

Part Two of the marriage preparation course that began with the first article in July(4). This is from the New York Times, Business Section – an interesting source of Pre-Cana material.

Lessons in Love, by Way of Economics  
By BEN STEIN

AS my fine professor of economics at Columbia, C. Lowell Harriss (who just celebrated his 96th birthday) used to tell us, economics is the study of the allocation of scarce goods and services. What could be scarcer or more precious than love? It is rare, hard to come by and often fragile.

My primary life study has been about love. Second comes economics, so here, in the form of a few rules, is a little amalgam of the two fields: the economics of love. (I last wrote about this subject 20 years or so ago, and it's time to update it.)

In general, and with rare exceptions, the returns in love situations are roughly proportional to the amount of time and devotion invested. The amount of love you get from an investment in love is correlated, if only roughly, to the amount of yourself you invest in the relationship.

If you invest caring, patience and unselfishness, you get those things back. (This assumes, of course, that you are having a relationship with someone who loves you, and not a one-sided love affair with someone who isn't interested.)

High-quality bonds consistently yield more return than junk, and so it is with high-quality love. As for the returns on bonds, I know that my comment will come as a surprise to people who have been brainwashed into thinking that junk bonds are free money. They aren't. The data from the maven of bond research, W. Braddock Hickman, shows that junk debt outperforms high quality only in rare situations, because of the default risk. In love, the data is even clearer. Stay with high-quality human beings. And once you find that you are in a junk relationship, sell immediately. Junk situations can look appealing and seductive, but junk is junk. Be wary of it unless you control the market. (Or, as I like to tell college students, the absolutely surest way to ruin your life is to have a relationship with someone with many serious problems, and to think that you can change this person.) Research pays off. The most appealing and seductive (that word again) exterior can hide the most danger and chance of loss. For most of us, diversification in love, at least beyond a very small number, is impossible, so it's necessary to do a lot of research on the choice you make. It is a rare man or woman who can resist the outward and the surface. But exteriors can hide far too much.

In every long-term romantic situation, returns are greater when there is a monopoly. If you have to share your love with others, if you have to compete even after a brief while with others, forget the whole thing. You want to have monopoly bonds with your long-term lover. At least most situations work out better this way. (I am too old to consider

short-term romantic events. Those were my life when Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon were in the White House.)

The returns on your investment should at least equal the cost of the investment. If you are getting less back than you put in over a considerable period of time, back off.

Long-term investment pays off. The impatient day player will fare poorly without inside information or market-controlling power. He or she will have a few good days but years of agony in the world of love.

To coin a phrase: Fall in love in haste, repent at leisure.

Realistic expectations are everything. If you have unrealistic expectations, they will rarely be met. If you think that you can go from nowhere to having someone wonderful in love with you, you are probably wrong.

You need expectations that match reality before you can make some progress. There may be exceptions, but they are rare.

When you have a winner, stick with your winner. Whether in love or in the stock market, winners are to be prized.

Have a dog or many dogs or cats in your life. These are your anchors to windward and your unfailing source of love.

Ben Franklin summed it up well. In times of stress, the three best things to have are an old dog, an old wife, and ready money. How right he was.

THERE is more that could be said about the economics of love, but these thoughts may divert you while you are thinking about your future.

And let me close with another thought. I am far from glib about the economy. It has a lot of pitfalls facing it. As workers and investors, we know that many dangers lurk in our paths. But so far, these things have always worked themselves out and this one will, too. In the meantime, they say that falling in love is wonderful, and that the best is falling in love with what you have.

July 13, 2008

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This book suggests some disturbing conclusions. T.E. (not me) addresses some of them at the conclusion of this article.

The Perennial Crisis of Clerical Sexual Abuse

By Paul Bower

New Oxford Review (CA)

July-August 2008

Book Review:

*Sacrilege: Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church*

By Leon J. Podles.

Crossland Press. 675 pages. \$24.95.

*Sacrilege: Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church* is a call to arms to the laity of the Catholic Church, an attack on clericalism, and a tocsin sounding to those parishioners who would blindly follow a corrupt and evil man merely because of his collar. Thoroughly researched and painstakingly detailed, Leon J. Podles's account of the history of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy inspires anger and disgust. ...

Podles spent twenty years in Washington, D.C., working at the Office of Federal Investigations. His job duties consisted mainly of fact-checking applications for security clearances. Spending countless hours poring over both fake and authentic documents and interviewing thousands of people gave Podles the ability to accurately identify con men.

