



Why the Catholic Church Must Change: A Necessary Conversation

Margaret Nutting Ralph

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Why do a third of the people raised Catholic in the United States no longer worship as Catholics? Why has the Catholic Church lost a credible teaching voice for many young people? Does the fault lie entirely with those individuals and with the secular culture? In *Why the Catholic Church Must Change*, Margaret Nutting Ralph first affirms that Catholics are called to seek the truth and to follow their well-formed consciences, not simply to submit mind and will to the teachings of the Magisterium. She then argues that the Catholic Church, which has been open to change in the twentieth century, must continue to be open to change in the twenty-first century: change in some of its teachings and in some of its practices. The Catholic Church has changed in the past and is being called to change in the present. Before that change can occur the Church must enter into respectful dialogue about pertinent issues, such as contraception, women's ordination and homosexuality, and present practices. Ralph contends that Catholic culture, not just secular culture needs a critical examination.

Why the Catholic Church Must Change engages the reader to enter into a necessary yet reasoned conversation about pertinent issues, such as contraception, women's ordination and homosexuality, and present practices surrounding the Catholic Church. Margaret Nutting Ralph critically examines pertinent topics of not just the secular culture, but the Catholic culture, that affects both families and culture as a whole, and presents a model for how to discuss difficult issues in a respectful and thoughtful manner. Ralph successfully discusses the issues surrounding the Catholic Church with awareness that the church is not the whole body of Christ. The paperback edition features a new preface that explores the potential for change in the church in light of Pope Francis's first year.

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