

# AN OPEN LETTER TO BISHOP DONALD W. WUERL

MEMBER, POST-SYNOD EXHORTATION COMMITTEE

## LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

“CHRIST’S FAITHFUL ARE AT LIBERTY TO MAKE KNOWN THEIR NEEDS, ESPECIALLY THEIR SPIRITUAL NEEDS, AND THEIR WISHES TO THE PASTORS OF THE CHURCH. (CANON 212 2,3)

**SIGN, CUT OUT AND RETURN THIS LETTER TO:**

**FUTURECHURCH  
15800 MONTROSE AVE.  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
44111**

**WE WILL SEEK A PERSONAL MEETING WITH BISHOP WUERL TO HAND-DELIVER YOUR LETTERS.**

**WE WILL SEND A COPY OF THIS LETTER WITH A LIST OF SIGNERS TO POPE BENEDICT AND THE OTHER 14 MEMBERS OF THE POST-SYNOD COMMITTEE.**

**WE WILL ENCOURAGE THE INTERNATIONAL REFORM COMMUNITY TO SEND LETTERS TOO.**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO EXPAND THE CORPUS CHRISTI CAMPAIGN DONATE AT  
WWW.FUTURECHURCH.ORG**

Most Reverend Donald W. Wuerl  
Diocese of Pittsburgh  
111 Boulevard of the Allies  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Dear Bishop Wuerl,

I write because you serve on the Post-Synod Exhortation Committee from the World Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist. I understand it is your responsibility to help write Pope Benedict XVI’s final synod exhortation expected to appear next Fall.

It was encouraging to hear so many synod fathers express grave concerns about the consequences to the Church as a community centered on Eucharist, if we do nothing about the worldwide priest shortage. I was heartened that four of twelve synod working groups recommended further study of opening ordination to married men.

I was puzzled and distressed that final synod propositions ignored their recommendations even though half of the world’s Catholics do not have regular access to the Eucharist.

I was disappointed to see that the ministry of Catholic women was invisible at the synod. Many women ministers in the U.S. and worldwide are valiantly holding parishes together in a time of fewer priests. There are now more paid lay ministers in the U.S (80% of whom are women), than diocesan priests.

Over the next ten years, U.S. dioceses will face massive closing and clustering of parishes because of the priest shortage. Demographers predict that in the foreseeable future more than half of our 19,000 parishes may have no resident priest.

With a few notable exceptions, our bishops are failing to exercise leadership in deciding what is more important to the Church, the Eucharist or an exclusively male celibate priesthood.

Your synod intervention was both practical and profound, particularly the conclusion: “Whatever operative pastoral plan or suggestions that emerge for future orientation of the Church’s pastoral ministry should include an emphasis on the foundational mystery of Christ’s enduring presence and action in the Eucharist.”

Bishop Wuerl, how can we be a Eucharistic Community without the Eucharist?

I ask that you do all in your power to influence the pastoral plan emerging from the synod. Please encourage Pope Benedict XVI to open ordination to married as well as celibate men, and reopen the long overdue discussion about women’s full ministerial equality in the Church, beginning with ordaining women to the diaconate.

When our priest leaders reflect the blessed diversity found in the Body of Christ, the Church, we will experience with renewed love, grace and power that “foundational mystery of Christ’s enduring presence and action in the Eucharist.”

Sincerely yours,

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ (optional-sign anonymously if you wish)

Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

(we will contact you about the outcome of this project)

**THIS INITIATIVE IS PART OF THE CORPUS CHRISTI CAMPAIGN: FEWER PRIESTS, FEWER PARISHES DEVELOPED BY FUTURECHURCH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CALL TO ACTION**

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