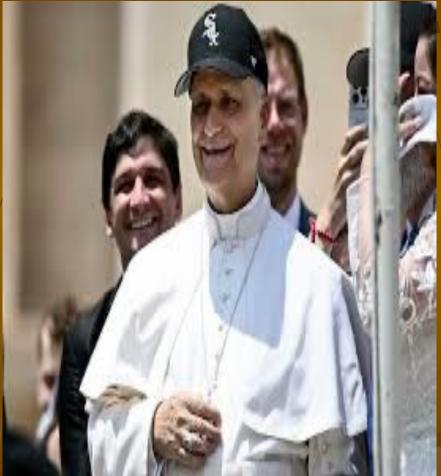
# "POPE FRANCIS' NEW PASTORAL METHODS: ANTHROPOLOGICAL, METHODOLOGICAL, AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS"

Todd Salzman, Ph.D. Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska

## Deep Polarization in the Vatican!

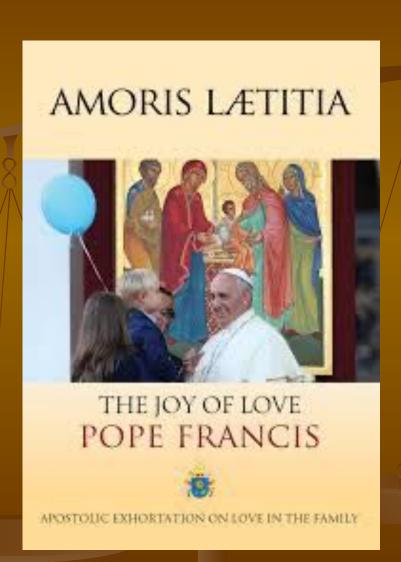




# Good Pastoral Theology is Grounded in a Comprehensive, Credible Moral Theology

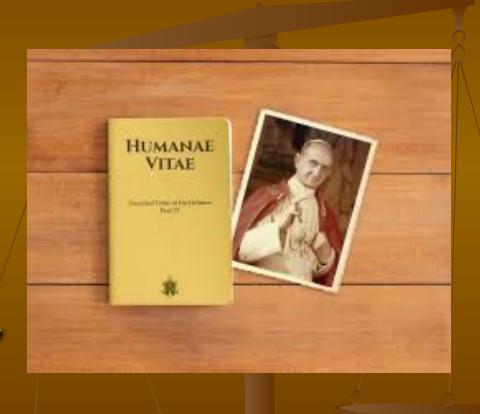
#### I. Introduction

- A. Current Catholic Teaching on Sexual Ethics
- B. What's New?
- c. New Pastoral Methods
- D. New Pastoral Methods and Anthropology
- E. New Pastoral Methods and Ethical Method
- F. Implications for Human Sexuality
- G. Future Prospects



#### II. Current Catholic Teaching on Sexual Ethics

- A. Grounded in Human Dignity
- B. Sexual Human Dignity: Complementarity and Inseparability Principle
- 1. Unitive: Unites couple emotionally, psychologically, spiritually, relationally
- 2. Procreative: "Open to the transmission of life."



# 3. Catholic Doctrine on Sexual Ethics

- Moral: Reproductive-Type Sexual Acts between a Married Couple
- Immoral: Any non-reproductive sexual acts between heterosexuals and same-sex couples.

- No contraception
- No premarital sex
- No non-reproductive type sexual acts
- No same-sex acts
- No artificial reproductive technologies

#### 4. Catholic Method in Sexual Ethics

- a. One-size-fits-all: Deductive
- b. Absolute Doctrines
- c. Physical Ontology (Heterogenital Complementarity) over Relational Ontology
- d. Patriarchal, Intrinsic link between sex and gender; Prioritizes Biology Over Relationship, Largely Ignores Science (e.g., intersex [MFC] and samesex parenting)

n those situations where mosexual unions have en legally recognized have been given the legal atus and rights belonging marriage, clear and nphatic opposition a duty." —Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger future Page Benedict IIVI, now Page Emectus it that time. Refect, Congregation for the Costrine of the faith under Pope Saint John Faul II given on June 5, 2003

