



What We, The Laity, Are Reading That Is Shaking Us to the Core

A Reader on the Catholic Sex Abuse Scandal

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“And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

John 3:19-21

“Be brave and stouthearted.”

Psalms 27:14

Introduction

This resource*, a reader of news articles, opinion pieces and online material, was compiled between July 28 and November 5, 2018, but includes articles from as far back as the 1990's. The perspective on this global crisis is mainly from the United States, and what the crisis looks like from the standpoint of the average lay Catholic with access to the internet. This is a small sampling of what is available; we have provided excerpts of sample articles and have listed other resources we also think to be of importance. Some of the articles are from a perspective hostile to the Church but that does not negate their veracity.

While abuse of minors is a very serious offense, processes and procedures have been put in place by the Dallas Charter of 2002 to deal with such crimes.

The focus here is on another huge problem: the continuing presence of priests who engage in sexual misconduct with adults, especially males, and the effect they have on the Church — the harm they have done to victims, their pernicious influence in seminaries, the extent of their influence in dioceses, and the way they impede zealous promotion of the gospel. Daily, new stories of abuse and cover-up are reported. We believe the extent of this problem is tremendous and the time to purify the Church is now. We anticipate this will mean a significant reduction in the number of priests available to do the work of the Church. Many of our fellow laity may prefer to have priests who live immoral lives rather than a shortage of priests, but we believe that neither Jesus nor his Church are well served by such priests. Once the presence of predator priests and unchaste priests is eliminated, we expect that there will be an influx of devout, chaste men into the priesthood.

We are lay people who love Jesus, our Church, our bishops, our priests. We know there are holy and exemplary bishops, and bishops who serve us heroically, and we want them to have a Church that fully supports their invaluable work. We know that many bishops have inherited messes of various kinds and it seems that often the default way of dealing with priests who live immoral lives is to look the other way. But we think that is the wrong answer -- the Church deserves priests fully committed to being faithful to their vows, and those who are not ought to reform or resign.

Our objective is not to force bishops to resign nor are we trying to embarrass or harass them. We are making minimal proposals for action here -- more comprehensive ones will certainly come from elsewhere. Rather, we are imploring the bishops to take the strong actions needed to restore trust in the episcopacy so that we can all work together to have a Church that will attract because of its beauty, love, truth, and, yes, transparency and accountability. We don't intend to stop praying, fasting, and advocating for change until that happens.

While many of these articles may seem sensationalist, it is in fact the reality of abuse that is truly responsible for the shocking nature of what is reported. It is difficult for anyone to believe

all these stories, but the sheer volume of them gives credence to them, not to mention the stories reported in the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report. If you know any of these articles to report false information, please provide your reasons because we have come to believe the material they contain. If you know them to be true, please acknowledge that they are true and assure us you will be working to change things.

Recommendations

We do urge you to read as many of the full articles as you can; due to space limitations, we could not excerpt all the good information in each article. These excerpts are meant to whet your appetite for the whole and for the sampling of additional articles listed below.

We hope this reader will lead you to find methods that include significant involvement of laity:

- To assure laity that seminaries are not places where seminarians will be subject to sexual harassment, but are places where they will be taught the fullness of the faith. (We are grieved to say we have heard that some seminaries still have problems in this regard.)
- To assure laity that there is no network of priests who engage in sexual misconduct in your diocese.
- To assure laity that priests who violate chastity in serious ways will be given an opportunity and help in repenting and changing their ways.
- To assure laity that unchaste priests who refuse to repent and change their ways will be asked to resign from the priesthood.
- To find ways to correct fellow bishops whose response to sex abuse cases is poor, confuses the faithful, and reflects badly upon all bishops.

A Year Promoting Chaste Celibacy

We recommend that bishops initiate a year dedicated to recommitting their presbyterate to chaste celibacy in order to help their priests achieve intimacy with Jesus and be the priests Jesus wants them to be.

One such program could be based upon the recommendations in the book *In Sinu Jesu: When Heart Speaks to Heart -- The Journal of a Priest at Prayer* (the bishop might want to give a copy of this book to all his priests). This book is a record of private locutions to a Benedictine priest by Jesus and the Blessed Mother who implore the author and other priests to do reparation for impure priests. Here is a typical passage:

I am about to renew the priesthood of My Church in holiness. I am very close to cleansing My priests of the impurities that defile them. Soon, very soon, I will pour out graces of spiritual healing upon all My priests. I will separate those who will accept the gift of My divine friendship from those who will harden their hearts against me. To the

first I will give a radiant holiness like that of John and of My apostles in the beginning. From the others I will take away even what they think they have. It must be so. I want the priests of My Church clean in heart and faithful in responding to the immense love with which I have loved each one of them and chosen each one for Myself and for the realization of the designs of My Heart. Those who do not live in My friendship betray Me and impede My work. They detract from the beauty of holiness that I would see shine in my Church. I weep over the hardness of heart, and My Immaculate Mother, their sorrowing Mother weeps with Me over them. (p. 49)

Here is the plan proposed in *In Sinu Jesu* (p. 78):

1. All priests meet on Thursday evening (in the Cathedral with the bishop if possible, or at several churches in accessible locations with the bishop rotating between them).
2. They pray Vespers together.
3. They have time for confessions.
4. They have Mass and an hour of Adoration with some passages read from *In Sinu Jesu*.
5. They share a simple meal together.

Again, we hope these efforts will help restore trust in the episcopacy and in the priesthood.

Please read what we have compiled for you.

And please read the final note at the end.

Thank you!

The full reader is online at: <https://www.nomorevictimsMI.org>

*. This reader is a project of No More Victims (Diocese of Lansing, MI). Among the members of the board are Al Kresta, broadcaster and journalist, Jason Negri, attorney and director of NMV, and Graham Lapp, survivor and advocate. Janet E. Smith, moral theologian, is a consultant. The media contact is: Al Kresta, akresta@wdeo.net

Heartbreaking Stories: The Victims Speak

Future priests among the victims

When he was 18, Fr. John Bambrick tried for years to get someone to believe his claims

Very Rev. John Bambrick, "I Am a Catholic Priest Who Was Sexually Abused by a Pastor. Here's How the Church Must Change," *Time*, August 17, 2018

I'm a Catholic priest who himself survived sexual abuse from a member of a clergy, though not in Pennsylvania. The perpetrator was a visiting priest who repeatedly molested me when I was a 15-year-old altar boy from New Jersey and who I remember telling me about the others — that is, the other boys and the other priests he sometimes shared them with.

In 1991, eleven years after he abused me, I filed a complaint against him with Archdiocese of New York. And for nearly two decades after, I tracked his movements throughout the country and fought to remove him from the various positions he held across several states: as a pastor (including at schools) and, after he was defrocked in 2006, as a hospital chaplain, among others. I kept notes. I investigated and found other victims and spoke with them.

I was stunned by the responses I received from Church officials. One monsignor, later a bishop, dismissed it as "a summer romance" — as if it could ever have been consensual. I recall an Archdiocesan official suggesting I made it all up, and accusing me of having committed incest with my own mother prior to the events, which he said inspired some kind of projection onto the priest. I remember that some asked why I wanted to ruin the man's life — that I was the abnormal one.

