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The Sexual Abuse Crisis in the Roman Catholic Church:
What Psychologists and Counselors Should Know

Thomas G. Plante ^{1,2,3} and Courtney Daniels ¹

Recent events regarding child sexual abuse committed by Roman Catholic priests in the Archdiocese of Boston and elsewhere have yet again resulted in a tremendous amount of media attention and frenzy regarding this topic. During 2002 alone, approximately 300 American Catholic priests, including several bishops, were accused of child sexual abuse. Many were forced to resign their positions while others were prosecuted and went to prison. Curiously, there still exist many myths and misperceptions about priests who sexually abuse children and their victims. Since psychologists and other mental health professionals are likely to interact with many who have been impacted by these recent events, it is important for them to have some basic understanding of the various myths and misperceptions about sexual abuse committed by Roman Catholic priests.

KEY WORDS: clergy abuse; Catholic Church; psychology.

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The recent sexual abuse scandals in the Roman Catholic Church, highly publicized since January 6, 2002 beginning with an investigative report published by the Boston Globe (Boston Globe Investigative Staff, 2002), has resulted in an almost hysterical national and international response to the allegations, convictions, resignations, and cover ups of priest sex offenders. All of the major newspapers, magazines, and television news programs throughout the United States and much of the world reported on the many cases of Catholic priests who engaged minors in sexual activity during the past several decades. The crisis resulted in daily headline news for much of 2002. Many people called for the resignation or defrocking of not only the priests accused of sexual misconduct but also the various bishops, cardinals, and other religious superiors who were responsible for supervising these men and assigning them to their priestly duties. The most notable example was the call for Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston to resign. Remarkably, 58 Boston area priests (Paulson, 2002a) as well as the 25,000-member Boston-based Catholic reform organization, Voice of the Faithful, demanded that Cardinal Law resign (Mehren, 2002). Finally, on December 13, 2002, Pope John Paul II accepted Cardinal Law's resignation. Catholics and non-Catholics alike have been furious with Church leaders for not better protecting unsuspecting children and families from sex offending priests. Calls for reform have also been voiced about other challenging and controversial issues with the Roman Catholic Church such as the prohibitions against women, married, and homosexual priests. It is unlikely that the American Catholic Church has experienced a more difficult crisis in our lifetime (Boston Globe Investigative Staff, 2002; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2002a).

*What the does the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church have to do with
psychology and related fields?*

First of all, approximately 25% of the American population identify themselves as being Roman Catholic (Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, 2000). Additionally, countless people (Catholics and many non-Catholics alike) have received elementary, secondary, and/or university education through Catholic schools and universities (McDonald, 2002). Furthermore, each year over 7 million Americans receive social and medical services from Catholic Charities while Catholic hospitals are the largest non-profit healthcare provider in the United States with over 800 facilities treating over 70 million patients each year (Catholic Charities USA, 2000; Flynn, 2000). Therefore, an enormous subset of the American population have had or continue to have direct contact with priests, other Catholic clergy such as religious sisters and brothers, and the Catholic Church in general at least in some capacity. Thus, because of the large number of people affiliated with the Catholic Church and their social and medical services, most psychologists and other counselors either personally or professionally interact with colleagues, students, clients, patients, or others who are touched by the Catholic Church.

Second, the crisis in the Catholic Church is a crisis of behavior. This includes the behavior of priests and other male Catholic clergy (e.g., brothers, deacons) who have sexually engaged with minors and Church leaders for inadequate supervision and decisions regarding how to best manage Catholic clergy who behave in problematic ways. Psychologists and other mental health professionals, by the very nature of their education,

training, experience, and work are experts on human behavior. Thus, they can offer and have offered a great deal to help with this problem (Daw, 2002).

Finally, many of the experts on these issues are in fact psychologists and other mental health professionals (see Daw, 2002; Plante, 1999a; Rossetti, 1995, 1996). Therefore, psychologists and counselors have the interest and skill to help consult and manage these issues working closely with Church officials, offending clergy, the media, child protective services, law enforcement, abuse victims and victim groups, and the Catholic laity.

COMMON MYTHS

It is remarkable that given the extensive media attention sexual abuse committed by priests has garnered, so many myths and misconceptions continue to persist about this topic. Let's examine the most common myths and misperceptions and comment on each one.

