

# Call For Radical Reform Of A Troubled Catholic Church

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*This observation leads to Moran's most general, but perhaps also his most important point: the institutional Church must rethink what it means by "teaching."*

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, September 29, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A book, *Missed Opportunities: Rethinking Catholic Tradition* by prolific author Gabriel Moran offers detailed criticism of the Roman Catholic Church and proposes radical reforms of that church. Moran has been writing on the strengths and weaknesses of the church since before the Second Vatican Council. The present book challenges the language and structure of the church as well as the basis of its moral teaching. Each of the chapters on topics that include contraception, abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia, the environment, and human rights is argued from a knowledge of the church's own tradition in light of contemporary experience.

The Roman Catholic Church has been in free fall in the United States and Europe. Tens of millions of people have drifted away, not usually because they were attracted to something better, but because church officials speak a language that seems irrelevant. Pope Francis was able to awaken the interest of a surprisingly large number of people. He has changed the face of the official church mainly by gestures, symbols and provocative comments. He is unwilling or unable to pursue the kind of doctrinal change that is needed, especially on sexual issues. He does not seem to grasp the extent and the seriousness of a women's movement worldwide.

The clergy abuse scandal, the author claims, was predictable fifty years ago when the aborted reforms of the Second Vatican Council left all power with the clergy while the support and protections of individual clergymen disappeared. Today the only way to end clericalism is to eliminate a clerical class. Priesthood is not tied to a clergy/lay division which runs counter to the church's original vision of itself as a community of communities. Pope Francis has called a meeting of the leading bishops in the world to discuss the clergy scandal. Bishops talking only to other bishops are not likely to grasp the extent of the problem or know what to do about it.

The chapter on abortion offers a different argument beyond the useless opposition of pro-life vs. pro-choice. The author claims to be the traditionalist in following Augustine, Thomas Aquinas and the long history of the church's teaching that early abortions are not homicide. The bishops in the 1970s, after nearly all church members rejected the official teaching on contraception, decided to take an absolute stand on abortion. They ceased talking about when a person comes into existence and started talking about "life." Their stand is in opposition to most of the church's tradition. The refusal to enter into any dialogue has been a self-defeating strategy. If the aim is to reduce the number of abortions the one policy that has proven to be effective is an easy access to contraceptives.

Author Gabriel Moran says that his aim in this book, as in previous books, is to open a better conversation on disputed topics. How a question is formulated determines the possible answers to the question. The Roman Catholic Church is sharply divided which makes fruitful discussions and debates nearly impossible. *Missed Opportunities* is an earnest attempt to find a new path that is both consistent with the long tradition of the church while genuinely confronting today's questions.

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