PERVERSION OF POWER WHEN MOURNING NEVER COMES

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When I was a doctoral student at Adelphi University in the 1980s, Morris Eagle, a respected senior psychoanalyst gave an afternoon colloquium during which he was asked to reflect on what characterized a successful therapeutic journey. He responded that, after decades of practice, he could say that patients who "got better" were those who could and would mourn while those who could not or would not mourn tended to experience more limited growth over the course of a psychoanalysis.

Now with almost as many years of practice experience as Morris had then, I can say that I agree with him wholeheartedly. While Eagle referred to psychological growth that afternoon, I propose that a failure to mourn impedes psychological, relational, social, political **and** spiritual growth. Further, I contend that the Catholic crisis of corrupted power, mis-defined as a sexual abuse crisis, has been marked by a colossal failure of mourning among too many within almost every Church constituency. This failure to mourn has influenced corrupt power plays among the hierarchy; manic attempts to restore the forever gone among some victims; denial, silence and empty platitudes among many priests; and studied naivete among a large portion of laity. So – in other words, I may offend everyone sitting here tonight! But, let me begin anyway……

Introduction to Mourning

No one makes it from the cradle to the grave without confronting deep, even heartbreaking, disappointments, betrayals, and losses. There are life's inevitable losses. From the pre-schooler who is rushed to the ER with a burst appendix and has to spend Halloween in the pediatric ward instead of trick or treating with his fellow goblins and ghouls; to the high school senior who gets only a one-page rejection from her first choice college; to the husband and father who comes back from lunch on Friday to find a pink slip announcing his part in the latest corporate downsizing; to the marathon running 50-something year old whose annual mammogram shows a nasty lump; to the ninety-year young senior widowed after 60 years of good enough marriage; we all are subject to assaults that shift the ground we once found firm and challenge much of what we thought we knew about life, people, ourselves and the Divine.

There are also perhaps deeper and more profound losses that are served up by those we respect, love, and believe we can trust because of their position in our lives or because they say we can. There is the 10-year old girl who wakes up with her father's penis pressed against the small of her back and, worse perhaps, the mother who will not believe it happened; there is the husband who, while looking for the car keys in his wife's purse, finds a love-letter email from another man showering her with the kind of bouquets the husband has forgotten

to bring home in years; there are towers tumbling to the ground on a gorgeous September morning in the central city of a country thought to be invincible; and there is an unending cascade of revelations that the shepherds of a church, once reverenced as the fountain of spiritual succor and access to the Divine, are breathtakingly indifferent to their flock, seemingly focused only on preservation of their own enclaves of privilege and prestige.

These relationally mediated losses constitute betrayal traumas, defined by cognitive psychologist, Dr. Jennifer Freyd, as occurring "when the people or institutions we depend on for survival violate us in some way. Betrayal trauma produces conflict between external reality and a necessary system of social dependence." The more profound the betrayal and the more vital to survival the betrayer is, the more likely it is that the trauma will be denied, dissociated, or diminished by both the victim and the bystander who consciously or unconsciously insist on maintaining an attachment to the victimizer on whom they depend for some aspect of survival, including at times spiritual survival. This process of distortion is amplified when the betrayer indeed threatens physical, psychological, or spiritual death if the integrity of that victimizer is challenged. External truth too often is twisted and reconstructed by individuals, families, or communities intent on maintaining a dependent relationship with those who betray them. Here, there is no space for mourning and growth.

What IS Mourning Anyway?

First, let's look at what mourning IS or can be. At its most accessible, mourning involves sadness that something has been lost. Loss is registered and the grieving person knows and feels that something or someone is missing. When loss is permanent, the experience of grief is deep and can last for some time, as any one of us who has lost a loved one well knows.

Loss can and should be laced with anger and anger does not have to be rational. "It's not fair, we rail. Why us? How could he, she, they, God LET this happen?" Denial and anger may volley back and forth. Repudiation -- "No, this CANNOT have happened – I won't believe it – she'll be back tomorrow – I dreamed this" interweaves with our anger that it did happen and something or someone is gone forever. It is also a normative aspect of mourning to rage at the lost loved one or group. "He should have exercised more to protect his heart! How could she cause me this pain? What's wrong with them?"

