

PRIEST AS PEDOPHILE

The Sexual Abuse of Catholic Children

by

Merit Bennett

and

Elaine Simard LaForet

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Santa Fe, New Mexico

PRIEST AS PEDOPHILE

A CONGREGATION OF VICTIMS

Systemic Pedophilia in the Catholic Church

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INNOCENCE ON THE CROSS

Sex and Violence in the Catholic Church

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PROMOTIONAL SUMMARY

What is finally coming into collective consciousness is that a major carrier of aberrant sexuality is the Catholic Church, an old, monolithic, patriarchal, religious (not "spiritual") institution.

Spirituality and sexuality will not be sundered. They are two faces of the same energy: creativity.

Where there is an attempt to deny or repress one partner in the marriage of sex and spirit, the other, in this case sexuality, will live itself in obscure and destructive ways. Sexuality, a sacred part of human life, cannot be excised from human nature by implanting beliefs that spirituality is by nature non-sexual.

As whole-holy human beings, the task today is to integrate sexuality and spirituality. The Catholic Institutional Church has failed to support this integration. Repression and denial of sexuality, the Church's modus operandi, are not pillars of wisdom but rotten timbers upon which any foundation will founder.

This tale (book) reveals priest pedophilia in detail so that the general public will see how the betrayal of sexuality in a religious institution can ruin individual lives, as it undermines the core religious principles of love, compassion, trust, respect and responsibility.

At the heart of the matter, the sexual abuse of children within the Catholic Church is a radical exploitation of power: the spiritual power of a priest is used to destroy innocence and trust forever.

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**A CONGREGATION OF VICTIMS
(Homage to the Innocents)**

"Turning and turning
in the widening gyre"
the circle splits
and the Christ Child is sodomized
in New Mexico stables.

Christmas is celebrated
in Wal-Mart stores
while lawyers and churchmen convene
in bingo parking lots
to expose the demise of Eden, to shatter the
"bliss" of ignorance, the illusion of
innocence.

Darkness devours the night:
Unpalatable
the Wafer
of Christ's body.

Blighted
the red and white Rose of Holy Wisdom
by a canker gnawing from within.

Betrayed
the Great Mystery
of Birth, Death,
Resurrection.

Innocence
converts to ignorance
while Eve's apple of the knowledge
of good and evil
rots in the hands
of "men of God".

Sin parades as virtue
in the latest sacred sites.

Victims congregate as prey
silent night
holy night
all is calm
all is fright

Sodom & Gomorrah in the U.S. of A.

PROLOGUE

INNOCENCE ON THE CROSS

Herod, Rome's puppet king in Jerusalem, got word that his rule would be endangered by a boy child newly born in his kingdom to be the King of the Jews. So threatened did Herod feel that he sent out his soldiers to slaughter every male child less than two years old.

Here we have a historical event recounting the fear-ridden sadism of a man whose power was threatened: to maintain the status quo, Herod tried to destroy potent new life.

In Herod's time, a new spiritual way of being was incarnated in the person and teachings of Jesus Christ. Radical new foundations for living were emphasized: TOLERANCE and LOVE, both self-love and love of others. These teachings stressed that all human beings were equal in the eyes of God, that the time was ripe for the eyes of God to be opened within the eyes of man. This new way of seeing and being was an obvious threat to the existing political, social and religious system based on domination by a male hierarchy.

The advent of Jesus two thousand years ago heralded a potential transformation of the love of power into the power of love. But, the Roman Catholic Church, as an institution, has not yet promulgated these teachings: the Church continues to harbor Herod, the fearful child-destroyer, within its brotherhood. Now, two thousand years later, it is time for the conversion of Herod so that the innocence of love and trust may be protected, not crucified, in every human child.

MERIT'S PREFACE

In 1992, I was quietly practicing law in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Since graduation from law school in 1975, I had bounced around the various areas of law, looking for my niche. After three years as a criminal defense lawyer for indigent children and adults in Colorado, I reached the burnout point and switched to business law and a more general practice. In 1988, I stopped representing institutional clients and began to take on the cases of people injured through the negligence of others. I became more and more interested in how people respond to trauma.

In my personal life, I came to realize that certain dysfunctional behaviors as a parent-adult were a direct product of my exposure to dysfunctional adult authority figures when I was growing up. With my struggle to learn why my relationships with others and the world unfolded in this predictably negative pattern, the focus of my law practice began to shift.

In 1992, I received a telephone call from an old friend from law school days, now a lawyer practicing in Wyoming. He told me that a young man in his late twenties had related that he had been sexually molested as a child by a Catholic priest in a small community in northern New Mexico. My friend wanted to know if I would pursue his client's claim against the priest and the local archdiocese. I said that I would be glad to help although I had never represented anyone who had been sexually abused. I had only a conceptual understanding of how a person could be damaged by childhood sexual molestation. I was about to receive

an education that would profoundly affect my life. In addition, I knew little about the Catholic Church.

Shortly after agreeing to represent my new client, I learned that his two brothers and several friends and cousins had also been molested by that same priest. Since that phone call in 1992, my partner Stephen Tinkler and I have represented approximately 70, mostly male, victims of childhood sexual abuse by Catholic clergy. I feel a strong allegiance toward all these client-victims, who were unprotected as children.

During my years of being part-lawyer and part-psychotherapist to my clients, I have consulted with psychologists and psychiatrists with years of experience helping childhood sexual abuse victims. I have learned that the sexual abuse of a child is particularly damaging in two ways: the trauma interrupts the child's developmental process, and the child is unable to attribute the wrongdoing to the sickness of the perpetrator. Instead, he or she assumes full responsibility for the traumatic invasion, then later unconsciously replicates the psychological confusion of the perpetrator in his or her own life. This confusion can manifest in many ways, such as an inability to trust others, sexual dysfunction, fear of intimacy, an inability to make moral distinctions, and a tendency to sacrifice oneself for others. These behaviors are usually accompanied by either a depressed resignation or an explosive rage that stems from a feeling of undeserved fate. Because a child is unable to attribute wrong to the perpetrator, it may

take years for a person to realize and react to the harm caused by the molestation.

Descriptions of the abuse by my clients often overwhelmed me. Sometimes I cried uncontrollably as I grasped the horror of a molestation and the lifetime destruction it wreaked. Outside my circle of co-workers and family, I had very few people to talk to. Most people I encountered could not comprehend how a life could be decimated by the sexual trespass of a "man of God". Few really wanted to know the details of the abuse. To this day, Catholic Church officials continue to minimize the effect on victims of the transgressions of these priests; they want the wounded ones to simply forgive and forget.

Male-dominated institutions such as the Catholic Church, operating under a cloak of secrecy, can easily create a climate for sexual abuse. At its core, the sexual abuse of children is a cruel exercise of power by one who is "right" or "better" over one who is "weaker" or "inferior". Not one of the priests who has sexually abused my clients acknowledges that he did anything wrong. In fact, it is remarkable to note that many priests respond to their accusers with self-righteousness and a sense of entitlement. The civil authorities in New Mexico seem to agree with this assertion of "divine right"; only one of the many priests who have sexually victimized my clients has been criminally prosecuted, and he was given probation.

In New Mexico, it took us numerous trips to the courthouse finally to be able to take the sworn testimony of former

Archbishop Robert Sanchez, who, during his nineteen-year reign, failed to protect Catholic children throughout the state who were being sexually molested by more than forty priests under his command. Because Sanchez was forced to resign as Archbishop in early 1993 following disclosures of his own sexual indiscretions with young women, his physical location was concealed by the Church in order to exempt him from public comment. When we wanted to question him under oath, the Church vigorously resisted, and it was only after we obtained a court order compelling his testimony that the Church agreed to produce the Archbishop for questioning at a "secret" location.

In January of 1994, we were directed to meet in a parking lot in front of a dilapidated bingo hall in south Albuquerque. Church security guards and the Archdiocese's lawyer ordered us into a church van so we could be transported to the "secret" location of the deposition.

We refused to ride in the van, and finally it was agreed that we would caravan to the mystery deposition site. We were then led to a convent where the former archbishop had been smuggled in from out-of-state.

After four days of questioning by myself and Bruce Pasternack, a lawyer who had been largely responsible for bringing the scandal to public attention, Sanchez again disappeared from public view.

It was not until September of 1996 that the press, despite a tenacious legal effort by the Church, was able to secure the

release to the public of the transcript of the deposition. Even though some appropriate measures are now in place to ensure that pedophiles do not attain priesthood, the Church still does not want the public to know how pedophiles could flourish for decades within a religious community that trumpets chastity and celibacy.

Almost all of the offending priests were severely abused themselves when they were children. Their sexual predilection for young boys is often a manifestation of what was taught to them by adults or siblings. The childhood experiences of being abused gave these men a model of behavior that distorted their sense of right and wrong and, at the same time, "normalized" sexual contacts across generational lines. They learned to avoid adverse social consequences to their behavior by conducting sexual activities in secret. Not surprisingly, these products of their dysfunctional environment have long found safe haven in the Catholic church.

It is doubtful that pedophiles can actually feel guilt as their church defines it. Instead, they usually display anxiety over being discovered and perhaps punished for their uncontrollable urges. Perhaps the saddest part of the phenomenon of clergy sexual abuse is that many pedophiles enter the priesthood in an effort to find a spiritual setting that will miraculously cure them or at least divert their attention from their sexual obsession with children. But, they find themselves in a male hierarchy that portrays its members as unable to do wrong and, in addition, shields its congregations from any

information about its priests' shortcomings. Some priests have had the courage to speak openly of the human failings of their brothers, but the majority have been concerned with preserving their collective image of purity and infallibility. The motto has been: "confess secretly, not publicly."

When a "man of God" sexually abuses a child, the devastation is pervasive. The child is given the clear message that God has judged him or her to be worthless. Ironically, every one of my clients feels an unbearable weight of guilt, "knowing" that they must have been lower than the lowest to have caused the priest to sin. This feeling of self-blame keeps children silent, locked in shame that extends to the depth of their inner being. Therefore, the wounding cannot be easily erased. It may require years of psychological therapy to lift, even partially.

A child is taught by molestation to feel inferior and inadequate; he or she is often unable to assert healthy personal protective boundaries. Children whose physical and emotional boundaries have been invaded by an adult have little respect for their own personal integrity. They tend to invade the physical and emotional boundaries of others. This self-devaluation manifests in drug and alcohol addiction; physical, emotional and sexual abuse of others; the commission of violent crimes and a general disregard for both authority figures and moral distinctions. The sexual abuse of one child can adversely affect everyone exposed to that child-adult throughout his or her lifetime.

I am now convinced that the sexual abuse of children is one of the most pressing and most unaddressed problems in our society. The Roman Catholic Church, one of many incubators for sexual pathology, epitomizes our culture's failure to integrate sexuality and spirituality. Until we talk openly about and actively take steps to eliminate sexual abuse of children, our culture will continue to suffer loss of soul.

In this book, we hope to transcend cultural prohibitions against talking about sexual abuse. A problem consciously faced can begin to transform. This book is dedicated to the arduous process of healing generations of wounded children.

ELAINE'S PREFACE

As a Catholic child fifty years ago, I was taught two sacred taboos: Do not question parents; do not question church. Both parents and church were to be venerated and respected as "perfect," without flaw or shadow. I was carefully taught that whatever these two powers did was "by nature" good or "for my own good". To question was a sin; compliance and blind acceptance were virtues.

As a teenager, I sinned secretly when I wondered whether the Pope was really "infallible." And, I was confused when I ventured to question "the party line" and my father sneered, "Who do you think you are?! Infallible, like the Pope?" Daring to offer an original thought was clearly anathema.

The tide of my unquestioning childhood obedience continued to shift. One Friday, standing in line for weekly confession, I realized I was manufacturing "sins" to meet the priest's "good Catholic" expectations and to present suitable humility. In this startling moment of awareness, I suddenly saw that something was seriously wrong with the picture that had been painted for me. I had been robbed of spiritual autonomy and innocence, racking my brain to represent myself as "bad" so I could be punished and forgiven.

A second question posed itself when the altar boy I danced with in dancing school announced he was going away to become a priest and therefore I could not be his girlfriend. Why can't a priest love God and me, I wondered? I didn't understand why

loving a woman was supposed to interfere with loving God. Why not both? Later, I asked myself whether God was a jealous God who demanded that his servants love only Him, only men?

