

CATHOLIC CHURCH, CENTRALLY ORGANISED COVER-UP OF CHILD ABUSE

There was a centrally organised cover up of child abuse by clerics within the Catholic Church.

Some people are thick enough to think that there were many parts of the Church which engaged in a disorganised cover-up and others which covered up in a more methodical way. They say all organisations can have similar problems but that the Vatican which leads the Church cannot be blamed for all of it. But the Vatican is paid and positions itself to rule the Church. With power comes responsibility and the duty to admit you have responsibility. No such admission has ever taken place.

What about Crimen Sollicitationis? This commanded sexual abuse in the confessional to be kept secret or the victim would be excommunicated.

Some say the document was never issued to all the bishops. They even say that it was so secret that most bishops didn't know of it. No evidence is given that there were bishops who did not receive it. And of course the Church cannot afford to have all the bishops admitting to have received this document. Bishops would not admit they got that secret directive. It was a secret after all!

Even if it were not given to all bishops, it was still the Vatican's formal policy - that is what we must never forget. NO decent person would follow a Church that would officially and sneakily create such policies. The Church is an organisation and you will become guilty by association for tolerating such a policy.

Crimen was to be kept extremely secret. It commanded grave secrecy for the Church tribunals. It has been said that this secrecy did not apply to the crimes themselves. It is said that Crimen did not urge the victims to keep the crimes from the police. But where are the victims who went to the police? And do you really think that the Catholic Church in many places of the world would be happy about victims going to a police force that was prejudiced against Catholicism?

Moreover the Vatican and the bishops never advised victims to talk to the police. That shows they didn't really care about justice or the victims. They did not see the crimes as crimes.

Some say the secrecy enjoined covered the church's internal tribunals, not the crimes themselves. They argue that where those were not reported, as usually they weren't, that was down to misguided and wicked institutional loyalty rather than a cover up. To that I say, if the tribunals encouraged victims and their families to go to the police then why didn't they? And the tribunals pretended to solve the problem which stopped people going to the police. It is judgemental to accuse the families of misguided insane loyalty when the problem could have been the Church! And is a religion that inspires and gets such loyalty really a good thing?

The 1983 Code of Canon Law decreed that if an accusation of abuse against a priest is to be made, the statute of limitations is five years. The only exception is if the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome is dealing with it. This exception was not clarified or mentioned until it was publicised by Ratzinger in 2001. How clever! It helped make sure priests got off the hook and then when the media and social pressure got too much the Church suddenly said the CDF would look after allegations exceeding the five years. This power was news even to the CDF? Predictably, the law was promulgated in 2001 by Pope John Paul II in Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela. Too little too late and too manipulative.

If the Vatican is trying to make the Church safer for children, that is more likely be about wanting to stop sexual pleasure than any genuine will to do what is best for children. The fact that the Vatican is forced by public anger is another factor.

Some victims can and do identify with the priests and religious who abuse them. Thus they end up abusers themselves. They may become clerics, bishops, cardinals and popes too. Then they become determined to perpetuate abuse themselves or to help others to do it by granting them support and protection from the law. A priest claims to be a person with special powers and authority and a symbol of and representative of God. Clearly a person who is abused by a priest will identify with the abusers faster than a person who is abused by an ordinary person.

Victims can identify with counsellors and therapists and doctors who abuse them but they do not have the God/supernatural power catalyst that a priest has which leads to a faster and stronger and more dangerous self-identification of the victim with the abuser.

Serious crimes that often led to victims committing suicide were compounded by a new crime. The Vatican's crime was

how it plotted and lied to avoid and delay civil justice from taking its course. That lack of support for victims contributed to many suicides.

Some victims are so traumatised and damaged by their experiences at the hands of priests that it takes years for them to come forward. It can take decades.

The Church will know that by now - and do not think it cares!