In healthy mourning, anger and pain inform and modulate each other. Anger is a life force that can temporarily alleviate searing pain while pain takes some of the temperature out of rage. Gradually, both become bearable and fused, rather than overwhelming and bifurcated.

Part of mourning also involves reminiscing or nostalgia. We relive times with the loved and lost. At first, we may idealize the lost, imbuing them with unadulterated haloed qualities. Over time, however, the successful mourner remembers and integrates the warts and truly irritating, hurtful aspects of the lost.

When things go well, what is memorialized is a three-dimensional internalized construction of a real person, organization, church, or nation with all its generosity and love and all its capacity for cruelty and indifference. Here, a perspective reasonably close to what once was external reality is preserved.

When things do not go so well, nostalgia impedes mourning. "Ah, yes, I remember it well," sings Maurice Chevalier with a dreamy look on his face, as he obviously experiences the bittersweet and fantasied-imbued memories of youth. Hermione Gingold, while also calling up the memories, has perhaps done a little more work on mourning and can bear a bit more clarity. Chevalier's nostalgia is laced with idealization of another time that exists mostly in his imagination and perhaps displays a yearning to restore what never was. Hermione tells it like it was while still enjoying tipping her toes into a time long gone. He has an idealized view of himself, of her, and of them as a potential couple; she can love reliving the day, but remembers how it ended.

Nostalgia in moderation, like Hermione's, brings back the smells, tastes, body sensations, and affects of a remembered lovely time. It nourishes our souls and links us to who we once were. Nostalgia reflected on and unpacked can actually be an anteroom to mature mourning. Carried too far, however, nostalgia morphs into a destructive mania that denies reality and insists that an unadulterated past that never was be recalled as real and indeed restored. Too many Catholics for too long have been enshrouded in a nostalgic haze of incense

and candlelight within which longstanding perversions of power are dreamily denied.

Another room in the house of mourning is mirrored and challenges us to self-reflect. What do we celebrate and regret about our own side of a relationship with the lost? How did we fail them and how did we support them? Can we live with who we were in the relationship? As incomplete mourning idealizes the lost, it can also lead to self-idealization. There was NO reason for him to break up with me; I loved him SO much. I was the PERFECT employee; my boss is an ass to have fired me. Here, we cling in brittleness to a fantasied perfect self, entitled to a pass in suffering this loss or maybe any other.

On the other hand, when a betrayal trauma has been levied by a person or group through which our identity in fact is essentially constructed and sustained, and on which we feel greatly dependent for psychic, physical or spiritual survival, we may maintain idealization of them and take on the blame for loss ourselves. "If they betrayed me, I must have deserved it. Well, it was bad but they did their best. They did not mean for it to hurt so much." Or as psychoanalyst Ronald Fairbairn poignantly describes the dilemma of the abused child, "It is better to be a sinner in a world ruled by God than to live in a world ruled by the Devil." The sinner can hope for redemption; if the devil is in charge there is NO hope. In this case, we dissociate, deny, or minimize betrayal in order to continue to belong. Once again, mourning grinds to a halt and distortion of self, other, the world, and the Divine dominates.

Mourning is long and it is complex. I think the Jews and Muslims are onto something when they bury their dead immediately and enter a year of mourning that symbolically creates space for the WORK of mourning. Those faiths also discourage change and big decisions for that year, again acknowledging the vulnerability of the mourner and the time needed to sort through and renew. When the process has gone well, the mourner emerges with sadness laced with hope and with internalized visions of self and the lost that are three-dimensional, multi-faceted, and carry truth for the mourner and those around her.

So Why Do We Need Mourning?

