



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on December 10, 2018

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The Truth About the Catholic Clergy Abuse Scandal

Numerous state attorneys general are opening investigations into clergy sex abuse in the Roman Catholic Church in the wake of Pennsylvania's grand jury report released in August, cataloging allegations of heinous sex crimes across the state over more than 70 years. On the heels of that bombshell came an 11-page *Testimony* — followed by addenda in September and October — by a Vatican prelate-turned-whistleblower, accusing Pope Francis of helping cover up sexual misconduct among high-ranking church ecclesiastics and calling on the pontiff to resign.



Once at the reporting end of the 2012 Vatileaks scandal, retired Archbishop Carl Maria Vigano specifically targeted 83-year-old ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick of Washington, whose decades-long priestly and episcopal career is riddled with scandal. Vigano claims Pope Francis lifted canonical sanctions imposed by Pope Benedict XVI on McCarrick intended to remove him from public ministry, despite Vatican knowledge of the cardinal's "gravely immoral" history. Vigano also indicted Cardinal Donald Wuerl, who resigned as archbishop of Washington, D.C., in October amid accusations that he did not stop abuse in Pennsylvania, where he served as bishop from 1988 until 2006.

With other states launching investigations into alleged clerical sex crimes and coverup, should we wonder what their research will reveal? In 2001, a year before accounts of systemic perversion came to light in Boston, *Crisis Magazine* reported, "Without exception, every one of the 188 dioceses in the American Catholic Church has faced or is facing claims of child sex abuse."

While the Pennsylvania report alleges more than 300 priest predators and 1,000 victims in six of the state's eight dioceses, perhaps most disturbing is the longevity of this outrage if the "credible allegations" are true. The grand jury lamented that "almost every instance of abuse we found is too old to be prosecuted" due to expired statutes of limitation. "We heard from plenty of victims who are now in their 50's, 60's, 70's, and even one who was 83 years old," and many of the accused are already deceased.

The tales of abuse are nauseating: teen and pre-pubescent victims, mostly boys, manipulated with alcohol or pornography, groped, raped, and persuaded through often blasphemous tactics to perform vile and unmentionable acts. Many of these crimes cannot be discounted as mere incidents of gossip-mongering since they are recorded in church archives. In relating how diocesan officials "managed" typical complaint cases, the grand jury wrote:

The main thing was not to help children, but to avoid "scandal." That is not our word, but theirs; it appears over and over again in the documents we recovered. Abuse complaints were kept locked up in a "secret archive." That is not our word, but theirs; the church's Code of Canon Law specifically requires the diocese to maintain such an archive.



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Such routine misuse of a bishop's confidential records — intended by canon law to play the same role as personnel files in any private corporation, not to cover up criminal wrongdoing — already has prompted Pennsylvania to pass a law requiring the state's dioceses to immediately forward any sex abuse complaints to the district attorney. (Incidentally, nothing in canon law prevents a bishop from granting archive access to civil authorities.) Federal Bureau of Investigation analysis confirmed that the dioceses in question typically covered up complaints with euphemisms, sham investigations, absurd psychiatric treatment, and/or transfer of an accused priest "to a new location where no one will know he is a child abuser."

It is important to note that these odious crimes claim two types of victims: Some are innocent young people, but others are innocent priests falsely accused. A review of all cases in the 2002 scandal revealed "the sobering figure that one third of accused priests in the Archdiocese of Boston were accused falsely," according to Dave Pierre of NewsBusters.org, in a *Catholic World Report* interview. Investigators say this phenomenon increases proportionate to self-reporting versus parental reporting, proving the value of current statutes of limitation and recalling that not every accusation is gospel truth. Moreover, let's not forget that all priests are victimized by this scandal. To the general public, the Roman collar has unjustly become akin to Hester Prynne's scarlet letter.

But many cases are factual; some even involve admission by the abusers of wrongdoing. Equally deplorable is the evidence of deceit by Catholic hierarchy. Who are these men perverting the Roman Catholic Church?

The Subversive Agenda

"Understand there is an intentional and malicious infiltration of the Church for the purpose of destroying Her from within," warned Minnesota priest Father Robert Altier in a recent sermon. "When I was in the seminary, if you were not homosexual or radical feminist, you were in big trouble. One of the professors actually was arrogant enough to stand up in front of the class and say, 'Martin Luther had the right idea, but he did it the wrong way. He left the Church. You can't change the Church from the outside. You can only change it from the inside, so we're not leaving.'" Altier lamented, "So these are people with an agenda.... They have been extraordinarily successful."

