



Catholic Comeback Lines

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Rule #1—Maintain an attitude of confidence. Keep in mind that “class is in session and WE are the teachers,” NOT them, not the secular world. At times our posture has to be something like a “holy arrogance.” This is because we have to cut through their arrogance which can be very deep and vicious in today’s world and they interpret our being “nice” as being weak. “Father wound” and father absenteeism is perhaps the single greatest longing in our world today. Underneath it all people today are like children who are mad at Daddy because they really want and need to hear from him. But Daddy is not to be found in our world today, so people slap at Daddy (Church, Pope, etc.)

Rule #2—Always answer an opponent’s question with a question: Take the discussion out of their court and invite them into the “H-Zone”=the “Honesty” zone. Everything will hinge upon the pursuit of **Honesty**. You will be taking them on a journey through the real meaning of the words they chose in their challenge. Explain how Catholics define a particular word.

Rule #3—Try to plug into their “sacred cows”—the virtues that they are trying to promote or protect and which they think Catholics do not share or are trampling upon; sensitivity, compassion, inclusiveness, women’s rights and above all **Honesty!** Usually our opponents want the same virtues as we do. The difference is in understanding how to arrive at the most honest form of these virtues.

Rule #4—The departure point between our opponents and ourselves will ultimately be the choice to embrace or reject the Cross. We can usually make progress in helping people understand what the Church is really saying on a an issue but the sticking point will always be the Cross. It is when they realize that to accept the teaching of the Church and therefore the only honest way to live, they will have to say “no” to themselves, to their inherent narcissism. The Catholic Church is the only entity on earth that will never remove or mitigate the Cross from the equation and that is why people strike at the Church. The Church is the “conscience” of the world and let’s face it, who likes their conscience? It was this way for Christ as well: “*Come down from the Cross....* and we will believe.” We can help people accept the Cross by plugging into their “sacred cows:” Ask them: “Don’t you have to “die” (say “no”) to yourself in order to rise to being good or the best at your job, sports, music, dancing, academics, making money, sustaining relationships, being compassionate, etc? “

The railroad track comparison

Secular world: *Power Function Usefulness (Utilitarianism)*

Catholic worldview: *Sign Sacrament Symbol*

“I don’t believe in organized religion”

Neither do I. That’s why I love being a Catholic. Catholic is not a “religion” or a set of rules. It is about a way of seeing and living according to that vision.

“Why is the Church against ‘gay’ people?”

Do you always call people names like that? We don’t do that in the Catholic Church because it is insensitive and not compassionate to label someone. We refer to everyone as “persons” which means they deserve at all times the utmost love, respect and dignity. Sometimes agreeing to what someone wants is not respecting them. Wanting what is best for someone regardless of the cost to ourselves is true compassion, respect and love. But it also the harder road to travel. It is much easier to practice false compassion by labeling someone and dismissing them. We don’t have to really bother with them. What passes for compassion and sensitivity can often really be narcissism on our part.

“If two men really love each other why is the Church against their being married? Why who are we to deny them happiness?”

What is your understanding of the words, “men,” “love,” “marriage” and “happiness?”

“I don’t get anything out of going to Mass”

Good! You’re not supposed to “get anything” out of going to Mass even though we do anyway by default. The sign outside said “St. Mary’s” not “St. Vending Machine.” It is God who gets something out of your going to Mass. God “gets” the gift of yourself as He gives the gift of Himself to us in the Eucharist.

“What you said offends me!”

Well, now, we do have a problem because I am offended that you are offended! Now, what do we do? Do we practice selective sensitivity and make your being offended more important than my being offended? Actually we are only offended if we choose to be. So, this is like football—’offsetting penalties’ which means I can continue talking.