And why do we need mourning? Mourning – the soul searing, gut wrenching process of grieving and gradual relinquishing - cleanses mind, spirit, and psyche to go on after loss; to reconstitute self, relationships with others, hopes, dreams and beliefs in a reintegrated and renewed engagement with ongoingness. Mourning hurts like almost nothing else does; it throws us to the floor, tears at our limbs, empties our tear ducts, and exhausts our soul. As my kids might say, mourning "sucks." Indeed, it sucks us down and out into a dark night, which at the time can seem endless. Even when we have support through the process of grieving, mourning is essentially a solo endeavor and that terrifies us. It presages death in which the ultimate loss is our own being.

As there is beauty in the drawing down of day and even in the mysterious shadows of midnight, however, there is also the promise of renewal and restoration inherent in mourning. We need night to renew and restore our bodies, psyches, and souls. So too we need the dark night of mourning to register, honor, and wrap ourselves around loss in order to revitalize; to greet ourselves, others, and the Divine in the fullness of a new day and through a self that is new in some ways too. To be trite, when we are doing our mourning well, we are sadder, but wiser. We have earned the wisdom of those who have looked and have been willing to see; who have heard and have been willing to listen; who have courageously stood in the painful truths of loss, betrayal, and gone-for-everness. "Things" may not be better, but WE are better. Mourning, in other words, ushers in morning and, without it, night prevails even if the sun is shining.

When Mourning Never Comes

So what happens when mourning is refused?

Mourning is repudiated in different ways. We refuse to believe the loss is permanent and we manically try to restore it – shrines are erected, possessions are never relinquished, compensatory relationships are never formed, memories are twisted to reflect wish rather than history. We continue to go to the same toxic wells hoping for refreshment and we do the same darn things over and over and over, sure each time that the outcome will be different – the popular definition of insanity. In another avoidance of mourning, we take guilt and

shame that may be embedded in our perceptions of our relationship with the lost and harm ourselves directly or indirectly through things like substance abuse, sexual acting out, isolation, and so forth. Or, we select someone or something defined as "other" onto whom we redirect anger at the lost or at ourselves; anger that may frighten us, feel too powerful to bear, or threaten still pressing internalized attachment bonds that survive the loss of the external individual or group.

Vamik Volkan is a psychoanalytic psychiatrist and founder of the International Society of Political Psychology, an interdisciplinary group representing psychology, psychiatry, political science, sociology, history, and anthropology. His book, *Killing in the Name of Identity*, addresses, among other concepts, the national and international consequences that ensue when members of large identity groups, like the Catholic Church, fail to mourn. Volkan says that when an injury subjectively experienced as betrayal is levied on a large group, members of the group are destabilized and their sense of security is threatened. The affects and fantasies associated with large group identities are usually hidden behind rationalized, real-world considerations and political, legal, historical, economic, and moral arguments. I would add theological arguments into the mix. He points out that large group identity is saturated with tribal, ethnic, religious, nationalistic, and/or political ideology. It is forged in childhood and is so powerful that it is rarely shed in adolescence when other identifications with family, culture, community are at least temporarily cast aside in the search for

individuality. (I have an aside here that supports that particular point. One night at a time in my 50s at which I was volleying between the Episcopalians and the Methodists on Sundays, my husband took me to the ER with some malady. When the admitting nurse asked my religion, I said, “Protestant.” My husband cracked up, asserting that only a Catholic would identify herself, once lapsed, as a “Protestant.” Or, as he later said, you can take the girl out of the Catholic Church; it is much more challenging to take the Catholic Church out of the girl! My own mourning continues.). Customs, rituals, dances, folk songs, dress amplify identification of the large group as “us” and not “them.” When the large group identity is threatened, “we” are more tenaciously idealized while “others” are equally devalued and even demonized.

Large groups can have substantial smaller identity groups within them. For example, post-9/11 Americans, through amplification of their large group identity, were more cohesive, idealized the nation more fiercely, identified and passionately hated an enemy most never thought about before that day. Flags waved and anthems rang out as we girded for battle against an enemy we were sure we knew but had difficulty pinning down and defining in a consistent way. Within the large group, however, there were even more tightly identified groups like firefighters whose sense of betrayal sometimes extended to the large group within which they were embedded and by which they felt misused and unnecessarily exposed to danger as, for example, during the many months of Ground Zero clean up.

