

In the Vineyard April 23, 2009

News from National

On May 1 and 2 the **VOTF platform teams** are gathering in Hartford, Connecticut, to meet each other, outline their goals—and become inspired! VOTF President Dan Bartley will kick off the conference on Friday night and each platform team will outline their goals for the coming year.

Got Seats? Cottages? Tickets?

We have had great fun with our turkey and ticket raffles this past year, and we would like to extend some of that fun into the summer season—but we need you to provide the something exciting! Do you have a summer cottage you would donate for a weekend, or a week? Seats at the opera or to a Springsteen concert somewhere? A very generous donor has twice given us tickets to a Red Sox game; what about you non-sports fans? Anything you'd like to share?

If so, please let us know! Any money we raise directly supports the work you believe in.

News from the Affiliates

VOTF New York Released the Following Statement Supporting Passage of the NY Child Victims Act

Voice of the Faithful New York supports the NY Child Victims Act, sponsored by Assemblywoman Marge Markey (Bill No. A02596) and State Senator Tom Duane (S02586). This legislation will deliver compassionate justice to victims of sexual abuse who have been denied justice by being locked out of the courthouse. The Child Victims Act would extend the statute of limitations on child sexual abuse for an additional five years, so that victims will have until the age of 28 to bring claims. The act would suspend the statute for one year, so that those who have been unjustly denied access to the courts in the past will be able to come forward and make a claim in this one-year “window.”

To read more

VOTF New York Released the Following Statement Supporting Passage of the NY Child Victims Act

Continued

When the State of California instituted reforms similar to those currently proposed in New York, it allowed victims to bring some 1,000 new cases and uncovered 300 previously hidden predators. Identifying more predators means that more children are protected from abuse.

Critics of this legislation contend that it discriminates against private institutions like the Catholic Church by giving public institutions special treatment. Voice of the Faithful New York believes that all institutions, public and private, should be treated with absolute equality, and would be in favor of companion legislation that would suspend the provisions giving special treatment to public institutions under New York State law for the same one-year window. Having the one-year "window" apply equally to all institutions would serve justice for all. Voice of the Faithful New York does not support legislative remedies that fail to include the one-year window.

Introducing the Winchester Area VOTF Affiliate

Submitted by Clare Keane

The Winchester Area VOTF affiliate began meeting on May 13, 2002, founded by, among others, Bob Morris of St. Eulalia's parish. Following the revelations of abuse in January 2002, a number of individuals, including Bob, had attended listening sessions at St. John's, Wellesley. Subsequently, this group founded the Winchester affiliate and many more of us, who attended the listening sessions offered in our own parish, later joined the affiliate.

Currently around 20-30 people attend our weekly meetings, although the number can be over 100 for a high-profile, popular speaker.

To read more about the Winchester Affiliate

Introducing the Winchester Area VOTF Affiliate

Continued

We meet in St. Eulalia's parish hall, Manion Hall, having been grandfathered into meeting on church property before Cardinal Law banned new groups from doing so. Occasionally we have prayer-centered meetings and for those we meet in the church.

We have enjoyed a huge number of excellent speakers from Boston College and Weston Jesuit School of Theology, as well as speakers from VOTF National, and authors of current books on the abuse crisis like David Gibson, Jason Berry and David France.

We have also been fortunate to acquire some very timely DVDs that have given rise to meaningful discussion, and have used some of the Voice of Renewal's Lay Education materials as starting points for some of our meetings.

Some of our most memorable speakers have been two sociologists from Massachusetts colleges. Patty Ewick from Clark University and Marc Steinberg from Smith College studied us (with our permission) and have reported twice to us on their findings. They have become more like members and friends than observers.

We have had many stumbling blocks! How do we carry on in the face of such discouragement? The answer is that we keep on coming for each other. We have formed a really unusual community and care a great deal for each other. We suffered a double-blow when Bob Morris moved with his wife to Rhode Island (because of her ministry in the Congregational Church), and then was recently diagnosed with ALS. He visited us in January, which was a wonderful blessing for us all.

One goal that we set for ourselves several years ago was to have a conversation with a bishop. After much negotiating, we managed to meet for dinner with our local auxiliary and I think it changed his life as well as ours. He has become a dear friend to us and attended our annual cookout for priests last August.

Another high point has been the raising of funds for survivors through the sale of Christmas and All-Occasion notecards, which are designed by our members. We have raised around \$30,000 for survivors through this and other fundraisers in the past 7 years.

We would love to hear about other affiliates across the country! Please contact vineyard@votf.org.

International News

Update from Ireland

Submitted by Sean O'Conaill

Recently, we've had another warning from Dublin's archbishop - to prepare for the worst in the impending report from the Irish state inquiry into clerical child abuse in the archdiocese under his predecessors.

From what I hear, the institution itself may receive the most severe criticism yet delivered in a series of Irish clerical sex abuse scandals that began in 1994. Delayed apparently by court proceedings in Dublin, the report may be with us within weeks.

To read more

Update from Ireland

The enthusiastic turnout for Easter liturgies in some churches was seized upon by some clergy here as welcome starlight in a long dark night - but there are still too few signs that leadership understands the need for VOTF goal 3: structural change to achieve the 'culture of accountability' that was called for by the recent report of the Church's own child safeguarding body, the NBSCCC.