Photo: AP Images

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"I was a first-year seminarian forty years ago and heard many stories about the homosexual exploits of then Bishop McCarrick," writes Father Gordon MacRae. "The stories were not passed around by seminarians who saw themselves as victims, but by young gay men who boasted of currying narcissistic favor with a bishop. I knew decades ago that Cardinal McCarrick had been strongly advised by the Apostolic Nuncio to sell his scandalous beach house." This quote comes from MacRae's award-winning blog *These Stone Walls*, which chronicles his past 24 years living in a New Hampshire prison, serving a life sentence for alleged crimes of sexual abuse, which his diocese settled for hundreds of thousands of dollars notwithstanding evidence of fraud. MacRae maintains his innocence despite a plea bargain's promise of only one year in prison if he asserted guilt.

Altier and MacRae shed an important light on stories raging through major media about the so-called pedophilia crisis. As Maureen Mullarkey pointed out at *The Federalist* in September, "With few



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exceptions, sexual abuse by priests has been visited overwhelmingly upon pubescent boys and young men, most often teenagers. This is pederasty, not pedophilia. And pederasty is endemic to gay culture.”

Pederasty — a homosexual relationship between an adult and a pubescent or adolescent — has long been declared a right by the homosexual movement. The January 1979 *Gay Community News* in Boston contained this blatant admission by well-known pro-pederast/pro-pedophile activist David Thorstad: “We should present ourselves not merely as defenders of our own personal rights to privacy and sexual expression, but as the champions of the right of all persons — regardless of age — to engage in the sexuality of their choice.”

Pederasty ran rampant in the 16th century, when Pope Saint Pius V issued his 1568 edict entitled “*Horrendum Illud Scelus*” (“That Horrible Crime”), ordering that “any priest or member of the clergy ... who commits such an execrable crime ... be deprived of every clerical privilege, of every post, dignity and ecclesiastical benefice, and having been degraded by an ecclesiastical judge, let him be immediately delivered to the secular authority.” Five hundred years prior, when a similar epidemic plagued the 11th-century church, Pope Saint Leo IX decreed the excommunication and permanent removal of guilty priests. He recalled and approved of the church’s fourth-century penalties for clerics who molested young men: public whipping and six months imprisonment, followed by a life of monastic solitude and fasting in permanent custody of two other monks to prevent contact with young people. What a striking contrast to the current pontiff’s response when queried about sodomitical priests in 2013. “Who am I to judge?” he shrugged.

Pederasty also plagued the 20th-century church, an epidemic well known to U.S. bishops since at least the 1950s. The story came to light in 2007 when a New Mexico judge opened sealed papers of Father Gerald Fitzgerald during litigation against the church. Fitzgerald founded a religious order in 1947 that ran retreat houses for priests struggling with alcoholism and substance abuse. At first he also treated those who had sexually abused minors, but soon explained to his archbishop, “Experience has taught us these men are too dangerous to the children of the parish and neighborhood for us to be justified in receiving them here.” Fitzgerald instead planned a private island retreat where he could sequester and treat sexual predator priests, whom he called “vipers.” As early as 1952, he began warning bishops about dangers in their dioceses and begging them to remove the offenders from public ministry. “These men, Your Excellency, are devils, and the wrath of God is upon them, and if I were a bishop I would tremble when I failed to report them to Rome for involuntary layization [*sic*],” he wrote in 1957. “We are amazed to find how often a man who would be behind bars if he were not a priest is entrusted with the *cura animarum* [care of souls].” Fitzgerald personally delivered warnings to the Vatican in 1962 and 1963. Yet it was not until 2002 that American bishops, gathering in Dallas, Texas, signed their *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, requiring bishops to remove predator priests from public ministry.

Bishop Blase Cupich chaired that Dallas committee. In 2009, he told the *New York Times* that the reason Father Fitzgerald’s warnings went unheeded for 50 years was that the priest’s “views ... were considered bizarre” with regard to his insistence that these priests should be segregated from society and removed from public ministry for life. He also said that cases of sexually abusive priests were considered rare.

