

# Are the views of the roman catholic church out of touchs?

[Religion](#), [Catholic](#)



This essay does not intend to cause offence, come across as heretical or blasphemous in any way. Obviously, every single view the Roman Catholic Church holds are not out of touch with modern day attitudes, but this essay focuses on the views of the Church which are currently discussed most frequently. The controversy and criticism surrounding the Catholic Church in this day and age is of staggering proportions.

It would be very difficult to pick up the same newspaper every day for a year and not at least once read a headline like ' Catholic Bishop Denounces Gay Couples' Right to Marriage' or ' Catholic Church Once Again Speaks Out Against Contraception Use'. It's clear that some of the views of the Catholic Church can discriminate, intimidate, and generally infuriate people. The modern man or woman, in most cultures and societies is free to be gay, use contraception or become a priest regardless of your gender.

However, the Catholic Church still takes an almost medieval approach to these issues, and by doing so has caused much outrage over the past few decades. Is this an ' adapt or die' situation? Is it the case that the Roman Catholic Church needs to be dragged kicking and screaming into the 21st century? Or are their traditional views still applicable today? It's very easy to say that some of the views of the Roman Catholic Church are outrageously out of touch with the modern world, what with all the bad press it receives these days.

But these views are based on beliefs that date back thousands of years. You might argue that, to keep up with today's open and ever-changing society, the Catholic Church should allow room for adjustments to their views that

they hold so firmly. However, some find it quite arrogant that people could be so bold as to suggest such a thing, considering these views are millennia old. Certain theories (and I stress the word 'theories') about some issues, such as the idea that homosexuality is acceptable, have been around for merely decades.

Why should Catholics change their belief system, which is based on the near-on two thousand year old scriptures and the teachings of their current church, just because widely popular but relatively new 'theories' about matters that they deem sinful are becoming commonly accepted among many different cultures? It would be like demolishing the Sistine Chapel and rebuilding it but with galvanised steel and glass, just because those materials are popular choices for many large buildings these days. We cannot simply get rid of some beliefs that date back two millennia because of the opposing beliefs of popular demand. It's important in this time when authority is challenged, people with a strong moral compass are hard to come by and human life is not valued very highly that we hold on to traditional Christian beliefs. If we did away with tradition and completely modernised the Catholic Church we'd have the Pope going out on Saturday nights, drinking his own body weight in alcoholic beverages, starting violent fights with anyone who accidentally bumps into him then find the nearest tipsy female and get her pregnant in a drunken one-night-stand.

This may be a slight exaggeration, but you get the point: if we start picking away and changing the traditional beliefs then we end up with a church people will find hard to take seriously because of its lack of moral principal. If

you signed a contract and then without telling you the contractor went against certain terms and condition within the contract I would imagine that you'd be jolly annoyed and completely lose any trust you had in that contractor. Some say that the Catholic Church is not out of touch with modern day mores, but simply sticking to tradition in order to remain a strong and consistent church.

Whilst tradition is important, for the Catholic Church to grow and to rid itself of its controversial labels, the fact of the matter is it needs to adjust and update itself to fit modern day attitudes. Its views on homosexuality, contraception and female ordination are very much stuck in a previous century, and if it does wish to grow then it will have to find a new approach to such issues. It's clear to most that being gay is acceptable in this day and age. Contraception usage is encouraged in most parts of the world.

Women becoming priests is allowed by many cultures. However, the Catholic Church denounces all of these things, most of the time openly. In the eyes of the Roman Catholic faith, being gay or using a condom is sinful. Can a Church that classifies these such things as sinful really grow in today's open, free-speaking society? The Catholic Church teaches that homosexual behaviour is a violation of divine and natural law; basically, being gay is sinful. 10% of the population of the world is gay or has had a homosexual experience.

Linking these two facts together, surely this doesn't mean that the Catholic Church deems 10% of the population sinners, doomed to spend an eternity in the fiery pits of hell? Today, homosexuality is widely accepted by many

communities. You would've thought that because of this, the Catholic Church would keep relatively quiet about their views on the subject. But they are not afraid to preach their beliefs through the media. In September last year, it made the headlines that the Scottish government was holding a consultation on whether gay marriages should be introduced.