These questions and many others hounded me through the years and culminated in my having to claim my own integrity by leaving the Catholic Church. My husband and I were refused a Catholic infant for adoption because I revealed that I did not go to confession every week, only every other week. The social worker was "very sorry" I had not been told that the rules for adoption required "every week". Then, it was assumed, I could have provided the necessary lie. I stood on the street corner outside the Foundling Hospital in New York City and vowed to sever every thread of my being from the Institution of the Church. That day, I excommunicated myself and began a personal quest for the long-lost Christ-spirit of Love.

My major mentor has been Carl Jung, whose teachings express the need for integration of the psychological and spiritual dimension within individuals. He himself said that his life's work centered around revisioning Christian teachings so that they could once again effect "a cure of souls."

The necessity for religious reformation was underlined for me when I learned of the worldwide, age-old epidemic of child sexual abuse within the Catholic Church; simultaneously, I learned from a lawyer friend that this sickness had long been rampant in my own New Mexico backyard. I was told that one

pedophile priest (or any adult male) can "infect" up to 350 children in his lifetime. What a disease!

Two thousand years ago, Jesus expressed reverence for children's souls: "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it. And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them." (Mark 10:14-16.) This profound regard has been perverted into the subjugation of children by "celibate" priests expressing their repressed and regressive sexual urges.

Pedophile priests are themselves the scapegoats of a Church that has refused to incorporate our psychological heritage into its religious precepts. Mired in medieval mind-sets that offer no understanding of sexual development, priests are left to wander in a swamp of ignorance, where there can be no inner maturation of consciousness and conscience. For many priests, there is nobody home internally to say "I'm doing wrong." Outer church authority has always set up maps of right and wrong rather than fostering individual ethical development. Individual priests' inner struggles have historically been either ignored or denigrated. Help has consisted of advice like "pray more," "reaffirm your vows," "behave." Mostly, the church's attitude toward psychological problems has been, "If we don't look at them, they will disappear."

Bringing this disease of sexual perversion out of the darkness into the light might activate healing for all involved. Native American spirituality and reverence for children reinforce my vow to do whatever I can to ensure that all children -- the future generations -- will be cherished, not maimed. A Native American teaching says it all:

The Little Girl and Little Boy inside all of us
are our first Teachers, our greatest Teachers.

The material in this book addresses both the "yes . . . but" and the "yes . . . and" statements I have encountered since the subject of child abuse entered my discussions with others. In denial, a person says, "yes, I hear a priest sexually abused a child, but that's an exception . . . he's left the priesthood and if he hasn't, I'm sure he's fine now." Denial is an experience of looking at something but refusing to see it, of hearing but refusing to listen, sweeping truth under the rug to pretend it no longer exists. In reality, what we do not want to acknowledge has only disappeared from conscious awareness. Whatever has been repressed or denied continues to fester in our shadow self.

The "yes . . . and" response continues to astound me. A person says, "Yes, I hear of priests sexually molesting children and let me tell you what a priest or a nun did to me when I was six and" Again and again, I have listened to gruesome revelations of innocent childhoods ravaged by "religious" men and women. Many such stories are waiting to be told. In the telling and in the being heard, something of horror can be shed. The victim has an opportunity to transform a blighted part of

her or his self through processing pent-up suffering. Life can resume, infused with the spirit of innocence and joy that was defaced in childhood.

INTRODUCTION

LUST COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP

"For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds."
(Shakespeare, Sonnet 94)

What possible motive could the Archbishop have for not persevering in exposing the sexual crimes of his clergy? We know he was concerned that such deviant behaviors not be made public. Did he really think that merely moving around guilty priests would keep their behaviors undiscovered? Where were his scruples? Why did he fail in his duties to protect the children from being preyed upon rather than blessed?

We know he was unduly slow in exercising his authority in sexual matters. In 1984, pedophilia surfaced in New Orleans, Louisiana, where a parent got a million dollar verdict. In 1985, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in Collegeville, Minnesota, supposedly grappled with the issue, trying to form a policy on how to deal with allegations of sexual abuse. Yet, it took Sanchez five more years before he responded in New Mexico to crisis revelations of child rape; even then he minimized the many molestations as only a "concern". The "Santa Fe New Mexican" on September 19, 1996, revealed from a 700-page deposition that former Archbishop Robert Sanchez thought that, in theological terms, abuse of children is less grave than abortion or striking a priest. In fact, he also stated that he was unaware of any extensive and continued damage that a child might suffer from sexual abuse. The capstone of his responses was "I didn't know abuse was a crime."

CHAPTER 1

In 1984, revelations of the molestation of numerous children in Louisiana by a Catholic priest made national headlines. Lawsuits were filed, and a jury in New Orleans awarded \$1.2 million to the parents of a young boy who had been raped by a priest. Soon, numerous other incidents of clergy pedophilia began to surface around the country. In 1985, the subject of clergy sexual abuse of children was on the agenda of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops held in Collegeville, Minnesota. Since that time, approximately two hundred lawsuits have been filed in more than thirty states alleging sexual abuse of children by clergy. Over six hundred members of the Catholic clergy have been investigated for sexual assaults on children.

Sexual misconduct by "men of the cloth" is not a recent historical development. Wandering minstrels in the Middle Ages sang openly about the debauchery of priests. Laws of celibacy were enacted only in the twelfth century - 800 years ago - to ensure that church lands would remain intact, unaffected by the claims of the heirs of married priests. A knowledgeable ex-Benedictine nun related recently that it has been tacitly understood in the Roman Church for centuries that celibacy vows mean only that priests have no intercourse with women. Women are considered by nature unholy, an "Eve-1" influence. She said that copulation of priests with other men, with children, even with animals has been outside the domain of what is prohibited by laws of celibacy.

Even though the Catholic Church publicly denounces the deviance of its priests, it has never fully accepted responsibility, and reform has been slow. For example, canon lawyers recommended that there be written policies addressing the screening and reporting of clergy sexual misconduct to the bishops at the National Conference in 1985, but the Archbishop in New Mexico delayed the implementation of written guidelines until 1990.

New Mexico, among a number of other states, has had its share of notoriety. Beginning in the 1950s, priests with sexual disorders, from all over the country, were sent to a Catholic "treatment" facility in Jemez Springs, New Mexico. This facility, known as Via Coeli, is run by the Catholic order known as the Servants of the Paraclete. Troubled priests sent to Jemez Springs soon were assigned to New Mexico parishes where, over a forty-year period, they sexually molested an untold number of the children of Catholic families. Then, in 1991 and 1992, eighteen clergy sexual abuse lawsuits were filed by Bruce Pasternack, a lawyer in Albuquerque. The lid to a Pandora's box of systemic sexual abuse was opened. Since then, the Archbishop, who for nineteen years covered up the molestation of Catholic children in his diocese, resigned in the wake of allegations of his own sexual indiscretions, which aired on the CBS television program "60 Minutes" in April 1993.

The New Mexico Catholic Church has vigorously defended itself against the claims made by victims of priest sexual

misconduct. Furthermore, church officials have been reluctant to compensate damaged victims, whom they characterize as being "greedy".

Unless what victimized children went through is accurately depicted, their molestation will continue to be misunderstood. Many church officials have said "We did nothing to help children who were molested by priests because we had no idea that the children had suffered any harm." The stories of the children leave no doubt that they are not mindless objects devoid of feelings or conscious awareness. Children are sensitive, vulnerable human beings who suffer emotional, mental and spiritual woundings.

What follows are the stories of some of the New Mexico children who were sexually abused by Catholic priests. The names of the actual victims, the perpetrating priests, and the communities in which the events occurred have been changed for obvious reasons. Some dialogue has been added to provide a context for the psychological dynamics of the abuse. The words spoken by the priests during the sexual abuse itself are verbatim from the memories of the victims. These stories typify the behavior of pedophile priests whose sexual abuse has been rampant in New Mexico for decades.

Some of the material is graphic and may be offensive, as the sexual acts described are offensive. Please be aware that the explicit details present adult pathology, not pornography.

We seek to ensure the safety of all of our children who are entrusted to the care of adults. Faith need not be blind.

This chapter is a composite of interviews with victims of one of the most notorious priests to roam New Mexico.

ADVENT OF A PEDOPHILE PRIEST

Northern New Mexico presents a quiet pastoral scene of canyons and mounds, valleys and heights, sparsely peopled, punctuated by simple villages like Chamisa and Jackalope and Mesa and Morena, dirt roads, simple trailer and adobe homes. This is Georgia O'Keeffe country, wide expanses, empty yet full. Pedernales Peak looms black over the land at dusk. Pure white clouds hover in a bright blue sky while hummingbirds dart in and out of pink thistle.

Chamisa itself, an Indian pueblo taken by the Spanish in 1747, was named a United States center for military operations against war-painted enemies in 1846. The St. Paul Apostle Parish in Chamisa was founded by Dominicans in 1872 and now includes eight churches and villages within its parish. Nearby stands the morada where penitentes flagellate themselves on Good Friday.

Although not newly built, the church and the Catholic center where social functions are held are the best maintained buildings in this poor, rural community.

On the surface serenity prevails. But life in this environment is hard, for the earth does not readily yield its bounty and jobs are scarce, usually requiring a commute to a larger town. The brilliant sun can be harsh on summer afternoons.

In this place, the Catholic Church and its priests have long been welcomed as the carriers of hope and faith in the good life, if not now, in the hereafter. Priests, who infuse these trusting people with a sense of being cared for, have always been given automatic entry into closed family enclaves. Whatever the people have, they share with him. No priest has to prove himself -- he is considered a man of God, beyond reproach, sent to absolve them of their sins. Any sins he might have are not their concern. Consequently, innocent children and their parents have often been unwitting targets for those priests whose compulsions thrive in an environment where worshippers acquiesce to the Church's demand for absolute obedience.

Such a pastoral setting is fertile ground for predators.

Matthew had turned ten just three days before Father Rigg arrived. The day was sunny and warm with the cactus in his yard blooming bright pink and yellow flowers in honor of his tenth birthday. Ten! Ten was monumental, as Matthew knew. Ten was double digits, bringing with it responsibilities and rewards. Matthew got a raise in his allowance and a new white Sunday shirt. His mother had made it for him since the sleeves on his old shirt only extended to the beginning of his wrists. He had told his father he wanted a new bike.

There was a big barbecue with potato salad and soda for everyone. All the relatives came, since a birthday was such an important thing. He received many gifts but no bike. The other

kids played hide and seek and tormented the dog, which writhed in ecstasy with their rough handling.

"Matthew, why aren't you playing with the other children, Mi'jo?", his mother asked. She reached over and patted his head.

"Because he is ten now and no longer a child," his father said and slapped his arm. "Right, son?" His uncles smiled and grunted agreement.

"Come," his grandfather said. "Come to the garage and help the men fix your father's broken car."

His father smiled at Matthew and stood up, "Ahh, my back is killing me." He looked to his wife for help. She smiled and put her hands on her hips.

"You think a little back pain is bad. Try giving birth to these eleven crazy children." She gently hit her youngest son on the back of his neck.

Matthew was so excited to help with the automobile that he did not notice all the men lagging a bit behind him. He certainly did not notice them as he opened the garage door to discover a bright beautiful black bike where his father's car usually stood. He rushed forward and lovingly rubbed his hand along the seat and on the handlebars. He jumped on it and pushed up the kickstand. He turned to see all the men grinning broadly at him.

"I think it fits, eh?" his father said.

"Oh, yes. It fits. It fits. Thank you, thank you, thank you!" He raced out of the garage and spent the rest of the day riding circles around the other children and dogs.

* * *

Three days later, he rode his new bike into town to buy some candy with his birthday money. There he encountered for the first time Father Rigg, who pulled up alongside Matthew's bike in his bright yellow Pontiac LeMans.

Father Rigg had just reached into his bag for a prescription bottle of pills. He took two "for depression" as recommended by the doctor who treated him after he was asked to leave his Michigan congregation due to nasty stories circulating about being "too close" to several altar boys. Police and parents in Michigan had decided not to prosecute him for molesting several young boys on the condition that he leave the Diocese, never to return. His new friend Father Rob had been unconcerned about why he was in treatment and had gotten the local archbishop to bless his "return to ministry" in New Mexico. No one in town knew any of this background, of course.