Myth 1: Catholic priests are highly likely to be pedophiles

Research from a variety of sources and authors throughout North America suggest that less than 6% of Roman Catholic priests have had a sexual experience with a minor (e.g., anyone under the age of 18). On the high estimate side, Sipe (1990, 1995) reports that 2 percent of priests are pedophiles (e.g., sexual interest in prepubescent children) while an additional 4 percent are epebophiles (i.e., sexual interest in adolescents). Thus, Sipe reports that 6% of Catholic clergy have had some sexual experience with minors. Since there are approximately 60,000 active and retired Catholic priests and brothers in the United States, Sipe's figures suggest that approximately 4,000 Catholic clergy have had sexual involvement with minors. Others strongly disagree with Sipe's findings. Loftus and Camargo (1993)

studied 1,322 priests over a twenty-five-year time frame who were hospitalized in a private Canadian psychiatric facility specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of clergy. These authors, based on analyses of more than 100 youth molesters and contrast groups of celibate, homosexual, and heterosexually active subjects, reported that 2.7 percent of the treatment population were pedophiles, while 61.1 percent experienced no sexual acting out behavior. Jenkins (2001) reports that of the 150,000 active and retired Catholic priests in the United States since 1960, only approximately 800 (less than 1%) have experienced credible accusations of sexual abuse of minors. Since the recent media attention on this topic erupted during 2002, only approximately 300 additional Catholic priests and brothers have had credible accusations brought against them (Robinson, 2002). Rossetti (2002a) reports that about 1% of Catholic priests have had a sexual experience with a child and an additional 1% has had a sexual experience with an adolescent totaling 2% of all Catholic clergy. Plante (1999a) brought together leading clinicians and researchers from across North America to participate in an edited book on this topic and a professional conference that all agreed that, based on their collective research findings and both clinical and consultative experiences, no more than 6% of priests appear to have had sexual experiences with minors.

Tragically, we know that sexual abuse of minors is not limited to Roman Catholic priests (Francis & Turner, 1995; Ruzicka, 1997; Young & Griffith, 1995). Although solid data is difficult to obtain, it is clear that sexual abuse perpetrated by clergy is certainly found among Protestant, Jewish, Muslims, and other religious groups (Francis & Turner, 1995). Our best estimates suggest that the percentage of sex offending Roman Catholic priests likely also applies to clergy members from other religious traditions (Plante, 1999c). Therefore, while the Roman Catholic Church has received the most attention, sexual abuse of minors

clearly exists among other religious leaders as well. Furthermore, physicians, psychologists, teachers, Boy Scout leaders, sport coaches, school bus drivers, and others who work closely with children and have access to them in private places include a significant subgroup of people who are sexually involved with minors. It appears to be well established that, in mental health professions, between 1 to 7 percent of female professionals and 2 to 17 percent of male professions sexually exploit patients (see Schoener, Milgrom, Gonsiorek, Luepker, & Conroe, 1989; Gonsiorek, 1995). These figures, however, predominantly reflect adult victims, and the prevalence of child and adolescent victims in these professions are too poorly researched to draw conclusions. Clearly, sexual exploitation by helping professionals in general is not unheard of. Sadly, sexual abuse of children and adolescents can be found in every area of the world and in every profession.

Furthermore, it has been well established that approximately 17% of all American women and 12% of American men report that they have had an unwanted and abusive sexual experience with an adult while they were still minors (see Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels, 1994; Rossetti, 2001a). Remarkably, about 1 in 6 of these Americans report that, as children or adolescents, they had a sexual engagement with an adult. Sadly, there is a great deal of sexual exploitation of minors by adults regardless of religious persuasion and role. In fact, some researchers suggest that approximately a sizeable number of men in the general population have had a sexual experience with a minor (Haugaard & Emory, 1989).

