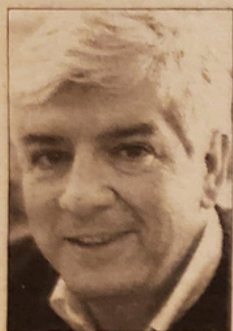


EDITOR'S NOTE

Plans and lives disrupted



We had plans this week to run an essay about bishops by Eugene Kennedy, whose insights have long provided a way to make sense of what sometimes seems incomprehensible. We were also going to publish a lovely and moving report/reflection by John L. Allen Jr. on his recent visit to Taizé. There is a nuclear weapons analysis on hold as well as a report about Catholic Workers on trial in New York.

All of that was held — we'll get to it eventually — to provide coverage of the grand jury report out of Philadelphia on the disturbing cases of child sex abuse by priests and the calculated cover-up of those crimes by members of the hierarchy. We could have chosen to run less about it. For more than 20 years, however, we have argued for release of the details of this debilitating scandal, we have asked the church to come clean, to open the archives and let the community know precisely what was done behind our backs by our leaders. The sad part is that it has taken judges' orders and grand jury investigations, where successful, to undo the secrecy. So when some light is shed and a record of what went on is available, members of the community deserve to know. It is tough reading about awful crimes and the equally awful strategies used to cover them up. We have left much graphic detail out of the account. Given the volume of offenses and the number of perpetrators, it is enough to say that the crimes included the assault, including rape, of considerable numbers of children, boys and girls, often repeatedly, by priests.



It occurred to me, as the staff had to

adjust plans for this week's issue, that we were experiencing in a small way what the scandal has done in countless large ways to the wider Catholic community. Life gets disrupted, plans are put on hold, ugly truths repeatedly intrude on the lives of individuals, parishes and dioceses. We are expected to accept as explanation, in the way Cardinal Justin Rigali reportedly explained to Philadelphia priests this week, that "mistakes were made" that no one is "perfect" or "without sin." What we all know, of course, is that something is terribly wrong.

I have a long acquaintance with Philadelphia. I grew up in that archdiocese, though well outside the city proper. I was an altar boy there, and learned in the archdiocese's schools and high schools. I have fond memories of many priests who played no small role in my formation. I grieve for those priests who have to work on under the shadow of these revelations. All I can offer is our shared understanding that knowing the truth is the path to freedom.



As if that weren't enough for one week, we had the sacking of Fr. Walter Cuenin in Boston (see story on Page 9) and the long and friendly meeting between Pope Benedict XVI and his longtime friend, colleague and archcritic, Fr. Hans Küng.

Finally, Arthur Jones weighs in, in his inimitable style, with part four of his goodbye. He's had his final word, and it's a wonderful read, but we haven't had ours. More later this month.

Tom Robert

No more: Catholics deserve better than Kurtz's excuses

8-30-18

Your Turn

Cal Pfeiffer
Guest columnist

Archbishop Joseph Kurtz's offensive and insensitive comments in a recent Sunday edition of the *Courier Journal* proves he is part of the problem of deceit and deception by bishops covering for pedophile priests.

As stated in the Pennsylvania Grand Jury's Report, "It seemed as if there was a script. Through the end of the 20th century, the diocese developed consistent strategies for hiding child sex abuse. While the patterns were fairly apparent to us from the documents, we also had experts review them: special agents assigned to the FBI's Critical Incident Response Group: Behavioral Analysis Unit III - Crimes Against Children.

The agents identified seven factors that arose repeatedly in the diocesan response to child abuse complaints: First - Use of euphemisms: Mischaracterizations of assaults and misleading designations for the removal of priests for a complaint of child sexual abuse. Violent criminal sexual acts, for example, were often described as "inappropriate" contact or "bound-

ary issues." The temporary or permanent removal of a priest from service was often coded as "sick leave" or "leave."

