all with a virtue and ability of doing good and being kind. Christ in the end, had one message to the world, love one another as I have loved you. A Christian subscribed to a call with Christ essentially thrives on the fundamentals of the union of love and brotherhood, a communion with life, a motivation in charity and the divinity of truth. By sharing this social love extensively, the encounter to be open with love and solidarity is essentially divine and also human which celibacy as a canonical legislation comes in conflict with. In fact priest or no priest, as children in God's love, we are equal custodians in the kingdom of Christ embraced by love. This is to be

recognized as apostolic love by putting God first in whatever professional endeavors we choose to pursue and to integrate intellectual proficiency in apostolic and fulfilling love.

In conclusion, Vatican must revoke celibacy with immediate effect and also open doors to professionals with spiritual maturity filled with the union of love as per God's design and in favor of a better world to further God's grace for all. Closed doors since a few centuries, must now be opened gain. The wisdom of divine providence must guide the Church to live on for the ages. This will reboot the existing Church run institutions in decline and galvanize a new fire in every Christian vein.