...

The purpose of Podles's in-depth examination of hundreds of sex-abuse cases in the Catholic Church is to expose a trend, a common element between seemingly isolated incidents. He hopes that in finding a common bond between the majority of offenders, it will become easier for seminaries to create adequate screening measures to keep the depraved from gaining access to the youth of the Church. Podles uncovers networks of child-abusers in the priesthood, some of which spanned entire geographic regions and crossed several diocesan borders. The most notable of these were in New Mexico and Iowa.

Podles constructs a composite of the ordained sex-abuser, which contains several key elements that constitute the personality of a man prone to abusing children. It was commonly assumed that abusive priests almost always suffered from a profound weakness around the young. This was, however, an erroneous assumption. Podles uncovers a predatory mentality inherent in most priests who've been accused of sexual misconduct with children. Podles's collected data points unilaterally to a desire for power and control, rather than sexual gratification, as the driving force behind the majority of priestly predators. Priests desire control over their victims because it makes them feel powerful, like a god. The root of this desire for power, according to Podles, is narcissism. He characterizes the abusing priest as a classic narcissist.

Podles argues that the office of the priesthood is especially attractive to narcissists, particularly since the late 1960s, when the reforms of Vatican II gave us a Mass more susceptible to becoming a showcase for charismatic or "flashy" priests who see themselves as stars in a liturgical melodrama. Being the center of attention for hundreds of people on at least a weekly basis can do terrible harm to one's sense of humility. The allure of this priestly "fame" attracts many men who can't be said to have a real vocation. While various abuses of the Faith have existed since the inception of the Catholic Church, the Western world saw a great increase of sexual abuse perpetrated by the clergy

starting roughly around the time of Vatican II. But Podles does not directly correlate the rise of sex scandals within the Church to the advent of the New Mass. He does, however, find the Novus Ordo much better suited to the personality-type of a sex criminal than the Tridentine Mass.

Podles also emphasizes the importance of forgiveness in a truly Christian life. But true love and compassion are never compatible with the toleration of mortal sin. You don't tell an abuser of intravenous drugs, for example, that you love him and care for him, and then turn around and give him clean needles. That's enablement, the opposite of compassion. Likewise, when a priest is an abuser of children, you don't make him chaplain of the local Boy Scouts. Yet this is exactly what happened when Fr. James Janssen of the Diocese of Davenport, Iowa, became a nuisance to Bishop Gerald Francis O'Keefe. Janssen had confessed to O'Keefe's predecessor, Bishop Ralph Lee Hayes, that he had molested children. Hayes did his best to keep the matter quiet, and O'Keefe, taking the reins from Hayes, decided to make Janssen the chaplain of the Boy Scouts. This type of coddling of criminals is completely insane, but it wasn't the first or last time sexually abusive priests were reassigned to positions in close proximity to innocent children.

The question we've all asked is: Why would bishops hide the abuse of children? Podles answers that this was easier than actually trying to correct the problem of sexual abuse of children by priests. Men are made bishops, says Podles, because they are adept at towing (sic) the line. The vast majority of bishops are reluctant to handle abuse cases because it would prove to be a major headache — and a major financial drain on the diocese. This headache, it would appear, is more painful to most bishops than the vicious rape of their flock, and infinitely more so than the arduous task of laicizing a priest. In the modern era, with the intensely bureaucratic nature of the Vatican, laicizing a priest involves so much red tape that such a maneuver takes years to accomplish, and most bishops would rather naïvely pray that the problem take care of itself, or merely pawn the offending priest off to another diocese. Abuse, transfer to another diocese, and further abuse is a pattern Podles finds most revolting.

Podles is not saying anything new in *Sacrilege* by bringing to light the fact that men sin, and that the clerical state makes a sin committed that much more ghastly. Where Podles breaks new ground in this book is in his insistence that the problem of ongoing abuse of the young by a single priest would not be extant if it weren't for the complicity of the laity. Podles recounts hundreds of cases of abusing priests being aided and abetted by their congregations — e.g., of parents disregarding their children's claims of abuse, of families of the abused being threatened by their fellow parishioners, of priests seen as above reproach. This book brings to light an attitude found among much of the laity that an abused child would simply “bounce back” from grave sexual abuse once he grew up, that it really wasn't that big of a deal anyway. Surely not big enough to prevent Father from preaching his wonderful, self-esteem-boosting sermons.

