

know? Because Father so and so is living that life, and note how happy and full of joy he is. In fact, the happiest people I have ever known were all priests or nuns, full of love, full of joy, and full of the spirit of holiness. These people live a life not devoted to temporal goods or pleasures, as most people do. Rather, they live for God, and they show us how to live for God alone.

And finally, we have permanent Deacons in the Church who are married. They can prepare couples for marriage, and they can counsel couples if couples wish to seek them out. So, if a person wants to see someone who is ordained yet married, he can see a Deacon. If a person wishes to see someone who is not married, but who has sacrificed the goods of marriage, and--if he's a priest from a religious order--ownership (the vow of poverty) and self-determination (the vow of obedience), he can do so. If one is looking for people who are married and can live the teachings of the Church, and who are good wives and husbands, we have those too in our parishes. We really do have all the bases covered. In the Catholic Church, there's something for everyone.

Perhaps it is this continued witness to something eternal and unchanging, something above and beyond the fleeting nature of temporal goods and human power that irks the devotees of democratic nihilism. And yet it is the reality witnessed to by Catholic priests that is the foundation of genuine democracy. Despite the inadequacies of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, it does begin by affirming this very principle: "Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law:" It should come as no surprise that Svend Robinson sought to have this statement removed from the Charter. He may very well succeed one day. Who, then, will be left to witness, in his body, in his manner of dress, in his lifestyle, and in the personal sacrifice of the married state, if not the Catholic priest?

## **Ongoing Reflections on Priest-Bishop Scandals**

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On Monday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, I attended the assembly of priests from the Archdiocese of New York to hear Cardinal Egan's message. The Cardinal made the point that the first consideration in this kind of tragedy should be the protection of children and youth. Our support must be for the innocent young person. That having been stressed, he added that we need to explore other facets of the crisis, which has already done harm to the image of the Catholic Church in the minds of many. Both Catholics and non-Catholics believe that many dioceses have not handled the situation well.

To a large extent, bishops and their advisors have not given to the victims of priests' sexual misbehaviour the kind of spiritual support to keep them from falling away from the Faith. Settlements out of court and pledges of confidentiality were frequent. Many dioceses may have taken care of the victims with adequate counselling, while the priest involved was allowed to resume ministry after a period in a treatment center, followed by approval from the same treatment center to resume ministry away from adolescent youth.

I say adolescent youth - most often male - because over the years, very few priests have been involved in acts of pedophilia. Unfortunately, the few were involved in many acts with children from 1983 to 2000 in Louisiana (Lafayette) and in Massachusetts (Boston - Fall River). The media, however, has made the actions of a few pedophile priests the main problem. Bad as it is, the main problem of errant priestly crimes is not in the area of pedophilia, which is strictly defined as an adult having sex-

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ual relations with someone below the age of puberty (12), but rather in the phenomena of priests with homosexual inclinations seeking out vulnerable youth. The secular press refuses to recognize that these priests are actively homosexual, not pedophiles. All such priests are called pedophile priests by the media who said that the Pope called the Cardinals together to solve the problem of "pedophile priests". And so on. Although one priest involved in sexual relations with teenage boys is one priest too many, still it should be stressed that the number of priests who have seduced teenage boys is a very small percentage of the 47,000 odd priests in the U.S.A. One report said that 177 priests throughout the USA have been removed from ministry. This of course is the source of serious scandal, which is made even greater by the anger of Catholic laity, who hold that our bishops have covered up these situations, and have made immense payments to settle law suits made by victims and their families. But one may ask whether our bishops *as a body* have been judged too harshly by both the media and our Catholic laity.

I believe that many of them followed the advice of psychologists and psychiatrists at various treatment centers. They were told that a priest who was now living a chaste life, and engaged in priestly ministry which did not involve children or adolescents, could do good work for the church in many forms of pastoral work and spiritual direction which did not bring him in contact with youth and children. I was asked to give spiritual direction to such priests. I saw true spiritual progress in the lives of these priests. Most of them remained faithful to their promise of celibacy.