Without such structures the long-term pastoral care of Ireland's thousands of abuse survivors may well become another avoidable source of scandal in the future. The clerical monopoly of leadership and ministry in the Irish church is clearly doomed, but where are

the signs of an orderly transition to something capable of harnessing the idealism of Ireland's younger generations?

Site Seeing

Carolyn Disco of New Hampshire VOTF discusses the NH Attorney General's release of more than 900 documents detailing charges of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church and its effect on survivors.

<http://www.cabinet.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/NS/20090416/MERRIMACK04/304169971/-1/merrimack>

Swiss Cardinal Georges Cottier discusses recent happenings within the Church. Cottier was for many years the theologian of the pontifical household, or the Pope's personal theological advisor.

<http://www.insidethevatican.com/newsflash/2009/newsflash-mar-10-09.htm>

Donna – Janet is trying to get in touch with Father Kane to see if we can run his letter – if I don't hear from him I will just run the link...

<http://www.naplesnews.com/news/2009/mar/24/letters-editor-march-25-2009/>

Editor, Daily News:

The Voice of the Faithful was denied the sanctuary for a celebration of the Eucharist by the pastor of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in North Naples. "They (VOTF) want to change our structures," the pastor said.

Well, yes — from a pre-Vatican II understanding when leaders were not accountable; where unity meant uniformity; when decision-making was strictly vertical.

We have changed — to a post-Vatican II mentality, when leaders should be open, listening, even accepting, the challenging voices of the faithful. Here we have another example of the prevailing clericalism, rigid orthodoxy (more precisely, orthopraxis) which chases to the periphery (if not excommunicates) a lay-led movement.

I pray that the Vatican II dynamic of mission, where goals, not authority, predominates and gathers all together. We need synods in every diocese of this nation where every voice of the faithful, not as yet indifferent, is heard.

Incidentally, I am joined to VOTF and I am a Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago in good standing for 57-plus years.

Father George Kane

Bonita Springs and Schaumburg, Ill.
Naples Daily News March 25, 2009

Calendar

The North Shore – Seacoast and Lynn VOTF Affiliates in collaboration with Boston College Department of Theology have been presenting programs on the theme, The Liturgical Year: Seasons for Spiritual Growth. Dr. M. Shawn Copeland, Ph.D., the final speaker in the series, will address the topic: Baptism in the Holy Spirit – Pentecost on **Sunday, April 26, 2009** from 7 – 9 P.M. at St. Pius V Lower Church Hall, 215 Maple St. Lynn, MA.

An international lecturer, Dr. Copeland has authored more than seventy articles and book chapters. Her lecture will explore the meaning of Pentecost for our contemporary cultural and social experience. When women and men experience the gift of God's loving Spirit, they experience themselves as transformed persons and a new basis for community is created, one in which they are knit together and empowered by the Spirit to witness to a new reality.

All are invited to attend and refreshments will be served. For more information regarding Voice of the Faithful, please contact Carl Greenler at 781-690-1307.

Join Cathedral Dean Samuel T. Lloyd III and author Jim Carroll as they converse on the topic "Practicing Catholic." at the National Cathedral in Washington DC on May 3.

James Carroll is a novelist, essayist, and non-fiction writer whose bestselling 2001 book *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews* explores the history of anti-Semitism in the West. A former Roman Catholic priest, he has written about the Catholic sex abuse crisis and, most recently, about the American military in the award-winning *House of War: The Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power*. He is a weekly columnist for the *Boston Globe* and a regular participant in on-going Jewish-Christian-Muslim dialogues at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem.

National Cathedral, Washington DC, May 3, 2009 10:10 AM at the National Cathedral
3101, Wisconsin Ave., NW 20016
Parking is available under the cathedral.

Olan Horne will be a featured speaker at Most Holy Trinity Church hall, 271 Main St., Saco, Maine on **May 6th** at 7PM, sponsored by the *Northern York County Voice of the Faithful*.

Olan Horne is one of the survivors of clergy sexual abuse who met with Pope Benedict XVI in a Washington chapel. Olan is a principal in the film "OUR FATHERS," an Emmy-nominated movie based on the book by David France. Olan is

also a founding member of Boston's victim support group "The Survivors of Joseph Birmingham".

In his meeting with the Pope, Olan Horne told the Pope that he (the Pope) has a cancer growing in his ministry and needs to do something about it. The Pope apologized, said Olan, and he seemed to intrinsically understand what we victims were talking about.

This is expected to be an exciting and interesting evening. Refreshments Will be served. For further information please call Doris Buonomo, President, at 207-286-9967.

October 30-31, 2009: VOTF National Conference

MAKING OUR VOICES HEARD

Featuring SR. JOAN CHITTISTER, O.S.B., and FR. THOMAS REESE, S.J.

Join in lively discussions as we come together to reflect on the state of our church and how we can be part of the changes that will renew our faith. We will post additional info as it's available.

Books

Not for Beach Reading!

Submitted by Gaile Pohlhaus

Roger Collins has written a 500 page history of the Papacy, *Keepers of the Keys of Heaven* (available at www.votf.org – follow the link to Amazon.) It is interesting, has pictures (hooray says Alice), maps, impeccable footnotes, and an extended index. It is the kind of book that one can read straight through or dip into for information on a particular Pope (or antipope.) You could discipline yourself to read a chapter or two a week throughout Ordinary time but I bet you won't be able to stop reading once you get into this tome.