*Sacrilege* ends on a hopeful note, with Podles giving credit to Pope Benedict XVI for putting into practice a process whereby the investigation of alleged abuse will become

more transparent than in previous papacies. He also cites several dioceses that have made their records available to investigators of abuse cases.

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If Podles is as Bower says he is, then I am more than chagrined and angered. I am furious. I vigorously disagree with his (their) analysis. Sexual abuse is not the result of poor screening, ... and to say it is a result of a narcissism generated by the Vatican II Mass is itself as pathological and reactionary as any opinion I have heard to date. In my opinion, Podles reveals himself (in Bower's review) to be a pre-Vatican II ideologue - a 'Tridentine Catholic.' As such you can expect there will be no criticism of the institution, either as to doctrine or practice. All blame will be heaped exclusively on individuals - whether they be bishops, clergy, laity - but never on the 'Church' and its teachings on faith and morals.

[On] the contrary, I submit that the Catholic sexual abuse phenomenon is the direct result of major defects in Catholic Christian Ideology, traceable to its roots in ancient Greco-Roman philosophy and religious prejudices. The Catholic doctrine and practice that formed us as priests produced sexually immature individuals. It was itself the sufficient and necessary 'cause,' and therefore 'explanation,' of the sexual abuse that has transpired ... include[ing] all those things we have yet to hear about.

*T.E.*

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Pope Benedict was responsible for clerical discipline during the reign of John Paul the Second. Why would one suspect greater transparency now that he is Pope? And is it enough that "several dioceses" have made their records available to investigators. Is there *any* excuse for those that have not?

I feel that the liturgy of the Second Vatican Council compelled priests to be *more* transparent. We couldn't hide when we were celebrating mass. The people could tell when Father was a phony. They could tell when he was a narcissist. They could also tell when he was sincere. It was just as easy to "perform" in Latin. The reason that more cases have been revealed post-Vatican II is that the press and the laity have stopped protecting the perpetrators and the enablers. We now are beginning to hear about a crime that has existed for a long, long time.

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Papal Bull: Sex, Lies and Vatican-tape

Edward Lozzi

Huffington Post (NY)

July 15, 2008

"Pope Benedict said that during the 10-day visit to Australia he would work for "healing and reconciliation with the victims" of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy there "just as I did

in the United States" earlier this year." - Reported by The Associated Press - Sunday July 13, 2008

Pope Benedict is in Australia and apparently about to pull the same media stunt of faux concern for the victims of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy that he pulled in the United States in April of this year; a carefully-orchestrated media strategy that led many US commentators to hail what appeared to them to be the Pope's courage and decency in meeting with five U.S. victims of clergy sex abuse.

In June, Archbishop Pietro Sambi, the US representative of the Pope was asked about the Pope's April visit and its impact on the sex abuse issue. Sambi claimed that the idea that the Vatican had not understood the gravity of the sex abuse issue had disappeared. "The Pope has shown the way to finally overcome this humiliating conduct."

This is all Papal Bull.

I am a supporter of S.N.A.P., the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, the largest organization of clergy sex abuse victims in the United States. It has over 8,000 members. For the past five years, my media company has provided services pro-bono to SNAP in legal battles by survivors of clergy sex abuse against the Diocese of Los Angeles and its rogue Cardinal Roger Mahoney, the most powerful prelate in the U.S representing the Vatican. It is this rogue Cardinal who has obstructed justice and aided and abetted his priestly rapists, many who have been convicted or are now fugitives - on the run from arrest warrants.

The Oscar-nominated documentary "Deliver Us From Evil" (Lionsgate Films), produced by CNN's Amy Berg, proved these well-known accusations and showed documented courtroom proof beyond any reasonable doubt, on how the Vatican and U.S top cardinals such as Mahoney fight and mislead all involved, including law enforcement, victims, their families, and parishioners.

For good reason Pope Benedict, during his U.S. visit in April, avoided both Cardinal Mahoney in California, and the Diocese of Boston (both hotbeds of clergy sex abuse). The Pope had the good PR sense to avoid both of them.