"Hello, son," Father Rigg said. Matthew smiled and took in the new car, the priest collar and the smiling face.

"Hello, Father. Are you here to replace Father Rob?"

"Why, aren't you a smart boy. Yes, I am. Father Rob had to go away for a little while so he could become a better priest, and I am here to take his place."

"Oh. So does that mean that you're a better priest than Father Rob?" Matthew remembered the whispers among the adults about Father Rob's "drinking problem". Everyone seemed to feel only sympathy for him, not anger and disappointment. He heard people say of Father Rob, "He's not a mean drunk; he is a man of God."

"Well, I don't know about that. I'll do my best, though. Do you think that you could show me to the church? Is it far from here?"

"No. I can ride my bike and you can follow." Matthew began peddling excitedly. He wanted to remember to tell his parents that he was using the bike to help the new priest. Father Rigg drove slowly behind Matthew, enticed by the bright-eyed boy.

"What a nice young man. He will certainly make a good helper for the church . . . and for me." He smiled, then frowned.

They arrived in front of the massive old adobe building. They both looked solemnly at the whitewashed facade. The giant wooden doors had been carved from a single tree in 1845 by Spanish missionaries. Jesus stood beckoning to parishioners on one side with the Virgin of Guadalupe staring placidly from the other. The cross on top of the bell tower was slightly crooked, tilted in its adobe hold.

"It's beautiful," Father Rigg remarked.

"Yes, and it's old," Matthew added. His grandparents and parents had been married in this church. He and his brothers and

sisters had been baptized in it. It was an old place as well as a familiar one, dating back to the beginning of time, as far as Matthew could tell.

"So, will you be helping me?" Father Rigg asked, smiling at Matthew.

"Yes, Father. My three older brothers were altar boys and I shall be one, too." Matthew grinned with pride, knowing that the responsibilities of an altar boy were something only a smart ten-year-old could handle, and he was both.

"How wonderful. Then I will see you bright and early on Sunday." Father Rigg's affable manner made Matthew feel at ease.

"Yes, Father. Goodbye, Father!" Matthew said as he sped away in a blast of dirt and tire.

* * *

"Good morning, Father," said the red-faced boy. Rigg smiled and bowed his head slightly.

"Well, good morning son. Who might you be?"

"Richard, Father. My name is Richard."

"Well, wonderful, Richard. And how old are you?"

"I'll be thirteen in August."

"You are certainly getting old, aren't you?"

"That's what my mom says. But I don't feel so old." Richard set out to prepare the host.

Matthew walked in and greeted Richard. He put the altar boy robe over his starched white shirt.

Oblivious in his innocence, Matthew was excited and nervous and honored to be an altar boy. It was practically a family tradition as his three brothers before him had helped the priest as altar boys.

In his sermon that day, Father Rigg talked about sin.

"Sin," he said in a deep resonant tone, "sin is what keeps the gates closed to us. When we wrong another, when we drink in excess, when we lie or cheat, we are lying to and cheating God." He opened his arms and pointed to the statue beside the altar. "We must make a conscious effort every day, every moment of our lives to act as our savior wants us to. We must keep those gates open or we will not enter Heaven." He looked at the faces that were appraising him.

Moving into his mid-thirties, Rigg was getting older, but a few extra pounds kept his skin smooth. Rarely in direct sunlight, his skin was pale, and only a few wrinkles made dents around his smooth lips and forehead. His ears protruded slightly from his small, short-haired and balding head. He looked over at Matthew, who sat smiling at him. "It is the children, of course, that are our hope and salvation. We must honor them and love them with all our hearts." Matthew believed Father was Christ come to love him, pure and simple.

After the sermon, Father Rigg stood outside the main door and greeted his new community. He smiled and laughed with as many people as possible.

"Father Rigg, I'm Lucille, Matthew's mother. What a lovely sermon." She reached out her hand to shake his. He reached over and hugged her.

"It was a service made lovely by those who attended and by those who assisted me so wonderfully." He placed his warm hand on Matthew's head. Matthew beamed at the flattery. "Could you recommend a place to eat nearby? I try to make a point of having a special dinner on Sunday night." He continued to shake hands with the men.

Lucille placed her hand on his arm. "Father, it would honor us if you would have Sunday dinner with us."

"That is very kind of you, but I don't want to impose."

"Nonsense. There are so many of us anyway. What's one more?" They all laughed, Matthew's mother feeling blessed that Father would consider favoring them with his presence.

"Well, then, it would be my honor to join you."

* * *

Sunday dinners soon turned out to be the high point of Father Rigg's week. The family was so loud and funny. Something was always going on between the family members. He did not feel as if he were simply going to a family home; every meal was like a family reunion. Three rectangular adobe dwellings aligned next to each other housed the extended family. There were two sets of grandparents, three married couples, Lucille's sister, a cousin from El Paso, and an endless supply of children.

Father Rigg was afforded the same respect as the older family members. He was consulted concerning relationships, children and most major family decisions. The elders also treated him with great respect, seeing in him wisdom that made him feel powerful.

Father Rigg even assisted in the bedding down of the children. He read them stories, always with one or two of the younger ones resting in his lap. He told them Bible stories and made up a few of his own. He helped tuck them in, kissed their soft cheeks and rubbed their ~~supple~~ backs. He kissed Matthew on the lips several times after his mother had left the room, and Matthew did not protest. He merely smiled and rolled over, saying "Good night, Father."

After dinner the men would adjourn to the garage to look under a car hood and drink beer. The priest was never invited to this ritual; he would spend the remainder of his evening with the women.

One evening Rigg had just finished helping put the kids to bed and the men were heading out to the garage when he spoke up.

"That car must really be a mess that you work on it every Sunday and it isn't fixed yet."

"Not quite," Lucille's husband, Ray, said.

"They like the talking rather than the fixing," Lucille said, and everybody laughed.

"Well, what's wrong with it?" Father Rigg asked.

"It's mainly the carburetor, the timing chain, the spark plugs, the oil gasket, the CV joints, not to mention one or two other things. It's old and requires a lot of attention. I can't afford a new one yet."

"You know," Rigg replied, "I have an interest in cars." Ray looked perplexed. Rigg continued, "My father owned his own garage, and had I not been the son singled out for the priesthood, I would own it right now. Some things are chosen for us, handed down . . . I had no choice"

* * *

On Sunday nights, Matthew would wait for Father Rigg to come into his bedroom and read to him. The books Father read were usually the happily-ever-after kind, yet Matthew couldn't help thinking that the hero's dangerous brushes with death were the best parts.

"Why do they always go off together in the end?" Matthew asked one day when Rigg concluded another swashbuckling adventure.

"What do you mean, Matthew?" Rigg asked. He sat perched on the end of the small bed with the book in his lap and his hand on Matthew's knee.

"I mean, it doesn't seem like a great ending to me. He just goes off with some dumb girl. He should stay and save more villages."

"Well, I suppose that would be a way to end it, but the book is not about fighting wars. It's about love." Rigg smiled and Matthew frowned.

Rigg casually squeezed Matthew's knee. "Are your mother and father allowed to love each other and kiss each other?"

Matthew thought about that for a moment. "I guess so."

"Matthew, really I am quite surprised by your hesitation. As one of my altar boys, you should know better than anyone that love is one of the most important things we have in this world."

"Loving Jesus and loving a girl are two different things. You don't have to kiss Jesus."

"Every time you eat the host you are taking him into your body. Isn't that even more serious than a little hugging and kissing?"

"I never thought about it like that."

"Physical love on this earth is one of God's gifts to us. We both love God, right?"

"Yes, Father."

"And I love you and you love me, right?"

"Yes, Father."

"When two people love each other and they both love God, that is beautiful. Nothing bad can happen between them. Much better than slaying a dragon, they can give many things to each other and to God as well. Don't you think it would be nice to share your love with people that you care about?"

"I'm not kissing Aunt Jean. She's got a big mole right underneath her nose, and I've seen it up close one time when she was sleeping on the couch, and I won't ever go near it again." Matthew leaned in to whisper, "It's got big black hairs growing out of it."

"I certainly wouldn't want you to go kissing everybody you know. But I hope you don't think that there is anything wrong with giving me a hug."

"On, no, Father. That's okay."

"Does your dad ever kiss you?"

"Sort of, sometimes."

"Do you mind it when I kiss you good night on your forehead?" Matthew bit his bottom lip.

"No, Father."

"Why not?"

"Well, you kiss us all."

Rigg laughed. "But do you still think that it's bad?"

"Well, I don't like it so much, but if it's what Jesus says."

"Yes, Jesus says it's okay."

Matthew lay back onto his pillow and Rigg pulled the covers up to his neck. "Now you go to sleep and have wonderful dreams of people loving each other. Remember, I love you, and all will be well." He leaned toward Matthew and placed a firm wet kiss on Matthew's closed mouth. Then he left.

* * *

A town sixty miles north of Santa Cruz had one very small church in its center. There was a main street with two gas stations, a Woolworth's, a hamburger joint, two clothing stores, a post office and a grocery store. The population of the town was 798 1/2 (Mrs. Hillson was pregnant). Most of the people who lived there were involved in some way with the cattle industry. Father Mitch, the priest of the local parish since 1946, became ill, and Father Rigg was called in to perform a winter wedding ceremony. He took Matthew with him to help.

After Father Rigg and Matthew arrived that afternoon, it began snowing about an inch every half-hour. The whole town was snowed in, which was fine since half the town was partying at the wedding reception, and the other half was home watching "It's A Wonderful Life" on television. Matthew and Father Rigg chose to spend the night in the church rectory adjacent to the church. Father phoned Matthew's parents to tell them that road conditions had worsened and they would return to Chamisa in the morning.

Showing Matthew to a small bedroom at one end of the rectory, Father Rigg told him he should take a shower in the bathroom at the end of the hall before going to bed. Matthew scrubbed under the lukewarm water and washed his hair with the corroded bar of soap that lay next to the sink. He dried off and put back on the t-shirt and underpants that he had worn that day.

In the bedroom, Matthew inhaled a musty odor tinged with candle wax and wet dog. The room had just one small window, a

bed and a hard-backed wooden chair. The walls were bare except for a wood-framed print of the Madonna and a crucifix above the bed. Sitting on the chair by the window, he watched the snow cover the trees, which stood tall and still in the dim gloom. His arms inside his t-shirt, Matthew shivered slightly, sorely missing the bedtime bustle of his family in this desolate room.

Father Rigg could be heard pacing the floor in his larger room adjacent to the kitchen. He was about to re-enact what had been done to him as a boy, time and time again, by his own father and older brother. Like other victims, the sexual "violation" he had both loathed and craved was deeply imprinted in him. It was a compulsion no anti-depressants could touch, a "high" that momentarily relieved anxiety, making him feel powerful and in control. The psychiatrist had been oblivious to how much he "enjoyed" boys, and he had not risked revealing himself only to have it reported back to his superiors. Besides, like all priests, he had been taught that wearing priest's garb converted his sexual demons into loving angels. Jesus even said, "Bring the little children unto me."

Matthew was startled to hear his door open. A shaft of light from the hallway silhouetted the figure of Father Rigg standing in the doorway.

"How are you, Matthew? Are you cold?" Rigg stepped inside and closed the door. Sound inside the silence felt out of place.

"Yes, a bit. I'm missing my family." Matthew turned back to the window.

"I understand. It's cold in here, and you've never been away from them, have you?" Rigg moved behind the chair and placed his hand on Matthew's shoulder.

"No, Father."

"Well, what can we do to make you feel better? What do you do at home to keep warm?"

"We all climb into bed together."

"We could certainly climb into bed together to keep warm. How would that be?"

"Um, I guess, okay. I'm awfully cold."

"I'll warm you up." Rigg climbed into the bed and motioned for Matthew to join him. Matthew removed his shoes and climbed in. Rigg put his arm around Matthew and grasped his small cold hands between his warm palms. "There now, does that feel any better?"

"I want to be your friend, Matthew." Rigg pulled Matthew closer against his chest. He pressed his pelvis against Matthew's back.

Matthew felt warmer, but his stomach was beginning to feel funny, not right.

Rigg took his hand away from Matthew's and began running it down Matthew's chest and legs. "My, you are wearing your underpants. Let's get you out of those."

"I don't want to be cold, Father."

