

BISHOPS WHO NEED DISCIPLINE

Pope Francis is in the process of setting up a procedure to discipline bishops who have failed to protect children from the abuse of clergy. That is an enormous task.

Anyone who has followed my comments on this Web will be hard put to find advice to church authority telling them what they should do. I have never been in a position of church authority and am loath to dictate advice. My positions are more simple and less political—a search for facts that may be useful in the pursuit of truth.

To be fact-based has been the goal in all my evaluations of clerical behavior. Facts I published, starting in 1990, merited one bishop to declare I was “effectively excommunicated”.

Dr. Paul Mc Hugh who served on the USCCB National Review Board from its beginning in 2002 shouted out during a Johns Hopkins reception at an American Psychiatric Association meeting in San Diego: “Boy, do the bishops hate you!”

Age and energy, not criticism nor rejection, have curtailed my activity.

Most of what I have to say now is repetition rather than revelation. If my comments have a harsh and angry edge, that is because I hold that hypocrisy, not sex, is the greatest religious sin. And this is a most destructive element in RC clerical culture. I hold myself to the same standard.

There are a plethora of women and men who know about the bishops’ transgressions and their culpability in concealing, disguising, dissimulating and defending abusive clergy. Chancery offices are full of knowledgeable people, lay and clerical. I will call them “co-conspirators”.

Only a hand full has spoken up [Msgr. Murphy in KC, Ms. Haselberger in St.Paul-Mpls, Fr. White a Dallas parish priest to name a few; [BishopAccountability.org lists a credible roster of whistleblowers.]

There are responsible critics who report on the activity of some bishops who need Rome's discipline. [C.f. Madeleine Baran series *Betrayed By Silence* for Minnesota Public Radio] She, among others, has targeted John C Nienstedt lately archbishop of St. Paul-Mpls and his coterie of chancery officials who will of necessity be evaluated by Rome.

Robert Finn, former bishop of Kansas City, is also a logical subject of Rome's attention. (C.f. Doyle's post on this Web)

My list of candidates for Vatican consideration is short and determined by personal experience and observation: Robert Brom, former bishop of San Diego, Roger Mahony former cardinal archbishop of Los Angeles, and Theodore McCarrick, former cardinal archbishop of Washington DC.

I attended depositions of the first two and they lied; there is no other word for it. Brom related facts to me in his private office that he bald-faced denied during his deposition where he had 8 lawyers at his behest.

Brom's history is laid out sufficiently on this Web (C.f. Search this Site). Brom was credibly accused of abusing a seminarian who shouted in the lawyer's office where Brom made a \$120,000 settlement, "You know, Bob, you raped me".

In 2002 the USCCB committee appointed Brom to oversee fellow bishops who failed to meet norms for protection of children from clerical abuse despite this and other contra indications of suitability.

Roger Mahony sullied history is so well documented it is hard to imagine that Rome will not look at his record. I served as an expert witness in several abuse cases against his archdiocese. (C.f. this Web: Forensic Reports *Declaration LA & Mahony* and Report *XXX John GV Doe v Mahony et al.*)

Mahony was deposed on November 23, 2004, a procedure I attended. He continued to lie about knowledge he had of the whereabouts of an abusive priest that he had memorialized in signed letters. His deception about these facts had been recorded in a prior deposition and on the witness stand. An eminently respected

California lawyer, Larry Drivon, reposted that there is sufficient evidence to prosecute Mahony for perjury.

There is monumental difficulty in holding church hierarchy accountable. Theodore McCarrick, or Uncle Ted as his abuse victims were encouraged to address him, is a prime example of invincibility. (C.f. this Web *The Cardinal McCarrick Syndrome*)

Part of the armor protecting him from discipline was his choice of victims, Catholic seminarians and priests who were over 18 years old.

Serving as a professor at a Pontifical Seminary for 12 years I fielded dozens of questions and complaints from students about McCarrick's sexual advances and propositions. There was no place in the system to support their discomfort. To object to the behavior of a superior threatens one's very existence in the system.

The chancery office warned one priest victim of McCarrick's assaults and eyewitness to his sexual acts with other priests that if he spoke to the press, "we will crush you".

Five priests who served under McCarrick complained of his behavior. One of several who came from other countries and cultures testified that McCarrick explained that his sexual behavior was, "the way it's done in this country".

These men are well situated in their power base; they have done a lot of good for the institution; their public reputation remains unquestioned. They have risen to levels of power and authority that make them invincible and immune to criticism.

Rome is our only recourse.

