

September 8 Vineyard

News from National

Emily and Rosemary Fund

In case you missed it, the deadline for grant applications from the Emily and Rosemary fund is October 10, 2010.

The Emily and Rosemary Fund for Women in the Church is a grants program initiated with a \$75,000 donation from Lynette Petruska of St. Louis MO. Grants from the fund will help women who face financial hardship after losing their jobs in the Church as a result of injustice or discrimination. Grants also may be awarded to women who are working to bring about justice and equality in the Church.

“Gender biases become more apparent each day in the Roman Catholic Church,” Ms. Petruska says. Women who report sexual misconduct may be especially at risk. “I want Catholics who see, suffer, or suspect sexual misconduct in the Church to speak out and make the Church safer for everyone, and I want other women who do this to know that they are not alone.”

You can read the details here. The first round of grants opened Aug. 10.

The Fund is designed so that additional contributions can be made simply by marking “Emily & Rosemary Fund” on the check or in the online donation comment box.

Major Donation Goes to Women’s Initiative

Our *Voices in Action* Women’s Initiative, under the Universal Church Reform platform, has received \$5,000 from a donor who does so in memory of Katherine (Katie) Enos, a young woman who died tragically on June 30.

In the donor's words, “Katie was such a joyful spirit, full of life and energy, wise beyond her 14 years on this earth. A gifted writer of stories and songs, she left so much to the world in her few short years among us. In Katie’s memory, I want to make this gift to Voice of the Faithful for the further exploration of the place and roles of women in the Catholic Church.”

Talk Show Interviews of Survivors Now Available

Early this summer, we posted news about the cable TV show “Coming Out of the Shadows of Sexual Abuse.” In the program, Bill Casey, a leader of the Child Protection/Survivor Support Team for *Voices in Action* and a VOTF trustee, interviewed three survivors of sexual abuse for Laurel Cable TV Network. The show is available for airing on other television stations, and you may obtain DVDs from the show for use at affiliate meetings or other venues (to request one, email or write the VOTF Office: office@votf.org, or Survivor DVD, P.O. Box 423, Newton MA 02464).

Now **you also can view the show right here** on the VOTF web site:
<http://votf.org/14775>.

Prophetic Voices

Looking for inspiration? Wondering if anything will ever change? Visit VOTF's Prophetic Voices site and read what men and women, priests and laity are saying. You may be inspired... Here's just a sample:

“And then there is the sexual abuse crisis. This challenges our Catholic faith – and perhaps causes us to lose it. Many of us who are bishops, as leaders in the church, often have been blind, ignorant, and clearly wrong in this crisis. At times we have focused more on the perceived needs of the institutional church than on the needs of the victims. For this we apologize. I pray that out of this crisis, the church will become better. The church is not the priests and the bishops. The church is the people. And most of all the church is Jesus Christ.” – Bishop Francis A. Quinn, bishop emeritus of San Francisco, [US Catholic](#), August 2010

Calendar

Save the date!

Tri State VOTF Conference
Saturday, October 30, 2010

“BREAKING the TIME BARRIER:

A 21st Century Laity Demands Relevance from a Medieval Hierarchy”

For more details go to VOTF-LI.org

“The Unrealized Goals of Vatican II.”

Adult Education and Faith Formation Program Sponsored by the Voice of the Faithful North Shore-Seacoast and Lynn Affiliates in Collaboration with the Department of Theology, Boston College

The first of the program series for 2010-2011 starts on *Sunday, Sept. 12, 2010*, at St. Rose of Lima in Topsfield, Massachusetts from 7:00 – 9: 00 P. M. The theme of the Programs is I Hope You Dance: Vatican II Achievements and a Work in Progress

Sr. Maureen Sullivan, O.P., Ph.D. Associate Professor, Theology Dept. St. Anselm College, Manchester, NH

In 2012, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opening of Vatican II, and yet to many it would appear that we have not sufficiently implemented the teachings. The Second Vatican Council is one of the most significant moments in the history of the Roman Catholic Church. It produced 16 documents that touched the very essence of the Catholic faith. This presentation will give an overview of the achievements of Vatican II and indicate the ways in which the Council is still “a work in progress”. Overall, it will invite attendees to “continue the dance” begun by Blessed John XXIII when he

announced the call for Vatican II. Everyone is invited. Refreshments will be served. Financial contributions are welcomed.