Kurtz was quoted as using words such as, "sins and omissions by Catholic priests and Catholic Bishops" and "those that have been hurt by these terrible situations" and "dealing with these issues." Crimes were committed, children were raped and/or sodomized, lives have been lost, marriages broken and worst of all, faith in God destroyed.

He also talks about fostering a safe environment when the Archdiocese of Louisville's own training program fails to even include the word "priest" as a possible sexual offender. He talks about reaching out to victims; they have been saying this since 1993 with little, if any, evidence. Where is the effort to help victims/survivors heal, how about their families? Why are convicted priests still being financially supported? Why are there still people at the Archdiocese of Louisville that knew of the cover-up?

Bottom line, Louisville Catholics deserve better, Kurtz needs to go and hopefully some other bishop can restore integrity.

Cal Pfeiffer is the Louisville leader for the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests.

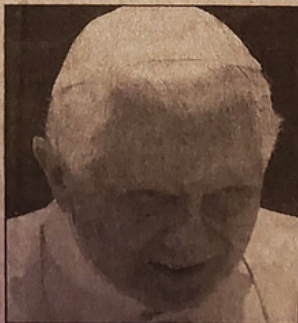


Joseph Kurtz

Compares pope to John Edwards

The term, "Vicarius Christi," refers to the highly skeptical, excessively arrogant and self-appointed description of the pope being the sole, undisputed mortal representative of Jesus Christ in our world today. After reading the most recent article in *The Courier-Journal* about Pope Benedict XVI and his denial of any knowledge in the latest sex abuse scandals, I have to ask:

Did Jesus ever lie about knowledge of an event to preserve his own fate? Did Jesus ever put money or power before human justice or dignity? Did Jesus ever ask one of his subordinates



"The church may continue to rationalize its lies, but we may have to look elsewhere. ..."

to accept responsibility for his actions?

The recent strategy of Pope Benedict XVI appears

more similar to the John Edwards and Andrew Young fiasco, as a lower-ranking officer takes responsibility for someone at the top, in an attempt to preserve the image of righteousness and virtue within the institution.

Wow! I was raised in the Catholic faith and was taught "thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Where I come from, a lie is a lie no matter who tells it. The church may continue to rationalize its lies, but we may have to look elsewhere for a Vicar of Christ.

PAUL A. SCHUM
Louisville 40216

3-29-2010

Protecting kids from predators

By Steve Pence

Special to The Courier-Journal

I want to commend Gov. Ernie Fletcher and thank the General Assembly for working in a bipartisan manner to pass a historic piece of legislation, which will undoubtedly save many children from the trauma of being preyed upon by sexual offenders.



Steve Pence

By setting aside political differences and uniting in the effort to better protect the families of Kentucky, we have reached a goal that some believed wouldn't happen during this session: strengthening the laws pertaining to sexual predators.

Information is the most powerful tool parents can have in shielding their families from danger.

Citizens of Kentucky have a right to know if there is a person in our children's classrooms who poses a threat to our sons or daughters.

Parents have a right to know if there is a person in their neighborhood who has a history of burglaries or violence.

For far too long we lived in ignorance of these risks.

That is why when the Kentucky Coalition Against Sexual Offenders (KCASA) began the process of strengthening Kentucky's sexual offender laws, one of the most important aspects for our group was to open juvenile felony court proceedings from the time of arrest through conviction.

Lawmakers told me and my staff time and again that changes to our current juvenile code had no chance of passing the General Assembly. In fact, we were told to leave the juve-

nile court system alone.

However, through continued meetings with legislators of both parties in the House and Senate, as well as with public defenders, a consensus was achieved.

Juvenile courts are now going to become a little more accountable, and the police and public will gain a lot more information about who is committing crimes in our communities.

House Bill 3, as it pertains to the juvenile courts in Kentucky will have two notable effects:

► It will require court clerks to keep a public record book of juveniles who have committed crimes such as burglary, drug trafficking, rape or homicide, and crimes involving a deadly weapon.