<http://time.com/5370530/pennsylvania-grand-jury-report-catholic-church-abuse-vatican/>



California priest becomes voice for victims, sharing his own story of abuse

Mark Pattison, "In homily priest says he was abused, hears from dozens of victims," *Crux*, September 20, 2018

To be a voice for victims of clerical sexual abuse, Father Brendan McGuire realized he had to come to terms with the abuse he suffered at the hands of a priest when he was 18. It was a secret he had held for 35 years.

...Since the homilies, McGuire said, he has heard from 45 men who told him they also had been abused. Five of the men were priests, he added, and four of those had been abused while they were seminarians.

Growing up in Bray, Ireland, near Dublin, McGuire said he first met his priest-abuser when he was 14, and did not recognize the four years of “grooming” by the priest for his “final play,” with the priest saying during the attack that he had waited until young McGuire had turned 18 “so it wouldn’t be child abuse.”

While the future priest successfully fought off his abuser - “I was one of the lucky ones,” he said in his homily - others were not so lucky. The priest, who was not named in the homily, had preyed on dozens in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, was imprisoned in 2004 and died in prison two years later.

<https://cruxnow.com/church-in-the-usa/2018/09/20/in-homily-priest-says-he-was-abused-hears-from-dozens-of-victims/>

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Women among the victims

Priest allegedly arranged an abortion for his victim

Carol Kuruvilla, “These Are The Chilling Stories Of Abuse Covered Up By The Catholic Church,” *HuffPost*, August 15, 2018

The grand jury reports that a priest in the Diocese of Scranton, Thomas Skotek, assaulted a young girl from 1980 to 1985. The priest allegedly raped her, got her pregnant and helped arrange an abortion.

Documents in the church’s archives suggest that the diocese’s bishop was “fully aware” of the priest’s actions by 1986. Skotek resigned and was sent to a Catholic treatment center for clergy.

In a 1986 letter obtained by the grand jury, the bishop of Scranton expressed his condolences to the accused priest. “This is a very difficult time in your life and I realize how upset you are. I too share your grief. How I wish it were not necessary to take this step,” the former Bishop James Timlin wrote in the letter to Skotek. “With the help of God, who never abandons us and who is always near when we need Him, this too will pass away, and all will be able to pick up and go on living.”

One year later, in 1987, Skotek was reassigned to another Pennsylvania church. In 1989, the young woman was asked to sign a confidentiality agreement in exchange for a financial settlement.

That same year, [Bishop James] Timlin sent a letter to the Vatican acknowledging that the priest had helped arrange an abortion. Catholic canon law deems those who cooperate in a completed abortion as “irregular,” which means they could be prevented from carrying out priestly duties. This bishop asked Rome to issue a dispensation for the priest, which is an exemption from an existing canon law.

“The Grand Jury noted that the focus of Timlin’s letter seemed to exclusively address the procurement of the abortion with little concern that Skotek had impregnated a child,” the report reads.

The priest continued in active ministry until 2002.

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/these-chilling-stories-of-clerical-sex-abuse-highlight-the-need-for-change_us_5b745954e4b0df9b093b7235

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Cover-up is a another form of victimization

Matthew Schmitz, “Stopping the Priests Who Prey on Adults,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 13, 2018

Rachel Mastrogiacomo says she has been victimized twice: first by an abusive priest, then by those who failed to remove him from ministry.

In 2010 Father Jacob Bertrand sexually penetrated Ms. Mastrogiacomo, then 24, while he said a private mass in the basement of her Minnesota home. ...

Four years later Ms. Mastrogiacomo reported the assault to Catholic authorities. When confronted by officials at the Diocese of San Diego, Father Bertrand “substantially admitted misconduct,” according to diocesan spokesman Kevin Eckery. On Nov. 30, 2014, Father Bertrand wrote in his parish bulletin that he was taking a leave of absence because he “struggled with experiencing emotional connectivity” after an arson attack. He returned to ministry in 2015.

In 2016 Ms. Mastrogiacomo discovered Father Bertrand was once again a parish priest—in which capacity he gave a talk on “Theology of the Body” and met with college students. “It was just as traumatic as the crime in the sense that it made me feel like I was worth nothing and I was powerless,” she recalled in an interview last week. “I felt as though I was a faithful little sheep in the flock that could just be raped and thrown out.”

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/stopping-the-priests-who-prey-on-adults-1536879580>

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Seminaries and seminarians

Several of the articles in this section are about the condition in seminaries some decades ago but they remain relevant since so many currently active priests and bishops were formed in the seminaries then. Conditions are for the most part much improved, though, unfortunately, not everywhere.

The large gay population in US Seminaries

Staff writers, "Gays and the Seminary," *Newsweek*, May 19, 2002

...the 64-year-old institution, nestled in the hills of Camarillo, Calif., may be one of the country's gayest facilities for higher education. Depending on whom you ask, gay and bisexual men make up anywhere from 30% to 70% of the student body at the college and graduate levels. "I don't want people to think that in a negative way," says a 28-year-old gay alumnus, who believes all seminarians there are chaste, regardless of orientation. "It isn't like Christopher Street or West Hollywood. But some seminarians are gay, openly gay, and very loud about it."

<https://www.newsweek.com/gays-and-seminary-145329>

(Later reports disclose that 10% of priests ordained from St. John's have been accused of molesting minors. <http://articles.latimes.com/2005/nov/17/local/me-stjohns17>)



Gay seminarian encouraged to engage in gay sexual relations

Ben Brenkert, "Confessions of a Gay Jesuit: How I Was Forced To Leave My Church—And Calling," *Daily Beast*, February 25, 2015

M.B. was a strikingly attractive young Polish man from St. Louis whose sexual appetite was rapacious, and whose attraction to me never ceased. With time his advances grew more aggressive. We spent a weekend at a vacation home in Green Hills, when M.B. asked me to sleep with him.

During that weekend M.B. told me about at least one affair with another Jesuit, M.P. Later, when M.B. suggested we have a threesome I knew that our own sexual intimacy in the basement of the "4th house" had stirred his addiction to sex, and to me.

...About the secret world of gay Jesuits: I could go on and on about gay Jesuits playing the piano in the West Village's Duplex or about the nights I spent at NYC's Splash Bar or Eagle Club. I could talk about how older gay Jesuits swam nude during summers at villa homes, about Jesuits who groped each other in hot tubs, or Jesuits who were gay in the order but who are

now safely married. I could talk about gay Jesuits that had online Avatars and memberships to gay online dating sites. I could talk about failed Jesuit hook-ups, my own and others.

There were the gay Jesuits who were so closeted that they hid behind conservatism, leaving the Jesuits for formation programs in dioceses across the United States. There were gay Jesuits who were put in clerical prison for embracing undergrads too long, and others who attended Sexaholics Anonymous, or whose personal collection of pornography was mistakenly played during high school lectures.

