Letters’ Editor  
Canberra Times  
  
Congratulations to Terry Fewtrell (‘Catholics need to wake up and speak out’ CT 28 March 2018 page19) for saying what needs to be said and to be done if the Catholic Church is to remain relevant to Australians.  
  
His article begs the question “Just as Australia as a nation is no longer ruled from Westminster, why should the Australian Catholic Church be ruled from Rome”? Why should there not be an Australian Catholic Church, just as there are other nationally based Christian churches recognised by Rome such as the Copts in Egypt?  
  
Organisations like Concerned Catholics are too polite. Trying to work respectfully from within will only result in being ignored. One way to help start the process sought by Mr Fewtrell is for parishioners to stop contributing to the Church’s finances. The first collection at mass is, I am led to believe, earmarked for the support of the hardworking clergy and thus should be supported, but the second collection supports the Church’s other activities and in my view, should be boycotted.  
  
I suggest that this may be the only way to attract any attention and possibly extract some meaningful reform from the internecine bureaucracy in the Vatican. Otherwise, it would be an impossible task to set our bishops, even if they could be persuaded to make the attempt. Nothing much has changed in the Church in the 500 years since Martin Luther except that the proportion of the population who participate in its spiritual life has fallen right away, especially among the young.  
  
History has some relevant lessons. The upper echelons of the Church still think that they have a Devine right to rule, just as the kings and queens of England did, until Parliament took control of the nation’s finances from the time of the Stuarts through to Queen Anne and reduced the Monarchy to a ceremonial role and not much more. That should satisfy our cardinals.  
  
I hope that those of us longing for meaningful reform succeed, but I have the strong feeling that in the absence of drastic action, nothing will happen.  
  
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