In short, the predominant view of the bishops in the 80's and 90's was that such men should be given a second chance which included group spiritual support, individual spiritual direction, and careful supervision. From personal pastoral experience, I saw good things happening with these priests. I also was aware that some of these bishops took good care of the youth who had been victimized by priests. The bishops

acted in good faith, in accordance with the psychological advice they received from professionals in the field. But now individuals are filing law suits concerning incidents of 20, 25, and 30 years ago with accusations of cover-up appearing in the daily newspapers.

District attorneys in the metropolitan area of New York have demanded that cases reported to the archdiocese of New York should be sent directly to the appropriate district attorney. Cardinal Egan believed that before a case was turned over to the D.A.'s office, it ought to be screened by a group of Catholic laymen to make sure it was a serious charge, and not a frivolous threat. The D.A.'s, however, did not agree with the archbishop, and now he believes that he has no choice except to turn over to the D.A.'s office any complaint about a priest.

The archbishop said that the Catholic laity demand that any complaint against a priest concerning sexual abuse should be turned over to the D.A.'s office. Were he not to do so, he could be accused of covering up. This disclosure of individuals could lead to unsubstantiated charges against a priest, and, once published, this would do irreparable damage to the good reputation of the priest. He would be removed from his work, and not allowed to minister to the faithful until it is proven that the charges are false. In other words, priests are vulnerable to false accusations with no adequate defense. Recently, I was threatened by someone unemployed for psychiatric reasons, because I refused to give him time at the moment, and asked him to wait for several weeks. I do not have his phone number which would enable me to contact the local police. But if he had carried out his threat, I would not be able to do my work until my name was cleared. And how long would it take to clear one's name?

Nevertheless, many in the Church feel that these measures are necessary for the common good of the Church, that is to say, that priests who had a falling many years ago, but had been faithful over subsequent years should be banished from priestly ministry for the rest of their

lives. I have grave difficulty with this opinion. Serious as these sins committed with male youth are, does it mean that in the view of the public, they may never again act as priests? Are we giving into public opinion when it denies that God's grace can restore an errant priest to ministry in the Church? Granted, there is a possibility that he could fall again, but this is not probable in the case of most priests who have sought to remain chaste. Meanwhile, should not both clergy and laity find some gainful employment for the above priests? I think we should do so.

The irony is that some bishops worked privately for both priests and victims, hoping to avoid scandal in the Church, regarding forms of "cover-up". The manner in which the press has presented statistics leads the public to draw unwarranted conclusions concerning the current frequency of such priestly crime. The impression is that it is frequent at the present time. It is not.

But from the statistics on various dioceses - covering 30 or 40 years concerning priests' involvement with teenage boys - it is clear that the percentage of such crimes among priests is very low indeed. When recently in New York, Allentown, and Philadelphia, records of such sexual misbehaviour were submitted to District Attorney's offices, it was noted in the media that most of the cases were beyond the statute of limitations; however, throughout the country, one notes practically everyday one old case or another is brought to light. Unfortunately, this conveys the impression that such crimes are increasing, and the Church in America has been inept in taking care of victims, and in exercising necessary discipline of the accused priests.

### American Seminaries

With regard to our seminaries, I believe that Rome intends another investigation similar to that of the late Bishop John Marshall in the mid-eighties. The Marshall investigation did not succeed in rooting out dissident teaching or permissive attitudes toward questionable behav-

iour. It did not really affect dissident teachers, tighten up discipline in seminaries or promote a more vigorous spiritual program. One of the reasons the Marshall Report did not have its desired effect was that some seminaries put on their best face for the examiners - what the Italians call *bella figura* - and then reverted to their usual policies. At that time, I was teaching in a complex of three seminaries in Washington, D.C. Since then, other seminaries, known for their dissident theologians, absence of a vigorous prayer program and lack of discipline - not to mention the acceptance of homosexuality as normal - have seen a sharp decline in the number of candidates (Michael Rose, *Good Bye Good Men*, Regnery, Washington, D.C. 2002). In more recent years, however, some seminaries have instituted reforms in theological curriculum, more intensive prayer programs, strict discipline and screening processes. They have flourished, and will continue to attract young men who want the fullness of Catholic doctrine as preparation for ministry in the Church.

