

*Note: these paraphrases attempt to capture the main points of participants, but are not verbatim.*

- “I have no agenda, but am wondering what to tell my kids about all this.”
- “I'm angry, ANGRY, pissed, confused. I have younger kids. How would I answer if my kids ask me how I stayed committed to the church when I knew about this? This is going on now. We need to learn from past and not look the other way. I'm so glad that Fr. Leo addressed this in his homily... I cried. There are too many old white men making decisions in the church that are wrong. Hoping Pope Francis can bring radical change.”
- “I'm from Ireland, where there is a huge amount of anger at the church. Most people there think of it as an evil entity because of the hypocrisy. When growing up, it was a very authoritarian organization, and even kids knew what was going on, which priests 'liked' boys or girls. A friend was raped by priest. The priest later committed suicide. I came back to church fairly recently for my kids. A family member is a religious brother who has given up so much to serve the church, and there are so many great people in the church. I don't want to see everyone tarred with the same brush. My kids haven't asked about it, but they know. Something big has to change... I don't know the answers.”
- “As a kid, I was pushed to go to church by my parents. Priests would turn over then, but no one would talk about it because the church was considered sacred. I was told by my mom when I was older what priests were doing, and was angry I wasn't told earlier. The church is sacred, but run by humans. The church says to love people and to not judge them, which is what I try to do. There's going to be a judgment day for some of those people. But I'm not involved in the middle... it's like trying to coach from the stands. I try to pray about it, and understand we're all human. But there's an old way of thinking that needs to change. The accountability factor is important... this can't keep happening again. There's just a band-aid solution. I don't know what I can do to change that.”
- “It's amazing that this happens but we're still dedicated to the church. Celibacy is an unreasonable expectation. People may have great intentions going in, but did they know that this would come out of it? It's not reasonable or healthy. I have some compassion for that and don't know what that's like.”
- “I have an absolute fear. I have a perceptive daughter. I remember my mom talking about 'stranger danger.' I remember being mortally terrified as a child, and hid it away until law school. A colleague told how he was being groomed by a priest, and had a cousin who was abused. It hit home. I'm terrified of having that conversation with my child. How do we love the church, but still keep them out of danger? I don't want my kids to feel in danger or unsafe.”
- “My background is in criminal justice. Sexual assault is much more common than people think, in many organizations and crossing many lines. It's everywhere, but it's different in the church. It has become an opportunity to institutionalize this kind of abuse. The system makes it possible. We hear apologies, but no acknowledgement of the depth and breadth or deep solution to address it. The church is supposed to be an institution of goodness. But it's hypocrisy. Things really need to be turned over, or it will keep happening.”

- “My experience being a lay person in Master of Divinity classes with priests was that—despite good intentions—they didn’t know how to relate to lay people. I have little hope that there can be deep change without women and lay people in the mix. I have huge discouragement. The bishop needs to be listening to this. Otherwise, we’ll just have more band-aid fixes. I’m frustrated to be told to pray and do penance. The priests and bishops who allowed this to happen should be doing penance. We aren’t the ones who have done this or covered it up.”
- “We’re in a crisis place. This is a huge opportunity to change things, and get women involved. I feel fear, anger, and frustration. I almost didn’t sign up my kids for faith formation this year. My kids are scared and don’t want me to leave the building when they are here.”
- “When I tell people I’m still part of the church, they look at me with horror. It creates a perfect storm. Faith is such a beautiful thing, which I love sharing with my children.”
- “We’re experiencing re-traumatization. With statute of limitations, liability is blown, with nothing victims can do. Why would they want to share these stories? I want to see systems to address this so this can’t ever happen again. Everyone should be trained to make sure policies are in place. Leaders have a close-mindedness. Change will come from outside forces to force the system to change. If the church isn’t going to do it, they may lose my family.”
- “Some other faiths allow optional celibacy. The most vulnerable are the ones being impacted. I consider the church to be sacred, but I’m losing trust.”
- “Children are already afraid of having their first confession. You’re told you’re going to be safe, and should have unwavering trust. But my daughter is so perceptive.”
- “What power do we claim? The Catholic church is not a democracy. Fifty percent of us are automatically excluded from being able to “vote.” So the only way I see we can vote is with our feet – walking out the exit – or with our money.
- “We are the church. Are we going to let the hierarchy take the church away from us?”