Contrary to public perceptions, the vast majority of priests who sexually abuse children abuse post-pubescent adolescent boys rather than latency-aged children or young girls (Haywood, Kravitz, Grossman, & Wasyliw, 1996; Plante, 1999a, Plante, Manuel, & Bryant, 1996; Robinson, Montana, & Thompson, 1993; Robinson, 1994; Rossetti, 1995,

1996; Rossetti & Lothstein, 1990). Current information indicates that the notion of sexual abusing priests primarily targeting young, latency-aged alter boys is a myth. In fact, these reports suggest that 80 percent to 90 percent of sexual abuse of children perpetrated by Catholic priests is directed towards adolescent boys (Bryant, 1999; Haywood, 1994; Haywood et al., 1996; Jenkins, 2001; Plante et al., 1996). Therefore, pedophilia among Catholic clergy appears to be rare with ephhebophilia being more typical.

Of course any sexual victimization of children by adults is horrific. When a clergy member perpetrates this victimization, the crime is especially heinous. However, no evidence exists to suggest that Catholic priests sexually abuse children or minors in general in greater proportion to the general population of adult males or even male clergy from other religious traditions. Furthermore, those who do in fact sexually engage with minors tend to do so with post pubescent boys and not pre-pubescent children and are thus not pedophiles by definition.

Myth 2: Allowing priests to marry would eliminate this problem

As mentioned above, no evidence exists that suggests that Catholic priests are more likely than male clergy from other religious traditions or men in general to sexually victimize minors. Therefore, males who are allowed to marry or engage in sexual relationships with consenting adults of their choosing are not significantly less likely to sexually victimize minors relative to Catholic priests. Furthermore, if someone cannot have a sexual relationship for any reason (e.g., religious vows, inability to find a suitable partner, marital or relationship discord) children and teens do not necessarily become the object of their desire.

Rather, consenting adults would likely become the object of their desire (Kennedy, 2001; Wills, 2000). Thus, allowing priests to marry would not eliminate the inclination of some of these men to sexually victimize minors.

Interviews with former priests have found that when asked for recommendations for what the Catholic Church can do differently to improve priestly life; a common suggestion has been to allow married men to serve as priests. There has also been a distinct change in the reasons for leaving the priesthood over time. In 1970, the main two reasons for priests resigning from the priesthood were because of disagreements with authoritative Church structures and their desire to marry. In 2000, the most prominent reason for resigning was a desire to marry and institutional criticism being far behind. In a survey of priests in the Catholic Church, 56% thought that celibacy should be optional and 12% responded that they would most likely get married if celibacy were no longer mandatory. Overall, the main reason for resignation and disagreement with the Church mandates is the issue of celibacy (Hoge, 2002). A recent poll in Boston reflects the ideas of many Catholics regarding the issue of celibacy. The survey found that 74% of Catholics in the Boston area disagree with the Church that priests should remain celibate (Paulson, 2002b).

So, if Catholic priests were allowed to marry there would certainly be a great increase in the pool of applicants to the priesthood. However, the increased number of priests would not necessarily eliminate the few men who have a predilection to sexually abuse minors.

Myth 3: Eliminating homosexual priests from the seminaries and priesthood would eliminate the problem of clergy sexual abuse of male children

Some notable American bishops such as US Catholic Conference of Bishop president, Fr. William Gregory, have made public statements that homosexual priests are at least partially to blame for the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. (Boston Globe Investigative Staff, 2002). Official Catholic Church policy does not allow homosexual men to become priests (see Gill, 2002). The Vatican's spokesman, Joaquin Navarro-Valls, recently reiterated this policy by stating that homosexuals cannot be ordained into the Catholic priesthood (Hoge, 2002). However, best estimates suggest that about 30 to 50% of Catholic priests and seminarians would describe themselves as being homosexual in orientation (Cozzens, 2002; Wills, 2000).

Many seminaries, novitiates, and dioceses maintain a "don't ask don't tell" policy or do not enforce Church teachings in this matter (Sipe, 1990). This "don't ask don't tell" policy leads to the creation of a quiet gay subculture in the priesthood. A recent survey of 1,200 priests found that 55% recognized a gay subculture within the Catholic Church (Hoge, 2002). Nineteen percent were definite in their feelings that a gay subculture exists within Catholic seminaries while 26% responded that it "probably" exists.

However, no research exists to suggest that homosexual men are more likely to commit sexual crimes with minors than heterosexual men. In fact, many men who choose to sexual abuse minors describe themselves as being heterosexual. Others describe themselves as being truly pedophiles (i.e., sexually attracted to children and not to adults at all; Groth & Oliveri, 1989).