"I promise you won't be. Bodies make lots and lots of heat, especially when they love each other." Rigg sat up and slowly

took off Matthew's underwear while massaging his penis. He kissed each nipple and smiled lovingly, saying "You are so, so beautiful." Matthew was like a rag doll being undressed. He offered neither help nor resistance when Father Rigg began sucking on his penis, telling Matthew over and over again, "It's okay. Don't worry. It's a godly thing to do." When Rigg's lips were pressed against his chest, Matthew sucked in a quick breath. He knew it was strange. He believed what was happening was wrong, but part of him believed that what Father Rigg had said was right. He was warm, it did feel good. When Matthew became erect, Father removed his own underwear, firmly guided Matthew's head to his penis and forced him to suck it. He tried to please Father, who started to whimper with pleasure, or pain, Matthew wasn't sure.

Suddenly, Father pulled himself out of Matthew's mouth and turned Matthew's body face down on the bed. Why was Father rubbing spit between his legs? Why was he hurting him, pressing into him from behind, just like he'd seen his dog Jake do to the neighbor's bitch? A spasm of pain shot through his small body; he bit the sheet to silence a scream. With every thrust, Matthew felt as if he were being impaled upon a spike driven up into his throat. How could this agony be "godly"?

Matthew squeezed his eyes tightly closed and tried to think about his bike. He saw himself riding fast toward the sun, faster and faster, passing cars with his lightning speed. He imagined his ears squeezing shut because Father was saying

things to him that he did not want to hear, saying things that the men said to the women on the television shows his mother watched in the afternoons. He felt his lips moving rapidly before he realized he was praying. He screamed silently to God to stop the pain, to make Rigg disappear in a flash of smoke, to take him home to his mother and father. He prayed so hard he thought his head would burst. But it did not burst, and God did not hear him. Maybe he did not pray hard enough, or maybe God really did not love him. That was probably it. He had done something wrong and did not deserve God's love. He was being punished like Jesus was on the cross. Father, the man of God, had crucified him, nailed him powerless to the musty bed. He had nowhere to go.

Finally, Father Rigg pulled himself out of Matthew and gently turned him onto his back. He kissed the child's forehead and softly kissed the small, quivering mouth. "There now, that wasn't so bad, was it?" Matthew turned his face away from Rigg. "It hurt a bit, didn't it? I'm sorry. It won't feel like that again. It will only get better and better until you will want us to love each other all the time. Now, you can do it to me. It's okay. God knows what we're doing is okay."

Under Father Rigg's guidance, Matthew dutifully tried to penetrate him from behind, but was unable to do it. Father Rigg then masturbated himself, and ejaculated on his own flaccid belly, instructing Matthew to spread the semen around with his small, thin fingers. As if in a trance, Matthew mechanically

rubbed the sour-smelling stuff across the priest's pale flesh. He choked back nausea, fearful of offending Father Rigg.

A half-hour later, Father Rigg got up from the bed. He turned to Matthew and smiled sternly. "You're all warm now so I'll go sleep in my bed. Don't tell anyone about this. It's our special sharing that the other children would be jealous of and your parents would, too. Remember, I love you." He left the room and closed the door. Matthew lay on the bed, the room spinning in circles overhead. He made his way to the bathroom to throw up, but he could only dry heave. His head felt split open, throbbing violently.

He went back to his room and closed the door. He threw open the little window and stuck his head out. He looked up at the white night. The snow had stopped. He closed his eyes and heard distant laughter; the wedding reception was still in full swing. He scooped up a handful of snow from the window sill and licked it. Then he slowly began to rub his face with it. He grabbed the rest of the snow and rubbed it fiercely all over his naked body, then jumped into the bed and pulled the covers over his head. He curled up into a ball, tensed his entire body, and lay rigid like a stone, silent and cold. His boyhood innocence gutted, he abandoned himself to the void where only secrets thrive. His mind slowly returned to the bed and, still frozen with fear, he listened for any sound. Would Father come back? He rubbed his eyes and peeked out from the covers. He strained to stay awake, but fell into the sleeplessness of nightmares.

Matthew slowly woke to the smell of frying bacon and toast and Father Rigg's knock on the door and cheery voice chiming, "Up and at 'em. Time to eat."

He began to feel his body again and immediately wished for more sleep. He hurt. His arms and legs ached. His mouth felt sunburned. A throbbing sensation ran from his stomach down through his intestines and out his rear end. He let a quiet moan slip out from between his chafed lips and closed his eyes to avoid the blinding sunlight that managed to find him under the covers. He would have stayed there forever. He would have never gotten up. He would have spent the remaining years of his life in bed so he would not have to face his family again, would never have to see his school friends or anyone in Chamisa, would lie there inaccessible to Father Rigg with his spine against the cold stucco wall but he couldn't. He had to pee.

Like his grandfather rising slowly from slumber, aching from toe to top, Matthew pulled his battered body to a sitting position, his small feet dangling toward the floor. He rose and crept silently to the door. He put his ear against the wood and heard whistling. Delicately, he turned the door knob and slowly slid the door open. Each step he took toward the bathroom was agonizing, as every muscle protested his movement. He finally reached the tiny room and quietly closed the door. Before facing the sink, he let the lock slide into place. He was startled when he turned and saw his sunken eyes, his pale face, the redness around his mouth. He stood for several minutes examining the

apparition that stared back at him from the mirror. But then his bladder took charge and he tore himself away from the reflection to relieve himself.

He wished he could make the urine hit the water silently, but he heard each drop hit like on a tin drum. He did not flush. Almost back into his room, he was stopped in his tracks by the prattling voice which reached out and grabbed him from the kitchen.

"You're up. Good morning! Matthew, come on in, breakfast will be ready soon. We'll eat and then get going. The snow is melting fast."

Matthew ate nothing. He played absently with his toast while Father Rigg chattered away about nothing much at all. Thankfully, Father Rigg didn't expect Matthew to respond to his banter. Nor did Matthew speak on the long ride home. Father Rigg filled the void of Matthew's silence with comments about the wedding, who might be married next in Chamisa and why weddings were such fun.

Matthew watched houses and farms zip by. He looked at three children building a snowman. That's what he would have done with his family this morning if he had spent the night at home, but he had not. The smell of Juicy Fruit gum filled the car. Father Rigg had eagerly loaded at least two packs into his busy mouth since they had begun the drive back. Matthew refused the pieces offered him. He did not want to throw up on the floor of Father's nice yellow car.

Music blared in his ears and out Rigg's open window. Father Rigg had been changing stations every minute or so, looking for something better than mariachi bands and static. He finally left the radio on a pop station and accompanied the music with his fingers on his steering wheel. Matthew heard for the first time a song that would strike a deep chord in his memory many years later. Over the whine of the engine and the air through the window, Rigg's constant muttering and the smacking of Juicy Fruit, Matthew heard, ". . a rock feels no pain, and an island never cries . . ."

When they arrived home, Rigg climbed out of his car and made his way inside for chitchat with Matthew's mother and grandmother. Matthew stayed outside. He kicked at what little snow remained in the driveway and went off in search of his bike. He could not find it; a sibling must have taken it for a ride. After dawdling in the garage and playing with the dogs, he reluctantly made his way back to the front of the house. The giant yellow car was gone. He rushed inside and was met by a hot blast of kitchen warmth that smelled like garlic and bread. His mother stood over the sink washing vegetables, and his grandmother sat transfixed by the television; it was time for her soap operas. His father was away working at a nearby sawmill. He didn't dare tell his mother what had happened, and she never asked any questions.

In a house filled with thirteen people it is easy to miss things, to fail to notice situations. Nobody except his little

sister, Janelle, noticed that Matthew did not speak for four days. But she wasn't speaking yet either, so his silence went unquestioned. On the fifth day, Matthew locked himself in the bathroom and took all his clothes off. He stood and stared at himself in the full-length mirror with a long crack across the top. He pulled his ears, he tested the length of his tongue. He checked to see how far his neck turned from side to side. He examined his arm pits and his belly button, he explored his nose and compared his arms. Then he masturbated. He imagined he was a dog, a horse, he saw himself kissing Christina Martinez, his twelve-year-old cousin with budding breasts.

He locked himself in the bathroom every day after that and masturbated. He couldn't stop even though sometimes he wanted to. When the school doctor, while conducting the back-to-school physical, commented on how red his penis was, he was embarrassed and humiliated. Still, he could not control his desire to masturbate.

No mention was ever made about what happened the night of the snowstorm. Sundays in the sacristy, while preparing for Mass, Father Rigg regularly brushed by Matthew. Though Matthew attempted to avoid the fondling, the priest always managed to isolate him long enough to grab him between the legs. Matthew felt it was an altar boy's duty to do whatever the priest wanted. This Sunday ritual continued throughout Father Rigg's three-year stay in Matthew's community. Even though Father Rigg

was known by the Bishop to be a pedophile, the Bishop never monitored Rigg's interaction with parish children.

After several months of courting Matthew's family, Father Rigg asked Ray and Lucille to let Matthew stay in the rectory after evening Mass to help him count the collection money, pick up the prayer books and straighten up the church. One such evening after Matthew had finished his duties, a torrential rain had made the dirt roads to Matthew's house impassable, so Father Rigg drove Matthew to his rented trailer adjacent to the community school.

There he informed Matthew, "Because the rain doesn't seem to be letting up soon, I've talked to your parents about your spending the night. It's okay with them. You can walk to school in the morning."

Inside the trailer, Father Rigg showed Matthew to a small bedroom where he was to sleep. There was barely room for the small bed covered with a single Army surplus blanket and a caseless pillow. Afraid, Matthew went to bed, trembling with the knowledge that what had happened to him on that snowy evening in the Church rectory was about to happen again. Matthew finally fell asleep, only to be startled awake. Father Rigg was kneeling beside the bed, sucking on Matthew's penis. Matthew didn't move, feigning sleep. Again, the priest anally penetrated and ravaged Matthew's young body. Again, Matthew endured the priest as if from a distance, watching his own body experience an odd, alternating mixture of pleasure and pain.

Upon finishing, Father Rigg got up from the bed and snarled, "Don't tell nobody." Pointing his finger close to Matthew's face, he repeated with uncharacteristic intensity, "Don't you tell nobody about this."

Matthew lay stunned on his bed listening to the rain and thunder throughout the rest of the night. The next morning, he dressed, quickly ate some corn flakes offered by Rigg and walked the short distance from the trailer to school. At the rear entrance of the school next to the gym, some older boys were sitting around smoking cigarettes. Matthew had chosen this back entrance because he didn't want anybody to know where he had been. He was offered a cigarette. For the first time in his life, he took the cigarette and deeply inhaled. He coughed, but it made him feel better.

* * *

Besides sharing meals with Matthew's family, Father Rigg was occasionally also welcomed to stay overnight. Matthew's parents, like myriad other Catholic parents throughout the world, knew nothing about their priest's sexual disorder. Because of space considerations, Father Rigg was given a bed in the room shared by Matthew and his two brothers. It was a great honor for the family to have a priest sleep in their house, and it provided them with prestige among the townsfolk. After the boys fell asleep, Father Rigg would wake up Matthew and then his brothers one by one and masturbate them and have them masturbate him,

something they only realized and reported to each other when they were grown men.

After the priest's sexual assaults began, Matthew started to acquire a taste for beer. He would beg for sips from uncles and every now and then would get his hands on a whole can from an older cousin. By the time he was twelve, he had settled on rum as his favorite drink, especially with Coke. At about the same time, he began to experiment with marijuana. By the time Father Rigg suddenly left Chamisa not long after Matthew's thirteenth birthday, Matthew was regularly getting stoned after school.

Matthew's drinking and marijuana use continued throughout high school, and he became more and more distant from his parents and his brothers and sisters. The family chalked up Matthew and his two brothers, Danny and Jerome, as being the "wild ones", the "black sheep". Barely graduating from high school, Matthew immediately enlisted in the Army because he "wanted to get out of town."

Matthew performed well in the Army, rising to the rank of master sergeant. He still used drugs but managed to keep his secret from the Army. During one period of time, Matthew was the NCO in charge of administering spot drug tests and learned how to manipulate the test results to avoid being caught. On weekends he left the post and would go into town to buy more drugs. He would also do "crazy" things like bump into people to provoke a fight.

