



## The Burning Bush—Online article archive

### Vatican forced to acknowledge debauched behaviour of priests and nuns



The leering priest . . .  
not so far-fetched as

In what amounts to a modern example of damning proof of the validity of the age-old Protestant charge of gross immorality amongst the priests and nuns of the Roman Catholic Church, the Vatican has been forced to make the extraordinary admission that priests in at least 23 countries across five continents have been sexually abusing and raping nuns. Most of the abuse has happened in Africa, where priests vowed to celibacy, who previously sought out prostitutes, have preyed on nuns to avoid contracting the Aids virus.

Confidential Vatican reports obtained by the National Catholic Reporter, a weekly magazine in America, have revealed that priests have been exploiting their authority to gain sexual favours from nuns, particularly those from the Third World who are more likely to be culturally conditioned to be subservient to men.

Some of the reports have been in circulation for at least seven years. They reveal that priests had demanded sex in exchange for favours, such as certification to work in a given diocese. In some instances, the priests had made nuns pregnant and then encouraged them to have abortions.

The article in the National Catholic Reporter was based on five documents, which senior women from religious orders and priests have presented to the Vatican over the past decade. They describe a particularly bad situation in Africa. In a continent devastated by Aids, nuns, and early adolescent girls, are perceived by some as safe sexual targets. Countless cases of nuns forced to have sex with priests were cited. Some were obliged to take the Pill, others became pregnant and were encouraged to have abortions. In one case in which an African sister was forced to have an abortion, she died during the operation and her aggressor led the funeral mass. Another case involved 29 sisters from the same congregation who all became pregnant by priests in the diocese. The reports said that the church authorities had done little to tackle the problem. There were cases of novices who applied to their local priest or bishop for certificates of good Catholic practice that were required for them to pursue their vocation. In return they were made to have sex. Some incidents of sexual abuse allegedly took place almost within the Vatican walls.

#### Played down

Forced to acknowledge the problem, the Vatican has tried to play down its gravity. In a statement, the Pope's official spokesman, Joaquin Navarro-Valls, said: "The problem is known and involves a restricted geographical area. Certain negative situations must not overshadow the often heroic faith of the overwhelming majority of religious nuns and priests." One of the most comprehensive documents was put together by "Sister" Maura O'Donohue, an Aids coordinator for Cafod, the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development in



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London. She says that nuns have been identified as "safe" targets for sexual activity, and quotes a case in 1991 of a community superior being approached by priests requesting that the nuns be made available to them for sexual favours. She said: "When the superior refused, the priests explained they would otherwise be obliged to go to the village to find women and might thus get Aids." She said that her initial reaction to what she was told by the nuns was "one of shock and disbelief at the magnitude of the problem".

### **Incidents in Ireland**

"Sister" Maura reported incidents of sexual abuse in 23 countries including India, Ireland, Italy, the Philippines and the United States. She said she was told about priests encouraging the nuns to take the Pill by telling them that it would prevent HIV. Others "actually encouraged abortion for the sisters", she said.

### **True Attitude**

"Sister" Maura wrote in her report of how a priest in one African diocese had talked "quite openly" about sex, saying that "celibacy in the African context means a priest does not get married, but does not mean he does not have children". This priest is but articulating what is the true attitude of Rome's priesthood to sexual relations. They are the "spiritual descendants" of the priests of Babylon with their temple prostitutes. In 1998, "Sister" Marie McDonald, mother superior of the Missionaries of Our Lady of Africa, put together a paper about the sexual abuse of African religious women in Africa and Rome. She tabled the document to the Council of 16, made up of delegates from international associations representing men's and women's religious communities and the Vatican office responsible for religious life. She noted that a contributing cause was the "conspiracy of silence". When she addressed bishops about the problem, many felt it was disloyal of the sisters to have reported the abuse. However, nuns had repeatedly informed the authorities. "Sometimes they were not well received. In some instances they are blamed for what happened. Even when they are listened to sympathetically nothing much seems to be done," she said.

### **Vatican does nothing**

The head of the Vatican congregation for Religious Life, Cardinal Martinez Somalo, set up a committee in response to the report to look into the problem, but it appears to have done little beyond raising awareness among the clergy. One of the saddest elements is the fate of the victims. While the offending priests are usually moved or sent away for studies, the women are normally chased from their orders. They are often too scared to return to their families or are rejected by them. They often become outcasts or, in the worst cases, prostitutes.

### **Rome's excuse**

The usual perverted view of Rome on the issue was peddled by one of the few clerics ready to speak about the reports, "Father" Giulio Albanese, of MISNA, a missionary news agency. "Missionaries are human beings, who are often living under immense psychological pressure in situations of war and ongoing violence. On one hand it's important to condemn this horror and it's important to tell the truth, but we must not emphasise this at the expense of the work done by the majority, many of whom have laid down lives for witness", he said. "The press only talks about missionaries when they are killed, kidnapped or are involved in something scandalous."



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### The condemnation of history

The Reformers, and every student of the teachings and practices of Roman Catholicism ever since, consistently maintained that Roman Catholicism was essentially immoral. The imposition of celibacy upon its priests was contrary to Holy Scripture and to nature. Indeed, it is a mark of the prophesied apostasy from God's truth that was to come at the end of the present age. *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth, 1 Timothy 4:1-3.*

The hypocrisy of the system of popery is immeasurable. Reports fill the daily newspapers of the world of dishonesty, sodomy and gross immorality amongst its clerics of which these latest reports are but an example. History provides us with an unbroken chain of such evidence right back to the emergence of the Papacy. Former priests, some of whom left Rome as a result of the converting grace of the gospel and some who left to embrace agnosticism as a result of what they saw within Rome's shadowed cloisters, have written extensively on the evils of Romanism.

Let every child of God pray that this report, virtually ignored by the world's press, will come into the hands of many millions of Roman Catholics and, under God, will become the means of awakening them to the evil errors of that accursed system and of turning them to the Christ of the Bible.