► It will allow law enforcement officers to gain access to all juvenile court proceedings for use in investigations and prosecutions.

It is difficult to believe that this information is currently being withheld from the police and the public, and when we first began our research, we were repeatedly told that current laws already allow the public to have access to the records of violent juvenile offenders.

But when I talked with the police, I found as so often in life, what may be true in theory is not the case in practice, and the police and public were being denied this basic information.

KCASA did not get all that it sought in this legislation, and I think there is a lot left to accomplish in ensuring accountability in the juvenile court system. However, compromise is the key to getting things done in Frankfort, so we were willing to bend a little.

Allowing the public to have some information about juvenile felony records is an im-

provement over what it has access to now, which is virtually nothing.

There is still much to be accomplished and improvements to be made to laws pertaining to juvenile records. I plan to work toward more progressive changes with the General Assembly in upcoming sessions.

Perhaps in the future, lawmakers will decide that all juvenile court proceedings should be open to the public. Many other states have followed this path.

Although we should not pass laws just because other states have them, I pledge to the citizens of Kentucky that I will make every effort to make the current changes in juvenile courts work for the betterment of our police and communities.

For a parent, there is no price too high to pay to protect our children from predators.

However, as helpful as these new laws may be in certain areas, every parent will agree that knowing where your child is, who the child's friends are, and what the child does on the computer will remain the first line of defense.

Steve Pence, a former prosecutor from Louisville, is lieutenant governor of Kentucky; he also serves as secretary of the state Justice and Public Safety Cabinet.

Uncovering the coverup

God knows — and He does — Protestants shouldn't be throwing stones at the Roman Catholic Church for the scandals involving the abuse of children by some priests. Protestants have a blemished history of how they have handled their own scandals involving extramar-

Cal Thomas



ital sex, misappropriated funds and arrogant behavior. The hall of shame in the last century includes Ai-mee Semple McPherson (an alleged affair with her radio engineer, Kenneth Ormiston), Garner Ted Armstrong (*Hustler* magazine carried a story in September of 1978 called "In Bed with Garner Ted Armstrong — America's Promiscuous Preacher," which detailed gambling, adultery and the alleged rape of a young stewardess who worked on his private jet), Jim Bakker (sex with his secretary), Jimmy Swaggart (sex with a prostitute) and Ted Haggard (sex with a man), among too many others.

The difference between them and what is happening in the Catholic Church is that the sex — though still sinful — was (with the exception of Armstrong's alleged crime) between consenting adults. Those swindled or otherwise deprived of their money were old enough to have known better.

If a priest having sex with children is not the unpardonable sin, it's pretty close. Listening to adults tell their stories of abuse as children and the burden they have had to carry, in some cases for decades, is heart breaking.

If Pope Benedict XVI were a politician, there would be those asking, "what did he know and when did he know it?" about the behavior



AP Photo/Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
The Rev. Lawrence Murphy, in a 1974 photo.

of a priest under his direct supervision when he was Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in Munich. *The New York Times* reported last week that Ratzinger "was copied on a memo that informed him that a priest, whom he had approved sending to therapy in 1980 to overcome pedophilia, would be returned to pastoral work within days of beginning psychiatric treatment. The priest was later convicted of molesting boys in another parish."

Various apologists claim Ratzinger didn't know about any of this. In politics, that is called protecting the president by giving him "plausible deniability." The pope's continued denials are not plausible.

The Vatican has also strongly defended its decision not to defrock an American priest accused of molesting boys at a school for the deaf in Wisconsin. Church and Vatican documents show that in the mid-1990s, two Wisconsin bishops urged the Vatican office led by Ratzinger to let them conduct a church trial of the Rev. Lawrence Murphy. Murphy appealed, citing a statute of limitations and poor health. The trial was never held. Murphy said he wanted to die a priest and be buried in his ecclesiastical garments. So he did and so he was.

