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Subject: **CATHOLICS: STAY TOGETHER DURING THIS SCANDAL**

Since credible allegations of pedophilia (sexual abuse of children) and sexual abuse of adult seminarians were leveled against Cardinal Theodore E. Mc Carrick, I have been swamped with inquiries about the lawsuit I filed in federal court in the Southern District of New York in December, 2005.

I alleged at the time that the Catholic Church was engaged in organized crime; an organized pattern of sexual abuse of children, teenagers, and vulnerable adults, and a massive cover-up by Church leadership.

It is my belief that this is what all Catholics should be focused on; namely, holding sexually abusive clergy and religious persons accountable for their sexual abuse of mainly fellow Catholics, and holding accountable Church leaders who allowed the abuse to take place and covered it up.

Many observant Catholics and reporters have found my lawsuit interesting for a several reasons one being that I tried to alert the court, judges, and the general public of the depths of the dysfunction in the clerical culture. Having spent twenty-three years as an Irish Christian Brother, two years in the seminary, one year as a deacon, and fourteen years as a priest (in other words, an insider), I witnessed the corruption of religious life, the seminary, the diaconate, and the priesthood and I consistently blew the whistle in different ways beginning in 1976.

As a twenty-four year-old annually professed religious brother, I fought to have the superior and principal of the community and school I was assigned to kicked out for being too close to some of the good-looking boys (I sensed that he was abusing them). It took me three years of constant pressure on religious superiors to get him out.

Thirty years later, I was proved correct when a number of those students in the 1970s came forward to report the sexual abuse by the same brother. But, I was punished too for whistleblowing and was transferred to another school.

I have been retaliated against ever since, but it didn't stop me from uncovering the rot in the culture of the priesthood and religious life for forty-two years. My lawsuit was an attempt to warn and alert unsuspecting and suspecting parties to the stench of the culture of religious life and the priesthood. The umbrella term is clericalism.

In my lawsuit, which contains dozens of incidents of sexual abuse of children, teenagers, and vulnerable adults, including myself, I attempted to "sing," just like those in witness protection programs snitch on the evildoers.

I was the lone voice in the wilderness for decades, I thought, but I have come to realize that a few others (very few) had the courage to whistle blow acts of criminal and non-criminal behavior and the cover-up of such by members of the Catholic hierarchy (Bishops, Cardinals, and even Popes), who knew about rampant sexual abuse among the clergy and religious and did nothing.

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Of the dozens of requests I have received from newsprint and television reporters and bloggers, many have asked this question, "Do you blame homosexuals in the priesthood for the scandal of sexual abuse?" My answer has been and always will be, "Absolutely not."

Let me be clear, and this is where Catholics have to stay together during this crisis: homosexual men do not sexually abuse anyone, for the most part, just as heterosexual men do not sexually abuse anyone, for the most part. The crisis of sexual abuse by clergymen is not an issue of homosexuality or heterosexuality.

It is a crisis perpetrated by predators of children, teenagers, and vulnerable adults who abuse their power and then sexually abuse for purposes of sexual gratification. Of course, some of the clergy predators are homosexual and some are heterosexual.

But, most homosexual priests are living their promise of celibacy and most heterosexual priests are living their promise of celibacy. The temptation to become a predator in the clerical culture is very strong and intense, and is fostered by archaic rules and regulations and dysfunctional and unsustainable practices and policies.

For example, mandatory celibacy is an unnatural rule to impose on anyone. Celibacy is a gift and those who are called to live celibate lives are given the grace to live them. However, most human beings are not called to practice celibacy, and that should never preclude them from being priests or religious brothers or nuns.

God gifts all human beings with gender identification, including homosexuality, heterosexuality, bisexuality and transgenderism. God loves all equally, and gender identification should never preclude anyone from service in God's vineyard. If the Church had not been so judgmental and bullying of people with other than heterosexual gender identification, the scandal of clergy sexual abuse would not have endured for as long as it has.

I am troubled when Catholics accuse homosexuals of creating the clergy sexual abuse crisis in the Church. It is the furthest thing from the truth. And, I plead with all Catholics to avoid blaming anyone except those who prey on children, teenagers, and vulnerable adults, and those who cover it up.

If Catholics bifurcate into conservative and liberal camps regarding the scandal of sexual abuse by clergy, they will simply not resolve the problem. Clergy sexual abuse transcends the labels of conservative and liberal in just the same way as it transcends the labels of gender identification. Many priests who might be considered theologically conservative sexually abused, and many progressive or liberal priests abused as well.

All Catholics must stay together in an effort to clean up this mess or the Church will cease to exist. If the Catholic Church is worth saving, labels must be abandoned except the labels of "predation" and "cover-up," and the clergy who practice either or both must be held accountable.