Celebrate the Women's Ordination Conference's 35th Anniversary

Making It Happen in Our Lifetime
Featuring the Chicago Premiere of the Film
Pink Smoke Over the Vatican
a documentary about the women's ordination movement

Saturday, September 18, 2010

6 p.m. Film

7:30 p.m. Dinner Buffet and Silent/Live Auction

Tickets - \$60

Irish American Heritage Center

4626 North Knox Avenue, Chicago

Free parking

Cash bar

For more information, please contact the WOC office at 202-675-1006

New Jersey Regional Listening Assembly

October 2 1010

Share thoughts in preparation for National ACC meeting next year in Detroit
Keynote Speaker: Dr Anthony Padovano on "The Wisdom and Experience of the People of God: "The laity are entitled, and indeed sometimes duty-bound, to express their opinion on matters which concern the good of the church" ...Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium, November 21, 1964)

For more information

Come! Join in small group discussions. Listen with others to the voice of the Spirit. Share your thoughts, your joy and your difficulties with being Catholic today.

Your thoughts from this regional assembly will be shared with those preparing for the national meeting of the American Catholic Council (ACC) over Pentecost in June, 2011, in Detroit, Michigan. The ACC is a movement bringing together a network of individuals, organizations, and communities to consider the state and future of our Church.

Examples of questions to be considered include:

- What makes you happy about being Catholic?
- Why are you still Catholic?
- How does being Catholic help you in serving others?
- What concrete elements would make the Church more effective as a sign of Gospel values?

- What changes in church practices would you recommend?
- What disappoints you most about the Catholic Church?
- If you had an opportunity to speak to your bishop about your greatest hopes for the church, what would you say?

Setting the stage for the discussion will be theologian and author Dr. Anthony Padovano speaking on “The Wisdom and Experience of the People of God.”

All are welcome. There is no charge to attend the assembly, but a free-will offering will help defray expenses and the cost of lunch. To facilitate planning, please register at info@votfnj.or or call 973-539-8732.

Site Seeing

Accused of covering up sexual abuse, Irish Cardinal to travel with Pope to England
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/religion/the-pope/7971937/Under-fire-Irish-Cardinal-vows-to-join-Pope-on-visit-to-Britain.html>

Disease and disaster might challenge our belief in God, but despite all that, we must keep the faith. Inspiring words from Bishop Francis A. Quinn
<http://www.uscatholic.org/church/2010/08/keep-faith>

Cardinal George under fire from pews and pulpit
<http://www.chicagocatholicnews.com/2010/09/cardinal-facing-increasing-unrest-in.html>

Lay involvement is different throughout the Catholic church
<http://ncronline.org/news/vatican/congress-laity-asia-without-church-asia>

Update on *Voices in Action*

What’s happening in the Women’s Initiative group?

At a critical time in the 2,010-year history of the Catholic Church, a new coalition of women and men have joined together to form the “Women’s Initiative.” We want our voices heard as we help to reform and transform our church to meet the needs of the 21st century. We want women—and all the baptized—to be empowered in the future Catholic Church.

Voice of the Faithful has provided the platform for Universal Church Reform (UCR). As a part of UCR, the Women’s Initiative will empower its members to provide the energy, ideas, imagination and steadfast commitment to bringing structural change to our church, inclusive of all people--where practicing one’s Catholic faith can be positively lived and publicly proclaimed.

Women's Initiative

As Catholic women and men, we are motivated by Jesus' call to all the baptized to fully use and share the gifts we enjoy as Catholics to publicly address church governance and structure in order to shape a fair, equal and inclusive church for all—for women as well as men.