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/confessions-of-a-gay-jesuit-how-i-was-forced-to-leave-my-church-and-calling>



By the 1970s, seminaries were attracting and grooming future sexual predators

Dan Michalski, "How Rudy Kos Happened," *D Magazine*, July 1998

Once a citadel of Catholic orthodoxy, Holy Trinity mislaid its moral compass in the mid-1970s. The House, as seminarians call the isolated beige brick structure at the University of Dallas, became a magnet for sexually confused youths, or self-professed gays. The infamous Rudy Kos, a sexual predator, also called The House his home in those days.

Unlike most seminarians, who entered as undergraduates at age 20 or younger, Kos came to The House at age 32 after a career as a registered nurse, with a failed marriage behind him.

...Before officially accepting Kos, Holy Trinity had to check the validity of his marriage annulment. Tucked into his Dallas chancery file was an interesting report from the diocesan marriage tribunal, who had spoken with Kos' ex-wife just before his acceptance to Holy Trinity.

... As it turned out, she had lived with Kos for five years in an unhappy, unconsummated marriage before kicking him out upon discovering a trunkload of love letters from several teenage boys. But she was never re-contacted after the initial interview.

As Kos begins the rest of his life in prison, other former seminarians are speaking — most on condition of anonymity — of their own sexual adventures at The House. These men tell a consistent story of forbidden urges that were more often expressed than suppressed at Holy Trinity. Gay and straight alike, they say that what began as occasional, isolated moments of sexual contact among the students degenerated into obvious promiscuity that the diocese did little but ignore, as long as the sexual shenanigans stayed quiet.

<https://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/1998/july/religion-how-rudy-kos-happened>



Seminarian victims of abuse and misconduct from around the world continue to tell their stories; among the most well-known is the Chilean crisis

Inés San Martín, "Victims recount sexual abuse horrors in Chilean seminary," *Crux*, August 7, 2018

Crux spoke with the four victims, and several others, in the past week. All are former seminarians of the Chilean diocese of Valparaíso, some 60 miles from Santiago, the country's capital. They've provided the complaints that they handed to ecclesiastical authorities over a period from 2010 until this June, when a papal representative was in the country to look into Chile's clerical sexual abuse crisis.

Crux also has obtained a copy of a letter by a Chilean bishop acknowledging that as of 2008, the Holy See had an allegation against a brother bishop. In addition, Crux has also obtained video and audio recordings and an email of one of the priests acknowledging guilt and trying to buy one of his victims' silence.

<https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2018/08/07/victims-recount-sexual-abuse-horrors-in-chilean-seminary/>



At seminary in Austria, openly homosexual behavior and abuse of children co-existed

Richard Bernstein, "Seminary Sex Scandal Divides Austrian Church," *New York Times*, July 17, 2004

It started early in the week when the Austrian weekly newsmagazine Profil published photographs of the rector and deputy rector of the seminary [St. Pölten], the main school for future priests in this area just west of Vienna, in which they appeared to be kissing and fondling seminary students.

The publication of the photographs came some months after thousands of images, apparently downloaded from child pornography Web sites, appeared on seminary computers, prompting a police investigation.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2004/07/17/world/seminary-sex-scandal-divides-austrian-church.html>



Proper formation impossible in Irish seminary with active homosexual subculture

Anthony Murphy, "Homosexual 'cesspool': Priest Blows Whistle on Ireland's National Seminary," *LifeSiteNews*, September 24, 2018

Father David Marsden, a priest and trained psychologist specializing in priestly formation, discovered the existence of a powerful "gay" subculture in St Patrick's College in Maynooth, Ireland and deciding that it was no longer possible to conduct proper formation in the seminary, he resigned. The priest's testimony suggests that an active and secretive homosexual subculture is being allowed to thrive in the Maynooth seminary, with the approval of the ecclesial authorities.

Despite the opposition from the staff (about speaking out on the same-sex marriage referendum), Fr. Marsden received much support and was admired by many of the seminarians, he recounted. But he was also aware of an active and vocal "gay" subculture operating freely in the seminary. When the referendum was passed in May 2015, the priest recounted how this group became emboldened to the point of having no fear in letting others know they were homosexual, sexually active, and in the seminary with the full knowledge and support of their bishops.

Fr. Marsden recounted how he challenged one of the most notorious homosexual seminarians about his disordered lifestyle. He was given the response: "My bishop knows, the seminary council knows, my spiritual director knows – none of them have a problem with it so neither should you." The priest said he realized that he was being told to essentially shut up since this was none of his business. It was after this encounter that Fr. Marsden said he realized that it was now no longer possible to conduct proper formation in the seminary in the face of such widespread dissent from Church teaching that was blatant among the seminary council and the spiritual directors. It was at this point, he said, that he wrote a letter to Mons. Connolly tendering his resignation.

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/opinion/homosexual-cesspool-priest-blows-whistle-on-irelands-national-seminary>



Seminarians' complaints about homosexuality in seminary ignored

Edward Pentin, "Honduran Seminarians Allege Widespread Misconduct," *National Catholic Register*, 7/25/2018

In a letter written to the seminary's formators that was subsequently circulated in June to the country's Catholic bishops, the seminarians asserted "irrefutable evidence" exists that a homosexual network pervades the institution and is being protected by its rector.

"Heterosexual seminarians are scandalized and really depressed," one of the seminarians who drafted the letter told the Register.

"Many are thinking about leaving the seminary," the seminarian said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of a fear of reprisals....

The disturbing Honduran allegations have particular resonance in the United States because they echo some key aspects of the current scandal in the Church in the United States....

[J]ust as the revelations regarding Cardinal McCarrick have provoked troubling questions about what his brother U.S. bishops and the Vatican knew about his interactions with seminarians and about why nothing was disclosed publicly for so long, the Honduran allegations call into question the actions of Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga of Tegucigalpa.

<http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/honduran-seminarians-allege-widespread-homosexual-misconduct>



Priests Who Have Sex With Males / Gay Networks

Sociologist suggests number of abuse incidents related to homosexual rise in clergy

Kevin Jones, "Clergy sex abuse on the rise again, and Church leaders are ignoring why, sociologist says," *Catholic World Report*, Nov 2, 2018

"The thing we've been told about the sex abuse is that it is somehow very rare and declined to almost nothing today is really not true," Father D. Paul Sullins, a Catholic priest and retired Catholic University of America sociology professor, told a Nov. 2 press conference.

"I found that clergy sex abuse did drop to almost nothing after 2002, but then it started to creep up," he continued. "It's been increasing. And there are signs that the bishops or the dioceses have gotten complacent about that."

...Clergy sex abuse incidence is today about one third as common as in the late 1980s. While sex abuse by clergy is "much lower" than 30 years ago, it has not declined "as much as is commonly thought." Most of the decline since the 1990s is consistent with "a similar general decline in child sex abuse in America since that time," Sullins' report said.

The decline is not necessarily related to measures taken by the U.S. bishops. Sullins told the press conference he saw no link between a decline in abuse and the implementation of the U.S. bishops' 2002 Charter for the Protection of Children and Young Adults.

"Recent experience calls into question whether the current understanding of the nature of the abuse and how to reduce it is accurate or sufficient," said Sullins in his report.