In 2016, Pope Francis elevated Cupich to the College of Cardinals. He and now-shamefaced Cardinal Wuerl are the only American members of the Vatican’s Congregation for Bishops, charged with



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overseeing the episcopal ministry worldwide. Yet Cupich is one of those Vigano implicated; he described the cardinal as “blinded by his pro-gay ideology” and noted that upon his appointment to the see of Chicago, Cupich obtusely asserted that homosexuality is not the main source of clergy sexual abuse.

In the cardinal’s response to Vigano’s *Testimony*, he referenced a 2011 study by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, commissioned by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). “The clinical data do not support the hypothesis that priests with a homosexual identity ... are significantly more likely to abuse children than those with a heterosexual orientation,” researchers concluded.

“What seriously mars the report is its ideological reluctance to deal forthrightly with the role of homosexuality,” wrote William A. Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. Shocked at the conclusion vindicating sodomy, he says the report’s clinical data stand in stark opposition. Eighty-one percent of the victims were male, mostly post-pubescent, and the researchers even admitted, “The majority of priests who were given residential treatment following an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor also reported sexual behavior with adult partners,” most of whom were male.

Seminaries Infested

Nevertheless, Pope Francis has asked Cupich to lead a week-long spiritual retreat in January “as the U.S. bishops continue their work to address the current U.S. clergy sex abuse crisis,” USCCB said in a statement. Mundelein Seminary in suburban Chicago is slated as host — a curious venue considering that the school is a notorious homosexual hotbed. Father Wayne Wurst first outed Mundelein in 1996 on Chicago radio, describing a homosexual network among upper-classmen who regularly supplied faculty members with “fresh meat” from the ranks of younger students. “There were madams, pimps and prostitutes all in a major seminary system that, from the outside ... would look very holy,” Wurst said, adding that “a large number of students had been convinced by some liberal teachers that sexual promiscuity with the same sex was not a violation of celibacy.”

That quote is taken from Michael Rose’s 2002 book *Goodbye, Good Men*, which prominently features Mundelein in its chapter on “The Gay Subculture” infecting Catholic seminaries. Wurst was speaking of the 1970s, but things haven’t gotten better. Rose chronicles the story of Joseph Kellenyi, a Mundelein seminarian in the late 1990s. “One hall in the seminary dorm is nicknamed the ‘Catwalk,’ known as the residence of the more fashionable gays,” Kellenyi recalled.

Rose interviewed other former students and graduates of the school who identified “the gay subculture ... [as] the dominant culture at Mundelein.” The faculty “wined and dined,” sheltered, and promoted homosexual seminarians, while orthodox students were harassed, suppressed, or driven away.

Mundelein is no exception to the rule. Interviewing dozens of priests and seminarians, Rose found

this “gay subculture” is so prominent at certain seminaries that these institutions have earned nicknames such as Notre Flame (for Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans) and Theological Closet (for Theological College at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.). St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore has earned the nickname the “Pink Palace.”

One of the priests Rose interviewed, Father Andrew Walter, echoing the sentiments of many, described an intense, overt, and threatening atmosphere. “This is not just about homosexuality; this is about an agenda,” Walter asserted. “These people are promoting this conflict.”



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Such is the contention of Father Donald Cozzens in his 2000 book *The Changing Face of the Priesthood*, in which he identified “a heterosexual exodus from the priesthood” due in part to unrestrained homosexuality in seminaries. He warned that the problem would only grow since the resulting perverse culture would repulse heterosexual males from pursuing vocations.

Former U.S. Army officer Father Norman Weslin also wrote a book in 2000, about the homosexual infiltration of Sacred Heart Seminary in Wisconsin. “Those heterosexuals who objected were singled out for psychiatric evaluation,” he wrote.

The “Gay Lobby”

In 1982, Father Enrique Rueda published his earth-shattering exposé *The Homosexual Network: Private Lives and Public Policy*. Using information from homosexual organizations in the United States, Father Rueda uncovered a systemic, well-planned, and well-funded infiltration of sodomites into church leadership throughout the country — in many denominations, including the Catholic Church — which began in 1924. Writing for EWTN.com in 2002, Connie Marshner summed up some of Rueda’s meticulously documented and damning evidence:

At one point in the late 70s, a key staffer at the Office of Public Affairs and Information of the U.S. Catholic Conference/National Conference of Catholic Bishops was a leader of the Washington, D.C., homosexual movement as well as president of Dignity, the pressure group which seeks to force the Catholic Church to relate to homosexuals according to the tenets of the homosexual ideology.

