

What Can We Do?
The Role of the Laity in a Time of Crisis

Meghan Cokeley, mcokeley@archphila.org
Office for the New Evangelization, Archdiocese of Philadelphia

1. “Although the Church possesses a hierarchical structure, nevertheless this structure is totally ordered to the holiness of Christ's members.” -St. John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem* 27
2. “Mary goes before all of us in the holiness that is the Church’s mystery... That is why the ‘Marian’ dimension precedes the ‘Petrine.’” –Catechism of the Catholic Church 773
3. “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” -Tertullian
4. “Sadly [St. Benedict] began to complain: ‘May God forgive you, sister. What have you done?’ ‘Well’, [St. Scholastica] answered, ‘I asked you and you would not listen; so I asked my God and he did listen. So now go off, if you can, leave me and return to your monastery’. Reluctant as he was to stay of his own will, he remained against his will. So it came about that they stayed awake the whole night, engrossed in their conversation about the spiritual life. *It is not surprising that she was more effective than he, since as John says, God is love, it was absolutely right that she could do more, as she loved more.*”. –*Dialogues*, Pope St. Gregory the Great
5. “So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there... He was amazed at their lack of faith.” –Mk 6:5-6
6. “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” –Mt 15:28
7. “[T]here was a temporary suspense of the functions of the “*Ecclesia docens*”. The body of Bishops failed in their confession of the faith. They spoke variously, one against another; there was nothing, after Nicaea, of firm, unvarying, consistent testimony, for nearly sixty years.’ –Bl. John Henry Newman, *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*
8. During that period [of the Arian heresy in the 4th century], ‘the divine tradition committed to the infallible Church was proclaimed and maintained far more by the faithful than by the Episcopate’. –Bl. John Henry Newman, *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*
9. “the faithful have an instinct for the truth of the Gospel, which enables them to recognize and endorse authentic Christian doctrine and practice and to reject what is false. That supernatural instinct... is called the *sensus fidei*...” –International Theological Commission, *On the Sensus Fidei in the Life of the Church*, par. 2
10. “The *sensus fidei fidelis* also enables individual believers to perceive any disharmony, incoherence, or contradiction between a teaching or practice and the authentic Christian faith by which they live. They react as a music lover does to false notes in the performance of a piece of music. In such cases, believers interiorly resist the teachings or practices concerned and do not accept them or participate in them.” –International Theological Commission, *On the Sensus Fidei in the Life of the Church*, par. 62

11. “Prayer and sacrifice are the two means to save the world. As for the Holy Rosary, Father, in these last times in which we are living, the Blessed Virgin has given a *new efficacy to the praying of the Holy Rosary*. This in such a way that there is *no problem that cannot be resolved* by praying the Rosary, no matter how difficult it is – be it temporal or above all spiritual – in the spiritual life of each of us or the lives of our families, be they our families in the world or Religious Communities, or even in the lives of peoples and nations. I repeat, there is no problem, as difficult as it may be, that we cannot resolve at this time by praying the Holy Rosary.” – Sr. Lucia of Fatima

Other Helpful Quotes

“Alerted by their *sensus fidei*, individual believers may deny assent even to the teaching of legitimate pastors if they do not recognise in that teaching the voice of Christ, the Good Shepherd. ‘The sheep follow [the Good Shepherd] because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run away from him because they do not know the voice of strangers’ (Jn 10:4-5). For St Thomas, a believer, even without theological competence, can and even must resist, by virtue of the *sensus fidei*, his or her bishop if the latter preaches heterodoxy.[\[78\]](#) In such a case, the believer does not treat himself or herself as the ultimate criterion of the truth of faith, but rather, faced with materially ‘authorised’ preaching which he or she finds troubling, without being able to explain exactly why, defers assent and appeals interiorly to the superior authority of the universal Church.” –International Theological Commission, *On the Sensus Fidei in the Life of the Church*, par. 63

"We must be prepared to undergo great trials in the not-too-distant future; trials that will require us to give up even our lives, and a total gift of self to Christ and for Christ." He continued, "Through your prayers and mine, it is possible to alleviate this tribulation, but it is no longer possible to avert it, because it is the only way the Church can be effectively renewed." The Holy Father concluded, "How many times, indeed has the renewal of the Church been effected in blood? This time, again, it will not be otherwise." –Informal statement from St. John Paul II

“Love the Madonna and pray the Rosary, for her Rosary is the weapon against the evils of the world today. All graces given by God pass through the Blessed Mother.” –St. Pio