It is in some aspects the easy case when the large group is betrayed from what is considered an external source – Osama bin Laden, Al Qaida, all Muslims depending on the size of the net one feels the need to cast. The repudiation of mourning is a team sport then that temporarily restores an ersatz sense of security through intensified we-ness. To paraphrase Pogo, we have seen the enemy, he is not us, but we know who he is, and we're going to get him. Mourning is submerged in rage and exclusivity – we are okay, they are not. The badness is out there while goodness and heroism is in here. Not many Americans immediately post-9/11, for example, wanted to enter a hall of mirrors that might reflect back some reasons why some Muslims might plausibly feel murderous towards us. Understanding the **context** of betrayal was merged with acceptance of the **acts** of betrayal and thus could not be processed. We literally could not think.

If this situation is complex, it is even more so when one or more segments of a large identity group betrays another sub-group or sub-groups and then denies that the betrayal occurred. Which brings us to the Catholic Church whose various constituencies have, in my opinion, defended against a necessary and creative mourning for a very long time.

Mourning is Missing in the Catholic Church

One strategy to contain mourning is to cram it into a forced temporality and perhaps even to mislabel it. We refer to 9/11 as if it were one day in what I

think is an attempt to box it into a bearable container. In fact, however, the context and causes of 9/11 preceded that day by decades and the consequences will be felt for many more. In some ways neither the beginning nor the end of the historical, religious, economic, cultural, and geopolitical currents producing and emanating from September 11, 2001 are easily located, which is scary. Similarly, the Catholic "sexual abuse crisis" which ostensibly began or at least was noticed by many within and outside the Church in 2002, neither began in 2002 nor primarily is about sexual abuse. Rather, the crisis of Catholicism began on the shores of Galilee shortly after Jesus's death and has always been about power – Who wields it? Over whom? How do they keep it for themselves? What do they do when someone tries to get some power of their own?

What the sexual abuse issue made public is the extent of longstanding perverted power plays imposed by a monarchy on its people who, in turn, took it because the lords handed out bread – literally and symbolically – when the serfs were hungry and administered punishment when they were bad, threatening eternal damnation if cooperation waned. The monarchy, of course, was the sole source of defining badness and lack of cooperation, which in secular history usually meant when the serfs struggled to assert some legitimate power of their own.

This is important. When we name a sexual abuse crisis as the essential problem, we imply that if we stop sexual abuse, if we make some kind of recompense to the victims, the crisis is over. There is a size and a shape to the

problem and we just have to figure out how to solve it. And many people, Catholic and otherwise, have spent the last decade trying to do just that. The bishops sign a charter they pretend will make all this go away, the National Review Board pretends to enforce the charter and to keep the bishops in line, dioceses pretend that local review boards are informed and empowered to keep kids safe in those dioceses, some victims pretend that all *they* want is to keep kids safe and have no power and prestige lusts of their own, some plaintiff attorneys pretend that its not about the money at all, many priests pretend that they can serve with integrity in a castle crumbling with moral rot, the laity pretends that the good the church does outweighs the costs it extracts from them and they pretend their "faith" is different from their attachment to the Church.

Failure to mourn is rampant so external truths are sacrificed at the altar of inclusion in the club. It is all hogwash, of course, and it all comes tumbling down like the world trade towers did when we rename the crisis as a centuries long attack on the teachings of Jesus perpetrated by an all-male kyriarchy whose primary consistency has been to maintain their own power no matter the cost to anyone. Monarchical Catholicism and Jesus parted ways long ago and lots of people have pretended not to notice or have compromised their ability to think broadly and deeply, to trust their own spiritual compasses, to fashion their own authentic and personal relationship with the Divine and with Jesus of Nazareth who eschewed secular and even theological power when it was laid at his feet.

