

Catholic Priests Demand Changes Despite Vatican Threats

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A recently released book authored by an anonymous Catholic priest is joining a chorus of new voices from a clergy that is increasingly challenging long-held Church laws.

Confessions of a Passionate Priest by Father Ameen (not his real name) is a searing account of one priest's refusal to live a celibate life and the consequences he faced when his affair went public. Father Ameen says his story is just part of a larger push for change.

"There are examples all over the world of priests and even bishops challenging the Church's strict adherence to outdated laws," says Father Ameen. "What's more, they are finding support from their congregations."

Priests like Father Peter Kennedy of South Brisbane, Australia, and the late Abbe Pierre of France are good examples. Father Kennedy was booted from his church after refusing to follow Catholic protocols and Father Pierre—considered a saint in France—fought constant battles with the Church over celibacy and contraception.

"The Church has seen that congregants are willing to follow these priests even after they are punished by the Church," says Father Ameen. "Father Kennedy was able to take his congregation with him because he is addressing real-world issues with real-world solutions."

In Confessions of a Passionate Priest, Father Ameen offers up his own solutions to a dwindling priesthood, including:

- Allowing former Catholic priests who marry to return to ministering.
- Allowing current priests to date and to marry.
- Making celibacy an optional vow for all priests.
- A change in the Church's views on sexuality to reflect today's reality.

"Sex is a beautiful thing that should be celebrated and enjoyed, not criminalized," says Father Ameen. "The Church will soon be faced with more clergy calling for change over this subject."

Father Ameen remains dedicated to the priesthood despite his contradiction of specific Church rules. He currently lives in an undisclosed location in the United States, preferring to remain anonymous to avoid recrimination. His book is available at the Amazon, Barnes and Noble and Borders websites.

(Confessions of a Passionate Priest by Father Ameen; ISBN: 0-9816892-0-5; \$14.95; 224 pages; 5½" x 8½"; softcover; East Mountain Books)

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