Homosexual priests who also sexually abuse minors may be more likely to choose male victims. However, being homosexual in orientation does not, by itself, appear to put

minors at significant risk for sexual exploitation. Thus, eliminating all homosexual men from the Catholic priesthood would not stop a subset of men from sexually abusing minors.

Myth 4: Zero-tolerance (defrocking and firing all abusing priests) is the only way to deal with sex offending clergy

It is easy to demonize sex-offending priests. It is easy to maintain a “throw them out” mentality. However, defrocking or firing all sexually abusing priests would not necessarily protect children and adolescents from further abuse by these men. If the goal of “zero-tolerance” is to minimize current and future sexual victimization of children by Catholic priests, then zero-tolerance may not achieve this goal. Defrocking and terminating priests from religious life would result in these men entering secular society unsupervised. Assuming they are not incarcerated, they would be able to live and work where they please. Of course, they would need to follow the laws of the land and may need to register as sex offenders in their local communities. However, they would be minimally supervised. Remaining a priest has several advantages in terms of minimizing potential future harm to others. Under the vow of obedience, these men could be instructed by their religious superiors to live and work far away from any potential victims for the rest of their lives. Remaining a priest under vows does not mean that these men would continue doing parish or educational activities that would put them in reach of children or any other vulnerable persons. They could remain in a monastery, convent, church infirmary or a variety of other appropriate locations if they remain at some risk of harming others. The obedience vow can be used to an advantage in protecting potential future victims. They could potentially be

much more closely supervised and restricted in their activities as priests than as former priests living a secular life.

Furthermore, not all sex offending clergy are the same. Some who have been highlighted in the press have a long-standing compulsive history of predatory behavior towards minors. The Boston case that sparked the 2002 media attention involved a priest who was accused of abusing 138 victims over about 30 years. (Boston Globe Investigative Staff, 2002). Like most psychiatric disorders or problems in behavior, some individuals are more amenable to treatment than others. Furthermore, evidence suggests that offending clergy can be treated and treated effectively (Rossetti, 2002b). In fact, the relapse rate of 306 priests and other clergy who were treated at the Saint Luke Institute in Maryland between 1985 and 2002 is reported to be 4.4% (Rossetti, 2002a). While there will always be some clergy who cannot be rehabilitated, data from hospitals specializing in the treatment of sexual offending clergy (such as St. Luke's) have found very low rates of further abuse by treated clergy (Bryant, 1999; Rossetti, 2002b).

Adding to the complexity of what to do with sex offending priests is the fact that many of the victimizing priests have been victims themselves. Approximately 66% have been sexually abused as children (Bryant, 1999). Many experience other psychiatric or medical illnesses that contribute to their problematic behavior. Evidence suggests that they may experience brain damage in the frontal-temporal region of the brain impacting judgment and impulse control (Lothstein, 1999). Many also experience alcoholism, seizure disorders, personality disorders, affective disorders, and other severe psychiatric and/or medical problems (Bryant, 1999; Plante et al., 1996).

Thus, zero tolerance sounds good in theory but may do more harm than good in reality.

Myth 5: Bishops, Cardinals, and the Catholic Church in general are clueless as to how to manage clergy sexual abuse of minors

Reading the headlines about how the Boston area diocese has handled some of the more egregious cases of clergy sexual abuse, one could easily conclude that the Roman Catholic Church is incompetent in dealing with this issue. The impression is that bishops and other religious superiors have no idea how to manage priests who sexually abuse children. It is important to note that there are over 300 bishops in the United States. Religious orders (such as the Jesuits, Dominicans, and Franciscans) have provincials who lead their priests in various areas of the United States. For example, the California Province of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) includes 500 Jesuit priests and brothers from California, Arizona, and Hawaii.

Each of the bishops and cardinals individually answer to the Vatican. Therefore, unlike most large organizations that maintain a variety of middle management positions, the organizational structure of the Catholic Church is a fairly flat structure. Therefore, prior to the Church clergy abuse crisis in 2002, each bishop decided for himself how to manage these cases and the allegations of child sexual abuse by priests. Some have handled these matters very poorly (as evidenced in Boston) while others have handled these issues very well. This is also true for the religious orders. Some provincials have managed these problems well while others have not.

