

The Courage to Stand for Truth – A Lesson from Queen Esther

(A Catholic Reflection on Esther C:12, 14-16, 23-25)

"Excuse Me, Lord, I'm Just a Little Busy Hiding"

Imagine a modern-day Esther. Let's call her "Esther Gonzalez," an employee at a big corporation. One day, she learns that her company is about to enforce policies that go against her Catholic faith. A memo circulates: "All employees must publicly affirm certain ideologies, or risk termination." She panics, thinking, "*I could lose my job! Maybe if I just keep my faith private, everything will be fine.*"

Sound familiar? This is exactly what Queen Esther faced, except she wasn't just losing a job—she was at risk of losing her *head*.

Scriptural Context: Esther's Bold Leap of Faith

Esther was a Jewish queen in a pagan empire. When she learned that the wicked Haman had plotted to exterminate the Jews, she had two options:

1. **Stay silent** and avoid the risk of death.
2. **Speak up**, plead to the king, and possibly perish.

She chooses the latter—but not before turning to **prayer, fasting, and total dependence on God**. She cries out:

"Help me, who am alone and have no helper but you, O Lord." (Esther C:14)

And guess what? God **delivered her people** because of her faith!

A Controversial Parallel: The Pressure to Conform Today

One of the great modern moral battles is **the pressure to conform to ideologies that contradict Catholic teaching**—especially in workplaces, schools, and social media. There's pressure to remain silent about the sanctity of life, the nature of marriage, or gender identity.

Like Esther, many Catholics today are tempted to stay silent, fearing cancel culture, job loss, or social alienation.

What Do the Church Fathers Say?

1. **St. John Chrysostom**: "It is not possible for one to be a soldier enlisted by Christ and to remain indifferent to what is going on." (Homilies on Acts) – Translation: No Catholic can say, "*I'll just mind my own business.*"
2. **St. Augustine**: "Right is right even if no one is doing it; wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it." – Truth does not depend on popularity polls!

3. **St. Thomas More** (modern parallel to Esther): "I am the King's good servant, but God's first." – He chose to die rather than compromise the faith under King Henry VIII.

Real-Life Example: The Case of a Courageous Student

A few years ago, a Catholic student at a major university was told she had to sign a pledge supporting views that contradicted Church teaching on sexuality and gender. She respectfully declined and was told that she might be expelled. Instead of caving in, she did what Esther did—she fasted, prayed, and sought wise counsel.

In the end, her courage inspired **other students** to stand up, and the school had to reconsider its policy.

Practical and Counseling Tips: How to Be an "Esther" Today

1. **Pray First, Act Second** – Esther didn't rush in. She prayed, fasted, and then spoke. Never enter a controversial discussion without prayer.
2. **Seek Wise Counsel** – Esther had Mordecai. Find a faithful spiritual guide.
3. **Use Charitable Courage** – Be firm but respectful. As St. Paul says, "*Speak the truth in love*" (Eph 4:15).
4. **Be Ready for Sacrifice** – Esther risked death. You might risk friendships, promotions, or reputation—but truth is worth it.
5. **Trust in God's Providence** – Like Esther, trust that God is in control. If He can save an entire people through one woman, He can work through you!

Conclusion: The Time to Speak is Now

When Esther hesitated, Mordecai reminded her:

"Who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14)

Likewise, who knows whether **God placed you in your job, school, or community for this exact moment?** Like Queen Esther, we must step forward in faith—because truth needs courageous voices.

So the next time you feel pressured to stay silent about your faith, just remember: *"The world offers you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness."* – Pope Benedict XVI

Now go be an Esther! 🙌🙌