

## **BISHOP ROBINSON SPEAKS**

**Bishop Geoffrey Robinson is one of the few, if not the only member of the hierarchy, willing to speak out about the real crisis in the Roman Catholic Church and the context and causes of the crisis.**

**Here are a few of his observations:**

**The Angry God:** The institution projects an image of a God of Wrath and Anger. This needs to be challenged. It is wrong, and bad theology.

**The Male Church:** Women have been marginalized and treated as second class by the institution for far too long.

**The Culture of Celibacy:** Mandatory celibacy has to take a major part of the blame as a contributing cause of this crisis. Celibacy professed but not practiced is destabilizing.

**Moral Immaturity:** The seminary system and training of priests and religious has not encouraged moral and spiritual maturity. That needs to be changed.

**Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy:** Bishop Robinson argues there has been far too much emphasis on Orthodoxy (right belief) and far too little on Orthopraxy (right action).

**Sexual Teaching:** Robinson argues that there needs to be "a profound change in all of sexual morality" within the institution.

**The Mystique of Priesthood:** Priests have been placed on a pedestal of perfection for far too long. It is dangerous to them and it's dangerous to the people they are meant to be serving. Priests are not God — they struggle with all the challenges that any human being struggles with in life. Because clergy are placed on pedestals they often find it difficult to find appropriate support in their lives.

**Professionalism:** There has been a rise in professional standards across almost all professions—ethical codes, structures that protect and foster professional integrity—but the priesthood

has largely been excluded. Much more needs to be done to lift professional standards of those in ministry with the Church.

**A Pope who can't make mistakes:** Robinson argues that the way the pontiff has been placed on a pedestal and immune from criticism has been especially damaging to the institution. Creeping infallibility is a huge problem not only for some at the top who would seem to believe they have divine perfection already but also for many at the lowest rungs of the Church. This culture needs to be changed.

**The Loyalty of Bishops to the Pope:** Bishops pledge their oath of allegiance is to the Pope—not to God, or the Church. He argues significant blame has to be placed at the feet of the late John Paul II for his inadequate responses to the growing sexual abuse crisis.

**A Culture of Secrecy:** Bishop Robinson argues that the culture of secrecy in the Church has been a major cause of its problems and the current crisis. The institution demands that Bishops present themselves in the best light all the time. The *bella figura* of Rome rules the culture of secrecy. The demand for secrecy has been deeply damaging to the institution and needs to be changed.

**The *Sensus Fidelium*:** Robinson argues that the institutional leadership needs to be listening far more to the thinking of the broad body of the faithful not just to the small sectors that crave authority figures and founts of certitude.