So, what needs to be mourned here is not just the unholy sacrifice of the young (which surely does need to be mourned), but the failure of Catholicism's promise to bring the teachings and the inclusive love of Jesus for ALL humankind into the world. What mostly has to be mourned is our own loving and sincere investment in a very long-running theater production whose directors told us they were conveying truth; not just "a" truth, but "the" truth, the central truth of Christianity and of a spiritual realm to which they assured us they were the divinely appointed gatekeepers. Our acknowledgment of their power over our souls was the token needed to pass through the gate. These imperial and papal bouncers, however, from Constantine to Benedict, have had no clothes on. Or, rather, their ermines, silks, and jewels always have been cloaks elegantly draped to obscure naked power.

We, former and current Catholic laypeople, have to mourn what it has cost us to live into the myth that the Catholic Church was the only Jesus-approved path to the Divine and to spiritual authenticity and fullness. The sexual and spiritual ravaging of our young is only part of the price we paid. Rather, the surviving victims crying out in the public square are who they are AND they are the symbolic heralds of realities, of crimes, of truths that many Catholics still refuse to hear or see or feel within their hearts. The victims are, in one of their incarnations, modern day prophets warning the monarchy, ""But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue and every kind of garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should

have done without neglecting the others. Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the chief seats in the synagogues and the respectful greetings in the market places. Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without knowing it." I have often said that were Jesus to return today, he would head straight for St. Peter's Square to call out the power perversions of the pope and his pharasitic court. Now, as then, the most likely outcome would be for the Temple Guards (Swiss these days) to call the Romans to get the problem out of their way. I am not so far off, as we have seen, when victims tried to enter into or leave letters at the Vatican and were rebuffed and sternly sent away by the Swiss Guards.

So we must mourn the deceptions and betrayals of our Church as well the sometimes studied naivete and thought-less collusion with perverted power that we may have enacted for decades. To that extent, we must first walk a hall of centuries-old portraits and landscapes and we must recognize each one of them as holding an aspect of truth. There is the poignancy of greatest love in the Pieta and sheer exuberance and trust in replicas of John XXIII's signatures on Gaudium et Spes and Pacem in Terris. There are portraits of heroism like Angelo Roncalli with a stack of forged baptismal certificates that defied both Church and state, saving the lives of hundreds of Jewish children; photographs of Oscar Romero standing for and with freedom in El Salvador; and a carved tribute to Dorothy Day caring for the poor. Also note, however, portrayals of the trial of

Galileo, the reproduction of Humanae Vitae, and the photo of John Paul II embracing Marcial Maciel as a special favorite.

Then, we must steel ourselves for an honest meandering through another hall, this one walled with mirrors. We must hurt and grimace in pain in order to put into multidimensional perspective the joys, graces, and moments of spiritual elevation we attribute to our Catholicism alongside clear eyed analysis of the duplicity and shadow boxing with truth to which we were subjected and with which we colluded. It is only when each of us has done the work of mourning well that we can decide our spiritual futures with wholeness and authenticity. For some like me, leaving the Church is the only option of integrity, although I still yearn for the Church that I loved and felt loved by for many years. When nostalgia beckons me towards a pipe dream of what could be for me, I force myself to remember the perversions and the gross misogyny of the monarchy and I literally feel myself waking up, fog clearing from my vision. Sometimes then, I soothe myself with Gregorian chant on my i-tunes; sometimes I pound out Bob Dylan protest songs at the top of my lungs. While no one can dictate what path holds integrity for any of you, neither leaving nor staying will work well if mourning is incomplete.

And what of those priests of integrity Voice of the Faithful wants to support? In all the research I did for my books, with all the priests with whom I have spoken, the only priests of integrity I have met so far are Ken Lasch and Tom Doyle and he's not an active priest anymore. To me, unless a priest

preaches the divergence between Gospel values and Church values every week, unless a priest speaks out publicly every time his bishop betrays his priests or his people, unless a priest publicly speaks HIS spiritual truths about the social issues of the day, unless a priest tells his congregation every time priestly misconduct is identified and overlooked, I cannot regard him as a priest. Here, I adhere to the words of one of my heroes, Eli Wiesel, who said and has lived out, "I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."