The name of the fair city of Boston appears frequently in Fr. Rueda’s pages, giving it the dubious distinction of being the birthplace of NAMBLA, the North American Man/Boy Love Association (an interesting coincidence in light of subsequent developments). Also interesting to note is that one Fr. Paul Shanley attended the NAMBLA convention in Boston, supposedly on behalf of the then-Cardinal Archbishop, Medeiros.

The Other Side of the Altar: One Man’s Life in the Catholic Priesthood by former priest Paul Edward Dinter, released in 2002, describes a post-seminary culture similar to that found within college walls, masked in secrecy and subverted by a power elite that protects and enables systematic abuse. *Vanity Fair* printed a shocking smut piece in 2013 called “The Vatican’s Secret Life,” unmasking a “powerful ‘gay lobby’” and spreading gossip about a cardinal “whose long-term partner is a well-known minister in a Protestant denomination,” a Monsignor “nicknamed ‘Jessica’ who likes to visit a pontifical university and pass out his business card to 25-year-old novices,” and a priest who “loves to dish male colleagues with campy female nicknames,” among other lewd descriptions of “the hidden netherworld” polluting today’s Vatican.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI brings up the “gay lobby” in his memoirs. Pope Francis confirmed the existence of this so-called Lavender Mafia in June 2013 when he told a private audience about a “current of corruption” and said, “The ‘gay lobby’ is mentioned, and it is true, it is there.... We need to see what we can do.” In late 2016, he reissued a 2005 ban on admitting homosexuals to Catholic seminaries, and warned Italian bishops to carefully vet applicants, rejecting anyone suspected of homosexual tendencies.

So when Catholic hierarchs such as Cupich and Wuerl say that they were unaware of problems, their claims are not just suspect but ludicrous and scandalous. But how dare we blame homosexuality? Drowning as we are in the amoral sewage of modern culture, homosexuality is merely an “alternative



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lifestyle” above reproof, removed from the American Psychiatric Association’s list of mental disorders in 1973, elevated to legally sanctioned status in 2015 by the U.S. Supreme Court, and even parlayed “into a protected species, more like black rhinos or orangutans than moral beings,” as Mullarkey posits.

Perennial Catholic values clash with such progressivism. “The Church’s teaching is clear that the homosexual inclination is not in itself sinful, but it is intrinsically disordered in a way that renders any man stably afflicted by it unfit to be a priest. And the decision to act upon this disordered inclination is a sin so grave that it cries out to heaven for vengeance,” writes Bishop Robert Morlino of Madison, Wisconsin, in a letter to his flock following the Pennsylvania grand jury report. “It is time to admit that there is a homosexual subculture within the hierarchy of the Catholic Church that is wreaking great devastation in the vineyard of the Lord.”

The Deafening Papal Silence

Meanwhile, Catholics still wait for Francis to end his incriminating silence on Vigano’s accusations. So far the pontiff has denied nothing — except media’s subsequent inquiries. When asked by the press about the *Testimony*, he side-stepped, leaving listeners scratching their heads with this insipid reply:

Read the statement carefully yourselves, and make your own judgment. I am not going to say a word about this. I believe that the statement speaks for itself, and you all have sufficient journalistic ability to draw conclusions. It is an act of trust. When a little time goes by and you have drawn conclusions, perhaps I will speak about it. But I would like your professional maturity to do this work. It will do you all good. Really.

Some claim that was Francis’ way of saying, “I’m not going to dignify this with a response.” But is that appropriate considering the grave charges of sexual misconduct and deceit against officials in the highest echelons of the church — serious enough for a well-respected Vatican prelate to demand the pope’s resignation? What about the ubiquity of the crisis, involving scandals not just in the United States but in Canada, Chile, Honduras, Scotland, Ireland, Belgium, Bavaria, Australia, and elsewhere?

The pontiff already made a rather embarrassing public apology in June for robustly defending a bishop from Chile, Juan Barros, accused of covering up for a notorious abuser priest. The pope had sternly reproached Barros’ accusers for what he called their “calumny.” But when Barros resigned in disgrace, Francis had to apologize and admit a “culture of abuse and cover-up” among the Chilean hierarchy, who submitted written resignations at the same time as Barros. Francis has accepted two others.