### Should a Seminarian With Homosexual Inclinations be Ordained to the Priesthood?

The issue is controversial, and I am sure that it will be discussed in Rome, and at the bishop's meeting in June. Some authors have cited the opinion of Joaquin Navarro-Valls, Vatican Spokesman, who said, "People with (homosexual) inclinations just cannot be ordained...[but he added] that does not imply a final judgement on people with homosexuality...But you cannot be in this field." (*New York Times* interview, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002). When questioned by Catholic News Services (CNS), Navarro-Valls declined to elaborate on his comments in the *New York Times*.

Anonymous Vatican Church officials, who asked not to be named, said the Vatican was not trying to impose an arbitrary norm against homosexuals, but was trying to make 'prudential decisions' based on individual cases at the seminary level. They added that the Vatican views the issue as mainly dealing with future



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priests, and not those already ordained. As you know, some seminaries - Philadelphia, for example - screen candidates to ascertain whether they are homosexual. This includes the direct question: "Do you have homosexual inclinations?" Some individuals see this as a violation of their rights. But a vocation to the priesthood is not a right, but a special divine grace and privilege.

In an interview in 2001 with CNS, Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone, Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, said that the homosexual inclination is a potential problem in a seminarian. He went on to elaborate that the inclination leads to a "temptation that, for whatever reason, has become so predominant in a person's life as to become a force shaping the entire outlook of the person." He concludes that such persons should not be admitted to the seminary.

### My Own Opinion

In January 1971, *American Ecclesiastical Review*, I offered an opinion on this issue, which I reinforced in *Lay Witness* (March 2001). I hold that the homosexual inclination in itself should not be viewed as an impediment to ordination to the Catholic priesthood. I am aware of the 1961 Vatican document from the Congregation of Religious which was concerned with those entering religious orders. It stated: "those affected by the perverse inclination to homosexuality or pederasty should be excluded from religious vows and ordination." It added that community life and priestly ministry would constitute a "grave danger" or temptation for these people.

The 1961 document of the Congregation for Religious was dependent upon the state of our knowledge at that time concerning homosexuality. The document needs to be updated by the collective insights of the last forty years concerning homosexuality and nature and circumstances of contemporary forms of religious life. I hope that the Vatican will develop another document, which will be the result of consultation with scholars in the fields of psychology, sociology, and moral theology. A recent state-

ment by the Catholic Medical Association (CMA) called Homosexuality and Hope ought to be considered. It is available on the CMA's website, at Cathmed.org.

On Sunday, April 28, 2002, Cardinal George was asked on "Meet the Press" whether a person with homosexual inclinations should be ordained to the priesthood. He responded that each homosexual seminarian should be evaluated according to norms that apply also to heterosexual seminarians. He did not think we need a universal law forbidding all men with same-sex attractions from studying for the priesthood. Earlier, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick offered the same opinion.

There are other issues which remain unresolved until the bishops meet in June. One example is how shall the bishops handle cases of priests who, over twenty years ago or so, had failed in their commitment to chastity with teenage persons, but subsequently have led a good life. Another issue is whether one failure should result in dismissal from the priesthood. This needs fuller analysis beyond the phrase "zero tolerance".

What are at the roots of the problem? Some forty years ago, we witnessed Catholic theologians and ethicists who started to disagree with the authentic teaching of the Church on marriage and human sexuality, separating the procreative aspect of marriage from its love-union aspect by the justification of contraception. By the time Paul VI issued the encyclical against contraception *Humanae Vitae*, 1968, it had already been assumed by the above theologians that contraception was justified in marriage for a variety of reasons. This was the first but very significant factor in scuttling Catholic doctrine. [See also Richard Neuhaus on CNN: infidelity to magisterium.]