I mention PR because over the years the Vatican and the Diocese of Los Angeles [have] hired the most ruthless lawyers and damage-control public relations experts that collection-box money can buy. Mahoney even hired the controversial Michael Sitrick's PR company to run damage control. When the L.A. Times and other publications published this fact, the parishioners forced Mahoney to fire Sitrick, but not until after he ([Mahoney](#)) had already paid this company \$180,000 in 2003 for only three months of services. That's a lot of "collection plate"...

The three law firms that the Diocese keeps on constant retainer, coupled with the recent \$660 million settlements paid to sex abuse victims, has caused an outrage amongst many Catholics and law enforcement officials. For the last five years my firm has had to

counter much of the misinformation, lies, and illegal actions generated by the Cardinal and his minions.

Pope Benedict's much-heralded meeting with the victims of clerical sex abuse during his April visit to the US was not his idea. The meeting was forced upon the Pope by the victims. These victims, both SNAP members and Voice of the Faithful (VOTF), had demanded a meeting. And if denied, they had promised to demonstrate peacefully everywhere the Pope went.

We were all set to go. Last year, victims of clergy sex abuse from SNAP, had completely surrounded Cardinal Mahoney's \$100 million dream cathedral in downtown Los Angeles. They held hands and held a silent vigil. Each adult wore a large photo of him or herself as a child at the time that he/she was raped or molested by one of the Diocese priests or nuns. Yes... nuns! The media had a field day and covered it extensively. So the Vatican knew we meant business.

The Pope finally agreed to meet the victims after pressure from within the Vatican. It came from Archbishop William Joseph Levada, emeritus of San Francisco, recently promoted to the number two man as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in the Vatican. Pressure came from Archbishop Angelo Amato - secretary of the same office.

And pressure came from Father Federico Lombardi, the devout Jesuit priest who is the new press secretary to the Vatican. Levada is an expert in avoiding prosecution for obstructing justice. He was subpoenaed recently to appear in Federal Court in San Francisco but asked for and received diplomatic immunity. (You see the Vatican is not just a religion - it's also a country. Helpful when those pesky parking tickets and subpoenas come in ...)

After seeing the ultimatum from the victims' organizations in April, these Vatican officials convinced Benedict to meet with the victims. It would take too long to detail here all the requirements and "special conditions" that the Vatican tried to demand for the meeting.

Pope Benedict was very uncomfortable meeting with the five representative victims who had been raped by priests and had their lives and families changed forever. This was a private meeting of course. The Pope was visibly embarrassed and in agony throughout the whole encounter. Benedict promised to end the stall tactics of his Bishops and to speed up the turning over of pedophile priests and secret documents to law enforcement. He promised transparency and a place for Catholic victims of pedophile priests in the so-called Programs of Awareness of Sex Abuse in the Church.

Ultimately that April meeting was just a publicity stunt by Benedict; a faux show of concern for the media. Three months later, not one of his promises has been acted upon. It is as if the meeting never happened.

Before being elected Pope, Benedict was "Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger" - the number two man in the Vatican during the reign of Pope John Paul. It was he who convinced the Pope to never meet with the American victims of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy because it would lead to "bad press".

And now as Pope Benedict, because of his stonewalling and his shrug of the shoulders, our children still remain at risk. He would rather protect his priests and the Holy Mother Church, than our children.

In any language - that is just Papal Bull.

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An interview from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. This is not well edited; but it raises important issues.

**The World Today - Philosopher calls for change** – July 14, 2008

Reporter: Emma Alberici

EMMA ALBERICI: This Sunday, Pope Benedict will celebrate mass in Sydney before an expected congregation numbering around half a million people. One leading Australian academic who will not be participating in the World Youth Day celebrations is Catholic academic, Max Charlesworth.

The Emeritus Professor of Philosophy with Deakin University recently wrote a book titled *A Democratic Church*, in which he discusses the conflict between the values liberal democracies take for granted and the almost totalitarian rule the Vatican seeks over its followers today.

He is calling for a return to old teachings away from the modern Catholic bureaucracy, which is virtually all male, all clerical and unaccountable to the wider Church.

MAX CHARLESWORTH: I'm not a world youth at the age of 82 and I can't give any advice to people. If young people, as they obviously do, like to get together like this, have a good time and increase their faith well, good luck to them.

But I don't think that's the future of the Church. I think these kinds of jamborees do have their own value, but really I think the troubles with the Church at the moment are much deeper than that, and require a lot more thought. You have this extraordinary centralisation of power in the Church and even in the bishops too, you know, make all the decisions and there's been very little done to help the laity to assume their rightful place, I think, in the Church.