Believing they deserve an equally frank response from their pontiff, groups such as Catholic Men United for Christ and the Catholic Women’s Forum have garnered tens of thousands of signatures on petitions imploring the pope to answer Vigano’s charges immediately and warning him of the scandal his silence is causing. The only indirect answer they received came in early October when Francis authorized a “thorough investigation” of Holy See Archives regarding McCarrick, acknowledging that “it may emerge that choices were taken that would not be consonant with a contemporary approach to such issues.” The Holy See added to frustrations when it put the brakes on a November USCCB meeting in Baltimore at which U.S. bishops planned to institute new standards of accountability and a special commission for receiving complaints. They complied with the Vatican’s request to table plans in anticipation of the February 2019 Congregation of Bishops meeting in Rome, but they also asked the pope to immediately release all McCarrick-related documents.

Meanwhile, Francis blames “clericalism, whether fostered by priests themselves or by lay persons” for



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the abuse crisis. Clericalism — an ambiguous term in Catholic circles — is left undefined in his August “Letter to the People of God.” Also glaringly omitted is acknowledgement of the homosexual issue, mention of the part bishops have played in the scandal, or steps Francis intends to take beyond asking Catholics to “create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening.”

Is it really his flock’s duty to end the crisis, or his own? “It is the Roman Pontiff, the Holy Father, who has the responsibility to discipline these situations,” Cardinal Raymond Burke told LifeSite News, “and it is he who needs to take action following the procedures that are given in the Church’s discipline. This is what will address the situation effectively.”

Perhaps Francis’ soft spot for liberal causes, long extolled by major media, ties his tongue and prevents him taking decisive action. “Since the start of his papacy, Francis has infuriated Catholic traditionalists as he tries to nurture a more welcoming church and shift it away from culture war issues, whether abortion or homosexuality,” says the *New York Times*. Writing on Ricochet.com, Hillsdale College history professor Paul A. Rahe noted:

As a Belgian cardinal named Gottfried Daneels — who had been removed [in 2010] as an archbishop because he had covered up the pederasty of another Belgian cardinal and had come out in support of contraception, divorce, gay marriage, euthanasia, and abortion — revealed in his memoirs, Bergoglio’s [Francis’] candidacy was promoted by the St. Gallen Group, a part of what Catholics call “the Lavender Mafia.” This disgraced figure stood on the balcony with Bergoglio after he was elected pope. He was chosen to say the prayer at the new pope’s inauguration.

Papal biographer Austen Ivereigh, an avid supporter of Pope Francis, writes flatteringly of the St. Gallen Group in *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* as a clique of Vatican clerics opposed to traditional church teaching on homosexuality and other issues such as those Rahe listed. Ivereigh describes then-Cardinal Bergoglio — now Pope Francis — as hand-picked by this inner circle of the Lavender Mafia, whose members commandeered the Vatican’s Synods on the Family in 2014 and 2015, which culminated in Francis’ infamous *Amoris Laetitia*. In a critical analysis of that document, theologians worldwide denounced it as containing numerous heretical propositions and “pos[ing] a grave danger to the faith and morals of Catholics.”

Is it reasonable to credit the conspiracy of silence over clerical abuse to the St. Gallen Group, a.k.a. the Lavender Mafia? Vigano wrote, “These homosexual networks, which are now widespread in many dioceses, seminaries, religious orders, etc., act under the concealment of secrecy and lies with the power of octopus tentacles, and strangle innocent victims and priestly vocations, and are strangling the entire Church.” If his accusations prove true, Vigano would be justified in calling for the pope’s resignation. In a letter harshly rebuking Vigano for criticizing the pope, Vatican prelate Cardinal Marc Ouellet confirmed that Francis’ predecessor placed “conditions and restrictions” on McCarrick owing to his scandalous past. Yet since Francis’ election in 2013, McCarrick has made official visits to China, Morocco, Iraq, and Iran; publicly celebrated masses with cardinals and bishops; and attended board meetings for the Papal Foundation and Catholic Relief Services.

Pope Francis said to his bishops on launching the current McCarrick investigation: “Both abuse and its cover-up can no longer be tolerated and a different treatment for Bishops who have committed or covered up abuse ... is no longer acceptable.” Will he hold himself to identical standards? Only time will tell.



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