Members of the Women's Initiative are dedicated to creating an ongoing dialogue with all Catholics who value the contributions women have made to the church since its inception and who look forward to a renewed church that welcomes all women to their rightful position as leaders of this effort and as collegial partners in shaping the church of the future. We will...

- Present and refute the situations and laws that marginalize and eclipse women in scripture, tradition and spirituality;
- Dialogue with all Catholics about issues of deep importance to women and their faith life;
- Educate and evangelize all Catholics about women's spirituality and the necessity of including this gift in shaping the reform of the universal church; and
- Work collaboratively with organizations and groups that have similar goals.

We are convinced that our efforts will be an effective sacramental sign of God's love and salvation in the world. We have chosen to join our work to that of the Voice of the Faithful because of VOTF's commitment to "Keep the Faith. Change the Church."
END LINK

Clergy Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church

Reflections 1984-2010 (first in a series)

By Tom Doyle

Part I: Defining the Context

Before looking at the saga of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy in the Catholic Church it is first absolutely essential to define the context, i.e., what precisely it is all about. The story is set in the Roman Catholic Church, the largest and oldest religious denomination in the world. The major participants have ranged from relatively unknown children from the anonymous fringes of the Church to bishops and even the popes. The issues that have caused controversy, debate and animosity have run the gamut from dogma, moral theology and governing style to media bias, social deference and personal worth. Anger, emotion and convoluted politics have often simmered just below the surface, dominating the issue at many levels. Name calling, personal attacks, slander and deceit have been common and more often than not have caused the focus to shift from the fundamental issue to personal agendas. Woven through it all from start to finish have been power and money.

But this is essentially not about any of the issues that have caused the most heat and triggered the intense emotional reactions. This is about an unknown number of innocent, trusting and vulnerable girls and boys, men and women who have been sexually, emotionally and spiritually violated by persons in whom they had placed unqualified trust...deacons and priests, nuns and religious brothers, bishops, archbishops and even cardinals. This is about decent, devout Catholics whose innocence was turned into a living nightmare, a prison of shame, guilt, fear and pain from which they could not break free.

This painful, shocking and sad story is about the men and women in positions of power who not only looked the other way but enabled the shameful predators to continue on their path of destruction. It is about men and women who were twice and three times victimized by the very shepherds to whom they appealed for help and who did nothing or worse, re-victimized them by treating them as a threat to their security.

This story is not about a challenge to orthodoxy or the preservation of an institution. It is about people...people who decided to stand up and take back the dignity that had been stolen from them.

The First Years: Crisis and Beyond

The sex abuse “crisis” is a misnomer even though it is often the most convenient descriptive word for what has happened. A crisis is a temporary event that threatens personal or societal tranquility. The clergy abuse “happening” is anything but temporary and it is clearly not a case of a miniscule number of moral misfits in a population of otherwise stellar professional Church men and women. It did not begin in Lafayette Louisiana in 1984 or in Boston in 2002. These were peak moments or spikes in the gradual information shift from hidden to open. Credible historical sources tell us that deviant and harmful sexual behavior by clergy has been part of the Catholic Church’s culture from its earliest years. I distinguish between deviant and harmful for a reason. By deviant I refer to sexual behavior that is classified as pathological or sick, such as pedophilia, ephebophilia, rape or ritual molestations. Harmful sexual behavior may not be officially classified as deviant yet it can be seriously harmful and even destructive to others. Here I refer to the use of one’s power and position to engage in unwanted sex with age-appropriate persons. In less convoluted or politically correct language I’m speaking of priests or bishops who use their power to seduce adults and use them as sex toys. Most of these are women but there are instances where the victims are men. The gender doesn’t matter. What does matter is that trusted clerics used the power given to them to do good and perverted it to hurt others while satisfying their selfish needs.

The remote origins can be found in the gradual evolution of the clergy as a privileged and powerful sub-culture. By the 12th century the major distinguishing mark of the Catholic clerical world was mandatory celibacy and it has remained thus even to the present. My purpose is not to focus on the causal relationship between celibacy and sexual deviance by clerics even though there definitely is such a connection. In short, accurate historical evidence leaves no doubt that celibacy is anything but the “jewel in the crown of the priesthood” as Pope Paul VI referred to it.