EMMA ALBERICI: You talk about the Catholic Church in some respects being non-democratic. What's wrong with that?

MAX CHARLESWORTH: We're in this peculiar situation in Australia. For example, we have a democratic political order and we hold people accountable for what they do. You have procedures set up to resolve disputes.

We've seen that with these unfortunate cases of sexual abuse by clergy where the bishop has taken complete control of the process and simply makes his own decision. So all the hopes as I say, that there would be a limbering up of the Church that came out of the Vatican II have been dashed. ... the early Church was much more democratic in the sense that people were allowed to have their own expressions of Catholicism.

EMMA ALBERICI: I found it curious in my readings that 1,000 years ago, celibacy was not a requirement of the Catholic priesthood.

MAX CHARLESWORTH: Well it's a bit more than 1,000 years ago but its worthwhile remembering that all Christ's disciples and certainly the Apostles were married men. And you had that same view of celibacy in the orthodox churches later on when they broke away from Rome.

In some of the orthodox churches, the bishops are recruited from celibates but you have a long-standing tradition of a married clergy.

In the early days of the Church you did have a lot of local differences between the various sections of the Church, and in the present Church you have this highly centralised government of the Church which simply, you know, pushes people around and just is completely at odds at the kind of democratic values that we look forward to, expect in a democratic society.

EMMA ALBERICI: What sorts of ways do you wish the Catholic Church would democratise?

MAX CHARLESWORTH: Well, I think we could take some lessons from, for example, the Anglican Church. The laity, for example, in the Anglican Church have quite a distinct role and they play a very important role in the way the Church is governed in the sorts of leaders that they get et cetera.

And above all, in the recognition that women have equal rights with men. We have come to see at long last that women have the same value as men, so they're not stopped from standing for election, for example, becoming prime ministers and all the rest of it. In the Church that's quite impossible. So we have this discrimination against women in the Church. They don't have equal value with men.

All sorts of pseudo theological arguments are given for this in the Catholic Church whereas, in the Anglican Church, at least in Australia, this is simply not taken seriously at all.

EMMA ALBERICI: The Catholic Church of course also doesn't recognise homosexuality. Is that a change you would welcome?

MAX CHARLESWORTH: Yes. Once again, a number of theologians, liberal theologians have come to the conclusion that we've simply got [to] recognise that homosexuality is not a deviation. There is not[h]ing wrong, morally wrong about it, and that one ought to look at again - and this applies to all Christians, not only Catholics - that admitting homosexuals to full membership of the Church.

In actual fact lots of homosexuals do belong to the Church, I know a number of them who go to mass. (A few of them may even be celebrants.) They don't broadcast the fact that they are homosexuals, but they nevertheless want to have a part to play in the Church.

EMMA ALBERICI: Does this lack of democratic process you speak of explain, do you think, the drift away from the Catholic Church, particularly among young people?

MAX CHARLESWORTH: I'm not quite sure because certainly in Europe at the moment there are all kinds of groups, more or less independent groups of young Catholics. We went to a couple of masses in Paris a couple of years back which are run now by young people with rather radical views of the Church. But you don't get that here in Australia, alas.

EMMA ALBERICI: One of the reviewers of your book recently called you a "Catholic dissident reflecting the spirit of secular libertarianism rather than the Catholic scholarship". What do you say to that?

MAX CHARLESWORTH: Well, I think it's rubbish. All those democratic values I think are really Christian values as well, and I think the Church has got to wake up to the fact that it's not a dictatorship, it's not something that's run by a special group of people who are not answerable to anyone else for what they do, who are not elected by the people who they serve, et cetera.

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World Youth Day: Pope, church out of touch'

By staff writers

July 14, 2008



THE Catholic Church is "out of touch" with young people, according to a survey released to coincide with the Pope's arrival in Australia for World Youth Day.

Pope Benedict XVI touched down in Sydney yesterday and is spending the next few days recovering from jetlag at a retreat in the city's northwest. Speaking with *The Australian* on the flight from Rome, the Pope acknowledged that the church faces a fight against religious indifference among young people.

An online survey conducted by social networking site MySpace appears to show he is right. It targeted Australians aged 14 to 24 and it found 77 per cent of respondents rated the Catholic church as irrelevant to their daily lives.

More than half (53 per cent) also said they would not participate in World Youth Day events "because of the church's stance on sexuality".

