

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

May 15, 2014 at 11:42am

---

## The traditionalists are trying to regain control

by Pat Perriello

NCR Today

As the time for the Synod on the family draws near, there seems to be an effort by traditionalists to control the process and shift the focus to doctrine rather than serving the pastoral needs of people.

Archbishop Samuel Aquila of the diocese of Denver has reiterated church teaching on marriage and sees the pastoral element as simply doing a better job of explaining traditional Catholic doctrine.

It seems pretty clear that Pope Francis is talking about something else. Francis said, "The question is not that of changing doctrine, but of digging deep and making sure that pastoral care takes into account situations and what it is possible for persons to do."

Francis is asking the question as to whether it is really possible for many in certain life situations to change their circumstances. Must one wait around for a spouse to die in order to receive Communion? Too many traditionalists seem unable to comprehend what a pastor must take into account to serve the needs of his people. They have a copy of the rule book, but what they may not have is a sensitivity to the people they serve.

What is being examined is not the indissolubility of marriage, but rather the distribution of the Eucharist. In the Scriptures it even appears that Jesus may have shared the Eucharist with Judas at the Last Supper. The Eucharist is meant to nourish the faithful. It is not a reward for the holy. It is not insignificant that most Protestant churches, including Episcopalians, always make clear that all are welcome at the Lord's Table.

Those having difficulties of any kind have the greatest need for the Eucharist. Yet we pompously walk around picking and choosing who can receive the graces and mercies of a loving Lord. If we want to deny Communion to all who are unworthy we should simply stop giving communion to anyone. None of us are

worthy, but all of us are in need. That is why Jesus gave us this wonderful gift.

Those opposed to sharing the Eucharist with divorced and remarried Catholics continue to focus on the doctrine of marriage. Yet no one is questioning the doctrine of marriage. Francis and other pastors of the church are simply looking at those who love the Lord and are saying, come, taste and see how good the Lord is.

Advertisement

---

**Source URL (retrieved on 03/24/2018 - 3:49am):** <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/traditionalists-are-trying-regain-control>

**Links:**

[1] <https://www.ncronline.org/forward/join?clickSource=end-article>

[2] <https://www.ncronline.org/node/160616>