Efforts to address clergy abuse must acknowledge both "the recent increase of abuse amid growing complacency" and the "very strong probability" that the surge in abuse in past and present is "a product, at least in part, of the past surge and present concentration of homosexual men in the Catholic priesthood."

... "From 1965 to 1995 an average of at least one in five priests ordained annually were homosexual, a concentration which drove the overall proportion of homosexual men in the priesthood up to 16 percent, or one in six priests, by the late 1990s," said Sullins' report. This trend was strongly correlated with increasing child sex abuse," he said.

Drawing on his findings, Sullins predicted that if the proportion of homosexual priests remained at the 1950s level "at least 12,000 fewer children, mostly boys, would have suffered abuse," he said. As a percentage, this means abuse would have been about 85 percent lower.

<https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2018/11/02/clergy-sex-abuse-on-the-rise-again-and-church-leaders-are-ignoring-why-sociologist-says/>



Homosexual clergy living double lives exposes the Church to peril

Kenneth L. Woodward, "Double Lives: The Peril of Clerical Hypocrisy," *Commonweal*, October 26, 2018

[One issue] that no one in the Catholic hierarchy seems eager to investigate: the extent to which there are gay networks operating within the American priesthood, its seminaries and chanceries, and within the Vatican itself. ...By networks, I mean groups of gay priests, diocesan and religious, who encourage the sexual grooming of seminarians and younger priests, and who themselves lead double lives—breaking their vows of chastity while ministering to the laity and staffing the various bureaucracies of the church.

The danger of clerical double lives – of secrets that can be used as weapons to protect other secrets – should now be clear to everyone.

The question of how networks relate to cases like McCarrick's is one that veterans in the hierarchy ought to summon the courage to air.

<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/double-lives>

Love nests, boy-parties and sex-driven favoritism, financed with Church funds, were exposed in 2011 by attorney-driven investigation in the Archdiocese of Miami

Brandon K. Thorp, "The Catholic Church's Secret Gay Cabal," *Gawker*, July 28, 2011
(This is a particularly horrifying report that stretches credulity but it was a selfless, careful lawyer who did the research. Warning: graphic image on website)

[Archbishop Emeritus John] Favalora, who was the most powerful Catholic official in Southern Florida from 1994 until last year, stands accused of cultivating what one group of pissed-off Catholics describes as a corrupt "homosexual superculture" in the 195 churches, schools, missions, seminaries, and universities that constitute the Miami Archdiocese.

...Favalora's accusers are loosely organized under the name "Christifidelis," and in 2005 they undertook an extensive investigation of priestly misbehavior in the Archdiocese.... Christifidelis's exertions on behalf of Mother Church are recorded in an enormous, binder-bound document entitled "Miami Vice: A Preliminary Report on the Financial, Spiritual, and Sexual Improprieties of the Clergy of the Miami Archdiocese."

Findings include (only partial list):

- *A priest was known to plan regular "sleepovers" with seminarians at his rectory*
- *A homosexual priest who served as principal at one of the Archdiocese's high schools poached sexual partners from seminarians at St. John Vianney Seminary.*
- *A homosexual priest in the town of Miramar was co-habiting with his lover, who's also a parishioner.*
- *An Archdiocesan official sought out "young boys from third-world countries, from unprivileged backgrounds, and recruited them for the Archdiocese's seminaries. These men [were] groomed to engage in sexual relationships with the older homosexual priests of the Archdiocese."*
- *More recently, an associate pastor had received full pastorship at a church in the Florida Keys after being caught en flagrante delicto (sic) with his male lover—while the person who caught him, a Philippino priest, was booted from the Archdiocese.*

<http://gawker.com/5825254/the-catholic-churchs-secret-gay-cabal>



Rome's netherworld of homosexual cardinals, priests and monks survives by secrecy

Michael Joseph Gross, "The Vatican's Secret Life," *Vanity Fair*, December 2013

Gay lobby? It depends on what you mean. ...At the Vatican, a significant number of gay prelates and other gay clerics are in positions of great authority. They may not act as a

collective but are aware of one another's existence. And they inhabit a secretive netherworld, because homosexuality is officially condemned. Though the number of gay priests in general, and specifically among the Curia in Rome, is unknown, the proportion is much higher than in the general population. Between 20 and 60 percent of all Catholic priests are gay, according to one estimate cited by Donald B. Cozzens in his well-regarded [The Changing Face of the Priesthood](#). For gay clerics at the Vatican, one fundamental condition of their power, and of their priesthood, is silence, at least in public, about who they really are.

Clerics inhabit this silence in a variety of ways. A few keep their sexuality entirely private and adhere to the vow of celibacy. Many others quietly let themselves be known as gay to a limited degree, to some colleagues, or to some laypeople, or both; sometimes they remain celibate and sometimes they do not. A third way, perhaps the least common but certainly the most visible, involves living a double life. Occasionally such clerics are unmasked, usually by stories in the Italian press. In 2010, for the better part of a month, one straight journalist pretended to be the boyfriend of a gay man who acted as a "honeypot" and entrapped actual gay priests in various sexual situations. (The cardinal vicar of Rome was given the task of investigating. The priests' fates are unknown.)

The Vatican holds secrets so tightly that it can make Fort Meade look like a sloppy drunk. Yet dozens of interviews with current and former gay priests, gay monks, veteran Vatican journalists, Italian aristocrats, and gay men at Roman gyms, bars, nightclubs, sex clubs, and restaurants suggest that, riveting as the more graphic stories are, they convey a limited part of the reality of gay clerical life in Rome.

To be gay in the Vatican is no guarantee of success, mark of belonging, or shortcut to erotic intrigue. Most basically it is a sentence of isolation. Gays in the Vatican are creatures of a cutthroat bureaucracy whose dogmatic worldview denies or denigrates their own existence. They live in a closet that has no door.

<https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2013/12/gay-clergy-catholic-church-vatican>



A very different point of view

James Alison, "Homosexuality among the clergy: caught in a trap of dishonesty," *The Tablet*, August 1, 2018

This article is very different from the others posted here. It is written by an openly gay priest and shows the thinking of some within the gay priest community.

An anecdotal illustration: a few years ago, I found myself leading a retreat for Italian gay priests in Rome. Of the nearly 50 participants some were single, some partnered, for others it was the first time they could talk honestly with other priests outside the confessional. Among them there were seven or eight mid-level Vatican officials.

...A second dimension is grasped when you understand the general rule that the heterosexuality of a cleric is inversely proportional to the stridency of his homophobia. This is one of the reasons why I am sceptical of all attempts to “weed out the gays”. The principal clerical crusaders in this area turn out to be gay themselves – in some cases, so deeply in denial that they don’t know it. And in some cases knowingly so.

My own experience, which has since been confirmed by hundreds of echoes worldwide, is that there are proportionately few straight men in the clergy (leaving aside rural dioceses in some countries, where heterosexual concubinage is the customary norm) and they do not, as a rule, persecute gay men. It is closeted men who are the worst persecutors. Some are very sadly disturbed souls who cannot but try to clean outwardly what they cannot admit to being inwardly. These can’t be helped since Church teaching reinforces their hell. For others the lure of upward mobility leads them to strategic displays of enthusiasm for the enforcement of the house rules.