One user wrote in a comment on the site that governments should not "waste so much money on a stupid event that could be much better spent elsewhere". But another MySpace user said World Youth Day was needed now more than ever. "In a world of so much pain, what is so wrong with having a bit of God's love?" "The government is footing the bill for a lot of the stuff, but only because of the influx of revenue this will bring to its coffers through tourism and all the other related industries."

The survey ran on the site for 10 days earlier this month and attracted more than 650 responses.

### **Pope's plan**

Yesterday, Benedict said he came to Australia with a mission to combat apathy and disenchantment with the church in this country.

"Many young people today lack hope," he said. But he insisted the time was right for a resurgence of faith in the Catholic message. "At this historical moment we begin to see that we need God," he said. "God is basically in the hearts of human beings and can never disappear."

The 81-year-old Pontiff's optimism contrasts with his comments in 2005 about his fears for the future of the church in Australia. "(The) so-called 'great' churches seem to be dying," he said. "(This) is particularly true in Australia."

... While he is here, the Pontiff will also issue an apology to Australian victims of abuse by Catholic priests. However victims groups have said mere words are not enough and expect Benedict to follow up with firm actions.

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Should *we* be held responsible for what we have allowed our leaders to do in our name? This is not purely a rhetorical question. It is for this evening's examination of conscience.

From *The Guardian/UK*, July 10, 2008

Should Bush Be Tried for War Crimes? The chorus demanding George Bush be prosecuted for torture and other constitutional abuses is getting louder.

I had a good laugh when my friend Seth Gitell reported in the New York Sun on a campaign by the dean of the obscure Massachusetts School of Law to put George Bush and other top White House officials on trial for war crimes.

Lawrence Velvel, Gitell notes, wrote last month that his model was the Nuremberg trials held after the Second World War. Velvel went so far as to say that, “we must insist on appropriate punishments, including, if guilt is found, the hangings visited upon top Germans and Japanese.” Oh, my.

Though I found Velvel’s apparently earnest quest as ridiculous as Gitell did, the idea of holding our leaders accountable for the crimes and constitutional violations of the past seven and a half years isn’t ridiculous in the least.

We are less than a decade removed from impeaching a president and nearly relieving him of office because of a lie in a civil deposition about [oral sex]. Yet when congressman Dennis Kucinich recently attempted to impeach Bush over torture, extraordinary rendition and other grotesque constitutional abuses, Kucinich’s embarrassed fellow Democrats couldn’t kill the measure quickly enough.

Why? Top Democrats are so complicit in what has happened since 9/11 that my guess is they dare not travel down that road. From voting in favor of the war in Iraq to holding the telecommunications companies guiltless for their role in spying on Americans (Barack Obama infuriated much of his progressive base by voting for immunity), the Democrats have often acted more as enablers than as a true opposition party. From their point of view, no doubt it’s best to move on.

And yet we can’t move on. Everywhere you turn there are reminders of the demons that have been unleashed in the name of fighting terrorism. We are less democratic and less free than we were before Bush and Dick Cheney entered office following an election that they demonstrably did not win. If we don’t come to terms with what happened, there’s little chance of reversing our slide into authoritarianism.

We shouldn’t be too optimistic. Even when the truth is proclaimed, few are willing to listen. Not long ago the McClatchy newspapers published a five-part series on what went wrong with American detention policies, mainly at Guantánamo and in Afghanistan. The massively documented stories revealed horrifying tales of torture and abuse; of innocent Afghans imprisoned for years because they ran afoul of tribal rivalries the Americans didn’t understand; of ordinary people radicalised and transformed into violent jihadists inside US-run prisons. Yet because McClatchy is not part of the media elite, its journalism has barely been mentioned by the New York Times, the Washington Post and the television networks.

... consider Vincent Bugliosi’s new book, *The Prosecution of George W Bush for Murder*, which has zoomed up the bestseller lists despite having received virtually no attention from the mainstream media. Bugliosi, a celebrity lawyer-author with a decent

reputation, argues that because Bush misled the country into the war in Iraq, he should be held criminally responsible for the deaths of American soldiers.

Finally, consider that most mild-mannered of liberal pundits, the Times' Nicholas Kristof, who on Sunday actually called for the formation of a truth commission in the manner of post-apartheid South Africa "to lead a process of soul searching and national cleansing".