Shortly after the initial revelations in the mid eighties, scholars from a variety of disciplines began studying the seemingly new problem. A rash of reports of sexual molestation of children by Catholic clerics and even worse, an apparent systematic cover-

up by their superiors, the bishops, was not something that could be easily ignored or successfully minimized. While an increasing number of people sought answers to the basic question, "WHY," the Vatican appeared to ignore what was happening and the bishops back home concentrated on damage control. Between 1984 and 1986 there was a steady flow of detailed information to the Vatican with no response but silence. The pope's first public utterance was not until June 1993. During this period the Vatican's spin was that this was an American problem caused primarily by our materialism, media sensationalism and lax morals.

Some U.S. bishops saw in the early revelations the beginning of a wider problem. Several bishops and religious superiors held mandatory training sessions for their priests and asked Ray Mouton, Mike Peterson and I to present lectures. In spite of the few bishops who showed a sincere interest the bishops' conference (NCCB, later USCCB) as a whole reacted in an arrogant and defensive manner. In response to the "manual" prepared by Mouton, Peterson and I, they dismissed the offering and claimed they knew everything that was in it and already had protocols and procedures in place. Around this time the NCCB general counsel told the media that the "manual" and the suggested action proposals were really an effort by the three of us to sell the bishops a "costly" program in order to profit from the crisis.

Before the end of the eighties the lines were drawn. The victims for the most part were on their own. The Vatican remained aloof and let the word out that this was an American problem. A few diocesan bishops responded to individual victims with kindness but the majority either ignored pleas for help or limited their pastoral contact to either lame excuses trying to convince the victims that they were mistaken about what had happened to them, or they concentrated on convincing them to remain silent. The bishops' conference (NCCB) discussed the issue in executive sessions at their annual meetings but their over-riding concern was avoiding or at least minimizing liability and negative publicity. Throughout this period (1984 to 1990) no one in Church leadership from the pope down to parish priests publicly expressed even a passing concern for the emotional and spiritual welfare of the victims.

Priests' reactions have been mixed. Some reacted defensively, upset that the criminal actions of a few tainted the image of all. Others were in denial, adamantly proclaiming that this was nothing more than a few isolated incidents that were multiplied and exploited by the anti-Catholic media. A few priests here and there courageously spoke out publicly, most in a respectful tone, simply asking for answers from their bishops. None of these were encouraged by their bishops and all were urged to back down lest they get in trouble. The majority of the priests remained silent, avoiding involvement. The National Federation of Priests Councils, an independent organization, said nothing until the bishops passed their "zero tolerance" measures in 2002. The NFPC suddenly found its voice, not in support of the innocent victims but to express concern that accused priests' rights to due process might be compromised.

By the end of the first decade it was becoming clear that what was unfolding was far more than the discovery of a few seriously disturbed clerics previously hidden in the clerical world. The true nature of what was unfolding before us could not be limited by describing it as a "problem," a "crisis" or a "scandal." It was all of those and more. We were not seeing the revelation of a shameful aberration but the uncovering of a dimension of the clerical subculture, a complex pattern of thought and behavior that was a deeply

embedded aspect of the “institutional Church.” In other words, this was not some disgusting parasite that had come from the outside and attached itself to the Church. This was a dark and destructive force that had its roots deep in the essence of the institution itself. What was becoming clear was that the clergy abuse phenomenon consisted of one entity, one problem so to speak, with two sides: the aberrant and destructive sexual behavior itself which targeted children, adolescents and adults and the integration of this behavior in the institutional Church. The primary focus has been on the papacy and the bishops because their responses have been so dramatically contrary to what is expected of the trusted consecrated office-holders whom we have been taught to believe acted in Christ’s stead. But the rest of the Church community also reflected this unique aspect of Church culture. A significant number of lay people either adamantly refused to believe that the plague of sex abuse was even happening or worse, many reacted with angry and often irrational attacks on the victims and their supporters, inflicting even more pain. They had been betrayed by the perpetrators, by the bishops and now by their peers among the lay faithful.