<https://www.thetablet.co.uk/features/2/14068/homosexuality-among-the-clergy-caught-in-a-trap-of-dishonesty>



Answers to some of the alternative explanations

Mary Eberstadt, “The Elephant in the Sacristy,” *The Weekly Standard*, August 19, 2018 (originally published 6/17/2002)

...strenuous, willful, and perverse denial of the obvious [that homosexuality in the priesthood is a problem], repeated unceasingly on paper and airwaves and websites these last several months, has been injurious to the greater good on at least two critical counts. First, the insistence on false definitions has deflected attention from where it ought to be--i.e., on who, exactly, has been injured in all this, who has done the injuring, and how restitution might be made. Second, and what is even more dangerous, this widespread repudiation of sheer fact has been inimical to the most important mission facing the bishops and, indeed, all other Catholics. That is the responsibility of doing everything in one's power to prevent this current history, meaning the rape and abuse of innocents by Catholic priests, from ever being repeated. Insisting that things are not what they appear subverts that end, to say the least.

...the biggest problem with the argument against celibacy has been that it simply affronts common sense. To argue that vows of chastity lay somehow at the root of the priest scandal is like arguing that tee-totaling (sic) causes drunkenness, or that quitting smoking will

increase the risk of lung cancer. The purported causality of the thing, as Michael Novak and others patiently explained, simply could not hold. Even more illogical, if that is possible, has been the idea that allowing priests to marry would somehow reduce the kind of sexual offenses of which the scandals were made. "Right," in conservative columnist Maggie Gallagher's tart words. "As if wives are the answer to the sexual urges of men who get their kicks from adolescent boys."

...in the effort to understand how the crimes happened, as well as the even more pressing business of deterring them in the future, the arguments about "secrecy" and "clericalism" amount to a sideshow. For while both phenomena obviously made the sexual assault of children possible, neither secrecy nor clericalism caused the assaults in the first place. Plenty of other institutions, from the CIA to 4-H clubs, keep institutional secrets all the time, and with no visible upswing in the sexual abuse of male children as a result. It is certainly arguable that post-Vatican II Catholic America has been bounded by a three-way collusion among disobedient priests, disobedient lay people, and child-molesting clergy benefiting from general laxity--a kind of ecclesiastical Bermuda triangle in which discipline and traditional moral teachings have mysteriously disappeared. But this is hardly the problem that writers who finger Catholic "secrecy" as the main factor in the scandals have in mind.

...even a cursory examination of reality brings the abstractions of "immaturity" up short. There is, first, the uncomfortable fact--or what ought to be an uncomfortable fact, especially for Catholics--that the explanation from "immaturity" bears no resemblance to the language of sin and redemption. It simply medicalizes the problem, emptying the abuser's acts of moral meaning and (literally, in this case) defining deviancy down. But that is not its only limitation. Rather, the fundamental shortcoming of the "psychosexual" argument is that it does not explain what it purports to explain--namely, where the scandals came from.

Original: <https://www.weeklystandard.com/mary-eberstadt/the-elephant-in-the-sacristy>

Revised: <https://www.weeklystandard.com/mary-eberstadt/the-elephant-in-the-sacristy-revisited>



Man with SSA agrees men like him should not be priests

Daniel Mattson, "Why Men Like Me Should Not be Priests," *First Things*, August 17, 2018

I am the sort of man the Catholic Church says shouldn't be a priest. I experience what the Vatican calls "deep-seated homosexual tendencies," which, according to the Church, make me an unsuitable candidate for the priesthood ...I take no offense at this teaching. In fact, I agree with it. I'm convinced that if the Church had heeded its own counsel from 1961 and 2005, we wouldn't be reeling from the shocking headlines of today.

Archbishop Charles Chaput, commenting on the 2005 document, wrote, "While persistent homosexual tendencies never preclude personal holiness—homosexuals and heterosexuals have the same Christian call to chastity, according to their state of life—they do make the vocation of effective priestly service that much more difficult." From my personal experience, I

believe there are many reasons why this is the case, but here I will focus only on two, directly connected with unchastity.

<https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2018/08/why-men-like-me-should-not-be-priests>



Laments of Priests

Confusion fostered in seminary becomes crippling

Fr. Athanasius Fornwalt, "Why Priests Won't Protest Violations of Clerical Celibacy," *Crisis*, August 23, 2018

Confusion is the first phase of torture. Its purpose is to confound the fight/flight instinct into a passive reserve: you freeze. Such a moment, that moment when you should fight for your life but instead become coolly resigned, is the origin of the psychological torture in a Siberian prison camp.

The moment comes for most of these good men when they are tempted to compromise their personal integrity and values. They hear a story, they see some impropriety, or they are propositioned for sex. The question is whether to blow the whistle or not, to tell an authority or not. Those who are wise realize that everything may be on the line. If they give in to temptation they will be blackmailed for life.

Imagine the seminarian's discouragement when he brings his confusion to a spiritual or formation director for advice and his concerns are disregarded. Indeed, often he is blamed for others' bad behavior or told that he lacks the maturity to understand. Or the situation is portrayed in a way that implies that the only person who is abnegating moral responsibility is the seminarian who voiced the complaint. He might be accused of being disloyal, anti-social, or maybe he's accused of instigating the illicit sexual behavior.

Now imagine the confusion that the young seminarian feels in prayer when he brings to God the deviant sexual behavior within this society, the corruption within the community, and the betrayal that he experiences from those in authority. After all, this is God's Church. Shouldn't he be doing something about it? Can't God find any man to "stand in the breach?"

What tremendous desolation he experiences when he reflects on the lack of affirmation for good behavior (no good deed goes unpunished), and the multiform societal encouragement of bad behavior. Once, perhaps, the seminarian was self-assured. He knew he desired the good for himself and for others. But now he may come to believe lies that he is not a person concerned with the common good because in the seminary he is suspected and sometimes accused of being mean-spirited, uncharitable, or uptight. Thus, in the fog that clouds his mind, he begins to lose a grip on his values.

<https://www.crisismagazine.com/2018/why-priests-wont-speak-out-over-violations-of-clerical-celibacy>

Bishops look the other way

A diocesan priest, "Where Are the Bishops Who Will Defend Faithful Priests?," *Crisis*, August 9, 2018

In my years of priesthood I have learned what the greatest good is for a bishop: to address as few complaints as possible. So, if a priest is having a gay affair, if he has a serious drinking problem, if he is sleeping around with women, if it is clear that he has mental disorders that inhibit him from overseeing a parish, if he is wicked and cruel, if he regularly abuses the liturgy, if he preaches heresy, if he contradicts the bishop, or if he teaches counter to the moral teaching of the Church, as long as there is no traceable record of complaint, or continual outcry from the people, then all remains the same, as long as the sins remain mostly occult. If a bishop can legally turn a blind eye, he will. Because otherwise, he may have to do something unpleasant.

