

Webathon today celebrates love of church

Dennis Coday | May. 2, 2014 NCR Today
Webathon 2014

Webathon Day Six. We need to raise at least \$15,000 today to keep us on track for our goal of \$100,000 this week. We didn't do that well yesterday, so we need to catch up today. If you haven't given yet this week, please give today.

If you have given already, call, text, email or fax your sister, brother, mother, cousin, Pilates partner or your children and encourage them to give too. [Donate now](#) [1].

Update 1:05.21 p.m. central time: We just met our matching grant. Thank you Joan and Bob. Thank you all how contributed!

As an added incentive today, we have a matching grant from Joan and Bob McGrath. The McGraths will match dollar for dollar the first \$5,000 that come in today. Take up Joan and Bob's challenge. [Please give now](#) [1].

This is a great day to visit NCRonline.org. You know that already, of course; that's why you're here. But let me give you some highlights: Fr. Thomas Reese's weekly column, Faith and Justice, was posted today; he's writing about [the political future of religious progressives](#) [2].

The second part of our two-part look at the life and work of Hans Küng, [?Ripples spread out from Hans Küng's work](#) [3], by John Wilkins will be posted. (Yesterday, we posted a piece by Leonard Swidler, [?Hans Küng knows church's problems - and that change is inevitable](#) [4].)

Joshua J. McElwee continues his reports from Rome and Vatican City. Pope Francis' Council of Cardinals met this week, and now he has convened his newly appointed committee to advise him on sex abuse. We are watching that closely. McElwee says the pope's message today is [?Bishops, lay people 'all on the same level'](#) [5].

This is just one day, one morning really, on NCRonline.org. Aren't these few articles worth \$15,000 for our collective readership? I'd hope so. If you read Reese's columns and appreciate his commentary, [please consider a generous donation](#) [1]. If you turn to *NCR* to read pieces from the likes of John Wilkins and Leonard Swidler, [please consider a generation donation today](#) [1]. If you want to ensure that we have the funds to pay for the boots-on-the-ground reporting Joshua J. McElwee, Brian Roewe, Tom Roberts, Monica Clark, and our other staff writers, correspondents and reporters provide, [please consider a generous donation](#) [1]. Do it now while you can still double your money because of the McGraths' generous matching grant challenge.

Yesterday, my attention was pointed to a website that purports to answer questions that Catholics have. Someone had written that forum to say she had recently discovered *National Catholic Reporter* and was seeking others' opinions about *NCR*'s orthodoxy. She was advised to never visit this site again -- about a dozen people chimed in, warning her that we are anti-Catholic. (One guy said he reads us all the time. It can't hurt to

know what the other side is thinking,? he wrote.) The questioner was told that *NCR*'s sole purpose is to destroy the church. *NCR*, she was told, hates the church. Wow.

I have to confess, those statements hurt me just a little bit. Those people know *NCR* only as a website and newspaper that takes stands they disagree with. They don't know the real *NCR*. By that, I mean they don't know the people who make up *NCR* and the spirit that drives us. We don't hate the church -- far from it. We love the church.

Why is that fact about *NCR* so often overlooked?

Nearly all of us were born and raised in the church. We are Sunday Massgoers and attend holy days of obligation. We pray and meditate. We belong to parishes, contribute to building funds and support parish outreach to pregnant women and soup kitchens and food pantries. We sing in choirs (and a couple of us are pretty good). We have been inspired by priests and women religious and laypeople who live holy, humble lives.

We love the church. We're raising our kids in the church and hope to see their kids baptized and practicing Catholics. We want the church to nurture the future generations as we have been nurtured.

We do what we do because we love the church. Here's the irony: Pope Francis can condemn clericalism in the hierarchy and get praised for his insight and prophetic vision. In fact-based journalism stories, we shine lights on incidents of clericalism and abuse of power in the church structures and condemn that in editorials and we get called "anti-Catholic" or "church haters."

Our job as journalists is to reflect, as best we can, the facts of the world around us. Sometimes, even when looking at an institution that we dearly love, the facts aren't pretty and the truth hurts. But we believe we are all better off when these things are brought to light.

That's what we do. If you can support us in that mission, [please give today](#) [1].

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[1] <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/ncr>

[2] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/faith-and-justice/political-future-religious-progressives>

[3] <http://ncronline.org/news/people/ripples-spread-out-hans-k-ngs-work>

[4] <http://ncronline.org/news/people/hans-k-ng-knows-churchs-problems-and-change-inevitable>

[5] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/francis-bishops-lay-people-all-same-level>