



**TWELVE
TOUGH
QUESTIONS
AND A
PASTOR'S
RESPONSE**

VERY REVEREND

DAVID M. O'LEARY, VF, S.T.L., D.PHIL

Endorsement

Twelve Tough Questions and a Pastor's Response attempts to unpack Catholic teaching, not in a purely academic fashion, but in a format that is easy to digest. Each chapter begins with a typical and timely question, and Father David O'Leary offers a reflective, pastoral response as he would to one of his parishioners. For the typical Catholic or a parish book club, it's a great and helpful read.

*-Bishop Robert Reed, Auxiliary Bishop
of Boston, President of Catholic TV*

Twelve Tough Questions and a Pastor's Response asks some inquisitive and riveting questions that Society and the Catholic Church are challenged to respond to. From a rich academic foundation and from many years in pastoral ministries, including Air Force Reserve, Fr. Dave offers penetrating questions and brilliant insights, as he responds to twelve questions in a simple style of letter writing. Parishioners with concerns for the Church and Society will find this book informative, challenging, and enjoyable.

*-Reverend Leo Shea, MM, Former Superior
General of Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers*

In this deeply practical and accessible book, Fr. David O'Leary brings compassion and humility to some of the most pressing questions on the heart of Catholic layfolk. From being faithful in our civic lives to caring for our loved ones at the end of life to wrestling with our identity as Catholics in the reality of the clergy abuse and cover-ups, O'Leary's reflections reside at this intersection of the pastor and theologian. He breaks open these challenging topics with grace and models to his readers how to draw open the foundations of the faith, using them like a compass in a storm - turning our hearts towards the Eucharist and human dignity. O'Leary leads with love, seeing God in all people and showing what it means to truly live out this truth. O'Leary's pastoral responses in this text will serve as a great resource for parishes, schools, and individuals. Our Catholic tradition has much to say about our world today, and O'Leary helps us make that connection. This book reminds me that my love for our rich tradition is not diminished by these hard questions, but enhanced and emboldened.

*-Lynn A. Cooper, M.Div., D.Min.,
Associate Director of the University Chaplaincy
and Catholic Chaplain, Tufts University, Author of
"Embracing our Time: The Sacrament of Interfaith
Friendships"*



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January 10, 2026

Very Rev. David M. O'Leary, V.F, S.T.L., D. Phil.
70 Monument Square
Concord, MA 01742

Dear Fr. David,

Please know of my appreciation for your considerable patience with this acknowledgment of you having so kindly sent me a copy of "Twelve Tough Questions and a Pastor's Response". Thank you for your understanding that my Emeritus status notwithstanding, the latter half of 2025 was a time of my venturing outside the Archdiocese on many occasions, for conferences, retreat programs, and initiatives on behalf of my Capuchin province. As you no doubt experience in your pastoral roles, there can often be the perception that if one is not engaged in a formal schedule of activities every day then one must have a great deal of free time.

It is good to know that the significant time and effort you have given to the pursuit of advanced studies, while also holding responsibility for the people entrusted to your pastoral care, was able to be somewhat moderated during your well-deserved time at the ICTE program in Rome. I would note that the schedule of that program, while intentionally not as demanding as that of a pastor at a parish, is also something far more than an extended vacation.

The questions we receive as pastors, whether assigned at a parish or in the course of being available for those who know us representatives of the Church, can often indeed be tough and more than that. Your book makes an important contribution to both the people we serve and fellow clergy better understanding that such questions are not problems to be solved, but opportunities for shared reflection on the presence of the Lord in our lives. It also provides the important recognition that none of us, whatever our ecclesial or educational status may be, know all the questions or have all the answers. Clergy and laity, believers and non-believers, doubters, and those striving to better understand the Catholic faith can benefit from your insightful exposition of that truth, presented in a format that is accessible to all. Thank you for your time and effort given to the book, and for all you do on behalf of the people of God.

With the assurance of my prayers, I remain,
Devotedly yours in Christ,

Sean O'Meara
Archbishop Emeritus of Boston