Therefore, while Cardinal Law in Boston has received the most attention regarding the mismanagement of clergy sexual abuse cases, other bishops or cardinals have managed these matters individually with varying degrees of competence. Decisions made in Boston do not necessarily reflect all dioceses and provinces.

Why so much attention on Catholics?

If the percentage of Catholic priests who sexually abuse minors is not significantly greater than the percentages of male clergy from other religious traditions (or men in general) who sexually victimize minors, then why has there been so much media attention on the Catholic Church? This is not an easy question to answer and there are likely a variety of reasons for the laser beam like attention on the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church has certainly had a history of acting in a highly defensive and arrogant manner regarding this topic. This has made people both inside and outside of the Catholic Church very angry. In many cases, they have not treated victims and their families with understanding and compassion. This has made victims and non-victims alike also very angry. Individual church leaders have not managed many of these cases very well, as in the example of Cardinal Bernard Law accused of allowing priests who have allegations brought against them continue to serve in the church (Boston Globe Investigative Staff, 2002).

Unlike other religious traditions and most organizations in the United States, the Catholic Church does not use lay board of directors to hire, fire, and evaluate priests or other Church officials. Local bishops (as well as other religious superiors) do not have to answer to

local boards but must answer to the Vatican. Furthermore, bishops and other religious superiors are not elected to their posts in the Catholic Church but are assigned. Therefore, if a particular religious superior such as a bishop makes poor decisions about how to manage problematic priests or other staff, they do not have the checks and balances associated with most organizations that might help to nip potential problems in the bud. Therefore, problems can spread like a virus out of control without these helpful checks and balances.

Furthermore, the Catholic Church is by far the largest continuously operating organization in the world representing about 20% of the 6 billion people on the planet. It is not a small, insular, and obscure cult or church. It impacts billions of people. The Catholic Church has also tried to be the ethical voice of moral authority for about 2000 years. The Church's often-unpopular position and standards on sexual behavior associated with contraception use, sexual activity among unmarried persons, homosexuality, and divorce make sex crimes committed by priests even more scandalous (Cozzens, 2002). Priests, unlike other clergy, are supposed to be celibate living with vows of obedience and poverty. When they error, sin, and fall from grace, it is a much bigger drop for them than for ministers from other religious traditions who are much more like us (e.g., married with children and mortgages). The intriguing secrecy and inner workings of the Catholic Church make the story of sexual abuse committed by priests fascinating and of great interest to the media and the general population (Wills, 2000). Finally, many of the 25% of Americans, who identify themselves as being Catholic, have mixed feelings about the Church. Many of the millions of Americans who have experienced Catholic education or were raised in the Church have stories of priests and nuns who were strict and difficult. Many have felt that they couldn't measure up to the impossibly high standards of the Church. In some ways, the current media

attention is a way to get back at a Church organization and Catholic clergy that may have contributed to the public feeling sinful or inadequate. Perhaps the gospel verse attributed to Jesus, “he who is without sin may cast the first stone,” is a poignant perspective of the media and public’s view on clergy sexual abuse.

Where do we go from here?

Church leaders could certainly have done more over the years to prevent sexual abuse committed by priests from occurring. This is clearly true in the now famous Boston case that sparked the current attention on this problem. Victims and their families could have been treated with more respect and compassion as well. Offending clergy could have been treated quickly and relieved from duties that placed them in contact with potential victims. Change will likely occur gradually over time through grassroots efforts by Church members, victims, and both religious and mental health professionals. Furthermore, the American bishops, with Vatican approval, have policies in place to better respond to allegations of clergy sexual misconduct and to prevent at risk clergy from having access to vulnerable children and others (US Council of Bishops, 2002a, 2002b). The current media spotlight on sex offending clergy has acted as a catalyst to examine this problem more closely and to hopefully develop interventions at both individual and institutional levels. The problem of sex offending clergy is certainly complex and lacks simple answers. Yet, at stake is the moral and spiritual authority of the Roman Catholic Church as well as the health and well being of countless priests and laypersons (Weigel, 2002).

Eight Directions

And so, where do we go from here? The following is a list of eight important directions and objectives for the future outlined by Plante and colleagues (1999c).