Not long after this did the proposal come under fire from the Roman Catholic Church. The Bishop of Paisley Philip Tartaglia (who was tipped to be the next Archbishop of Glasgow) said that a Scottish government that backed gay marriage did not deserve the support of the Catholic community. This came after the most senior Scottish catholic, Cardinal Keith O'Brien, said legalising gay marriage would "shame Scotland in the eyes of the world". There's no doubt that this story would not fail in making homosexuals in Scotland feel discriminated.

Discrimination on this scale belongs in pre-1970's America and in history books and should not still be making headlines today. The Catholic Church does not have the right to discriminate against homosexuals, and if they feel that it is their faith that teaches them to do so, then their faith is most certainly out of touch with the world as it is and needs to update itself. Christian acceptance of contraception use is relatively new; up until the start of the 20th century all churches frowned upon the use of artificial contraception.

In modern times, many churches say it is acceptable to use contraception, but the Roman Catholic Church still forbids it. It regards the use of contraception as intrinsically evil for a variety of reasons. The main issue for

Catholics is that using contraception is against 'natural law'; the purpose of sex is to produce offspring. Catholics have held this belief about sex and contraception since the beginning of Christianity. These days, birth control is widely accepted and even promoted in the West, and it looks like the Catholic Church might be fighting a losing battle.

A study carried out in 2008 suggests that most practising Catholics are ignoring the Church's teachings on contraception and sex. 1, 500 Mass-goers in England and Wales were surveyed by The Tablet magazine. It was found that the contraceptive pill is used by 54.5% and nearly 69% had used or would consider using condoms. These statistics come 40 years after Pope Paul VI forbade birth control use in his encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (Of Human Life). The survey also found that more than half think that the teaching should be revised.

With figures such as this, coupled with the fact that most people in the West consider using a condom or other forms of contraception the normal and right thing to do, it appears that the Catholic Church is out of touch with modern society on the issue of contraception usage. The idea that a female should become a priest would have been utterly preposterous just a few decades ago, but now in many churches, such as the Anglican Church and most branches of the Protestant Church, the ordination of women is completely acceptable.

Although not the only Church that does so, the Roman Catholic Church is possibly the most vocal of Christian churches to denounce the right for women to be ordained. In fact, in 2007 the Holy See issued a decree stating

that the attempted ordination of women would result in automatic excommunication for the women and priests trying to ordain them. Once again, here we see an example where the Roman Catholic Church is lagging behind the fast moving modern day. The idea that only a man should be allowed to become a priest is, many believe, sexist.

Granted, other Churches, such as the Orthodox Church, take the same view on such matters, but it's not a case of 'everybody does it, so it's fine'. If the Catholic Church wants to seem less repellent towards the modern day man or (in this case in particular) woman, it needs to adapt itself. A survey carried out by the Association of Catholic Priests (ACP) showed that 77% of Irish Catholics wanted women priests. With figures such as these, it's clear that an update of the views of the Roman Catholic Church is very much in demand.

The subject of abortion is one of great debate and controversy. Not everybody agrees with abortion, but if women chooses to abort an unborn baby, for whatever reason, then that is her decision and she will have to live with that. The Roman Catholic Church takes a very firm line on the matter of abortion, saying that deliberately causing one is a grave moral wrong. Having an abortion has led to automatic excommunication from the Catholic Church since the sixteenth century.

Unless under strict conditions (laid out by the Canon Law, which states ten extreme circumstances) In the past, the Roman Catholic Church has come under attack for being too strict and too extreme over some issues that, in the 21st century, are in common practice, such as being gay or using a

condom during sex. Admittedly, tradition is important and sticking to it shows a firm and consistent church, but is a church which openly deems homosexuality, contraception and female ordination sinful really able to remain strong in a society where such things are widely accepted?

To use a final analogy: every successful species on earth has had the ability to evolve - adapt to its surrounding. If an animal does not evolve then in more cases than not, that animal will die. The fact of the matter is the Catholic Church has not evolved since its birth some two thousand years ago. To survive it must adapt, because at the moment the only conclusion I can come to is that some of the views of the Roman Catholic Church are very much out of touch with modern day mores.