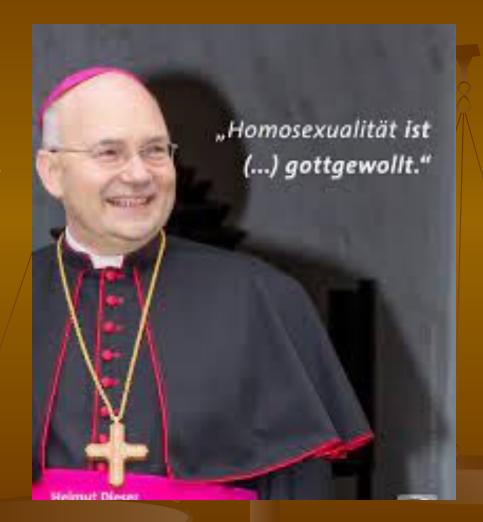
#### III. What's New?

#### A. Calls for Reform

Bishop Georg Bätzing, the president of the German bishops' conference, emphasizes the development or reform of doctrine based on viable arguments, which include "fundamental truths of faith and morals, progressive theological reflection, and also an openness to more recent results of the human sciences and the life situations of people today."



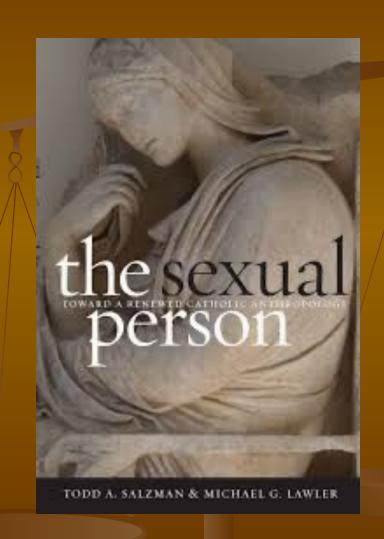
2. Bishop Helmut Dieser of Aachen asserts that "same-sex feelings and love are not an aberration, but a variant of human sexuality." He maintains that Church thinking on homosexuality in particular and human sexuality in general is "too simple." Homosexuality, he argues "is—as science shows—not a glitch, not an illness, not an expression of any kind of deficit." Homosexuality is "God's will."

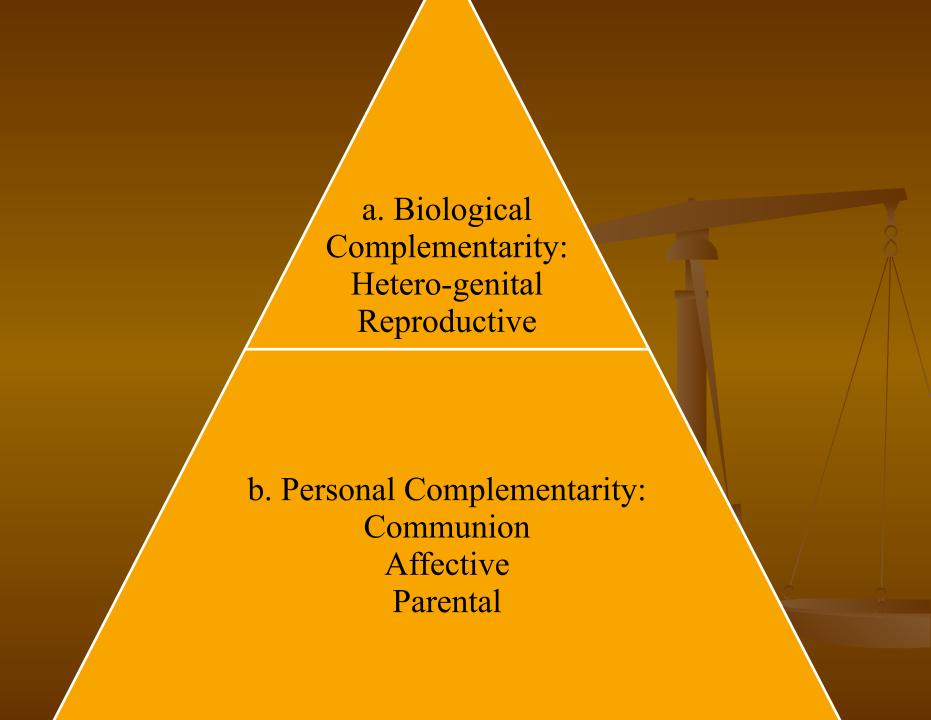


3. Cardinal Hollerich of Luxembourg argues that "the sociologicalscientific foundation of [Catholic teaching on homosexual people and acts is no longer correct." It is, he believes, "time for a **fundamental** revision of the doctrine" on homosexual acts.

