

MARIA 1.0: THE CHURCH IS TOO FEARFUL!

The current conditions within the Catholic Church are described by Maria 1.0 as unprecedented - and it asks whether the church tax is not part of the problem.

Earlier this week, some Catholic chaplains publicly blessed homosexual partnerships in churches; nationwide, women preached in services following a call by a Catholic women's association; on Saturday (May 15, 2021), Protestants received Holy Communion - officially desired - as part of the ecumenical church congress. "All three incidents may contribute to the civilization of the Church, but they are incompatible with the Catholic Magisterium," says the Maria 1.0 initiative, whose spokeswoman, Clara Steinbrecher, reports that Maria 1.0 has again received hundreds of e-mails from concerned Catholics. "The letters were particularly critical of the fact that there are German bishops who not only tolerate these violations of the Catholic Magisterium, but approve of them," Steinbrecher said.

"From the times of the holy fathers, the order requires that the bishop, before his consecration, profess in the midst of the Church a firm resolution to keep the faith faithfully and to administer his office rightly." (Cf. Pontifical dt. 1994, 30-32.) Thus, at their consecration, bishops pledge obedience to the pope and promise that they will pass on purely and unabridged the deposit of faith handed down by the apostles. Maria 1.0 can only explain the current behavior of some bishops by saying that in some dioceses they are afraid of losing their importance. "Apparently there are local priests and even bishops who are afraid of no longer being able to connect with Catholic positions in a largely hedonistic society," suspect the women of Maria 1.0, whose leader, Clara Steinbrecher, therefore suggests thinking about abolishing the church tax. In doing so, the young woman from Eichstätt refers to another Bavarian: Pope Benedict XVI surprisingly called on the Catholic Church in Germany in 2011 to renounce state privileges. In a speech to 1,500 guests at the Freiburg Concert Hall, the then Pope said, "The Church, freed from material and political burdens and privileges, can turn to the whole world better and in a truly Christian way, can be truly open to the world. She can once again live more unabashedly her vocation to the service of the worship of God and the service of neighbor."

For Steinbrecher and many other observers, this was a critical hint from Pope Benedict back in 2011 that the Catholic Church in Germany, with its large, well-funded agencies and apparatuses, has its priorities wrong. “The church tax is a sacred cow, but it seems to me to be part of the problem,” Steinbrecher analyzes. Maria 1.0 assumes that this is why so many German bishops are pandering to the mainstream, because they are afraid of further church departures and thus further declines in church tax revenues if they do not give in to the demands of the zeitgeist.

Jesus Christ was a sign that was contradicted. The women of Maria 1.0 call on the German bishops not to be afraid of contradiction that the Catholic faith experiences in Western society. “Some bishops express themselves like politicians who want to please as many as possible,” Steinbrecher laments. But pleasing was not the motivation of the apostles of Jesus, in whose direct succession the bishops still stand today: “And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary the mother of Jesus, This man is appointed that in Israel many shall fall by him, and that many shall be raised up; and he shall be a sign that is contradicted,” the young women quote a well-known Bible verse (Lk 2:34).

Maria 1.0 was launched in May 2019 by Johanna Stöhr, a schoolteacher from Schongau, in response to the Maria 2.0 movement, which developed from Münster, Germany, into a nationwide protest against the valid teaching authority of the Catholic Church and for women's access to ordained ministry. Maria 1.0 believes that “Mary does not need an update.” The initiative wants to show “that there are also women who are faithful to the teachings of the Church.” Since May 1, 2021, Clara Steinbrecher, a student (majoring in mathematics education and school psychology) has taken up the reins from Stöhr. Steinbrecher has already been part of the Maria 1.0 team for some time