1. *Accept and understand the facts.* It is important to unveil and demystify the problem of clergy sexual abuse. Sadly, sexual abuse of minors by priests, ministers, rabbis, physicians, teachers, and other helping professionals do in fact occur and occur too frequently throughout the world. We must deal with this problem guided by reason and compassion rather than bias and hysteria. We must collect all of the available data and let the facts inform our thinking about this problem in order to deal most effectively with clergy abuse.

2. *Treat offending clergy.* Promising treatments have been developed for offending clergy and should be utilized. Specialized programs at treatment facilities such as the St. Luke Institute in Maryland, Southdown Hospital in Toronto, and the Institute of Living/Hartford Hospital in Connecticut have developed impressive programs with encouraging treatment outcome results as of this date. Treatment programs that have developed successful approaches should share their experiences with others.

3. *Collaborate between mental health and church professionals.* The mental health community and the leadership of the Catholic Church should join forces to protect past, present, and potentially future clergy abuse victims, and effectively diagnose and treat those clergy who offend or at high risk for offending. Perhaps the Church could utilize the services

of mental health professionals who are sympathetic to the mission and activities of the Roman Catholic Church. For example, many qualified psychologists who are practicing Catholics might be enlisted to offer their services. A trusting collaborative relationship would likely be enormously helpful to all involved (Plante 1999b; Plante, in press).

4. Treat victims. Victims and their families need both validation and treatment. Rather than experiencing victims as a threat and an enemy of the Church, victims should be provided with apologies from the Church, offered spiritual and psychological counseling, and offered attempts at restitution. Furthermore, from a practical standpoint, victims are more likely to resort to litigation when they feel that the Church does not treat them with respect and compassion. When Church authorities stonewall or frustrate victims' concerns and needs or don't take their claims seriously they invite lawsuits. Furthermore, it is important to not lose sight of the horrible consequences of clergy sexual abuse. So many victims have developed numerous psychiatric and other problems as a result of clergy abuse. Additionally, many have lost their faith in not only the Catholic Church but in God as well and thus the spiritual damage of clergy abuse is added to the psychological damage (de Fuentes, 1999).

5. Share data. Data obtained by insurance companies, the Church, treatment facilities, law enforcement, and others should be made available to each other and to researchers to develop a better understanding of this problem. Useful data are hard to obtain due to the highly secretive manner in which this data are collected and stored. Collaborative data analyses between various interested parties are likely to prove useful and informative for all involved.

Far too few mental health professionals and researchers have been able to investigate and learn about these issues due to lack of cooperation or lack of interest.

6. *Develop clear policies of intervention.* Clear Church policies for dealing with both sex-offending clergy and their victims based on state-of-the-art information are needed. Progressive dioceses and religious orders have already developed effective and thoughtful policies and procedures long before the crisis appeared in the media during January 2002. The Church crisis has now resulted in national policies for appropriately dealing with accusations of sexual abuse by priests (US Council of Bishops, 2002a, 2002b). These policies have now been approved by the Vatican. They call for, in part, a lay board to advise local bishops on how to best handle individual accusations against priests and encourage contacting law enforcement officials with any accusations. National and international standards could also be further developed and issued by the Church with collaboration from appropriate mental health and legal professionals.

7. *Train and support clergy.* Clergy need more in-depth training in the maintenance of professional and personal boundaries as well as issues related to sexuality and sexual expression. In addition to training, they may need to receive ongoing support, consultation, and direction concerning how sexuality and boundary issues emerge throughout their lives.

8. *Practice what you preach.* Common sense and compassion must be the order of the day rather than hysteria and demonization. Perhaps we should consider the words of Jesus himself as quoted in Chapter 5 of the Gospel of Matthew: “You have heard that it was said,

‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. Be compassionate, therefore, as your heavenly Father is compassionate.”

The sexual abuse crisis in the Roman Catholic Church has impacted countless numbers of people across the United States. Psychologists have an opportunity to help many who have been troubled by the crisis. This not only includes victims and their families but also clergy, rank and file Catholics who are demoralized about what has happened to their Church, and others impacted by clergy sexual abuse. The best available data, reason, and compassion can help to avoid the hysteria of the moment. Steps can and should be taken to minimize these problems in the future. Collaboration between the Church, psychologists, and other appropriate professionals is needed to avoid future problems in this area.

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