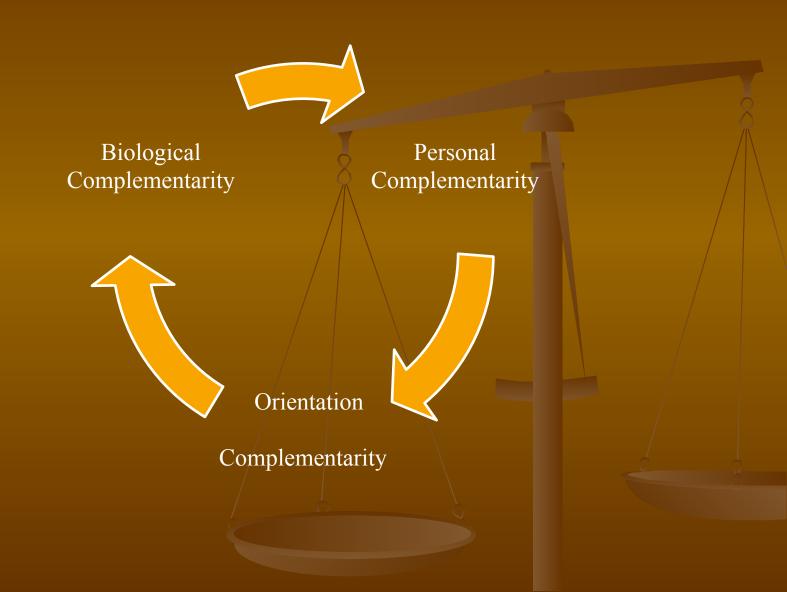


- 4. From "God does not and cannot bless sin" (CDF, 2021), to German Bishops' Conference, Synodal Way, Cardinal Marx, Fiducia Supplicans (DDF, 2023): Bless Same-Sex Civil Unions.
- 5. Sensus Fidelium
- Theologians: Holistic Complementarity



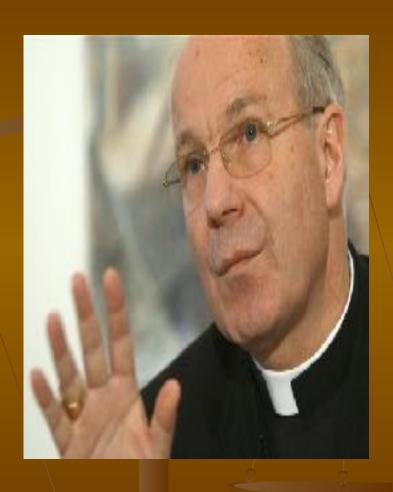


## Holistic Complementarity



- B. Amoris Laetitia
- Cardinal Schönborn: "AL is the great text of moral theology that we have been waiting for since the days of the (Second Vatican) Council and that develops further the choices that were already made by the Catechism of the Catholic Church and by 'Veritatis Splendor.'' (Cindy Wooden,

" 'Amoris Laetitia' at Three Months: Communion Question Still Debated," America [July 7, 2016], emphasis added)



- Cardinal Schönborn: AL represents "an organic development of doctrine."
- introduced a "paradigm change" in Catholic theological ethics that calls for a "new spirit," a "new [pastoral method]."



#### IV. New Pastoral Methods

- Pope Francis notes that the two synods preceding AL "raised the need for new pastoral methods...that respect both the Church's teaching and local problems and needs"
- Pastoral Approach: Foundations (Cardinal McElroy)
- 1. The Church should reflect the pastoral approach of Jesus himself.
- The Church must commit to accompaniment: "remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other."
- Church's identity, teaching, and action must be grounded in human experience. "Signs of the Times"