Next came the justification of sexual intercourse before marriage. It was said that sexual pleasure is necessary for one's fulfillment, including persons who had no opportunity to marry. Sexual pleasure became the focus of the

individual. This in turn led to describing masturbation as "self-pleasuring". Pop psychologists recommended it for relaxation. The full meaning of human sexual intercourse had now been reduced to obsession with individual sexual "fulfillment". Since sex was now separated from procreation and marriage, why could not two persons who had same-sex attractions find their happiness in an attempt at bodily union with each other?

This massive dissent by Catholic leaders from the magisterial teaching of the Church is the basic message of *Human Sexuality* by Anthony Kosnik (Paulist Press, 1977). This book and others like it reached the libraries of many Catholic seminaries and colleges and the future teachers of Catholic high schools and grade schools.

Thus the first root cause was false teaching on the meaning of marriage and sexuality. Prominent dissenting theologians were teaching at Catholic universities and no one in authority reproved them until the case of Fr. Charles Curran. The situation in some seminaries and colleges became more difficult for seminarians and students who knew that the Church's teaching was not supported by dissident professors. For example, Catholic league president William Donohue refers to Fr. Anthony Kosnik's view that "fornication, adultery, homosexuality, sodomy, and bestiality" were not "intrinsically evil acts", but merely "sexual taboos". He quotes Kosnik as saying that "priests must understand that God is surely present in homosexual relations that are marked by 'sincere affection'."

It is not surprising then, that dissident teaching led to deviant behaviour, the second root cause. Again, as Donohue observes, it is time we connected the dots between dissidence and deviance. While the latter is not always caused by the former, dissidence provides intellectual cover for deviance. On the specific issue of homosexual acts, the authentic teaching of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on this question as found in the *Declaration on Sexual Ethics* 1975, and later in the *Letter to the*

*Bishops of the World on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons* 1986, was reduced to the level of a "venerable" opinion. In some seminaries and Catholic colleges, students who clung to magisterial teaching were regarded as "rigid". Indeed, many seminarians left and the Church was deprived of priests. Many laity, likewise, latched on to dissident teaching, particularly on the issues of contraception and sex before marriage.

Besides considering the impact theological dissent had upon priests, seminarians, and the Catholic laity, we need to take a good look at the harmful effects which secular psychologists, like Karl Rogers and others had on many Catholic educators. All this is detailed in the April issue of the *Culture Wars*. Herein E. Michael Jones' article, "Pedophilia and Kulturkampf: The Consequences of Just Saying Yes to the Culture of Appetite" is right on target.

Jones says "the recent pedophilia case in Boston is instructive for those who want to understand how Kulturkampf works in a culture where media-orchestrated opinion is the main instrument of control." Jones views the media "commissars" as seeking to impose their views on the public. Jones notes that the secular media chose a homosexual Catholic, Andrew Sullivan, to speak as if he were a Catholic leader. Sullivan speaks as if he had the good of the Church in mind in *Time* magazine, calling celibacy "an onerous burden that can easily distort a person's psyche."

Such views of 'designated Catholics' like Sullivan are put forth as expert moral opinion. But this is only a pose, leading up to the real message "which is that the Church will have to abandon its commitment to preserving the moral order in the sexual realm." The political purpose of the current crisis is "to break whatever hold the Catholic Church still has on morals, because morals, especially sexual morals, are the only thing which stands between the nations' beleaguered individuals and families and the globalists control of culture through appetite..." (Jones, *Culture Wars*, April 2002).

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Jones believes that Cardinal Law's 'crime' was that he listened to psychologists, and he did what the dominant culture advised him to do. He accepted the authority of psychologists, that pedophilia was curable, and so he was persuaded to reassign priests in question to other parishes, usually under certain regulations which by and large were not carefully observed.

We need, however, to go back to the late fifties and sixties. Jones says that in this period the Catholic Church became docile to the dominant culture of yielding to one's appetites. The instance he gives is that the Church began running seminars among Catholic educators and religious orders according to the principles of Karl Rogers and Sigmund Freud. The Church, he says, is at fault for listening to dominant culture, especially psychologists of this sort. Thus he views modern psychology as a major contributor to current confusion among Catholics. He holds that we need no new evidence to make his point, which is already documented in his book, John Cardinal Krol and the Cultural Revolution.