To some extent this intentional and willful ignorance is understandable. I think I know why these men act (or don't act) as they do. Whenever a bishop takes action against a priest, there is outcry. Especially if it is a popular priest who preaches what people want to hear. I know of so many situations where a bishop has justifiably removed a priest, only to be met with a deafening, unyielding chorus of disapproval. Letters are written (both to the press and to the Nuncio). Petitions are signed. Websites are created. Tweets are formulated with trending hashtags. All detail the plight of a kind-hearted priest being persecuted by a malevolent bishop for no apparent reason. It has to hurt the morale of other priests trying to do the right thing. This is a terrible thing to do your job and be persecuted for it—within the Church, despite the words of our Lord: "The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

If I may, I now speak for myself and my peers directly to the American prelates: Bishops, we can appreciate how you feel when attacked for doing what is right. We can appreciate the hurt, the desolation, and the immense loneliness. We can appreciate it, because we live it as well.

We live it when we preach a homily defending the Church's teaching on marriage, and are chastised by you for "upsetting the people." We live it when we express how difficult it is to live with someone who drinks himself into a rage every night, and we are told by you that we need to "get along with our pastor." We live it when you let our brothers mock us behind our backs over cocktails with benefactors. We live it when we are chastised for legitimate liturgical expressions and our brothers who preach counter to the faith are given plush parishes and diocesan offices. We live it when our peers call us names, and paste misplaced quotes of Pope Francis on our doors. We live it when we see seminarians leave because a priest made an advance on them and you do nothing about it after we report it. We live it when our family and friends part ways with us because of Church abuse scandals. We live it when we are insulted in public. We know that it is difficult to do what is right in the current climate.

We often look to you, our spiritual fathers, for solidarity and support. We need someone to stand with us to be “shining lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.” But we remain alone. At best, you ignore us, and, at worst, you punish or reprimand us.

<https://www.crisismagazine.com/2018/bishops-will-defend-faithful-priests>



Analyses and General Reporting

Is history repeating itself?

Sandro Magister, “Gomorra in the 21st Century. The Appeal of a Cardinal and the Church Historian,” *L’Espresso*, November 5, 2018

“The situation is comparable to that of the Church in the 11th and 12th century.” As an authoritative Church historian and as president of the pontifical committee of historical sciences from 1998 to 2009, Cardinal Walter Brandmüller, 89, has no doubt when he sees the present-day Church “shaken to its foundations” on account of the spread of sexual abuse and homosexuality “in an almost epidemic manner among the clergy and even in the hierarchy.”

“How could it have come to this point?” the cardinal wonders. And his answer is found in an extensive and detailed article published in recent days in the German monthly “Vatican Magazin” directed by Guido Horst:

Brandmüller refers to the centuries in which the bishoprics and the papacy itself had become such a source of wealth that there was “fighting and haggling over them,” with temporal rulers claiming that they themselves could apportion these offices in the Church.

The effect was that the place of pastors was taken by morally dissolute persons who were attached to the endowment rather than to the care of souls, by no means inclined to lead a chaste and virtuous life.

Not only concubinage, but homosexuality too was increasingly widespread among the clergy, to such an extent that Saint Peter Damian in 1049 delivered to the newly elected pope Leo IX, known as a zealous reformer, his “Liber Antigomorrhianus,” composed in the form of a letter, which in essence was an appeal to save the Church from the “sodomitic filth that insinuates itself like a cancer in the ecclesiastical order, or rather like a bloodthirsty beast rampaging through the flock of Christ.” Sodom and Gomorra, in the book of Genesis, are the two cities that God destroyed with fire on account of their sins.

But the thing more worthy of note, Brandmüller writes, was that “almost simultaneously a lay movement arose that was aimed not only against the immorality of the clergy but also against the appropriation of ecclesiastical offices by secular powers.”

...What is similar, Brandmüller notes, is that then as now the ones expressing the protest and demanding a purification of the Church are above all segments of the Catholic laity, especially in North America, in the footsteps of the “marvelous homage to the important role of the witness of the faithful in matters of doctrine” brought to light in the 19th century by Blessed John Henry Newman.

<http://magister.blogautore.espresso.repubblica.it/2018/11/05/gomorra-in-the-21st-century-the-appeal-of-a-cardinal-and-church-historian/>



The right response of the laity

Ralph Martin, “Dear Troubled Catholics – A Letter From Ralph Martin About the Current Crisis,” *Renewal Ministries*, July 31, 2018

*Grave damage has been done to the credibility of the Church, and more will leave. Grave damage has been done to many of the flock, and reparation must be made; public repentance is called for. As Pope Benedict XVI wrote when he was a young priest, **the Church will have to become smaller and more purified before it can again be a light to the world.** The Church is going through a radical purification under the chastising hand of God, but already we can see a remnant of fervent renewal appearing all over the world, which is a sign indeed of hope and the renewal to come.*

And so, what can we do as we continue to pray for the pope and our leaders that God may give them the wisdom and courage to deal with the root of the rot and bring about a real renewal of holiness and evangelization in the Church?

»We need to go about our daily lives, trying to live each day in a way pleasing to God, loving Him and loving our neighbor, including the neighbor in our own families. We need to look to ourselves, lest we fall.

»We need to remember that even though we have this treasure in earthen vessels (or as some translations put it, “cracked pots”), the treasure is no less the treasure. Don’t throw out the baby with the bathwater! Baby Jesus is the treasure, and He is still as present as ever and still as ready to receive all who come to Him. And the Mass! Every day, He is willing to come to us in such a special way. Let’s attend daily Mass even more frequently, to offer the sacrifice of Jesus’ death and resurrection to God the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit, for the salvation of souls and the purification of the Church.

»We need to remember that the Catholic Church is indeed founded by Christ and, despite all problems, has within it the fullness of the means of salvation. Where else can we go? Nowhere;

this is indeed our Mother and Home, and she needs our love, our prayers, and our persevering in the way of holiness more than ever.

»We need to remember that there are many truly holy and dedicated bishops and priests, and we must pray for them and support them. They need and deserve our support.

»We need to remember that this isn't the first time such grave problems have beset the Church. In the fourteenth century, St. Catherine of Siena bemoaned the "stench of sin" coming from the papal court and prophesied that even the demons were disgusted by the homosexual activity he had tempted priests into and the cover up by their superiors! (See chapters 124-125 of Catherine of Siena's [The Dialogue](#).)

And finally, I'm beginning to see why the Lord has impressed on me so strongly in the past year the urgent need to heed the appeals of Our Lady of Fatima. Indeed, as Mary said,

"Pray, pray very much, and make sacrifices for sinners; for many souls go to hell, because there are none to sacrifice themselves and to pray for them."

<http://www.renewalministries.net/wordpress/dear-troubled-catholics-a-letter-from-ralph-martin-about-the-current-crisis/>



Ex-gay, ex-porn star tells of poor Church instruction

Joseph Sciambra, "With Chaos and Confusion in the Catholic Church, the Gay Male Community Offers Discipline and Dogma," Joseph Sciambra blog, October 24, 2018

In the 1990s, I had a sad and funny friend who I thought ridiculously clung to some strange semblance of his highly superstitious Catholic upbringing in a Chicago ethnic neighborhood. As a cosmic citizen of San Francisco, I considered myself above such unenlightened nonsense. To his great consternation, he could never quite integrate homosexuality and Catholicism until he read John J. McNeill's "The Church and the Homosexual" – originally published in 1976 and reissued in 1993.