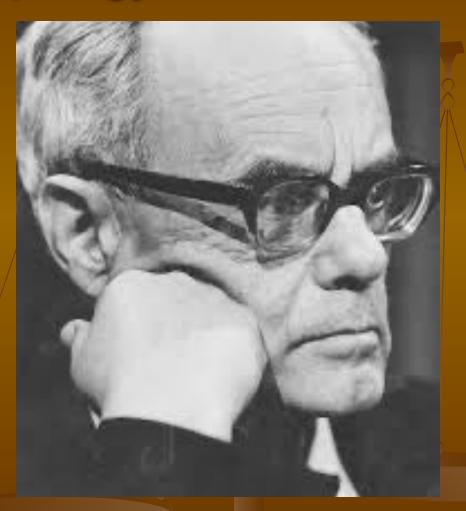
#### C. Shift in Focus

- 1. HIV and Condoms: Fifth or Sixth Commandment? The first problem is the reality of "denutrition, the exploitation of people, slave labor, lack of drinking water.... These are the problems."
- Integrating Catholic sexual anthropology and method and Catholic social anthropology and method



# V. New Pastoral Methods and Anthropology

- A. Rahner: "Today, dogmatic [and moral] theology must be anthropology and such an 'anthropological turn' is necessary and fruitful."
- Pope Francis' anthropological turn in his understanding of conscience is distinct from his predecessors in his emphasis on the subject orientation of conscience, discernment, and virtue.



#### 1. Conscience

a. Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, Archbishop Chaput:

"Catholic teaching makes clear that the subjective conscience of the individual can never be set against objective moral truth, as if conscience and truth were two competing principles for moral decision-making." (Archbishop Chaput, Pastoral Guidelines for Implementing Amoris Laetitia Archdiocese of

Philadelphia, July 1, 2016, accessed at: http://archphila.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/AOP\_AL-guidelines.pdf).

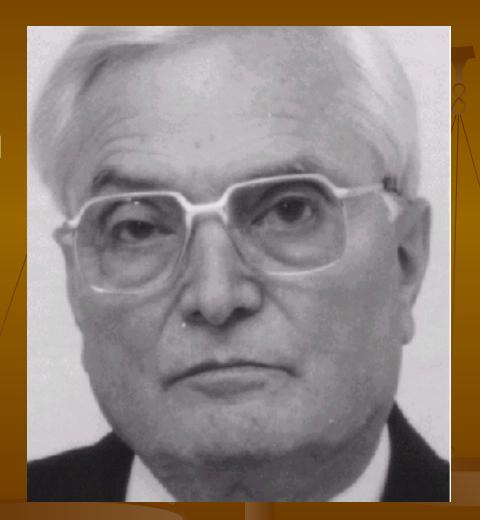
Objective
Norms
"Truth
Exists in
Itself"



Subjective Conscience

#### b. Pope Francis, Vatican II, Revisionists

- conscience as objectorientation "concerns the
  material content of the
  function of conscience" and
  indicates how we are to
  relate in the world. (Fuchs)
- orientation is "having inner knowledge of the moral goodness of the Christian, and as standing before God, and Christ, and in the Holy Spirit." (Fuchs)

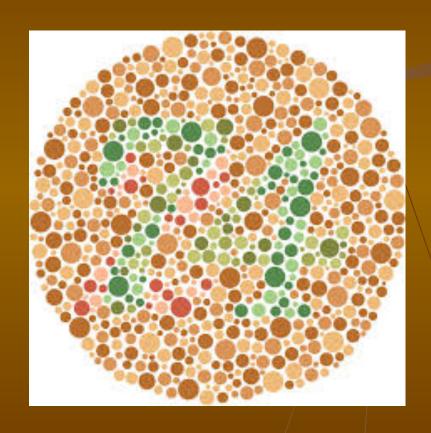


Objective Norms



Object and Subject-Orientation Conscience "Truth Exists in Myself"

## c. Perspectivism or Relativism?





## d. Pope Francis on Conscience

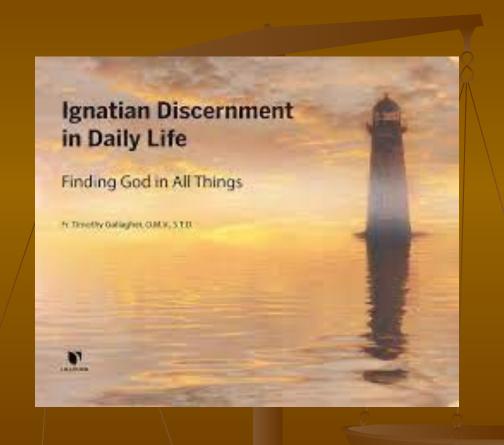
- Amoris Laetitia: "We find it hard to make room for the consciences of the faithful, who...are capable of carrying out their own discernment in complex situations. We have been called to form consciences, not to replace them" (AL 37; emphasis added).
- Prioritizes Subject-Orientation