Jones also refers to the writings of Wilhelm Reich, citing The Mass Psychology of Fascism as a factor in the sexual revolution in Europe during the sixties, but he also refers to one of his American disciples, Carl Rogers with his client centered therapy. In the above book, John Cardinal Krol and the Cultural Revolution and in past issues of the *Wanderer*, Jones describes with much documentation the spiritual demise of the Immaculate Heart of Mary nuns in Los Angeles. He says that the release of moral control destroyed this order. Roger's message was to say yes to your appetites.

There is much truth in Jones' criticisms of the Rogerian approach to counselling. From my study of client centered therapy, I saw its weakness in assuming that man's desires for personal fulfillment were always in accord with the natural moral law. It was as if man did not have any unruly passions - no carnal concupiscence, no effects of original sin. One looked into his own psychic mirror and determined what was best

for him. There was no objective criteria for moral good or evil. In 1957, I wrote an article contrasting the counselling methods of St. Francis De Sales and Karl Rogers (*Techniques in Counselling: A Comparison of the Method of St. Francis De Sales With That of Karl Rogers' Client Centered Therapy*, *Catholic Educator*, Pt I, Feb. 1957, Pt. II, Apr. 1957.) Francis gave the counsellor advice and spiritual direction; Rogers refused to give any advice, because he regarded advice an intrusion into the freedom of the person. It is easily understood, however, how persons who are given no moral criteria in discerning right from wrong may easily succumb to unruly desires or appetites. After all, the dominant culture sees repression of such desires as bad.

### What Can We Do?

I think the first thing we can do is not panic. The Church has been in crises worse than this before. The point was made by a priest in Fall River, Fr. Roger Landry, who then referenced Saint Francis De Sales: At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Francis De Sales, the exiled bishop of Geneva, was asked to publicly address a scandalous clerical situation in what is now southern France - then Savoy. He said that the sins of clerics were a source of scandal and could lead to the murder of souls; but he added that the greater evil was that of those who allowed the scandalous acts of clerics to turn them away from the Faith of the Church, to give up the Mass and the reception of Holy Communion. This he called spiritual suicide. Do not allow the scandalous conduct of a relatively few priests to shake your Faith in the Church and in Christ.

A second example, also cited by Fr. Roger Landry, is that of Saint Francis of Assisi. Like Saint Francis De Sales, he lived in a time of great immorality in the clergy. He was asked by one of his confreres, another Franciscan brother, "Suppose you knew that the priest celebrating the Mass has three concubines. Would you receive Holy Communion from him?" Francis answered that he would receive Holy



Communion from him because, however sinful the priest may be, he has changed bread into the Body of Christ and wine into His Blood. This is so important: The efficacy of the Sacraments, including the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and sacramental absolution, does not depend upon the holiness of the priest.

What can we do? I submit that we can continue to practice chastity of the heart, for which we daily pray. Allow me to distinguish chastity of the heart from its imperfect form which I term "white-knuckled chastity". This occurs when the individual is constantly in contact with impure fantasies and desires. Past sexual experiences continue to fill his imagination, particularly if he had formed bad habits. His affections are not yet purified from these impulses. He finds himself in constant fear that he will yield to mortal sin. He is practicing imperfect chastity or continence - it is a virtue. He needs to intensify his prayer life, which will cleanse his heart of lustful desires. He needs to cultivate chaste friendships. With God's grace, he will find chastity of the heart. Such chastity is a form of divine love, because it is rooted in the strongest motive for practicing chastity (virginal or marital), and that is love for Jesus Christ crucified.

### **The American Bishops' Meeting in June 2002**

As I continue this commentary, I note that the American Cardinals in their communique to the American bishops hope that the June meeting will develop three goals: (1) to send the congregations of the Vatican a set of national standards which the Holy See will review. These standards will include essential elements for policies dealing with the sexual abuse of minors in dioceses and religious institutes in the United States. (2) To recommend a special process for dismissal from the clerical state of a priest who has become notorious because of serial and predatory abuse of minors; and (3) To propose a special process for the dismissal of priests who are not notorious but who are regarded by the diocesan bishops as a threat to the protection of

children and young people. Such a dismissal is meant to avoid grave scandal in the future and to safeguard the common good of the Church. Other proposals were added to achieve these three goals.