When I was engaging in a series of increasingly kinky one-night stands, he had a series of monogamous partners. Whereas I pretended that I remained completely unscathed by promiscuity, my friend was visibly affected by the break-up of his past two relationships. Yet, he found solace in McNeill's promise that "morally good homosexual relationships" were a possibility and that many homosexual partnerships succeeded in maintaining "a high degree of stability, and have provided a truly human companionship and fulfillment."

While he set about his quest for a "husband," I endlessly patrolled the gay bars and sex clubs for my savior. We lost touch with each other. A year or so later, I heard someone mention his name. He had AIDS. Apparently, his last stable relationship wasn't that stable. He died within the year.

...When I crawled to the doorstep of the Catholic Church, those parishes nearest to the center of confusion, located in neighborhoods with a large LGBT population, I found a relatively small cadre of men and women similar to those who advocated for the nationwide legalization of same-sex marriage.

...We all tried to hide from it, but their attempt to cope with the pain involved the remaking of the Church and even God into their own image; with one vocal practitioner urging his listeners “to imagine Jesus as gay...” Unfortunately, numerous other priests, prelates, and parishes capitulated to the demands of a select few; to make matters even worse, they facilitated and provided forums for the dissemination of scurrilous theories ranging from the supposed homosexuality of “queer saints” to the eventual acceptance of gay marriage in the Catholic Church.

What made the open deception even more tragic was the refusal of local ordinaries to oversee or curtail these dissident ministries and parishes. As a result, this form of Catholicism bore little resemblance to tradition or the teachings clearly pronounced in various Vatican documents and in the Catechism. Like same-sex marriage, it’s a simulacrum of something instituted by God. But in its most extreme form, such as BDSM, these deceptions promise a deeper union with God; however, this false “communion” leaves you empty.

The stability and strength that I sought my entire life, I found in the Catholic Church; but in an unexpected place. Here, a few stalwart souls did what they were supposed to do – preserve the faith; so, when the “prodigal son” returned from the pigsty, he would have somewhere to go.

<https://josephsciambra.com/with-chaos-and-confusion-in-the-catholic-church-the-gay-male-community-offers-disciple-and-dogma/>



Proof can, and should, be found

Janet E. Smith, “Janet Smith to Bishops: ‘Save the Church — Tell Everything,’” *National Catholic Register*, August 14, 2018

... bishops upon hearing about abuse, nearly always say, “All I have are rumors; I have no proof.” I ask, “Why, if there is a bishop who is highly placed who has enormous influence, and the rumors are persistent and credible, why don’t you hire investigators? Instead of just shrugging your shoulders and saying ‘We have no proof.’”

Proof can be found. When spouses believe their spouses are cheating, often they hire an investigator. To just say, “Well, no one offered me any proof,” I find that lame and incredibly irresponsible. And of course, investigators should be hired for reports of abuse by any priest or any person.

Sadly, in this day and age, there should be really deep background checks of men being proposed to be bishops. What has been done up to now is clearly not sufficient.

How much do you think [the sexual abuse crisis] is related to the sexual revolution?

Hugely. And, as everyone knows by now, I think the pill was the major element that fueled the sexual revolution. When people became convinced that having sex did not need to be an act of “making love and making life,” sex became “just sex” — just a momentary intense physical pleasure that could be engaged in by any consenting person, no matter what their sex. And so men who had a homosexual inclination in the priesthood concluded that there was no reason for them not to enjoy sexual pleasures. They reasoned (even if unconsciously), “Spouses are using contraception and rendering their acts non-procreative, so how do our acts differ from theirs?”

<http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/janet-smith-to-bishops-save-the-church-tell-everything>



Shaken to the core but not out of the game

Charlie Specht, “Charlie Specht on what it’s like to cover the Buffalo priest abuse scandal as a Catholic: Lifelong Catholic describes the personal toll,” WKBW Buffalo, July 14, 2018

...disappointing are the actions of the hierarchy -- generations of powerful bishops and lawyers who covered up the abuse while putting the image of the institution above the well-being of innocent children. Then they lied to the faithful, hard-working people in the pews about it all.

I get tired of challenging these men, questioning them, pushing them and cajoling them to do the right thing. In those dark moments, I go to the pile of paper next to my phone, where I keep the phone numbers of victims.

People like Michael Whalen of South Buffalo, whose courage emboldened other victims and led to an avalanche of allegations -- 76 accused clergy and counting.

David Husted of Olean, whose grit, intensity and determination to take back his life inspires awe.

Jim Faluszczak of Buffalo, a former priest whose intelligence is matched by his concern for the victims and his mission to right his church.

Dan Bauer of Jamestown, who for years has been on a one-man crusade to out his abuser and get the bishops to admit the full scope of the abuse.

The voices on the other end of that phone have given me incredible hope. I have seen the

face of God in the courage of these survivors.

I also see it in the “good priests” who are horrified at the abuse. Some of them tried to alert the bishops years ago, but they were ignored. The good priests call me with tips, they pray for me, they pray for the victims. They are true shepherds.

Like them, I truly believe that by reporting on the problems within the church, I am not hurting it. I am making it better. That's because, as my Mom has always told me, the church is not a building or a bishop. The church is the people in the pews.

One person has been on my mind the most during the last four months. He stood before a crowd at a downtown restaurant... speaking about what it means to follow Jesus in today's world. As he spoke, I turned to my Mom and saw the pride on her face. I felt that same pride in my own heart. I knew that, in some way, God was calling him to be part of the solution to clean up his church.

That person is my younger brother, Mike. At the end of his speech, he made the announcement: he has decided to become a Catholic priest.

I couldn't have been more proud.

<https://www.wkbw.com/news/i-team/charlie-specht-on-what-its-like-to-cover-the-buffalo-priest-abuse-scandal-as-a-catholic>



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<https://apnews.com/604b14d73268410b96c9f7bf948c1de1>

“Our Myth, Their Lie: Clericalism, Not Heresy, Caused the Crisis,” *Commonweal*, November 1, 2018

<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/our-myth-their-lie>

“Catholic bishops promised reform in sex-abuse scandal. But they didn’t look at their own misdeeds,” *The Boston Globe*, November 3, 2018

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2018/11/03/bishops/qVYEiZ5SY5wVzCgA3gvN5O/story.html>

Key Documentary

Sex Abuse in the Church: Code of Silence

This documentary made in France has gone viral among laity. It shows how credibly accused priests from various congregations are not infrequently 'conveniently reassigned' to other countries to escape prosecution — or the ire of the local bishop. And there they continue to have access to children. It ends with a disturbing account of how Cardinal Bergoglio handled the case of Fr. Grassi in Buenos Aires.