In Ireland, where stories

of abuse of children have captivated public attention and deepened disgust with the way the church has handled them, Cardinal Sean Brady, the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, will be pressured to quit if he refuses to resign, according to the *London Times*. The Northern Ireland Assembly is preparing to begin an investigation of Brady and child abuse in the province.

The president of Switzerland, Doris Leuthard, has called for a central registry of pedophile priests.

The problem for the Catholic Church is that it is extremely difficult to "fire" anyone. If shame does not cause abusive priests and their protectors to quit, nothing else can, except perhaps an exodus by Catholics from their congregations (taking their contributions with them instead of seeing the money go to settle victims' lawsuits). Other options include conversion to another faith, or no faith at all.

In all of this, it appears that the Catholic Church is more interested in preserving the institution than the integrity of the One it is supposed to represent.

The Catholic Church must be held accountable. A formal investigation should be conducted, which exempts no one, including the pope. It should be run by people not in the church hierarchy or beholden to it. Anything less will not satisfy public opinion, much less a Higher Authority.

In his instructions to Timothy about the qualities necessary in a pastor, Paul writes, "... the overseer must be above reproach." The behavior of these pedophile priests, and those who covered up for them, is beneath contempt.

Cal Thomas is a columnist with Tribune Media Services. His e-mail address is trnseditors@tribune.com.

READERS' FORUM

The new pope

It has been well documented that Pope Francis has been a champion of the poor. The financially poor come to mind first, but will he be a champion for the poor in spirit?

That is, those that have had their spirit broken by sexually abusive priests and their enabling bishops.

Those that have taken their lives in despair, those that have taken solace in alcoholism, those whose marriages have failed and those that left the church in disgust with the cover-up.

The election of Pope Francis has been a sign of hope that the message in the parable of "The Lost Sheep" will be a guiding principle for the Catholic Church in the near future.

May God bless you, Pope Francis, in your endeavors to reach out to all of the poor.

CAL PFEIFFER

Member

Survivors Network

of those Abused by Priests

Louisville 40207

4-23-2013

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2003

"The assessment increase from 5 percent to 8 percent will have far-reaching effects on all parish ministries, most notably the parish grade school."

— Scott Floore, Louisville 40220

READERS' FORUM

h not shaken

on that sexually abuses
child is a criminal and
ould be turned over to the
ce, prosecuted and serve
m sentence allowed un-
y if proven guilty. The
despicableness of such a
f children should leave
of tolerance for such a
nyone who abets such
olation of a child should
secuted to the fullest ex-
law. There is simply no
tolerance of sins against
vulnerable members of society.
fe-long member of the Catholic
d my experiences, like those of
majority of Catholics, are of nuns,
brothers who helped to form my
lues and ethics to lead a life
he values of the Gospel. The for-
ich I received from such people
e McGee, Sister Bernadine Nash
r Curry supplemented the values
to me by my parents. They chal-
dded, cajoled and led me to ac-
the best of myself and of those
...
sexual predator actions being re-
he media by a few members of the



Richard Blair
Louisville,
high school
teacher

clergy of the thousands that have served the Archdiocese of Louisville alone do not shake my faith as a Catholic. This was a sub-question put to us for consideration in this blog. The Catholic Church is much larger than the horrendous actions of a few, as is the case in any religion or organization. My experiences as a child, a young man and an adult have been in a Church that provides for the spiritual and moral development of the whole person. As a kid growing up in St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Germantown, I was exposed to clergy and religious people who cared about others, and that continues.

One of the most valuable lessons that has been emphasized throughout my life by the clergy and the religious has been to accept responsibility for one's actions. As painful as that process can be, it is the responsibility of the Catholic Church, from Rome to Louisville, to deal aggressively with this problem. It is not the role of the Church to satisfy the various media. It is the role of the Church to bring justice to the exploited and to bring to justice those who perpetrated the vilest of crimes on the most vulnerable among us — our children.

The cost to Catholics . .