  Anthropologically, Methodologically,
  and Ecclesiologically



**"We also must learn to listen more** to our conscience.... Conscience is the interior space in which we can listen to and hear the truth, the good, the voice of God. It is the inner place of our relationship with [God], who speaks to our heart and helps/us to discern, to understand the path we ought to take, and once the decision is made to move forward, to remain faithful." (Weekly Angelus Address, 6/30/13)

- 2. Discernment: Pastoral and Personal (AL, 293, 297, 298, 300)
- a. Gift and Skill
- Process of Discernment (McIntosh)
- i. Presence of God in my life
- Desires that distort or promote perception of God's presence.



- iii. practical wisdom that demands maturity
- iv. recognizes that this action in this situation is God's will for me
- the moment I judge that this action rather than that one is God's will for me in this specific situation and I freely move to do it.



- their own discernment in complex situations." Discernment is the truly Christian way to reach a decision of conscience
- of pastors must always take place 'by adequately distinguishing', with an approach which 'carefully discerns situations'. We know that no 'easy recipes' exist." (AL, 298; emphasis added)

e. "If we consider the immense variety of concrete situations...it is understandable that neither the Synod nor this Exhortation could be expected to provide a new set of general rules...applicable to all cases. What is possible is simply a renewed encouragement to undertake a responsible personal and pastoral discernment of particular cases..." (AL, 300; emphasis added).

#### 3. Virtue (ch. 4):

a. "The importance of the virtues needs to be included. Among these, chastity proves invaluable for the genuine growth of love between persons" (AL, 206). (Catechism vs. AL on chastity) Focus on virtue vs. obedience to absolute rules.



b. "Love is patient, love is kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way, it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things' (1 Cor 13:4-7)" (AL, Ch. 4, 90).

#### c. Prudence

- "prudence, good judgement and common sense are dependent not on purely quantitative growth factors, but rather on a whole series of things that come together deep within each person, or better, at the very core of our freedom." (AL n. 262).
- See AL 295, prudence and the law of gradualness.

# VI. New Pastoral Methods and Ethical Method



#### A. CSeT and CSoT

Amoris
Laetitia:
Integration of
CSeT and
CSoT



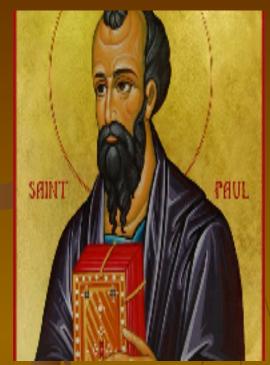
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## B. Accompaniment

"In our world, ordained ministers and other pastoral workers can make present the fragrance of Christ's closeness and his personal gaze. The Church will have to initiate everyone – priests, religious and laity – into this "art of accompaniment" which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the **other** (cf. Ex 3:5). The pace of this accompaniment must be steady and reassuring, reflecting our closeness and our compassionate [and merciful] gaze which also heals, liberates and encourages growth in the Christian life." (EG, 169)



c. Virtue-Focused:
Character and values
emphasized over acts
and rules (AL, 90ff.;
201); ch. 4 and
virtue. Pope Francis
emphasizes mercy.

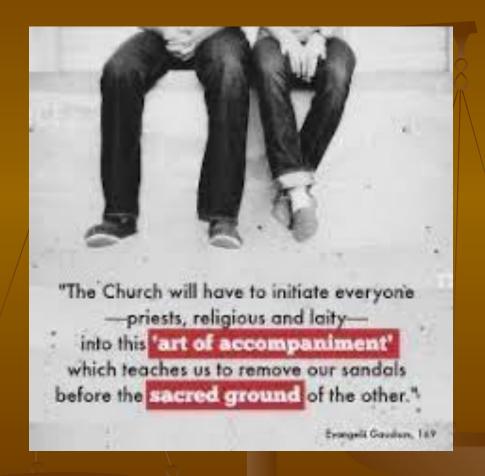




Principle Based: "Although there is necessity in the general principles, the more we descend to matters of detail, the more frequently we encounter defects... In matters of action, truth or practical rectitude is not the same for all, as to matters of detail, but only as to the general principles; and where there is the same rectitude in matters of detail, it is not equally known to all... The principle will be found to fail, according as we descend further into detail". (Summa Theologiae, I-II, q. 94, art. 4.)