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- “I’m a lifelong Catholic, and my family has been Catholic for generations. I am now considering leaving the church. The church is the last surviving medieval institution, and it needs to change. The only way to change this is to call bishops to criminal liability worldwide. Laity cannot be passive, and must take role of governance. We pay for it, and commit time to it. We must co-determine the faith of this church as loyal Catholics.”
- “Friends of mine were molested. The diocese should set up lay councils, a truth commission as in South Africa to examine all complaints. No priest should get away with it, but I also don’t believe in punishments. The diocese should have a lay board. I don’t trust bishops any more. Every year they should sign an affidavit. I’m not going to leave the church, but also not going to be quiet any more. Celibacy should be optional. Women should be allowed to be priests.”
- “The past is full of injustice, pain, and suffering. Jesus died to show that evil does not rule. We need to forgive and pray for the parasites and the church hierarchy. We need to create great change. I will not let others dictate.”
- “If nothing changes, nothing changes. Older Catholics have seen more of the same way too long. Priests, bishops, and leadership need accountability. I believe in signed affidavits, stating that there are no wrongdoings, otherwise that investigations will be made. We cannot allow leadership to phone it in. They can’t just be telling us what to do. It’s our church. We have an obligation and a right to speak up and call people to task.”
- “I am a strategic planner for corporations. Church is ultimately a corporation. I suggest that we think about the future. The past is important, and we need justice for the past. But we need to make sure this doesn’t happen in future.”
- “We are reliving the past. Scandal has been going on for years. The pope was a complete failure as a cardinal and afterwards on this issue (in Ireland). The Episcopal church doesn’t seem to have this problem. Repetition after repetition. Millions of dollars were paid out in the Bay Area to settle abuse claims. Nothing has been done about complaints of priests involved. Leaders don’t have the guts to throw priests out. We can/should have married priests. I don’t think we’ll see women priests in my lifetime, though. I wouldn’t have said this twenty years ago.”
- “I hear we need to speak up. But we have been speaking up. Voice of the Faithful has been speaking up for a long time. Religious sisters have been speaking up. That is not enough. I want to hear ideas for what we can do.”
- “The current governance structure has failed the church. There have been no reforms of big organizations that come from internally. It just doesn’t happen. The only way is outside people looking at the church, which would threaten people in leadership, but they failed us. All Rome understands is money. I say cut off Rome. The church has been terrible to women. We should have women priests and priests should marry. Full stop.”
- “The pope meeting with bishops next year is a big waste of time if women aren’t present, able to speak with authority, and listened to. They need others there outside the current hierarchy.”
- “There is no reason priests cannot be married. Episcopal priest converts already come in with wives and families. I’m hoping in the February meeting the pope makes major changes. It’s time

to clean house for those who haven't done anything. We hear stories from adults who were abused as children and nothing has been done about it. I support our pope, the best we've had."

- "I am so appreciative of the wonderful things the church has done and for everyone in this room. I feel this is our church, and I won't allow the politicians in this organization take that away from any of us. Change has to come externally from the organization, but we are agents of that change. We need to get vocal publicly, publishing an open letter in the New York Times, to stand up and call to task bishops and the pope, that women must be at the meeting. We need to not be afraid, and we need our voices to be heard."
- "I agree with what's been said, especially for priests to be able to marry. But there's something important in our tradition. Our political situation in Washington is because of a rebellion by people who felt that things were pushed down their throats too fast. I hope this doesn't happen to us in the church. I hope we can do the change gradually. There's a certain tradition and history that we don't want to force change down others' throats. We shouldn't alienate conservative Catholics. There's reason for respect within the church."
- "I'm a lawyer who represents the small against the large. This dynamic is endemic with every large organization. Oppression can come from any place or any person. The church has great lawyers, and defense requires lawyers. Change will only come through lawsuits. I am and stay Catholic because we have so many great Catholic institutions. The Catholic church has fostered lots of learning. To fix this we need to fund lawsuits against the church."
- "What can we do here? How can we affect change in this little corner? How can we represent ourselves in Rome? How can we be seeds of change? We need to strategize and define who we want to be as the church. Insanity is doing things over and over the same way and expecting change. We need to gather our strengths, weaknesses, and ideas and be heard. If it stays here, nothing will change. Define who we want to be."
- "I'm a history buff. People look at Catholicism as grass roots, but it's not. A friend stood up to Cardinal Law in Boston. My wife can't face a priest in these pews because of the guilt we have to bear as Catholics. I don't believe in community organizing as Catholics from the grass roots. Be prepared for a schism. I don't believe we can be effective telling Rome what to do. I believe folks are switching to the Episcopal church. Be prepared for this."
- "The church is organizational and hierarchical. We are facing a structure... how are we going to break it up and crack it? We should have priests who are women and can be married. Everyone won't agree with us. Can we have a lay council that can speak to the bishop? A bishop is a little guy among the cardinals. You start locally, with crowbars. Taking money away from the diocese is one way to do it. Let's face it... my grandkids are the ones who will see it. I want to start with the good organizations of nuns and priests who are out there dealing with the hierarchy. Let's hear from them."
- "I agree with the need for reform. Personally, I have this vision of going back to the early church. Community, out in the street helping each other, not caring about what religion people are. Just being with people. That's what Jesus meant."
- "I'm a 40+ year parishioner, and am too stubborn to leave the church. I don't know why the synod has to take so long. They're not going to listen to us. We also have to reform the

seminaries, with kids going in at 13 years old, with an outlook on life based on that stage. That's an easy change to make. It has to be an issue."