In the Army, Matthew met his first wife, a young woman who had been diagnosed as paranoid/schizophrenic. She had been sexually molested as a child by a family member. Matthew, with his own history of abuse, was naturally attracted to her. They married and had two children. His wife attempted suicide a number of times, and Matthew was discharged from the Army on family hardship grounds.

Out of the Army, Matthew began to move from place to place. He could not hold any job for very long, usually being fired because he would refuse to take orders. He continued to abuse drugs. He divorced his wife and eventually moved to Wichita Falls, Texas, where his younger brother, Danny, was living.

One day while driving to a construction job with Danny, Matthew noticed that Danny seemed depressed. When he asked what was wrong, his brother reported that it was emotionally difficult for him to tuck his stepson into bed at night. When Matthew asked why, Danny said, "I was abused when I was a child by a priest." Matthew asked, "Was it Father Rigg?" Danny blanched, "How did you know?" Matthew responded, "I was abused by Father Rigg, too."

Matthew had never totally forgotten the incidents with Father Rigg. He knew that the encounters were weird, but he figured that what happened with Father Rigg happened to everybody in one form or another when they were growing up. Yet, when Matthew learned that Rigg did the same thing to Danny, his experience with Rigg began to assume a different meaning. He

wasn't the only one Rigg had sex with. Maybe what Rigg did to him was part of a larger wrong. Maybe what happened with Rigg harmed his own life in some way, like what Danny was going through with his stepson. Matthew began to feel "dirty".

Several months afterward, Matthew heard that Danny was pursuing legal action against Father Rigg and the Catholic Church. Matthew soon learned that his two years older brother Jerome was also a victim of Father Rigg's sexual appetite for young boys. At virtually the same time that Danny began to question the effect of his childhood abuse, Jerome, who had become an inveterate drinker, biker and wife-beater, had a disturbing flashback while living in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Jerome and his wife, Lena, were in a bar one evening, and a man grabbed Jerome's ass in a scuffle. Jerome and Lena left the bar for something to eat at an all-night restaurant. Perplexed at what had happened, Jerome said, "It was weird in the bar, that guy grabbed me in the ass."

Lena responded, "Yes, that's just like the priest used to do."

Shocked, Jerome growled, "What makes you say that?"

She said, "You've told me that before when you were drunk."

Jerome leaped up out of the booth in a rage, raced out of the restaurant, jumped into his truck and sped down the highway, almost colliding with a state trooper's patrol car. Arresting him for drunk driving, the trooper exclaimed, "Where the hell were you going? Were you trying to kill someone?"

Jerome mumbled almost incoherently, "I was molested by a priest."

As a result of this arrest, Jerome was ordered to get alcohol counseling, where he began the process of recalling the agonizing details of his childhood abuse.

After Jerome informed the entire family of what Father Rigg had done to him those many years ago in Chamisa, his youngest sister, Martha, lapsed into a severe depression, shunning her husband and crying uncontrollably without provocation. She kept seeing herself at the age of three, running into the living room of the family house after playing outside. She saw flashes of Father Rigg pulling six-year-old Danny down into his lap onto his erect penis. Remembering the look of anguish on Danny's face, she now wanted to kill herself because she had not done anything to protect him. Although she was only three at the time, she now blamed herself for what happened.

Hearing the stories of his brothers and sister, Matthew began to realize that maybe it was not his fault that Father Rigg had sex with him. If Father Rigg had done it to others, maybe something was wrong with the priest, not with them. Matthew discovered he did not have to be alone anymore.

Matthew joined his brothers in filing lawsuits against Father Rigg and the Church. He began to see a therapist in an effort to stop his lifelong downhill slide. However, Matthew couldn't handle the emotional stress of dealing openly with the abuse, and he began to run again, becoming estranged from his

brothers and marrying another woman who, like his first wife, had been sexually abused as a child. He suffered from anorexia, often not eating for long periods of time. He was haunted by the recurring memory of Father Rigg grabbing his hair, holding his head and ejaculating into his mouth while he cried and choked but couldn't vomit.

Even after he finally stopped using drugs and alcohol, Matthew was unable to sleep more than one or two hours a night and he became more and more depressed and confused. A psychiatrist recently prescribed medication to help Matthew sleep, but Matthew is still struggling to restore his life.

**EXTRACTS FROM VERBATIM INTERVIEW OF
MATTHEW'S NEIGHBOR, SEXUALLY MOLESTED
BY THE SAME PRIEST, FATHER RIGG, AT AGE 10**

Bare Bones Description By Adult
Male Subject of Non-Consensual
Sex Acts with a Priest as a Child

The first time was in fifth grade at a first communion party at my parents' house, a hug from behind took place. Holding both my hands, he led my right hand to his penis (pants on) while he kidded with kids playing . . . and adults were inside getting fed while Reverend Rigg was also present.

April, the following Sunday, the Sacristy at Church. As I was putting stuff away (altar boy), same act. Standing behind me, he put both my hands on his penis, undid his zipper and put my right hand to his penis. As he got an erection, approximately five minutes later he came around in front of me and undid my pants and performed oral sex (blow job) which lasted approximately ten minutes. I did not become erect after he tried to arouse me. He also put my testicles in his mouth. I remember his face on my penis and sensitive areas while he slobbered or licked my testicles. His thick lips and dimple on his chin. No one was present by this time. He had told my father he would drive me home as soon as I was done, to go ahead because he was sure my dad had stuff to do. He asked me if it felt good about two times. He quit, buckled my pants and dropped me off. He visited about twenty minutes and went on to have Mass in a nearby town.

August, Sunday: Same move. I experienced an erection this time which I thought was strange. Only difference was he said I had a nice "pecker."

August, later Sunday: He asked my dad if I could go to his Mass in the nearby town because he needed for me to help serve. On the way, he reached over to touch my penis, using a forcing or strong move. He undid my zipper and touched my penis; lasted approximately 10 minutes. Since driving needed some attention, after Mass he said he was stopping at a mobile home (rented by the parish for bad weather accommodations for clergy). We entered the mobile home. He played the music turntable. The album was by [REDACTED]. He put my hands on his penis to rub him also. He undid my zipper, unbuckled and got his hands on my penis, proceeded to perform oral sex on me for about twenty minutes, then he held my hand and led me to the bathroom. He had my hands touching his testicles. I somehow got my pants up. He started using this "jerking motion" on his penis. I didn't know he was masturbating. Then as he proceeded he said that sperm would soon come out which got ladies pregnant and it looked like "hand lotion". That took approximately ten minutes and he "came" and got cleaned up. He then got his trousers up and we had a soda and left for home in his [REDACTED].

About a month later: He asked if I could go to the nearby town again to help serve Mass. He stretched my hand over to touch his penis as he undid his trousers while driving. I'd get tired of the stretch and as I pulled away he would put my hands

back. The town was just fourteen miles away, but it seemed like a lot happened on that trip. No one else was present and the conversation was beginning to be a bit sexual. He was starting to tell me what felt good as far as touching. He wanted his testicles "tickled" and the bottom of the penis was also a favorite to rub to the tip and back down towards the testicles. Nothing else happened as we approached the church. We visited with an old couple after Mass, ate lunch and he drove me home.

Another time, he gave me a card after Mass and also mailed one to the family. He took me home before going to the neighboring town. He walked in, made himself at home, lifted up the lid from frying potatoes that my sister had started for lunch, made comments about her good cooking, and walked around the house asking about pictures and who slept where and what belonged to whom. As we walked down the hallway, he approached me in a corner, hugged me from behind and took control of my hands. Again, I touched him as he touched my penis as well. The noise from my brothers coming down the hallway forced a stop and he kept talking. As he started to leave he made his last touch without anyone noticing and left.

Another time: Came to visit on a weekday, had just been to visit his parents in [REDACTED] (I think) and commented on their well-being. He had also purchased a gray car, same shape as his previous car. He showed sisters, brother and myself (my dad was at work). He had an alarm system that functioned with just about any disturbance to his auto. The setting was to the front

of the driver's side that was set by using a key. He made the siren go off for a display. As my sister and brothers walked off to their chores, he asked me what I was doing for my chores. I said I feed chickens and water plants and also help clean and cook. He suggested we go to the chicken coop to feed the chickens. At the chicken coop while no one was present, he undid my trousers and performed oral sex and tried to ejaculate me. Since I wasn't ejaculating, he said I could do that on my own and the sperm would come eventually. He did not undo his trousers but only put my hands on his "pecker". He said my "pecker" was getting bigger.

While weather was cooling, on a Sunday after Mass, he invited me to the next town along with his two other passengers, two other same-age boys. After the evening Mass, we went to the mobile home. Rigg fixed dinner for us. As dishes were cleaned, I wondered who was going to sleep where. We watched T.V. and listened to music as long as we could. Now at bedtime he told the other two to sleep in the spare bedrooms. One told me in Spanish that he (the priest) was going to suck me. I kind of laughed as if that had not happened. Rigg then picked me off the couch and carried me into his bedroom. As soon as lights went off, he took his underpants off, started touching my penis and put my hands on his penis. We both became erect and now all clothes were off. It was the first time I ever slept in the same bed as he did. He performed oral sex, trying to ejaculate me by sucking me in a fast up/down or back and forth motion. He told

me to tell him when I thought I was going to come and when it felt more sensitive. While this is happening, I am switching hands from touching or rubbing his penis because of fatigue. Then he licked my rectum and his finger and put his finger in my rectum and said that there was a place where the sperm was made just within reach of his finger. He had turned on the lamp by now. He put on his glasses which felt cold when his glasses touched my skin. Since he didn't make me come, he had me ejaculate him, telling me that if I rubbed and tickled long enough, the sperm would shoot farther on his stomach, maybe even his chest, when ejaculated. Upon ejaculation I quit and laid back down as he got kleenex from the nightstand and wiped his hairy stomach and penis.

Another time, instead of sleeping in the next town on Sunday night, he stopped after dinner and planned on sleeping over at our house. My father was a bit nervous because linen wasn't clean and fresh for company, but Rigg said it was just fine. He was put in our guest room and I happened to be sleeping there. At bedtime, everyone went to bed including my father (next room over) but my father has a hard time hearing low noises. Soon after lights are off, Rigg starts with rubbing again, all his clothes come off and he takes mine off. Blow job on me first. This time he performs the 69 position with his testicles hanging right over my face. Immediately as I put one of his testicles in my mouth, I quit because I thought the taste was bitter and unpleasant. He told me I could continue, but I just tickled and

rubbed him. I then ejaculated him and as he wiped (he had kleenex in his overnight bag) I laid down and went to sleep. No one heard or had any clue what was going on. By now he told me I was going to start growing hair (pubic hair) and my "pecker" was soon going to get bigger.

On my dad's birthday in [REDACTED], Rigg came to visit. He was on his way to a distant town and asked my father permission to take me on an overnight visit to a parishioner's house. We stayed over and Rigg suggested one bed to avoid too many beds to make the next day. They fed us supper and we watched T.V. with the only son of the parishioners until bedtime. Rigg and I were put in the same bed, and he performed oral sex on me and also gave me the opportunity to do the same as well as penetrating my penis in his rectum. I did not proceed with the suggestion, just rubbed and tickled until he was ready to ejaculate.

I think I was in seventh or eighth grade: He was in the area and stopped to visit during the week. My father was at work. He was headed to [REDACTED] for two days and wanted to invite me for the weekend to be his guest. He did the rubbing/tickle and put my hands on him. He did not stay long. He said he would be back tomorrow. I mentioned it to my father. He went to work the next morning and said I could go if I did all my chores. I was ready when he came by the next day and we were off to [REDACTED]. On our way we slept at my aunt's in the guest room together. Oral sex took place on me and I ejaculated him. The next day we headed towards [REDACTED]. I remember at a rest

area we both used the rest room and no one being where he parked, he performed oral sex until a car was approaching us. At a motel in [REDACTED] (I don't remember the town) he performed oral sex and put his finger in me (rectum). I was now experiencing ejaculation which he would swallow when performing oral sex. He would continue to perform oral sex which made me very sensitive, especially when his chin would touch the tip of my penis. I again ejaculated him. I finally got to sleep as he continued to wipe with kleenex. I noticed he would use a lot of kleenex. Even after wiping, he still wiped more.

