
The timeline below offers a cursory overview of the current ecclesial crisis as limited to the controversy surrounding Pope Francis' Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia ("The Joy of Love"). Although by no means exhaustive, this timeline tracks certain high-profile events in the controversy that are now public knowledge. As many Cardinals, bishops, priests and theologians maintain, the AL controversy is only symptomatic of an underlying crisis of doctrine, morals, and liturgy. As in the past, the Church must clearly and authoritatively address these deeper issues before any great measure of ecclesial health will return.

Fall 2014: The Extraordinary Synod on the Family

2/20-21: Extraordinary Consistory of the Cardinals on the Family held in [Rome](#).

2/20: Pope dubs Card. Kasper to set direction for coming [Synod](#). Card. Meisner reacts: "All this will end in a [schism](#)."

10/5-19: 3rd Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the [Family](#).

10/7: Five cardinals, others publish *Remaining In The Truth of Christ*, defending traditional marriage [doctrine](#).

Fall 2015: The Ordinary Synod on the Family

3-9: *Filial Appeal* launched, .8 million Catholics petition Vatican for clarity, right doctrine on marriage and [family](#).

9/4: Cardinals publish *Eleven Cardinals Speak*, in defense of traditional marriage [doctrine](#).

10/4-25: 14th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the [Family](#).

10/26: Card. Burke: Synod final report "lacks clarity in a fundamental matter of the [Faith](#)."

11/30: Pope in press conference: Contraceptives are justifiable in some [cases](#).

Winter 2015: Drafting *Amoris Laetitia*

11-12: AL draft [ghostwritten](#) by controversial Jesuit Fr. Fernandez (author of *Heal Me With Your Mouth: The Art of Kissing*), recycling earlier [errors](#) in moral doctrine. Draft shared internally among [hierarchy](#), prompting 30 Cardinals, multiple bishops' conferences, and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to submit pages of concerns to pope: none are acknowledged, and no AL changes are made.

2/18: Pope in interview: Contraceptives are justifiable in some [cases](#).

March 19, 2016: *Amoris Laetitia* [Issued](#)

Spring - Summer 2016: Initial Controversy

4/10: Philippines Bishops guidelines: Yes, Communion for public adulterers. "Mercy cannot wait. Mercy should not wait! ...at the table of sinners at which the All-Holy Lord offers himself as food for the wretched, there is always [room](#)."

5/2: Bishop Fellay, SSPX implores AL revision. "We humbly but firmly implore the Holy Father to revise [AL]... As with the documents of Vatican II, what is ambiguous must be interpreted in a clear manner, and what contradicts the constant doctrine and practice of the Church must be retracted, for the glory of God, for the good of the whole Church, and for the salvation of souls, especially those in danger of being deceived by the guise of a false [mercy](#)."

5/4: Card. Müller, Prefect of CDF interview: AL cannot authorize Communion for public [adulterers](#).

6/16: Pope to pastoral congress: "Great majority of Catholic marriages are [invalid](#)."

6/29: 45 Catholic theologians submit AL censures privately to College of Cardinals, request intervention on errors.

7/27: Pope to Polish Bishops in closed-door session: Communion for public adulterers could be a localized [decision](#).

7/27: 45 Theologians go public with earlier June letter and AL theological [censures](#).

8/15: Pope dubs Archbp. Paglia (commissioner of homoerotic church [mural](#)) new head of Pontifical Academy for [Life](#) (PAL).

8/30: Buenos Aires Bishops guidelines: Yes, Communion for public adulterers.

9/5: Pope confirms Buenos Aires Bishops: Yes, Communion for public adulterers - there is "no other [interpretation](#)."

9/16: Four Cardinals submit *dubia* (formal "doubts") privately to Pope, seeking AL clarification.

9/20: Josef Siefert, prominent Catholic prof in interview: AL may cause total split in the [Church](#).

Fall-Winter 2016: Calling It A Crisis

10/4: Rome diocesan pastoral guidelines: Yes, Communion for public [adulterers](#).

11/2: Claudio Pierantoni, respected Catholic prof publishes essay: Today looks a lot like the Arian [crisis](#).

11/14: Cardinals go public with *dubia*. Global controversy erupts around five basic yes/no [questions](#).

11/18: Pope in interview: Moral teaching can't be "only white or [black](#)."

11/18: Pope dismisses entire PAL staff, issues new statutes removing required declaration of Catholic pro-life [commitment](#).

11/22: Pope names Card. Cupich, who claims in interview: Most synod bishops support Communion for [adulterers](#).

- 12/1:** Pope makes Communion for adulterers “official,” adds Buenos Aires letter to official Acts of the Holy [See](#).
- 12/7:** Bp. Schneider interview on hidden schism. “We are witnessing today a bizarre form of schism. Externally, numerous ecclesiastics safeguard formal unity with the pope, at times for the good of their own careers or out of a kind of papolatry. And at the same time they have broken ties with Christ, the Truth, and with Christ, the true Head of the [Church](#).”
- 12/12:** Card. Cordes interview: “The four [*dubia*] cardinals have asked for the removal of doubts... they were met with a disproportionate protest... I had doubts these indignant persons were motivated by a desire to discover the [truth](#).”
- 12/19:** Card. Burke interview: suggested timeline for a formal correction of Pope Francis by the [Cardinals](#).