The determinedly bipartisan Kristof, who did read the McClatchy series, writes that both Obama and John McCain should commit themselves to forming such a commission. For that to make sense, though, you'd have to ignore such inconvenient facts as McCain's own ambiguous stands on torture and his demagoguery over the supreme court's recent decision upholding the habeas corpus rights of those being held at Guantánamo.

... we - nevertheless must be called to account for what we have allowed to happen to our country. If we don't, then we are all responsible - if not for what happened, then for what is yet to come.

*The author, Dan Kennedy, teaches journalism at Northeastern University in Boston and blogs at Media Nation.*

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An excerpt from *Breath of the Spirit*, a weekly spiritual essay, reflecting on the scripture readings for July 20, 2008, the 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year.

...

Jesus warns that a too zealous effort to make God's kingdom perfect on earth will result in lots of good people being uprooted with those we consider to be weeds. God will eventually take care of that part of the kingdom's work. Our job is to keep planting the wheat. Jesus thinks it's important to remind us that the kingdom is God's, not ours. When we attempt to take it over it ceases to produce the results God intends.

One of our main problems is that we want God's actions to appear against the background of fireworks and blasting trumpets. It takes a special person to surface God working in an action as insignificant as a minute mustard seed or a small hunk of yeast. In each case, it'll grow into something tremendously large, if only we take the time and make the effort to plant or mix those small elements into our daily lives. This seems to be why both the author of Wisdom and Paul stress our own human limitations. ...

Paul also presumes strong-willed, judgmental people aren't the individuals Jesus wants to sign up to be proclaimers of God's presence in our world. 'The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness.' The Apostle writes 'for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit intercedes with inexpressible groaning.' True disciples have to admit they're not even certain themselves what to pray for. Without the Spirit's guidance they'd probably be praying for things which are against God's will.

Getting back to Jesus' wheat and weeds, how can we then be comfortable judging others' actions? Only 'the one who searches hearts knows what is the intention of the Spirit, because he intercedes for the holy ones according to God's will.' Often when we tear out the weeds impeding us from what we conceive of as our clear path of growth, we might actually be dead-ending God's plan of growth. ...

Be patient with theologians and preachers you don't agree with. It's possible that they may be right. (But don't necessarily discount the alternative!)

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Ex-Anglican communities to become Catholic, Rome confirms  
July 16, 2008

The Catholic Church will expand its provision of "Anglican Use" parishes in the United States in order to allow whole communities of traditionalist Anglicans into the Roman fold, a senior Catholic archbishop has announced.

The Most Rev John J Myers, Archbishop of Newark and Ecclesiastical Delegate for the Pastoral Provision, told a conference of ex-Anglicans on Friday that "we are working on expanding the mandate of the Pastoral Provision [of Catholic parishes using Anglican-inspired services] to include those clergy and faithful of 'continuing Anglican communities'.

"We are striving to increase awareness of our apostolate to Anglican Christians who desire to be reconciled with the Holy See. We have experienced the wonder of several Episcopal bishops entering into full communion with the Catholic Church and we continue to receive requests from priests and laity about the Pastoral Provision."

This is big news, and makes nonsense of the claim that Pope Benedict wants to dissuade Anglo-Catholics from converting. The obvious interpretation of the Archbishop's words is that the Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC), a "continuing church" which has hundreds of thousands of members worldwide (though few in the UK), will eventually be given its own Catholic parishes which use a Eucharistic Prayer incorporating Cranmerian language.

This possibility has existed since the 1970s, but Archbishop Myers indicates that it is only now - under a sympathetic Pope, and during the break-up of the Anglican Communion - that the Pastoral Provision is entering a new dimension.

If Rome is expanding its network of ex-Anglican parishes in America, then we can rest assured that it is sympathetic to the notion of group conversion in England. The Vatican is well aware that such a process is likely to be complicated and patchy; no one is naive enough to assume that entire parishes will "bring their buildings with them".

But the plan to found a priestly Fellowship of St Gregory the Great for ex-Anglican clergy and members of their flock seems eminently feasible, given imagination on the

part of both sides - and the courage to defy the Tabletistas who would try to sabotage the scheme.

Oh, wonderful! Because we already have a shortage of reactionary clerics in the Church! What about extending the Pastoral Privilege to progressive clerics?

Thank you to Rocco Palmo's *Whispers in the Loggia* blog for this information – I think.