I do get it – many priests wearily told me they would leave but need the pension, the benefits, and or do not know what else they would do – but I cannot be at peace with it. If you stay and do not speak out, to me, you are part of the problem. If you disagree with the institutional Church on given issues and stay and do not speak out, you are a bigger part of the problem. The priest who has done his mourning well may stay, but will speak and keep speaking at whatever the costs. Easy for me to say, I know, but Tom did it and took the consequences; Bishop Gumbleton did it and took the consequences, Bishop Geoffrey Robinson of Australia has done it and has taken the consequences, Ken Lasch did it and suffered the consequences; consequences that included rejection and disparagement by most of their fellow priests. Each of these men is a gift of and to the Spirit and each I think has done his mourning. Surely Tom has and having met Bishop Robinson and Ken Lasch, I would say they have as

well. They are battered and betray the suffering they have witnessed and wrestled with on their deeply lined visages, but they are at peace and offer peace to others. They have mourned.

And what of the victims of sexual abuse? As a clinician who has worked for almost three decades with adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, including clergy abuse survivors, I am deeply concerned about the apparent absence of mourning among some groups of survivors.

There comes a time in the recovery of survivors when they fully comprehend their losses. Further personal growth and healing requires that, at that point, they mourn the childhood or adolescence that never was, the defensively idealized caretakers who never existed, and, perhaps most poignantly, the self that could have been had hope and possibility not been shattered. This is a searingly painful process that draws on every strength and resource they have developed in earlier stages of recovery. Both therapist and patient struggle with darkness, hopelessness, and despair as the enormity of loss descends into the treatment room. It is the therapist who, hopefully having done his or her own mourning in life, symbolically holds the patient steady, reassuring both of them that this agony is on the road to greater wholeness.

Quite understandably sexual abuse survivors may act to avoid the mourning necessary for them to continue to move on from the abuse and all that was stolen from them. It is often at this point in recovery that the survivor is able to give full reign to fantasies of revenge in which the abuser and his protectors

are forced to pay, to make restitution for the lost youth and potential self. Launching a lawsuit against the perpetrator and his abettors may be one strategy that seems to offer more than mourning. No matter the amount of the ensuing settlement, however, a residue of emptiness and lost hope often persists. At the core of the survivor's being, the worst has happened once again; she or she has been paid to go away while life goes on relatively unscathed for the perpetrator and, even more, for those who shielded him. Only when the suit is over, the lawyer has moved on to other cases, and the media has bigger news to report may the survivor realize that, in all the ways that count, nothing has changed.

Since 2002, I have had two incompatible relationships with the lawsuits filed against the Church. (To fully disclose the nature of one side of the relationship, I have served as an expert witness in a handful of cases.) From a social justice perspective, they are the ONLY strategies that have created movement within the Church and precious little of that has occurred at the higher levels. They have raised the consciousness of this country and others about the devastation of sexual abuse and, in the best of cases, they CAN empower healthy efforts on the part of survivors to become agents in their own lives. From a healing perspective, however, lawsuits can impede mourning and thus healing by keeping the survivor stalled in anger and/or in the fantasy that a substantial settlement will make it all better. We have seen too many suicides take place the night before or the day a suit is filed, or when the checks are cut

and mailed, not to be concerned about the potential harmful effects on some survivors who delay mourning in order to sue.

In the end, whether survivors of sexual abuse sue or not, they have to mourn the youth that is forever gone, the faith that may be shattered, the self that did not develop as it might have. Finally then the abuse takes its proper place as a truly past part of life, as when incest survivor Louise Armstrong responds to a question about early childhood trauma:

So it doesn't go away?

Armstrong: It recedes.

I don't like that.

Armstrong: You don't have to like it. You just have to live with it.

Like a small, nasty pet you've had for years.

