

## Wildfire

As flames sear the West Coast, so the Hollywood community skewers one of its 'gods' (Meryl Streep referred to Weinstein as one in accepting an award for a picture he produced) for sexual misconduct of the most lurid order. Anyone with an iPhone knows that Harvey Weinstein—movie mogul responsible for highly honored films—used his position to misuse dozens of women. Most women were twenty-something beauties on their way up. Weinstein apparently could not be stopped. His lust leapt out of the casting office and onto female reporters who are now reporting the truth.

I hope the exposure of his power abuse will restrain the gods of Hollywood. Remarkable are the weird responses to his unraveling. Especially his 'friends.' We are talking here about a tightly knit network of actors and staff and lawyers and politicians who knew what was happening (come on, the man exposed himself constantly to pretty women, and had eight out-of-court harassment settlements) and turned a blind eye. That Streep—the most respected advocate for women in the industry and a frequent collaborator with Weinstein—claims she did not know of his abuses rings false to me. One can know and choose not to know.

Why the silence? Since the movies became an American institution in the 1920's, Hollywood has been off-limits for most kinds of sexual restraint. Lusty players created a moral fault-line on which the industry developed. Early studio heads did damage control constantly for reckless actors (of both sexes) while behind the scenes, these gatekeepers advanced appealing ones in exchange for sexual favors. Such trade still flourishes (both homosexually and heterosexually) under some power brokers: 'Give me what I want and I'll give you what you want.' Too many aspirants perpetuate the system by exchanging their dignity for a shot at stardom.

To expose Weinstein is to challenge one of Hollywood's central tenets: sexual lust masking as liberty. Of all kinds. When does consensual sex become abusive? Where does one cry foul? On the fifth marriage? Once the affair ends after filming? The next arrest for procuring prostitutes? Boundary-breaking films featuring underage sex (Watch for upcoming 'Call Me by My Name')?

Perhaps the silence—or feigned shock-- of some players toward Weinstein's exposure is based on their own compromises—maybe not as monstrous as Weinstein's but still stinking of strange flesh. One dares not judge lest (s)he be judged. Complicity is empowered by one's own little monsters.

Some good feminists claim that Weinstein's mess will provoke Hollywood's repentance. Cleansing this system may take a little more. Yes, abuse of power must end. And yes, one must sort out all the vain liberties Hollywood celebrates. Sexism is not the only villain. All sins against chastity are; only those players who confess these sins face down before their Author and Redeemer will finish well.

Only one foundation stands through the fire. Pray that Weinstein (and all his friends who now throw

stones at him) fall on the Rock. While the Weinstein story was breaking, I was rereading Pope Francis' excellent encyclical, 'The Joy of Love.' I close with these excerpts: 'God Himself created sexuality, which is a marvelous gift to his creatures. If this gift needs to be cultivated and directed, it is to prevent the impoverishment of an authentic value (150)...On the basis of this healthy vision of sexuality, we can approach the subject with a healthy realism. Sex often becomes depersonalized and unhealthy, an occasion and instrument for self-assertion and the selfish satisfaction of personal desires and instincts. In our day, sexuality risks being poisoned by the mentality of use and discard...Can we really ignore or overlook the continuing forms of domination, arrogance, abuse, sexual perversion and violence that are the product of a warped understanding of sexuality?'(153)

Hollywood can no longer.

[Join us for the 'Becoming Good News for the Gender Challenged' fast from Oct. 11th-Nov. 19th.](#)

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2017 Fall Report

A PUBLICATION OF DESERT STREAM MINISTRIES

# *Becoming Good News for the* **Gender Challenged**

**'FOR** I have  
not hesitated to  
proclaim to you the  
whole will of God.'  
St. Paul, Acts 20:27

*'You Will Be My Witnesses' (Acts 1:8)*

## **FORTY DAYS**

*of Prayer and Fasting for the Church*  
October 11<sup>th</sup>—Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### **A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE**

*By Andrew Comiskey*

Please join us for 40 days of prayer and fasting as we fight for the dignity of persons subject to a variety of destructive gender 'selves.' Together we will deepen our awareness of who God calls us to be as His faithful witnesses; we shall take bold steps to live the truth so bring God's Kingdom...