Great news! The local moral authority for us Catholics has recently shown us what to do if we ever find ourselves in need of some really big bucks. It is so easy. Simply take it. The folks who have been so generously paying the bills forever

anyway won't really mind — after all, we are a family.

Perhaps former Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating was correct when he said that some of the bishops were behaving like Cosa Nostra/Mafia. We have certainly been made an offer we can't refuse. Unbelievable!

And another thing — are good Catholic people truly paying salaries and housing expenses for those "removed" priests because canon law requires it?

If so, "the law is an ass." Apologies to Charles Dickens.

DOLORES T. QUIRE
Louisville 40218

. . . The buck is passed

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Louisville is doing far more than selling property and cutting services, as the headline on Page 1 of the Aug. 21 *Courier-Journal* suggested. A key element to cost recovery/revenue generation was detailed on page 7 as new costs to parishes. The assessment increase from 5 percent to 8 percent will have far-reaching effects on all parish ministries, most notably the parish grade school. Fewer dollars in the parish budget to fund these schools will result in additional pressure on the schools and, therefore, on the families who send their children to these schools. The brunt of the cost for the archdiocese's negligence has been passed, in large part, to our parishioners, school families and children.

As one of those who will ultimately be asked to pay for the victims, the lawyers and the bureaucracy, these events and the actions taken to resolve them offend me. While the cur-

rent leaders are in place at the archdiocese, additional gifts to the church, such as the Catholic Services Appeal, will receive no support.

SCOTT FLOORE
Louisville 40220

Papacy under fire

The scandal of sexual abuse of children by Roman Catholic priests, which led to the dismissal of 700 priests in the United States alone in a single three-year period, now threatens to engulf the papacy.

If that assessment sounds extreme, consider the Nixon-era echoes in a *National Catholic Reporter* editorial about Pope Benedict XVI: "The focus now is on Benedict. What did he know? When did he know it? How did he act once he knew?"

At the moment, neither Catholics nor the larger public know the answers to those questions. What is clear is that for 33 years — as archbishop of Munich, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and, since 2005, as pope — Benedict has been in a position to be involved in the handling of sex abuse by the clergy. The record is deeply troubling.

In one case — reported this week by *The New York Times* — Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the future pope and then the archbishop of Munich, was informed that a German priest whom he had ordered into therapy for pedophilia was to be returned to pastoral duties. The priest was later convicted of molesting boys in a different German parish, and German prosecutors are now weighing charges against the priest. Equally unsettling, *Times* reporters obtained memos and documents that disproved initial Vatican assertions that the priest's assignment had been handled entirely by the archbishop's deputy.

In another instance reported by the *Times*, Cardinal Ratzinger, by then a

top official in Rome, was one of several Vatican leaders who decided against defrocking an American priest accused of molesting as many as 200 boys at a school for the deaf in Wisconsin. Cardinal Ratzinger failed in 1996 to reply to two letters about the case from the archbishop of Milwaukee, and the Vatican appeared keenly interested in secrecy in the case. The priest, who was never dismissed, died in 1998.

Meanwhile, horrifying new allegations of abuse by priests are roiling Europe. The Pope this week accepted the resignation of a bishop in Ireland and addressed a letter expressing "shame and remorse" to Irish Catholics in the wake of government investigations that reveal decades of sexual abuse of hundreds of thousands of children and widespread cover-ups by the church. Additional abuse allegations have surfaced in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands.

The Vatican has reacted angrily to reports and questions about the Pope's role and has denounced what it terms efforts to "smear" Benedict. But the wronged parties in this sordid history are not popes, priests or the church. The victims are the uncountable children who have been molested by sexually predatory priests.

The time is long past for the church to drop its reflexive defense of the institution and to offer a full accounting of what was done in its name. The place to start is with the complete truth, and now more than ever the messenger must be the Pope himself.

Kelly's resignation . . .