Finally, there is the failure to mourn within the monarchy itself. Volkan's work on large identity groups is germane here. The Catholic hierarchy's grip on power has been under siege for decades in this country. Through what Gene Kennedy eloquently terms the "Brick & Mortar" stage of American Catholicism, roughly taking us into the sixties, the monarchy ran a reasonably successful totalitarian state as the majority of the laity "prayed, paid, and obeyed" as the saying goes. Trust in the rightness of Church teachings and in the necessity of following them were engrained within the laity who responded in somewhat autonomatic fashion to lists of acceptable books, movies, sexual practices, and marriage laws.

With the 1960s came radically different views of authority and authoritarianism that continue to be refined today. Social and political events like government duplicity about Vietnam, Watergate and Nixon's pardon, the Iran-Contra debacle, combined with scandals at long trusted companies like Archer Daniels Midland, Enron, and Worldcom have left many American less willing to blindly trust governments, politicians, companies, business magnates, and religious leaders. Assumed authority was waning with authorized power becoming more and more necessary for someone or some institution to lead successfully. And women were among those deciding who to authorize to share power with them, not hold it over them.

Catholics had their own watershed moment when, against the advice of the majority of his consultants, Pope Paul VI issued *Humane Vitae*, which reaffirmed papal prohibitions against artificial contraception and has been cast as the Church's Vietnam War. It was rejected wholesale by Catholics and began a still-continuing de facto disempowerment of the monarchy to control the moral lives of Catholics. Today, less than 15% of Catholics believe contraception is wrong and more Catholic women than Protestant women have abortions every year.

How has the monarchy responded to all this? Not with mourning their losses in any apparent way and then growing or growing up. Rather, like Volkan's large identity group, they have steadfastly denied that there is anything wrong with them or their teachings and, in so doing, have enacted an almost

flawless exemplar of the large identity group that refuses to mourn or self-reflect. If dress consolidates identity and power, let's bring back the cassocks, birettas, and cathedral-length silk trains we wore back in the day. If customs and rituals increase group identity and authority, let's publish a new/old missal that convolutes language and amplifies our role as interpreters of the Word (or the words) because no one else can pronounce them, much less access their meaning.

Like guests at a Mad Hatter's Tea Party, lords and princes sip sherry with the king and reassure themselves that they know the truth and teach essential truths; truth that the enemies of the realm "out there" want to destroy. Enemies du jour have included priests sassy enough to use their minds and voices in opposition to papal bulls; victims and their families who, not knowing their place, question and fight and demand justice; media cast as resolutely anti-Catholic and often Jewish; homosexuals who for some reason it is believed and touted want to have sex with animals as well as with the other men they love; and, of course, women who have the ungodly gall to want to exert some authority over the functioning of their own reproductive systems. Damn that Eve and her apple!

Throughout the ten years of the contemporary sexual abuse crisis, we have witnessed a monarchy that denies the problem, minimizes the problem, assigns the problem to other sources, and disclaims any real responsibility for the problem. Apologies are made and gestures offered, but they are those of dukes of the castle extending a paternalistic nod to the village baker whose

daughter was raped by the duke's son. As Tom Doyle has said repeatedly, the hierarchy is terribly offended at being held accountable for the sexual and spiritual ravaging of souls but remains essentially unmoved by the offense itself. Echoing Doyle, Greeley asks of the hierarchy, "How can one be guilty of so many objective mortal sins and not break down in pain? Why don't they rush off to monasteries to expiate?" In other words, why don't they mourn?

Perhaps they do not mourn because they know at heart that sex abuse is the tip of the iceberg. Perhaps they appreciate more than most that perverted power, symbolized by the sexual abuse crisis, is a many tentacled Shelob guarding the entrance to Mordor. Maybe for them, it is too late to mourn, too late to change, and we have to wait for our hobbit friends, Frodo Baggins and Sam Gamgee, perhaps emerging as today's victims and advocates, to blow up the whole mess by destroying the ring of power so something decent can be built again from the ground up. In the meantime, we all can do our own mourning so we are ready if that day comes.

I will close tonight as I did when I spoke to the bishops in Dallas a decade ago. May great grace walk with you and guide you in the days to come. It has been a great grace for me to address you tonight.