Another incident: Now I am driving on pavement, not just from the church to my father's. On the way home from [REDACTED], we stopped to see my grandparents. Rigg let me drive to my father's. As it was getting dark and as I drove, he undid my pants and performed oral sex and he asked if I was ready to come. I said "no". He asked because he noticed a "slimy" clear liquid on my "pecker". Then he explained to me that this liquid made it easier to penetrate when having sex because it would slide easier. He also said that it could get a girl pregnant because it sometimes carried sperm cells. We pulled over to my grandparents' and as we approached their home I fixed my trousers and drove.

I met Rigg when my brothers made their first holy communion. He tried to play tag at this time, trying to catch kids running from him. I remember him being about 5'8", 180 lbs., half bald, curly hair, light brown hair, thick glasses, always had

prescription sunglasses also, quite hairy belly and some hair on chest, also a dimple on chin. Belly was somewhat flabby, about 43 years old, from [REDACTED] area, lots of doctor's appointments.

I later discovered he had left the priesthood and married [REDACTED] and he was [REDACTED]. He then called me and said he couldn't have children, that they were trying, and he would also ask if I was "fucking" any girls yet. At graduation he called to my father's again to wish me luck and to verify an address to send a gift (a clock radio). He also was betting that I had an even bigger pecker. While I lived in [REDACTED], he found my phone number and called to talk and wanted to meet in Santa Fe for dinner. I took his phone number at the hotel to call when I arrived. I ignored the invitation and lost the phone number. In 1990 he called again from Santa Fe. I was to meet him for dinner but found myself unavailable. He left a phone number and hotel name for me to call as I got to Santa Fe. He then asked if I had any children yet or was even married. I again missed the dinner appointment. When I moved to a nearby town, I still received a call from Rigg and the invitation remained the same: Santa Fe dinner, room at a hotel and left a phone number. I never made it to dinner.

I have recently had a talk with a childhood friend, and he said that while a kid (ten years old) he remembers Rigg running around cars (playing tag, sort of) at his grandfather's after a bunch of kids trying to touch one's penis and performing a soft wrestle act, and towards bedtime he hung around kids' bunks and

would touch a certain kid's penis. Now I know I wasn't the only
one

THE CASE OF DONALD

The following case illustrates poignantly an attempt to connect to the "missing maternal" and a pattern of sexual deviance within the Roman Church worldwide:

Donald, now in his forties, still carries with him a profound sense of betrayal by the masculine from an experience he had with a "man of the cloth" in Italy, when he was eighteen years old.

Donald was sitting by a fountain, drinking in the sun and the ambience of the beautiful old city of Florence, when a priest in clerical attire strolled by. He watched as the priest stopped, turned back, and came to stand in front of him. Looking into Donald's eyes, the priest leaned down and pinched his T-shirt just above the nipples, saying, "Bella, bella." Donald was pleased, thinking his hand-dyed hippie shirt was being complimented and feeling happy to be noticed by a priest, whom he revered as a "man of God." Then the priest said something in Italian and motioned Donald to follow him. Donald, thinking that perhaps he had been invited to visit in the nearby cloisters, proceeded down a cobblestone street, through a metal gate, down an avenue of giant pines, down and down a series of stone steps along a high wall, which, instead of leading onto the church grounds, suddenly dead-ended. The priest wheeled around, lifted Donald's T-shirt and leaned down to suck on his nipple. Then he lifted his frock to reveal long distended nipples, which he asked Donald to suck, at the same time that he emitted a soggy fart.

Disturbed and disgusted, Donald ran back up the steps and through the city to the hostel where he was staying.

Donald wept as he told this story, saying that this encounter was "a shocking affront to my innocence. . . . I assumed that being a priest guaranteed his integrity and purity, that he'd never do anything to harm me; I found out he was hiding behind his costume. . . ."

SUMMARIES OF 6 OTHER CASES - CHAPTERS

MARK

Mark, raised by his elderly grandparents in a small, rural Catholic community, was a 12-year-old altar boy at the local Catholic church when Father Johnson came to serve as associate pastor. Father Johnson, learning that Mark was the only child in the family household, dropped in regularly for dinner and an overnight stay on the way back from performing Friday night Mass in a neighboring community church. Almost every night over a 2-year period, Father Johnson bedded down in Mark's room and performed every conceivable sex act on him. Father Johnson repaid Mark and insured his silence by taking him fishing and hunting, doing those "father" things with him that his elderly grandparents could not do.

The sexual abuse continued unabated until Mark's grandfather died. At the funeral, with Mark sitting in the front pew, Father Johnson bent over and kissed Mark's grandfather on the lips; then he looked directly into Mark's eyes and smiled. At the reception at the grandparents' home after the funeral, Father Johnson took Mark into the orchard and performed oral sex on him. When Mark ejaculated into Father Johnson's mouth, the priest calmly spit Mark's semen into his handkerchief. The next day, Mark and his grandmother moved away, and Mark never saw Father Johnson again.

Death, sex and abandonment became knotted together in Mark's troubled life. For the next 20 years, Mark's life followed a

pattern of alcohol and drug abuse accompanied by depression and isolation.

LUKE

From the age 10 through age 17, Luke was sexually abused by four priests. One priest actually turned Luke over to another priest. Luke reported an event in a rectory when he performed oral sex on one priest while another priest attired in bikini underwear watched and self-masturbated. Later that same evening, they drove to a church rectory in a nearby town where the same two priests met with another priest who offered the adolescent marijuana and cocaine to take with them.

Luke now suffers from depression and sexual confusion and attends weekly group and individual psychotherapy sessions.

JOHN

When John was eight years old and serving as an altar boy in his family's church, Father Dennis was assigned to the parish and began to supervise the altar boys. For a period of seven years, twice a month Father Dennis took a young boy from his parish to a town sixty miles away for an "outing", always to the same motel where he would sexually molest them. John was one of these children.

Ten years later, John suffered from sexual confusion, depression and drug and alcohol abuse. Since recalling the abuse, John has undergone intensive therapy, including a thirty-day period of in-patient treatment at a facility specializing in helping victims of sexual abuse. Today, John attends daily Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and gets ongoing psychotherapeutic counseling. He wants to be a fashion model.

MARY

At age ten, Mary met Father Chavez when he performed the Catholic rites at her father's funeral. Her father had committed suicide by shooting himself in the head. Father Chavez appeared often at the family house to "help" the family recover from the father's death. The priest, inviting Mary to sit next to him or on his lap, always placed his hand on Mary's thigh. When she sat on his lap, she could feel his penis becoming hard. At 10, Mary had never had any sexual experience. One day, Father Chavez had Mary come into his bedroom in the church rectory. He lay on his bed and told Mary to undress. When she hesitated, he coerced her by threatening to re-enact her father's suicide: He opened the drawer of the nightstand next to his bed and pulled out a silver pistol, held it to his head, and once again told Mary to take off her clothes. She complied, and he raped her. He later took Mary on a trip to California for two weeks and molested her along the way. Fifteen years later, Mary fears intimacy and suffers from depression. She is seeing a psychotherapist in an effort to heal from the sexual abuse by Father Chavez.

PAUL

Paul was a pre-adolescent victim of thirty-six-year-old Father Riley, a priest from Ireland, a known pedophile whom the archdiocese sent to Paul's small town church. Father Riley made Paul his concubine, and when Paul was twelve years old, Father Riley took him on a one-month trip to Europe, staying in the family home in Dublin with the priest's parents and sharing one bed where the priest sexually molested him daily. Paul is now addicted to drugs and alcohol; he is manic. Paul needs psychological intervention but is too mentally disconnected to pursue it. Even now, he says, "I don't want people knowing about me; it's too humiliating . . . I want to keep this blanked out."

According to Paul, the priest had "feminine traits -- the way he walked and spoke." He had "a lot of magazines in his house, none with women, always like men in Speedos and underwear for men He would ask me questions about sex, if I was circumcised, if I ever did it, about masturbation." The priest gave him "a stereo, money . . . the reward thing." Paul's father was a devout Catholic and proud his son was an altar boy, "So I did it for him," Paul said.

At twelve and thirteen, Paul reported that the priest "let me drink whatever I wanted, basically After dinner, he'd offer me a beer, or during dinner, he'd offer me some wine"

Bizarre scenario: When Father Riley learned that Paul at age fourteen had fondled a girl, he told him he had to check him

for VD. Father Riley masturbated Paul to ejaculation for the first time (always before he stopped short of ejaculation) and put "the sperm sample" in a tissue. Then the priest called in a state police officer to lecture Paul on statutory rape.

Father Riley told Paul that if he didn't continue trying to become a priest, "You're going to Hell." But Paul wanted to be free. "I just slowly got out of church, and he got another altar boy with him then, I just stopped going to Mass." Paul realized how dispensable he was to Father Riley. He has lived a dispensable life ever since.

SARAH

Eight-year-old Sarah, under the guidance of Father Plotsky, was preparing for her first holy communion at the end of second grade. One day Father Plotsky told Sister Clara that he needed Sarah to help him with some film equipment in the school equipment room. In the equipment room, Father Plotsky pressed himself against Sarah from behind, fondled her breasts and penetrated her vagina with his finger. He then entered her anus from behind with his penis. For approximately four years, Sarah was sexually molested by Father Plotsky. Finally, Sarah was asked by two of the nuns if Father Plotsky had touched her inappropriately. She told the nuns that he had touched her in her private parts and had penetrated her anally. The nuns told Sarah never to tell anyone about it again. Sarah never told until her mother died twenty-four years later and Father Plotsky's younger brother appeared on the scene to perform the last rites. Memories of the abuse came flooding back and Sarah became suicidal.

Sarah was also molested by Father Chavez when she was seventeen. This priest lured Sarah by telling her he loved her and wanted to marry her. He had intercourse with Sarah on numerous occasions.

Since 1992, Sarah has been in and out of in-patient psychiatric units for suicide attempts and depression. Now Sarah is actively attempting to heal from the sexual molestation, but

she is having difficulty dealing with overwhelming feelings of unworthiness and self-hatred.

MOTHER CHURCH: WHAT HAPPENED TO MOTHER?

"We speak with clarity. We speak with freshness. I am budding woman. I am a woman of offshoots. I am green woman. Mother of Greenness, Mother of Dew. I'm asking for blessing, for the blessing of life and of wellbeing. What I am asking about is the root, the offshoots, the buds, is all the babies and the children. It is for them that I ask for blessing."

Maria Sabina
Curandera, Oaxaca, Mexico

The mother is the child's first protector, its first place of safety; first she is womb, then she is breast and lap. Mother is heaven on earth for the child whom she brings forth into life. What has happened to her protective presence that her son falls prey to the Father-priest?

The mothers of abused children are frequently oblivious, their primal intuitive link to their children short-circuited by afflicted relationships to the fathers of their children and to their own self-worth. Or, they FEEL something is wrong but that knowing never reaches conscious awareness. It is REPRESSED, for they cannot bear to know what they "know". To realize that the Father is incesting the Child would require that a woman be true to her own knowing, breaking her long history of submission to male authority -- even questioning her own idealization of the lofty "spiritual" and powerful male world represented to her by the Catholic Church and Father priest. In many families of abused children, Father priest has easy access to boy children. He is welcomed by the mother as a stand-in for an absent father, who is either physically absent, having abandoned the mother and her children, or emotionally absent. The priest is also welcomed

as a supposedly safe non-sexual male who can be a wholesome, even holy, influence on her sons.

The Mother -- and woman at large -- is being called to return home to life's stage from her cast-off, in-the-wings position. Given the great emphasis that Jesus gave to the Feminine principle as the carrier of love, how is it that she had been deprived of her rightful place and power during the last 2,000 years -- particularly by the Catholic Church? For the Church, where is the mother archetype? First, woman was placated by being relegated to a figurehead position as Mother Church, a role not incarnated in any female Popes. Furthermore, acknowledging women indirectly through male clergy wearing skirts did not make amends for the exclusion of real women from the church hierarchy.

Secondly, the mother Archetype represented by Mary was transposed into an ethereal Madonna, a floating heavenly virginal figure with her feet off the earth and her head in the stars. Her physical earth substance (the word "mother" derives from "mater" and "matter") was denied. As a de-materialized being, how can mother be HERE with her child? Images, literal and imaginary, of the Mother as a force to be reckoned with, were hidden or destroyed by the Church in medieval times. What is now being recognized as the Black Madonna is re-emerging into collective consciousness. Black is the color of the earth, the night sky, and the mysterious underworld of the unconscious. The deep feminine is returning to the earth with her treasures of

compassion, love and transformation. All children, and adult children, can find sanctuary in Her.