In the opinion of Dr. Germain Grisez, the bishops will not be able to achieve these goals in four days; he suggests that they issue an interim report to the Catholic public, indicating that they will continue to work on these goals and purposes until they are completed. This, however, will not satisfy many Catholic laity and clergy, who demand that the bishops come up with universal statements as soon as possible. Personally, I find this demand by some members of the faithful and by some clerics unreasonable. If it is enacted in hysteria, it will probably be rescinded some years from now, when the American Church regains its spiritual equilibrium. Meanwhile, many priests who have demonstrated great virtue over many years, after original lapses will remain without any kind of ministry in the Church. Are we as Church ignoring the reality of God's grace that has worked in their lives? John Paul II referred to the divine graces that bring about conversion in sinners. But are these priests to be cast out because their serious sins of years ago are unforgivable?

### **Germain Grisez's Commentary to the U.C.C.B.**

Grisez submitted a series of recommendations to the Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee. I want to comment on a few of his recommendations in the space of this article.

From the many recommendations that Grisez submitted to the Ad Hoc Committee, I shall comment on a few in this article. He takes issue with Stephen Rossetti's A Tragic Grace: The Catholic Church and Child Sexual Abuse and also with an article "Priest-Pedophile" in *America* magazine (25 April, 2002) by Melvin C. Blancette, S.S.S. and Gerald Coleman, S.S.S.. Rossetti, for example, says that acts with post-pubescent children by the "majority of perpetra-

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tors" are "more amenable to treatment". One of the treatment goals "is to develop satisfying relationships with age-appropriate peers." But what does Rossetti mean? According to Grisez, Rossetti holds that no change in sexual orientation is necessary for the "perpetrators" - actively homosexual men; consequently, "with treatment, they can stop committing crimes with underage men and enjoy 'satisfying relationships with age-appropriate peers' [Rossetti's expression]...."

"Priests should and usually do enjoy satisfying non-sexual relationships with many of their spiritual children from the cradle to the grave. Only unchaste relationships must be limited to age-appropriate peers - to consenting adults. Rossetti apparently considers that limitation a successful treatment outcome." Here Grisez regards Rossetti as justifying such adult homosexual relationships by priests who formerly were involved with teenagers. Rossetti needs to clarify his position. One wonders why he uses the word "perpetrators" when he is referring to homosexual priests.

Grisez's criticisms of Blancette and Coleman in that article in America "Priests Pedophiles" is well articulated. The above authors claim that "ephebophilia" is a "basic sexual orientation". But Grisez doubts that an adult sexual interest in adolescent men or young women is a distinct form of homosexual behaviour. The term "ephebophilia" is not found in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association. I believe the term ephebophilia is useless in the analysis of adult homosexual men seeking adolescent males.

The media's use of the term "predatory priests" is not really in accord with the typical pattern of adolescent seduction. The media constantly refers to predatory priests when, in most cases, "physical or assaultive kinds of behaviour" are rare. The most common pattern among such priests is "that they enjoy the company of youngsters, like the companionship, want to do good for them, and then, unfortunately, as a bond develops emotionally, they begin to feel

sexually tempted and persuade the youngster to go along with sexual activity." (Frederick S. Berlin, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the National Institute for the Study, Prevention, and Treatment of Sexual Trauma - interview, USCCB website).

Grisez believes that the American bishops ought to publicly condemn criminal homosexual seduction of adolescents and young men by clerics. This would be "an appropriate first step for dealing with the homosexual subculture in the Catholic Church in the United States." Grisez believes that the bad example of the priest scandals may lead other Catholics, including priests, to commit and "rationalize" lesser sexual sins.