Reports of sexual abuse came from dioceses and religious orders throughout the United States. The bishops’ responses revealed a pattern of behavior by individual bishops and by the hierarchical corporate body that was consistent and systemic in nature. It was neither haphazard nor random nor did it appear to be the result of a conspiracy to respond in a manner that was opposed to the norm. The cover-ups, the secret re-assignments, the failure to report crimes to civil authorities and attempts to coerce victims into silence have not been exceptional reactive behaviors but evidence of pattern and policy that was and is part of the clerical culture...not the exception but the norm. The bishops made it clear by the divergence between their public expressions of regret, sorrow and apology and the way they were actually treating victims that whatever the response to the growing problem was to be, it had to be on their terms. Their public utterances and the consistent refusal to accept any true responsibility (“If mistakes were made...”) made it obvious that they were entrenched in their belief that the institutional Church was willed by God and entrusted to them. Their fundamental mandate was to protect and defend this institution and their role in it at all costs. The salvation of humankind depended on the Church and its bishops. Joined to this core belief about the nature of the institution is the conviction that the priesthood, also of divine origin, alters the very nature of a man once he is ordained. This ontological change raises the man to another level of being because he is, to quote Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, “configured to Christ.” Both of these beliefs influenced the popes’ and bishops’ attitudes towards the victims in a way that was detrimental to them. These beliefs have been instilled in the laity and have a profound impact on the severity of the traumatic effects suffered by victims, especially the effects of a spiritual nature.

End of Part I

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Reading J. Lambkin's letter about her children and her comment "I grow more doubtful about keeping with this church" should spur us to greater action regarding reforming the laity. While I applaud the work and efforts made by VOTF toward achieving the 10 steps, I fear all of it will be temporary unless step number 7 is greatly expanded.

Let me say first I understand it is VOTF's commitment to work within the Roman church system. I also understand that the laity has a right to speak and assemble to have their voices heard according to canon law. The problem is the laity has no power and has no plan to get any power.

The goal of empowering the laity must go far beyond simply "being heard" for any lasting and effective reform. There is no power in simply being heard if the hierarchy is completely free to ignore whatever the laity has to say. As it stands now the hierarchy is free to do just about anything it wants. It even violates what little rights the laity has in canon law. In truth the laity only has the power to decide if they will go to mass, and the power to decide if they are going to contribute to the collection. Everything else is not the laity's power to decide. Whatever else the laity may want to do is totally up to the discretion of the pastor. The pastor is completely free to spend the laity's money on anything he wants over the laity's objections.

The laity's money (20-30%) that is required to be sent to the bishop from the collection is spent at the total discretion of the bishop. The laity has no power to decide how their own money is spent. According to canon law parish councils are not required, and finance councils have no power because canon law stipulates that they are only advisory. They only give the appearance that the laity has a voice because they are only rubber stamps. They have no power.

What is worse is they create the deception that they have importance.

Canon law is written by the hierarchy to ensue that the hierarchy has all the power and all the control. Canon law is written for church government of the hierarchy, by the hierarchy and for the hierarchy. The laity has had no power to determine anything in canon law. It has been called the law of the church, but that is deceptive because it is not the law of the whole church. The truth is that canon law is only the law of the hierarchy.

Until this is recognized and changed by the laity, empowering the laity will have no substance. It will be like the Dallas Charter which is not mandatory, has no standing in canon law, and which the bishop is free to ignore anytime he wants.

I say all of this to implore VOTF to develop an education campaign to reform the laity so that the laity will organize itself for democratic power and real structural change at their own initiation. I believe that only by doing this can the laity ensure that the other 9 steps will have any permanence. All reforms are reforms of the power of governance. This should not have to be the job of J. Lambkin's children.

Deacon Bill