The Church cut its heart out when it sundered the Mother from the Trinity in the Father-Son-Holy Ghost configuration. An eighty-three-year-old Catholic woman, wondering about the Father-Son-Holy Ghost image, asked spontaneously, "Where's the Mother there?" Why did the Church take away the Mother and distort the archetype of family, represented through the ages of humankind as Father-Mother-Child? Why did the Catholic Church cast out the Mother from the Holy Family archetype, and in her stead put the Holy Ghost? Was the mother converted into a sexless Spirit figure? What would it feel like if the sacred Trinity were imaged as Mother-Son-Holy Ghost, with the Father excluded? What has been emphasized for centuries is a sacred image of Father-Son union, "I and the Father are One", implying psychological father-son incest. Is it any surprise that pedophilia has been sustained within the Church?

What we are learning is this: Ostracized psychological and spiritual structures will seek to return, if not through the front door in a healthy way, then through the back door, pathologically. In the Case of Donald, "the mother" and "child" seeks to return to the psyche of a priest in an unhealthy way, since the feminine is not embraced naturally.

THE CURSE OF CELIBACY

Widespread sexual abuse of children by Roman Catholic priests has surfaced. Idealistic expectations of priests as exemplars of loving virtue have been shattered. Facts relevant to abuse have been revealed in New Mexico and other places. If we look at these facts and explore what might have generated them in the history, structure, and belief of the Roman Church, we may have a greater understanding of the serious issue of exploitation.

As recently as a 1967 encyclical, Pope Paul VI, called celibacy the church's "brilliant jewel," which "evidently gives to the priest, even in the practical field, the maximum efficiency and the best disposition psychologically and clerically, for the continuous exercise of a perfect clarity."

Celibacy is a high calling when it is linked to asceticism, which is a solitary path with a sole focus on union with spirit. Withdrawing from the world, an ascetic consciously and purposefully sacrifices the fleshly life. If a priest-to-be is motivated by a devotional call to put all his energies into serving God, the Beloved, and thereby sacrificing sexual connection to a woman and the possible fathering of children, then celibacy might be appropriate.

Celibacy was not instituted by Jesus in A.D. 30 but by church leaders in the twelfth century. On the manifest level, this decision was taken to bring about the sublimation of sexual desires to the service of God and humanity. In fact, however,

celibacy helped the Church become a haven for men ashamed and fearful of their "sinful" sexual urges. Some men-boys became priests hoping, unconsciously or consciously, that the structure of the Church and the psycho-sexual rule of celibacy would help them control their impulses. As a venerated priest, a man could suppress his shame and his diminished self-respect at what he knew was hidden inside him -- a desire for children.

What caused such a lofty ideal - celibacy - to become so base? As handmaiden to the repression of healthy sexual development, celibacy actually can abet pedophilia. Also questionable is the belief that sexual encounters "taint" the soul and spirit. So-called spiritual purity thus requires repressing or sublimating sexuality, not an easy task, and one the Church has not explored psychologically. Priests with sexual problems are advised to pray more, to confess and repent, a procedure that is no solution for deep-seated disturbances.

Sexual acting out by priests suggests that celibacy has not been consciously and purposefully chosen, that perhaps a priest has not been sufficiently guided and is not self-aware. At best, celibacy vows speak to the soul and mission of a priest. At worst, celibacy vows are taken because they are "required" to stay in the priesthood or because of the belief that sexual encounters are tainted. In those cases, taking vows becomes tantamount to cheating on an exam in order to pass.

Are there other attractions for a man - sometimes still a boy - for taking celibacy vows? Often a young man studying for

the priesthood is naive, with no experience of women. He has no idea what he is giving up. If he is insecure about his masculinity, celibacy can be an escape from fears of "proving" himself sexually.

One priest, now sixty-five, recounted that he went only to parochial schools all the way through his childhood. High school was a live-in boy's school run by the Church. There he was groomed to be a priest, and celibacy was a fait accompli that he never questioned. At age 50, he experienced a violent inner crisis when he realized that he had been "outcast from the feast of life" without choosing celibacy himself. He found himself in the tenuous position of the virgin-priest counseling couples about their sexual and marital problems. He wondered how he could presume to advise them. He chose to leave all his duties, to expose himself to psychological counseling and to more-than-superficial relationships with several women.

Ultimately, however, he was unable to leave the Church as, "I don't know how to fend for myself in the world; I've always been protected and taken care of on the material level." Fear keeps him a priest.

Jesus himself never advocated celibacy as a priestly requirement, although he affirmed celibacy as one possible path. He acknowledged that there are many individual ways to be on the spiritual path; what is right for one may not be right for another.

St. Paul, more than 40 years old at the time of his conversion, had been married. St. Peter, priest and first "pope," was not celibate but had a family. In fact, Pope Anastasius I was the father of Pope Innocent.

In the apostolic days of the early Church, married leaders co-existed with celibates. The Church was tightly woven into the context of the family, with followers meeting exclusively in each others' homes. As Schillebeeckx (1968) says, "There is no indication of any rejection of women or sexuality in connection with the priesthood." Celibacy and marriage were both respected as authentic ways of being, neither a detriment to following the pattern of Christ-like living.

Celibacy only gradually became mandatory. Apparently, ascetic monks, in their devaluation of earth and the feminine, denied the rights of secular priests: the Synod of Elvira in A.D. 305 ordered priests to stop having intercourse with their wives. In 952, German bishops at the Council of Augsburg decreed that priests could no longer live with their wives. Moreover, they ordered that women who had sex with priests were to be marked with stripes and to have their heads shaved. In 1022, Pope Benedict VIII decreed that children of priests be taken as serfs.

The papacy insisted on celibacy to preserve Church property and power, not exactly "spiritual" motivation. In the sixth century, Pope Pelagius I required all married priest-candidates to sign contracts waiving their children's rights to inherit

Church land, a way to consolidate Church power and to stop a hereditary nobility of bishops.

Thirty years later, Pope Leo IX and the Council of Rome ordered the wives and mistresses of priests seized and enslaved in Lateran palaces.

In A Gospel of Shame, the authors write:

Mandatory celibacy not only gave the Church tight control over its lands and power but also endowed the Church's servants with an aura of holiness and purity that placed them above other mere mortals. By imitating Jesus in giving up intimate attachments, they became what Saint John Chrysostom declared a priest should be: "Purer than the very rays of the sun, so that the Holy Spirit will not abandon him, and so that he may be able to say, 'It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me.'"

In consolidating the Church's wealth, shoring up its power and exalting its priesthood above the rest of society, mandatory celibacy lay at the heart of the Church's historic bid for power. And it still, in the eyes of the Church, lies at the heart of its power today. Mandatory celibacy allows the Church tight control over its priests, who have no dividing loyalties to wives and offspring and thus require minimal salaries. And it envelops those priests in a mystique that bolsters the idea of Catholicism as the one and only true faith. Church leaders are not going to let go of mandatory celibacy easily.

In the end, mandatory celibacy is relevant to the current child sexual abuse crisis not just because its culture attracts abusers, but because it facilitated the rise of the rigid Church hierarchy that may, in the end, be the most formidable obstacle to a solution of the crisis. If there is a single truth on which virtually every expert on child sexual abuse agrees, it is that abuse thrives in hierarchical, authoritarian institutions -- particularly sexually repressive ones. When experts describe such institutions, they seem to be characterizing the Catholic Church.

THE CRUCIFIXION IS OVER

"It is finished"

the rape of children

women

men

Christ crucified

again and again

"It is finished."

We suggest the "Holy Mother" Catholic Church do the following:

(1) Re-evaluate and reform the selection and training of priests to include psychological as well as spiritual development.

(2) Transform the laws of celibacy, offering individual options as Jesus did. Affirm the positive links between sexuality and spirituality.

(3) Demystify and humanize the priesthood. Encourage open discussion of a priest's proper exercise of his religious authority.

(4) Abolish the "confessional" as a formal rite accomplished through the priest; do not tempt the priest with the power of the congregation's secrets.

(5) Offer in-depth professional help to any and all individuals abused by priests, monks or nuns.

We would like to affirm that the Roman Catholic Church and many priests are now grappling with the "wolves of darkness".

The shroud of secrecy has been rent. Children can be protected now that the demons of sexual dysfunction are being uprooted from the fertile ground for power abuse within the priesthood.

For victims of sexual abuse, healing cannot be contingent upon what the Church does or does not do. It is imperative not to wait for Church reformation. However, one might ask, "Is it possible, given the extent of psychic and physical desecration, for victims of sexual abuse to reclaim the souls stolen by errant priests?"

Of primary importance is that the victim, now an adult, see and accept that the child inside was crucified, was split asunder. That inner child can be reassembled, with dedication to one's self and with outer support. An inner guide to this rebirth is the Good Shepherd within - that Presence who never leaves but can be obscured by trauma or dark energies.

The victim can issue an invitation to the supportive Good Shepherd Presence. The Good Shepherd - the one, who crucified, never dies - waits to be reborn (revivified) in each human being. The words of a folk song entitled "The Lord of the Dance" express the Living Spirit available to anyone desirous of making a connection:

I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun.
I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth,
At Bethlehem I had my birth.

Chorus: Dance, dance, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

I danced for the scribe and the pharisee,
But they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me,
I danced for the fishermen, James and John,
They came with me and the Dance went on.

Chorus

I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame,
The "holy" people said it was a shame,
So they whipped and they stripped and they hung me
high,
And left me there on the cross to die.

Chorus

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone,
But I am the Dance and I still go on.

Chorus

They cut me down and I leapt up high,
I am the life that'll never ever die.
I'll live in you if you'll live in Me,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said He.

Chorus

At this phase of your spiritual development, any further crucifixion of the body, soul and spirit is no longer an option. Victims can stop the debilitating process and re-create themselves in the image and energy of the Living Christ Spirit. We repeat: The Good Shepherd is within. Each individual victim is the stable, the altar, the sanctuary, the abode for Holy Essence.

In undertaking the healing journey toward wholeness, the victim can begin by asking what direction the Good Shepherd would offer. We now have much information about inner soul-work in written teachings, as well as new understandings of Christ consciousness, especially in two of the most outstanding finds

within the history of biblical and religious archaeology, namely the Nag Hammadi library of Gnostic Scriptures and the Dead Sea Scrolls of Qumrun. (manuscripts discovered in 1945 and 1947) (See appendix for the story of the finds, from pp. 16-21 in Jung and The Lost Gospels by Stephan A. Hoeller).

As we now know, no organized religion has the final word on Christ's teachings and life. The Gnostic Gospels were hidden to avoid destruction by the Church of Rome, which was calling heretical any teaching that did not support its position as the only carrier and interpreter of Christ's teachings. Early on, the Church of Rome aimed to consolidate its power and wealth by claiming a monopoly on the way to Heaven and avoidance of Hell.

The Gnostic Gospels reveal Jesus as preaching another way—the way of an individual, inner connection to Spirit, where "two or more are gathered in my Name, there shall I be." These teachings emphasize not sin, but the living Christ, whose presence is resurrected every time we love our neighbors as ourselves.

The Gnostics refused the simplistic notion that the redemption of humanity was accomplished by the physical death of Jesus on the cross and that a good Christian merely has to believe in this event in order to be redeemed. Gnostics did not believe that human beings were basically sinful.

Stephan Hoeller explains Gnostic beliefs:

The task of the messianic messenger was to help human beings discover who they truly are, and to assist them in overcoming the inimical cosmic powers [their personal shadows, too] and rejoin the fullness of the

true light. "Salvation" thus became synonymous with "liberation" and the way to this state was envisioned not consisting of faith but of interior liberating experience facilitated by the teachings of the Liberator and by the sacramental mysteries he entrusted to his followers.

Jung and the Lost Gospels, The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, 1989, p. 119.

Some rites of liberation could include hearing and accepting the following truths:

(1) You have not sinned but have been sinned against; you have been taught to believe that as a victim you are bad. He who abused you, an innocent, led you to believe he was godly and exempt from wrongdoing.

(2) You are not guilty; the guilt you carry belongs on the conscience of others.