Grisez is on target in holding that a bishop's first concern in dealing with an offending cleric must be "the good of the cleric's soul". This is in line with the Holy Father's address on April 23, 2002: "We can not forget the power of Christian conversion, that radical decision to turn away from sin and back to God..." The bishop should treat the offending cleric with pastoral mercy and help him to change his way of living.

Grisez, however, holds - like some bishops - that a cleric who has committed even one sexual offense should never again be permitted to engage in ministry, except to administer the sacraments to the dying. I find this position difficult to accept, but I leave it to the judgement of the Holy See. Grisez refers to the fact that there are many clerics who are openly sexually active, "though only with consenting and age-appropriate peers". Seemingly, their sexual activity is tolerated by their bishops. In my judgement, the number of such priests may not be known by the Ordinary, because they keep their way of life underground. I know this from a priest who left the underground but did not reveal the matter to the Ordinary for fear of punishment. This happened twenty years ago when even the admission of homosexual orientation would be avoided by clerics and religious. In the current situation of the Church in



the United States, however, there may be no tolerance of homosexual acts by clergy or religious.

Grisez quotes the Pope on Catholic moral teaching and dissent: "They (the Catholic faithful) must know that bishops and priests are totally committed to the fullness of Catholic truth on matters of sexual morality, a truth as essential to the renewal of the priesthood and the episcopate as it is to the renewal of marriage and family life" (John Paul II, 23 April 2002).

The Final Communique of the United States participants in the Vatican meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> stressed the need to promote the correct moral teaching of the Church and "to publicly reprimand individuals who spread dissent and groups which advance ambiguous approaches to pastoral care."

Grisez recognizes that "dissent has become institutionalized and significantly divides the collegium itself." The present division in the Catholic Church is not only over sexual morality, but over other issues which some bishops consider "uncompromisable"; it will be overcome only by a collegial effort of the Pope and the other bishops. Grisez hopes that our Holy Father will initiate a collegium of the bishops which will be truly representative of all the bishops. Hopefully, some bishops will urge the Pope to do so. At the end of his discussion on spiritual formation in a seminary, Grisez holds to the traditional principle that candidates for ordination need to be perfectly "continent" for at least a full year before they promise celibacy, and also during that year they should "make progress towards peaceful chastity, so that they could be morally certain before they promise celibacy that they will not be aflame with passion." In my opinion, those persons who have struggled with chastity need to have been continent for more than a year before the promise of celibacy. Such a judgement should be made by the spiritual director. Again, chastity of the heart describes more accurately the kind of interior chastity which the candidate should have.

Grisez sees the need to overcome the distrust which some members of the laity have towards their bishop. In his view, "the crises that began in the United States in January 2002 is not about sexual abuse. It is about some bishops' behaviour over many years; they tolerated clerical sexual offenses and even seemed to facilitate them..." This led to the crises of January 2002. Bishops, says Grisez, need to be true Fathers of their flock. All clerics, moreover, need to support each other in serving the spiritual needs of the laity. We need to be concerned for the common good of the members of the Church and for the preaching of the Gospel. We need to break away from the kind of cooperation among clerics which is blinded by preoccupation with status and self-interest

### Conclusion

In an op-ed column in the *Morning Call* (April 1, 2002), Larry Chapp, Chairman of the Theology Department at De Sales University, seeks the roots of the sexual abuse crises in our society: "The problem with the Church isn't that bishops were guilty of an abuse of power. The problem is that the bishops did not exercise their power at all. What was needed was more assertion of genuine Gospel-based authority, not less." Chapp hopes that the American bishops will turn to the leadership and example of John Paul II. They will find in his writings on the nature and meaning of human sexuality, a truly modern perspective of God's design for marriage and family. In summarizing the Pope's writings, Chapp speaks in such a positive way on the Christian understanding of celibacy, viewing celibacy as "a form of sexual expression, not its lack, a fulfillment of the commandment to 'love thy neighbour' rather than the absence of love - in deed that the genital expression of our sexuality is but one way that love expresses itself rather than the only way."

It is to be hoped that the teaching of our Holy Father on marriage and the family will receive far more attention from the American hierarchy when matters begin to settle down in our Church.