By now, I'm sure that most readers have seen or heard about what transpired on February 15 at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

> Two Catholic priests — Fr. Edward Dougherty, M.M., & Fr. Andrew King (both assigned to @StPatsNYC) — said nothing when a notorious trans activist was celebrated as "St. Cecilia, mother of all whores" & commended for "her" work to ensure "that sex workers are free."
>
> Abominable. pic.twitter.com/vytmTAKOKG
>
> — Matt Gaspers (@MattGaspers) February 18, 2024

For those who haven't, in short, a notorious transgender "woman" (male), activist, and former prostitute who went by the name "Cecilia Gentili" was given a public Catholic funeral service — professionally live-streamed via a channel called "Trans Equity," no less! — despite the fact that he identified "as an atheist" in an interview published last November.

Two days after the sacrilegious funeral, Fr. Enrique Salvo, rector of St. Patrick's Cathedral, released a brief statement in which he claimed, "The Cathedral only knew that family and friends were requesting a funeral Mass for a Catholic, and had no idea our welcome and prayer would be degraded in such a sacrilegious and deceptive way." (For evidence of deceptive and malicious intent on the part of the funeral organizers, see here.)

Fr. Salvo offered no explanation as to how *The New York Times* and *TIME Magazine* both knew about the funeral in advance and were on site to document the scandal, nor did he comment on Fr. James Martin's public admission that he "had been invited to preach" at the funeral "but was out of town" — not to mention Martin's comments given to the *Times* "before the service," further evidence that at least one NYC priest knew that a transgender activist was going to be publicly celebrated at the cathedral.

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My question remains: Can any random person, whether they are a Catholic in good standing or not, have a public funeral at St. Patrick's Cathedral? Is that really the policy there? Even at the humblest of parish churches, a basic inquiry is made regarding the identity of the deceased and their religious status before death. The Code of Canon Law requires at least that much due diligence:

> Can. 1184 §1. Unless they gave some signs of repentance before death, the following must be deprived of ecclesiastical funerals:
>
> 1/ notorious apostates, heretics, and schismatics;
>
> 2/ those who chose the cremation of their bodies for reasons contrary to Christian faith;
>
> 3/ other manifest sinners who cannot be granted ecclesiastical funerals without public scandal of the faithful.
>
> §2. If any doubt occurs, the local ordinary is to be consulted, and his judgment must be followed.

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So, if common sense would have been employed, those in charge of funeral planning at St. Patrick's would have easily ascertained that "Cecilia Gentili" was likely an apostate — someone who repudiated the Christian faith altogether (can. 751), if he was ever baptized in the first place — and was most certainly a manifest sinner whose ecclesiastical funeral would gravely scandalize the faithful.

According to New York's Cardinal Timothy Dolan, however, no one at St. Patrick's knew anything about the deceased. "We don't do FBI checks on people who want to be buried," he said with a wry chuckle earlier this week. During the same podcast, Dolan said he thinks that cathedral personnel "acted extraordinarily well," and commended "our priests who made a quick decision" not to offer a funeral Mass but simply a funeral service.

> Here's Fr. Edward Dougherty (according to TIME) officiating the funeral at St. Patrick's Cathedral for trans activist and prostitute Cecilia Gentili, joking, "Except on Easter Sunday, we don't really have a crowd that is this well turned out," to which the crowd of trans… pic.twitter.com/3gYehwdxcq
>
> — Mary Margaret Olohan (@MaryMargOlohan) February 16, 2024

In reality, even if they didn't know anything in advance, both of the priests involved — Fr. Edward Dougherty, M.M. (assigned to St. Patrick's in January), who presided, and Fr. Andrew King (master of ceremonies at St. Patrick's since 2012) — allowed all of the "scandalous behavior" (Fr. Salvo) that was live-streamed to the world, including the obscene and sacrilegious eulogies, even though the Order of Christian Funerals explicitly forbids all eulogies (n. 27).

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Homily

27 A brief homily based on the readings is always given after the Gospel reading at the funeral liturgy and may also be given after the readings at the vigil service; but there is never to be a eulogy. Attentive to the grief of those present, the homilist should dwell on God's compassionate love and on the Paschal Mystery of the Lord, as proclaimed in the Scripture readings. The homilist should also help the members of the assembly to understand that the mystery of God's love and the mystery of Jesus' victorious Death and Resurrection were present in the life and death of the deceased and that these mysteries are active in their own lives as well. Through the Homily members

4. See *Lectionary for Mass* (2nd *editio typica*, 1981), General Introduction, nos. 49, 52, and 55.
5. See General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, no. 109.

8 ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

Ignorance of the deceased's background is not a valid excuse for allowing the house of God to be desecrated with impunity by "enemies of the cross of Christ … whose glory is in their shame" (Philip. 3:18, 19).

This week Wednesday, Cardinal Dolan released a brief video message in which he referenced the life of St. Peter Damian, whose traditional feast day is February 23, and noted how the Saint and Doctor "preached to the Church" about the need to eradicate corruption within the Mystical Body of Christ so that the Church is not a cause of scandal. "We need to clean up our own act if we're going to preach conversion to the world."

I wholeheartedly agree. Let us pray that Cardinal Dolan does his part by instituting common-sense policies and procedures for event planning at St. Patrick's Cathedral, so that the scandal of a sacrilegious funeral never occurs there again.

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