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B0718SMTRY/>

Plaintive Poem

By Al Kresta

*Holy Father, we have been silent,
We have been team players.
We have been in prayer and fasting.
We trusted our shepherds.
We have been mild. We have not been noisy.
We have been docile and open to the Holy Spirit and most reluctant to do anything to cast a shadow upon the Catholic Church because we have had the extraordinary privilege of leading many into full communion with her.*

*We love her and our love is not less because we lack ministerial ordination.
Our whole posture has been to defend that which we have asked others to join.
When we had no evidence of wrongdoing on your part we didn't imagine there was a problem.
When the evidence was ambiguous we gave you and our bishops the benefit of the doubt.
When the evidence pointed your way, we asked for you to explain.*

*But you ignored the bleating of the sheep.
You ignored that we have all along been praying and can maintain a discipline of silence as well as most of the ordained.
You ignored that we were all along team players and reluctant to publicly complain.
You ignored that we have been all along giving the benefit of the doubt through:*

*Maciel,
the scandal of the mid 80s,
early 90s,
2002 and
even now with McCarrick and Viganò's revelations.*

We asked for an investigation, not a rebellion.

*We have for almost all of our Catholic lives stretched our moral imaginations to think the best, not the worst, of you and our bishops.
Your response has been to stonewall rather than to pastor.
You asked us to ignore the evidence of our senses and the conclusions of our reason.
In short, you have asked us to divide ourselves, to split our conscience from our devotion.*

This is not the counsel of Jesus, who comes to make us whole.

*The devil works hard tempting us to be double-minded and to split our head and our hearts, our beliefs from our behavior, our knowledge of painful realities from our determination to avoid denial and get on with healthy problem-solving.
You, like the Devil, are asking us to sit on our hands in a shitstorm and to think we are pious souls for doing so.
From where I sit that is not Catholic spirituality and I am still trying to imagine that your advice is due to ignorance of our plight rather than motivated by something baser.*

<https://www.catholicconvert.com/blog/2018/09/04/an-impassioned-appeal-to-the-pope-explanation-why-our-patience-has-run-out/>

Final Note

“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.”

Acts 20:28 (ESV)

Bishops, we truly do love you and honor you. We accept you as the successors of the apostles. We know there are those among you who do recognize our pain and feel the same or more distress at what has happened to our beloved Church.

We know that the criticisms made in many of the above articles paint with a broad brush that does not treat all bishops fairly. Indeed, we don't know that we would have done any better with the challenges you face, especially had we inherited an episcopal culture so ill equipped to deal with the crisis that besets us now. We do not stand in judgment on you.

We simply want to be a part of the solution, for we are confident that the Church will survive and thrive, but only if a deep purification takes place. It can't take place without brave bishops who will break from the habits of the past and be willing to admit mistakes, expose the evil that is so pervasive, and work to find new ways to build the Church that Jesus intended.

“The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the Lord of hosts.”

Haggai 2:9 (ESV)

Appendix

Key documents

The John Jay Report

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/upload/The-Nature-and-Scope-of-Sexual-Abuse-of-Minors-by-Catholic-Priests-and-Deacons-in-the-United-States-1950-2002.pdf>

The Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report

<http://media-downloads.pacourts.us/InterimRedactedReportandResponses.pdf?cb=42148>

LA Times Survey of Roman Catholic Priests, 2002

<http://www.bishop-accountability.org/resources/resource-files/reports/LAT-Priest-Survey.pdf>

The testimony of Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò (3rd letter)

<http://www.ncregister.com/blog/edward-pentin/archbishop-vigano-responds-to-cardinal-ouellets-letter-with-new-testimony>

Report to the People of God (Archdiocese of Los Angeles, 2004)

http://www.la-archdiocese.org/org/protecting/reports/Documents/2004-0217_ADLA_CSA_Report.pdf

Online resources

The crisis and scandal have hit every continent except Antarctica and hurt untold thousands. While no list could be comprehensive, here are a few resources that demonstrate the global nature of the crisis:

A searchable digest of known, credible reports of abuse; daily news and links:

<http://www.bishop-accountability.org/AbuseTracker/>

Ending Clergy Abuse

<https://www.ecaglobal.org>

SNAP (Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests)

<http://www.snapnetwork.org>

Aides aux Victimes des dérives de mouvements Religieux en Europe et leurs Familles

<https://www.avref.fr>

Coordinated responses

Requests to re-appoint a lay board of investigators:

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/church-sex-abuse-mccarrick-lay-board-bishops-catholic-reappointment/>

Better Church Governance, an independent lay group, vows to investigate cardinals and release a “Red Hat Report”

<https://cruxnow.com/church-in-the-usa/2018/10/01/wealthy-catholics-to-target-cardinals-with-red-hat-report/>

Roman Catholic Faithful, Inc., re-ignites its mission, which had been in hiatus:

<http://www.renewamerica.com/columns/abbott/180909>

Catholics speaking with their wallets -- for instance, Legatus will put its annual tithes in escrow:

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/catholic-business-leaders-hold-back-donation-to-vatican-amid-church-crisis-1536262231>

The Siena Project: fostering letter writing campaigns to the bishops

<https://www.thesienaproject.org/home>

Novena Concerns the Sexual Abuse Scandal in the Catholic Church

<https://clicktopray.org/en/news/novena-concerning-the-sexual-abuse-scandal-in-the-catholic-church>

Books

Jason Berry, *Lead Us Not Into Temptation* (Doubleday, 1992; 2nd edition, 2013)

A.W. Richard Sipe, *Sex, Priests, and Power: Anatomy of a Crisis* (Routledge, 1995)

Malachi Martin, *Windswept House: A Vatican Novel* (Main Street Books, 1998)

Michael S. Rose, *Goodbye, Good Men: How Liberals Brought Corruption in the Catholic Church* (Regnery, 2002; 2nd edition, 2015)

Donald Cozzens, *The Changing Face of the Priesthood: A Reflection on the Priest's Crisis of Soul* (Liturgical Press, 2000)

Donald Cozzens, *Sacred Silence: Denial and the Crisis in the Church* (Liturgical Press, 2002)

Kathryn A. Flynn, *The Sexual Abuse of Women by Members of the Clergy* (McFarland, 2003)

Thomas P. Doyle, A.W. Richard Sipe and Patrick J. Wall, *Sex, Priests, and Secret Codes: The Catholic Church's 2,000 Year Paper Trail of Sexual Abuse* (Taylor, 2006)

Leon J. Podles, *Sacrilege: Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church* (Crossland Press, 2008)

The Investigative Staff of the Boston Globe, *Betrayal: The Crisis in the Catholic Church: The findings of the investigation that inspired the major motion picture Spotlight* (Back Bay Books, 2015)

Robert Blair Kaiser, *Whistle: Fr. Tom Doyle's Steadfast Witness for Victims of Clerical Sexual Abuse* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015)

Fr. Thomas Berg, *Hurting in the Church: A Way Forward for Wounded Catholics* (Our Sunday Visitor, 2017)

Phil Lawler, *The Smoke of Satan: How Corrupt and Cowardly Bishops Betrayed Christ, His Church, and the Faithful ... And What Can be Done About It* (TAN Books, 2018)