INTRODUCTION: A Cry from the Silence of the Temples

Step into a church today and pause for a moment. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you feel? For many, the temple —which should be the dwelling place of the Most High and a place of recollection— seems to have been overtaken by indifference, triviality, and even irreverence. People chatting loudly, phones ringing, inappropriate clothing, rushed Communions, abandoned tabernacles, and priests who tolerate —if not promote— performances in the sanctuary. Is this what we have allowed? Have we forgotten *who* dwells in this place?

This article is an urgent call to awaken our consciences. It is not just a denunciation. It is a spiritual guide, a deep —theological and pastoral— look at the reality of the sacrileges committed in our churches. And above all, it is an invitation to recover the sense of the sacred.

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1. WHAT IS SACRILEGE? — Profaning the Holy

Etymologically, “sacrilege” comes from the Latin *sacrilegium*, from *sacer* (sacred) and *legere* (to take, to snatch). It literally means “the theft of the sacred.” But it is not just a material act. It is any action or attitude that profanes, degrades, or trivializes something consecrated to God.

The Church distinguishes between several types of sacrilege:

- **Sacrilege against persons**: when sacred ministers or consecrated people are attacked.
- **Sacrilege against sacred things**: when liturgical objects, relics, or sacred images are destroyed, misused, or disrespected.
- **Eucharistic sacrilege**: the gravest of all, when due reverence is denied to the Blessed Sacrament.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church is clear:

> *“Sacrilege consists in profaning or treating unworthily the sacraments and other liturgical actions, as well as persons, things,*

> *or places consecrated to God. Sacrilege is a grave sin especially when committed against the Eucharist, for in this sacrament the true Body of the Lord is made substantially present." (CCC 2120)*

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2. AN OPEN WOUND IN THE HEART OF THE CHURCH

From the early centuries, Christians understood how grave it was to offend the worship or Body of Christ. St. Cyprian of Carthage, in the 3rd century, already condemned those who received Communion in mortal sin, thus profaning the Eucharist. St. Paul was even more direct:

> *"Whoever eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment upon himself." (1 Cor 11:27–29)*

But today —sadly— sacrilege has become commonplace. And worse still: tolerated.

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3. MODERN FORMS OF SACRILEGE: THE INVISIBLE ENEMY

1. **Receiving Communion in mortal sin**

Many receive Communion without having gone to confession for months or even years. Sin is no longer preached, nor the need for repentance. Communion is received as a social gesture, not as an intimate encounter with the living God.

2. **Receiving Communion in the hand without reverence**

Although permitted in some contexts, Communion in the hand has led to countless abuses: particles falling to the floor, no genuflection or bow, careless handling of the Body of Christ… How did we get here?

3. **Inappropriate dress and behavior**

People entering the church half-dressed, tourists walking around like it's a museum, gum chewing, chatting during Mass... Do we still believe in the *real presence* of Christ in the Tabernacle?

4. **Deformed liturgical celebrations**

Masses with clowns, dancing, liturgical experiments, profane songs, barren altars... Where is the *ars celebrandi*? Where is the reverence for the Mystery?

5. **Tabernacles displaced or empty**

In many modern churches, the Tabernacle has been pushed to a corner —or even to a side room. As if Jesus were a decorative object that's in the way! How could this not wound the heart of the Redeemer?

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4. THE THEOLOGICAL BACKDROP: WHAT'S REALLY AT STAKE?

The root of the problem isn't just ignorance or negligence. It's the loss of the *sense of the sacred*. The post-conciliar liturgical crisis has generated a horizontal vision of the faith: prioritizing community over mystery, spontaneity over rite, the human over the divine.

And this has enormous spiritual consequences.

a) **The Eucharist is no longer the center**

If we don't believe that Christ is truly and substantially present, everything collapses. The Catholic faith revolves around the Eucharist. As Pope Benedict XVI said:

> *"The crisis in the Church that we are experiencing is largely a crisis of the liturgy."*

b) **The loss of the fear of God**

Not a servile fear, but holy reverence —the awe that arises when one stands before Infinite Majesty. Without that fear, the sacred becomes “optional,” “adaptable,” “trivial.”

c) **Spiritual lukewarmness**

When reverence disappears, lukewarmness grows. And Jesus was clear: “Because you are lukewarm, I will vomit you out of my mouth.” (Rev 3:16)

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5. WHAT CAN WE DO? — A PASTORAL AND SPIRITUAL RESPONSE

1. **Recover liturgical and doctrinal formation**

It is urgent to re-teach what the Eucharist is, what sacrilege means, what it means to be in a state of grace. Homilies, catechesis, workshops… Let’s return to the foundations!

2. **Restore frequent confession**

Every Catholic should regularly go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. No fruitful Eucharist without a purified soul.

3. **Encourage Communion on the tongue and kneeling**

Not out of fanaticism, but theological coherence. The great saints received this way. Why shouldn’t we follow their example? External reverence forms internal devotion.

4. **Protect silence in the church**

Restoring sacred silence is not rigidity —it is respect. The soul needs recollection to hear God.

5. **Train faithful ministers and servers**

Priests, altar servers, lectors, sacristans… all must understand the value of what they handle. Sacredness is not improvised.

6. **Be reverent witnesses**

Every layperson can be a living testimony. Through attitude, modest dress, way of receiving Communion, silence… we can preach without words.

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6. AN URGENT CALL TO CONVERSION

The real scandal is not that sacrileges occur. It's that we've grown used to them. That they no longer hurt us. That we look the other way. That we remain silent for fear of "offending."

But the Church doesn't need complicit silence —it needs prophetic voices. It needs Catholics who burn with love for the Eucharist. Who fight to restore Christ to His rightful place. Who defend the temple as if it were their home —because it is. Who live the Mass as if it were Heaven —because it is.

CONCLUSION: *Zeal for Your house consumes me* (John 2:17)

When Jesus saw the Temple being profaned, He didn't sit idly by. With burning zeal, He cleansed it. Not out of hatred, but love. For the reverence owed to the Father. And us? Will we remain indifferent?

The history of the Church is filled with saints who shed tears —and sometimes blood— to defend the sacred. Today, that responsibility falls on you and me. Let it never be said that our generation was lukewarm, silent, or allowed Christ to be despised in His own house.

Let us awaken! Let us react! Let us rediscover the greatness of the sacred!
Because only when we treat the things of God as they truly are, will we begin to live as true children of Heaven.