(3) You are worthy of love. The baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan culminated with the blessing of the true Father, the spiritual parent (not the false "Father-Priest"), with the words, "You are my beloved one." All children are born pleasing in the eyes of the Great Spirit. Remember, your birthright is to be blessed and validated. The priest who posed as "God-the-Father's" representative perverted this blessing by calling his violation of your body and soul "God's love". He broke your trust; he broke your heart. Evil takes many disguises. You can reclaim your relationship to your true Parent.

The parable of the lost sheep presents us with a guiding image for gathering those scattered parts of oneself. The parable emphasizes the value of the lost sheep. Valuable parts

of victims of clergy sexual abuse have split off from the center in response to their trauma.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says, Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones . . . For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost.

What is lost is regarded as of more value than what was never endangered. The lost one not only represents the value of one sheep out of a hundred, but also signifies that which is needed for wholeness: without this one (or two or three), the flock is incomplete. M. Esther Harding writes the following:

If [any part] of the psyche is lost, it will have to be sought again with pain and difficulty, involving perhaps even a journey to hell . . . - that is, to the unconscious, regardless of the hazards and suffering that such an adventure entails. For only when the lost members are all retrieved and given their rightful place will the psyche be made whole.

Harding, M. Esther, Psychic Energy, Bollinger Series X, Princeton University Press, page 373.

Seek a wise guide, someone trained in the art of psychotherapy, to help you traverse the inner landscape of your soul. A wise guide - someone trained in matters of the psyche - can facilitate your healing.

In the meantime, take steps to find and gather together your own lost sheep, those sacred, scared parts of your self. What parts of you fled because of abuse? Close your eyes and imagine yourself as a very young child. Perhaps it will help to envision each lost sheep as "a sense of" . . . something, freedom, for example. Fill in other qualities as you experience them in the child who was "You". That child can and must be reclaimed for

your healing. Does it feel as if the whole flock has wandered off? Keep revisiting your self as a small child.

Are the following "sheep" part of your found-flock?

<u>A sense of</u> . . .	"I'm not alone"
	"I love myself"
	"I am worthy"
	"I trust"
	"I care"
	adventure
	passion
	curiosity
	faith
	connection to Spirit
	purpose
	relatedness to myself and others
	self-confidence
	joy
	vitality

Bringing these parts home is a process that can take place effectively with a trusted guide.

Victims can become like children:

Once, when they were in Capernaum, the disciples asked Jesus, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of God?"

And he called a child over, and put him in front of them; and taking him in his arms, he said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you can't enter the kingdom of God." Matthew 18:1-4.

Returning to one's original self where body, psyche and spirit are in harmony is a state of being we experience in childhood and is available to all of us.

Jesus' teaching again and again points to the child's original innocence and wholeness, love of play and natural capacity for wonder; these natural endowments are often stunted or blighted in interactions with the world.

And when Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and entered the territory of Judea. And large crowds gathered around him, and he healed and taught.

And some people were bringing children to him, for him to bless; but the disciples rebuked them. And when Jesus saw this, he was indignant, and said to them, "Let the children come to me, don't try to stop them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, whoever doesn't accept the kingdom of God like a child cannot enter it." And he took them in his arms, and put his hands on them, and blessed them. Matthew 19:13-15 and Mark 10:13-16.

Jesus' righteous rage and condemnation of those who violate children resounds in this passage in the Gospel of Matthew:

Anyone who welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But anyone who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones who have faith in me would be better drowned in the depths of the sea with a great millstone around his neck. Alas for the world that there should be such obstacles! Obstacles indeed there must be, but alas for the man who provides them. Matthew 18:5-7.

May the Church and perpetrator priests heed the judgment of Jesus whom they claim as originator of the Christian religion.

May victims access their own rage so that it can serve as an ally in the rejection of evildoers and thus pave the way for redemption of the lost child's soul.

We are blessed; innocence is our inheritance. We carry knowledge of original oneness within. Resurrection of the inner child is a luminous possibility.

APPENDIX

Thomas Traherne's praise of childhood.

Certainly Adam in Paradise had not more sweet and curious apprehensions of the world than I when I was a child. All appeared new, and strange at the first, inexpressibly rare, and delightful, and beautiful. I was a little stranger, which at my entrance into the world was saluted and surrounded with innumerable joys. My knowledge was divine. I knew by intuition those things which since my apostasy I collected again, by the highest reason. My very ignorance was advantageous. I seemed as one brought into the estate of innocence. All things were spotless and pure and glorious: yea, and infinitely mine, and joyful and precious. I knew not that there were any sins, or complaints, or laws. I dreamed not of poverties, contentions or vices. All tears and quarrels were hidden from my eyes. Everything was at rest, free, and immortal. I knew nothing of sickness or death, or exaction, in the absence of these I was entertained like an angel with the works of God in their splendor and glory; I saw all in the peace of Eden; heaven and earth did sing my Creator's praises, and could not make more melody to Adam than to me. All time was eternity, and a perpetual sabbath. Is it not strange that an infant should be heir of the world, and see those mysteries which the books of the learned never unfold?

The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold. The gates were at first the end of the world, the green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported and ravished me; their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things. The men! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem! Immortal cherubims! And young men glittering and sparkling angels, and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty! Boys and girls tumbling in the street, and playing, were moving jewels. I knew not that they were born or should die. But all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifest in the light of the day, and something infinite behind everything appeared: which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. The city seemed to stand in Eden, or to be built in heaven. The streets were mine, the temple was mine, the people were mine, their clothes and gold and silver were mine, as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins and ruddy faces. The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the world was mine, and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it. I knew no churlish properties, nor bounds nor divisions: but all properties and divisions were mine: all treasures and the possessors of them. So that with much ado I was corrupted; and made to learn the dirty devices of this world. Which now I

unlearn, and become as it were a little child again, that I may enter into the kingdom of God.

Excerpt from Jung and The Lost Gospels by Stephan A. Hoeller

In 1945, when the physical and psychological ruins of World War II were still painfully evident in Europe, Africa and Asia; at the very time when the hecatombs of Auschwitz, Dachau and Bergen-Belsen were about to be matched and superseded by the death camps of Stalin's Gulag Archipelago; when it seemed to many that the world would never recover from the greatest calamity of human history - at this very moment of deepest darkness and despair of the world soul, an Egyptian peasant, riding his camel while searching for fertilizer, came upon a number of ancient documents that possess the potential of aiding the West in the recovery of a substantial portion of its lost soul. At the very time when the sage C.G. Jung wrote and spoke about modern man in search of a soul, a long forgotten, or rather repressed, component of the soul of Judeo-Christian religiosity and of Western culture in general emerged from the soil at the base of the mountain range Jabal al-Tarif near the river Nile in Upper Egypt. In a storage jar made of claylike material the Egyptian peasant and his companion found a collection of ancient manuscripts, consisting of 1,153 pages bound into twelve leather-bound primitive books (known as codices), containing fifty-two separate writings (called tractates). The writings, as subsequent investigation revealed, were copies by third and fourth century Egyptian scribes from works that originated for the most part in the Apostolic Age, when the memory of the enigmatic Rabbi Jehoshva, known as Jesus, still lived powerfully in the minds of numerous persons who were present during his brief but portentous lifetime.

Only a little over two years later, in the summer of 1947 in Palestine, an Arab goatherd was searching for one of the goats of his flock. The goatherd was young and agile and with his athletic prowess climbed about on the limestone cliffs overlooking the Dead Sea. While engaged in these exercises he espied a small hole leading into a cave in the mountain. Being afraid of evil spirits, the young man first fled from the cave and returned the next day with a companion. The two young men descended into the cave where they found a number of clay jars covered by bowl-like lids. Most of the jars were empty, but one contained a large bundle composed of a piece of leather wrapped in rags. They took the mysterious package home and upon unwrapping it found that it contained a scroll, or roll of parchment, which, when unrolled, stretched from one end of their tent to the other. The same discovery was made concerning two more bundles found in the same jar. The two youths had in their possession three scrolls filled with writing of a nature they did not comprehend. A few days later they sold the three scrolls to

a dealer who traded for the most part in illegal merchandise in the town of Bethlehem. The pilgrimage of what became known as the Dead Sea Scrolls had begun.

The first three scrolls thus discovered on the shore of the Dead Sea were soon deciphered and named the Isaiah Scroll, the Habakkuk Scroll, and the Manual of Discipline. They were followed by a large number of additional scrolls found by successive waves of expeditions sponsored by a number of governments and academic institutions. The worldwide publicity that followed revealed that the scrolls were the writings of a heterodox community of Jews, called Essenes, who resided at the site of the discovery from about 130 B.C. to A.D. 70 (with an intermission of about thirty years prior to the year 4 B.C.) and whose strange doctrines and practices as well as their chronological proximity to the beginnings of the Christian dispensation were bound to cause widespread interest.

At first the two finds impressed the observers with their dissimilarity. The earlier discovery contained writings in the Sahidic dialect of Coptic, a popular language of Hellenistic and Roman Egypt; the latter find consisted of works written for the most part in Hebrew and Aramaic, the Semitic tongues used in contemporary Palestine. The authors and scribes of the Nag Hammadi library were Christians of the Gnostic persuasion; the persons involved in the authorship and copying of the Dead Sea Scrolls were Jews of the Essene sect. Even the outer format of the writings showed a radical divergence in appearance: The Egyptian Coptic writings are the earliest example of the format of bookbinding known as the codex, whereas the Palestinian documents are in the form of long scrolls. To make the divergence complete, the Jewish sectarian writers used parchment, and the Christian Gnostic writers wrote on papyrus, a derivative of the papyrus reed from whence the modern word "paper" originates.

The differences dividing the two discoveries were dramatized in the radically different turns that their respective fates took subsequent to their initial reappearance. The Coptic Gnostic library was not to see the light of widespread public attention for many decades to come. The first complete translation into the English language did not appear for thirty-two years after the discovery. Wranglings among scholars, politicians, and antiquities dealers, as well as much obtuseness and indifference on the part of many of the individuals involved, has made most persons awaiting the publication of the Nag Hammadi find well-nigh despair over its prospects. The more imaginative of the would-be readers might even have remembered that the ancient Gnostics, like true magicians in the Egyptian mode, were given to the practice of attaching awesome curses and binding guardian spirits to their concealed holy books. In fact, one of the gospels of the Nag Hammadi collection, The Gospel of the

Egyptians, was found to contain a magical admonition of just such an ominous nature:

Thou shalt write down what I tell thee, and of which I shall remind thee for the sake of those who come after you and be worthy (of such). And thou wilt make this book repose upon the mountain, and thou wilt call up the guardian, (in this wise): "O Come, Thou Dreadful One!"

To this statement might be added another, appearing in The Apocryphon of John, near the text's end where Jesus addresses John by pronouncing what has become known as the "Jesus curse":

"For truly I have given these things to thee to record them, and they shall be deposited in a safe place." Then he spoke thus to me (John), "Cursed is everyone who shall impart any of this in return for a gift, or for food, or for drink, or for clothing, or for anything of a like kind."

Whatever the effect of such curses, it appears that after the passing of a quarter of a century, various individuals as well as at least one international public agency (UNESCO) began to overcome the forces opposing the publication of the Nag Hammadi scriptures. It is to be noted also that the only portion of the Gnostic find to leave the turbulent and hostile climate of Nasser's Egypt of the 1950s and thus to become accessible to scholars without restriction was purchased by the Jung Institute of Zurich and presented as the "Jung Codex" to C.G. Jung on his eightieth birthday. On November 15, 1953, at a convocation of leaders of the Swiss government, as well as numerous academic and professional authorities who had gathered to honor him, the octogenarian Jung held in his hands this document that after some 1,200 years heralded the possible rebirth of the Gnosis to which the Swiss sage gave so much of his work and devotion. It is most tempting indeed to imagine that now at last the Nag Hammadi find made its connection with a truly worthy heir of the tradition within which it had its origin. The principle that Jung called synchronicity has once again worked its uncanny magic: the barriers began to be lowered, the obstacles slowly diminished, and the long-lost heritage of Jung's "old friends," the Gnostics, became accessible to all who would appreciate it. The opportunities delayed had not passed; indeed, new psychological and social developments arose in the 1960s and 1970s that created a climate of receptivity in regard to much unconventional spirituality, including that of the Gnostics. The message of Nag Hammadi was finally on the march.