- "We should allow priests to marry. Abusers should go to jail. Were early priests allowed to marry? When did that stop? Middle Ages. Women should be allowed to be priests, too."
- "It's great that we're trying to get a hold of this now. But kids and young adults are checked out. They're saying they don't need this mess. We need healing around this. If we don't think how the faith is relevant to the next generation, it's all going to die out with us."
- "The *National Catholic Reporter* had a terrific editorial in the last issue. *America* magazine sent out a great letters to subscribers. Some of the concerns have been addressed in these periodicals. I know change can be possible."
- "I've been a parishioner for 50 years. I have not read or heard much from the pope on this. I wonder if others have. (Discussion) I want to hear more from the leadership."
- "I agree with so much of this. The attitudes towards women almost made me not become Catholic recently. We're putting a lot of focus on the priesthood, but I think opening up diaconate could be a next step. Allowing women priests tomorrow would create a huge rupture. We need to think about steps."
- "We need to look at sooner goals than changing the priesthood. This is a first step. My group of ex-Catholic women friends have challenged me on why I stay. I can't be a private Catholic any more. However we do this, I'd like to see a grass roots format where we can work on formats where we can be heard, especially women. I'm very supportive of this process."
- "I've been very committed, but this has shaken me to the core. I'm concerned about the people who are leaving. Over half of the parish is women, why can they not be deacons? Companies have women joining corporate boards. Why can't the church have women in leadership?"
- "I am very active here in leadership (parish, school), but I am not Catholic. The reason is that I don't buy into the leadership and hierarchy. I come here because of this group of people... all of you. My relationship with Catholicism is because of Corpus Christi. We visited a dozen churches in the Bay Area, and this was the only one where I felt comfortable. I want to remind you of the power of this community, and how important it is not to lose that. I would love to see change, and I would consider becoming Catholic if that revolution happened. But we can't lose what we have here. I'm at a loss for how to get there because of the structure of the church. Everything here is owned by the diocese. We can't just stop giving. It was set up that way ON PURPOSE. I welcome any thoughts on how to get there."
- "I'm so angry. Really angry. I feel my faith is one thing, the hierarchy is another. The hierarchy has allowed predators to find a safe haven. They look for where they can prey. The Catholic hierarchy has not only allowed this, but encouraged it. This has to be handled. Prayer does not work when you prey on children. We have a crisis with having enough new priests, but we are not even handling our current Catholics. I want more people to be angry that for 70 years we have a record of children being preyed upon."
- "I'm new to the area. Religion is inside us. I was born Catholic, but my family changed denominations. I was told it would be too expensive if priests married. But the apostles were married."

- “When John Paul II was canonized, I thought, this crisis happened on his watch too and he never did anything. That smacks of hypocrisy. And when I heard I should stand up and take my church, I remember being in St. Peter’s Square being harassed by a guard. They were so mean to me. How would it be to storm the Vatican? That’s just not going to happen. My son saw 'too many things' happen at another parish, and stopped going to church. The priest there was chronically drunk. My son doesn’t believe in God any more. I baptized the grandchildren myself, and wish they would come to church.”
- “This is a systemic problem that we keep fueling. I have many non-Catholic friends who I have to answer to, and have very bad time with that. I don’t have an answer.”
- “I’m old and love my church. I feel so badly for what’s happening to it. There should have been more outrage, and I keep looking for it. I don’t hear it from bishops or the pope. We need to be reassured that this isn’t going to continue and something must be done.”
- “I’m a lifelong Catholic. My uncle was a priest, and there always was a sense of secrecy, a secret society with us on the outside. I watched this when my uncle died, with hundreds of priests and a couple bishops. Our family members were just witnesses, outsiders. There is protection of this society, and I’m not sure how we change that.”
- “To be revolutionaries, we need to look at papal infallibility. Women priests and married priests are more a possibility than sexuality issues, because are no ex cathedra teachings on them.”
- “I’m very grateful for the leadership here. I hope we can find mechanisms to deepen our own relationships with Christ. We need youth ministry, and investments in the next generation of the school leadership. We need to reconvene small groups and continue. At the same time, we need to show our anger and resolve to change things externally. One is not exclusive of the other.”
- (Email) “We need married priests, women’s ordination. We need a special Catholic laity board for special matters to advise pope (including legal council, etc.). This all needs to be discussed by all parishioners. After we reach consensus, we could forward to those in power. There are more issues to discuss, but these would be a big start. Rome was not built in a day.”