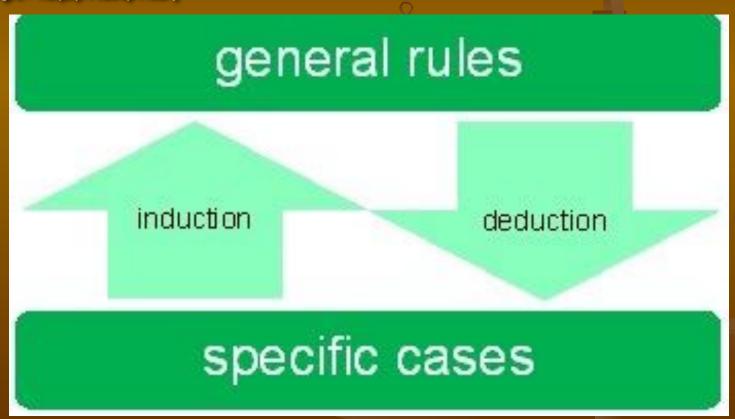
- The church, Pope Francis argues, "possesses a solid body of reflection concerning mitigating factors and situations. Hence it can **no longer simply be said** that all those in any 'irregular' situation are living in a state of mortal sin and are deprived of sanctifying grace." (AL, n. 301; emphasis added)
- 2. Example: "In some countries, de facto unions are very numerous...material poverty drives people into de facto unions" (AL, 294; emphasis added).

Pastoral Response to de facto unions: "these situations require a constructive response seeking to transform them into opportunities that can lead to the full reality of marriage and family in conformity with the Gospel. These couples need to be welcomed and guided patiently and discreetly" (AL, 264)



#### E. Deductive over Inductive Reasoning

(Diagram taken from URL: https://www.google.com/search?q=inductive+vs. +deductive+reasoning&biw=1413&bih=675&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi1\_prF94LPAhXGPz4KHTOwCAMQ\_AUI BygC#imgrc=-nBqSq77v2iAqM%3A)



# F. Synodality: Journeying Together



For Pope Francis' "synodality was key to taking the prayers, experiences and intuitions of Catholics all over the world and using them to discern new, better ways to share the Gospel message." (Chicago Catholic)

### VII. Implications for Human Sexuality

- natural means are to be promoted (AL, 222).
- Cohabitation: sex and economics
- 3. Same-sex civil unions: Pope Francis supported

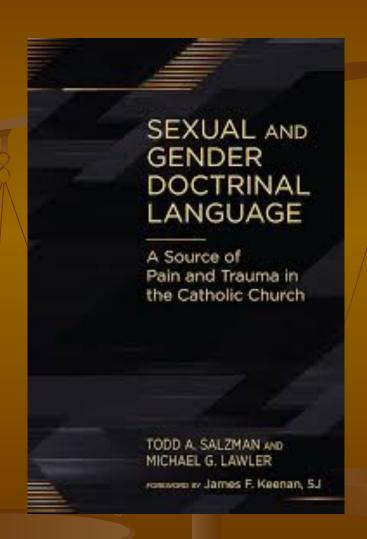
- 4. Divorce and Communion (Pope John Paul II vs. Pope Francis)
- 5. Irregular Situations
- 6. Women in the Church

# VIII. Conclusion: Future Prospects

- A. Cardinal Schönborn: AL represents "an organic development of doctrine."
- B. Using "New Pastoral Methods" for doing Catholic sexual ethics and pastorally guiding Catholics
- c. Drawing out the anthropological, methodological, and ecclesial (synodality) reforms for Catholic sexual ethics: conscience, discernment, accompaniment, virtue

Creighton University, Omaha, NE USA

- Language and Promoting
  "Not Unjust"
  Discrimination; "Gender
  Ideology" (Paulist Press)
- E. Women in the Church: Leadership Roles
- F. Priesthood: Married Priests (Querida Amazonia)
- G. Nones: Sexual and Gender Ethics
- н. Pope Leo XIV?



# Thank You!