Spring-Summer 2017: Confirming The Crisis

- 1/7:** Card. Müller interview: No correction of Pope is needed, because there is no danger to the [Faith](#).
- 1/13:** Maltese Bishops guidelines: Yes, Communion for public adulterers. Vatican newspaper publishes Malta [guidelines](#).
- 2/1:** Card. Müller interview: No Communion for public [adulterers](#).
- 2/1:** German Bishops guidelines: Yes, Communion for public [adulterers](#).
- 2/1:** Thousands of priests worldwide submit joint petition to Vatican for AL [clarification](#).
- 4/14:** *Dubia* Cardinals privately request papal audience – no answer given.
- 4/22:** Rome Conference on Family decries doctrinal crisis, calls for authoritative [clarification](#).
- 5/19:** Rome Life Forum hosts Cardinals, Bishop, priests. Card. Burke: “Church is beset by confusion and [error](#).”
- 6/7:** Polish Bishops guidelines: No Communion for public [adulterers](#).
- 6/13:** Pope appoints new staff for PAL - some of the staffers support intrinsically evil [acts](#).
- 6/19:** *Dubia* Cardinals publicize their request for a papal audience - still no [answer](#).
- 7/5:** *Dubia* Card. Meisner dies at age 83.
- 7/8:** Pope abruptly dismisses Card. Müller from his post as Prefect of the [CDF](#).
- 7/31:** Fr. Thomas Weinandy, former Chief of Staff for USCCB Committee on Doctrine, sends personal letter to Pope, noting “chronic confusion” and fear in the Church: “Many fear if they speak their mind, they will be marginalized or [worse](#).”
- 8/11:** *Filial Correction* issued privately to Pope by 62 Catholic clergy, lay scholars. “The pope has, by his Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris laetitia*, and by other, related, words, deeds and omissions, effectively upheld 7 heretical positions about marriage, the moral life, and the reception of the sacraments, and has caused these heretical opinions to [spread](#)”.
- 8/18:** Fr. Aidan Nichols, leading Dominican theologian: Change canon law to correct papal [error](#).
- 8/23:** AL ghostwriter defends adultery, “evolution in the Church’s understanding of her own [doctrine](#)”.
- 8/31:** Archbishop Martinez removes honored Prof. Josef Seifert from teaching post following his second public AL [critique](#).

Fall-Winter 2017: AL Crisis Escalating

- 9/6:** *Dubia* Card. Caffarra dies at age 79.
- 9/24:** *Filial Correction* of August made public, 200+ Catholic theologian signatures soon added.
- 9/24:** Two lay petitions launched [here](#) and [here](#) to support the *Filial Correction* - 20,000 signatures by Oct.
- 10/17:** 700+ progressives launch support for Pope’s “pastoral initiatives and their theological [justification](#).”
- 11/1:** Fr. Weinandy goes public with earlier July letter to Pope - USCCB seeks and gains his resignation within [hours](#).
- 12/31:** Kazakhstan Bishops issue statement of “immutable truths about marriage” - 10 bishops add signatures by [Feb](#).

Spring 2018: Intervention Needed

- 1/29:** Italian Bishops, Piedmont region: Yes, Communion for public [adulterers](#).
- 2/3:** “C9” Card. Marx proposes liturgical blessings for same-sex [partnerships](#).
- 2/9:** Card. Cupich hails AL as “revolutionary,” doctrinal “paradigm [shift](#)”, launches secret US bishop meetings to [implement](#).
- 2/11:** Bp. Olivero interview on Piedmont guidelines: Objectively sinful relationships could receive liturgical [blessing](#).
- 2/20:** Card. Müller article: “Paradigm shifts” are corruptions of the [Faith](#).
- 2/20:** German Bishops Spring Assembly: Yes, Communion for spouses in manifest formal [heresy](#).
- 3/3:** Card. Wuerl: DC priests must respect individual consciences on Communion [issue](#).
- 3/4:** “C9” Bp. Cemeraro: Public adulterers may be Catholic teachers, lectors, [godparents](#).
- 3/19:** Pope issues new apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, EWTN pundits: “very troubling” parts tied to [AL](#).
- 3/28:** Pope in interview: Souls are not immortal, Hell does not exist. Global scandal. Vatican does not [disavow](#).
- 4/4:** Card. Woelki, 6 German bishops seek Vatican intervention to stop Communion for [Protestants](#).
- 4/6-8:** CFN Conference “Weapons of Our Warfare” calls on Cardinals to declare Pope in error, defend the [Faith](#).
- 4/7:** Rome Conference “Catholic Church, Where Are You Going?” hosts Cardinals, bishops to speak on the [crisis](#).
- 4/7:** Bp. Gracida of Corpus Christi calls on Cardinals to begin investigation of Pope’s canonical [status](#).
- 4/17:** Card. Burke in interview: I’ve considered the possibility of excommunication for defending the [Faith](#).