After having reviewed the 158-page John Jay report produced for the Catholic Conference of Bishops, it becomes abundantly clear that Archbishop Thomas Kelly has done everything wrong that could have been done wrong with his handling of the victims.

The Courier-Journal has done a questionable job of representing the interests of the victims. I read your paper daily and notice the positive articles written on behalf of the church.

The victims of the various priests are still here. Our stories and our desire to see Kelly step down have not diminished or waned since the settlement. We are outraged, and the demands for his resignation go unheeded.

We victims are not the only people who feel he should relinquish his control over this archdiocese. It is time for a new archbishop who will feel our pain, and the parishioners' pain as well, a person who will take the assertive steps to reconcile what Kelly has effectively brought into question, that being our faith.

KYLE A. BURDEN
Louisville 40214

1-25-2013

READERS' FORUM

Catholic cover-up

How many times, in how many venues, does it have to be reported and documented that Catholic bishops and officials covered up for pedophiles?

Los Angeles is the latest. Will there ever be outrage? Louisville has a similar documented history of coverup.

Will Cardinal Mahony be promoted and given a villa in Italy like Cardinal Law? Will he be celebrated like Bishop Medley of Owensboro, who was promoted to bishop and selected as an Honoree by both the Catholic Education Foundation of Louisville and Bellarmine University? What message is sent when our local Catholic officials are presented documents showing Medley's involvement in cover-ups and they still honor him? What an outrage.

CAL PFEIFFER
Louisville 40207

Comments on the Vatican's plan to ban homosexual priests

Celibacy of priests

The Vatican refuses to deal with its manmade law requiring celibacy of its priests. A major goal of this latest review of the seminaries is to remove homosexuals. During my seminary years (1950s and '60s), just one hint that a candidate was forming a special friendship got him a ticket on the "Midnight Express." No questions asked, no explanations given; the offender(s) simply did not show up for breakfast the next morning. My class (1966) was decimated!

The post Vatican II exodus of priests to marry prompted many Catholics, lay and clergy alike, to urge the bishops to pressure Rome to rescind the mandatory celibacy requirement. Rome rebuffed the bishops, who changed their rigorous standards and happily ordained gays. Today, a large number of our clergy are admittedly gay.

Now the Vatican, which teaches that homosexual acts are "intrinsically disordered" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, section 2357, page 566), seeks to disqualify gay seminarians from ordination. To be consistent, it should also defrock gay clergymen. Then bishops will be forced to pressure Rome to rescind the celibacy requirement as the only practical way to ensure a supply of clergy. The church could return to its ancient practice of having both married and celibate clergy, as it did for the first half of its history.

MICHAEL A. DIEBOLD
Louisville 40220

'Its search for a scapegoat'

I write to respond to the Sept. 22 article, "Vatican aims to

ban gays as new priests," about the Roman Catholic Church's most recent attempt to deflect responsibility for the sexual abuse committed by its priests on tens of thousands of children in this country and throughout the world. Having spent the better part of the last three and a half years pursuing legal claims on behalf of some of these victims, I know all too well the devastation this problem, and the church's steadfast refusal to deal with it, has placed on these victims and our society as a whole.

The childhood sexual abuse scandal that has plagued the Roman Catholic Church is not about homosexual priests; it is about pedophile priests. The church's attempt to equate homosexuality with pedophilia is a notion that has been soundly rejected by the medical and scientific communities. There is a wealth of literature that deals with sexual predators, and many insightful studies have been published. For anyone interested in learning more about these issues, I recommend Dr. Anna C. Salter's 2003 work, *Predators: Pedophiles, Rapists and Other Sex Offenders: Who They Are, How they Operate, and How We Can Protect Ourselves and Our Children* (Basic Books, 2003).

Many of you may be surprised to learn that the Rev. Louis Miller, one of the most prolific predatory priests in this country, is a heterosexual. But being a heterosexual was not Miller's problem; being a pedophile was...

It is true that a certain percentage of homosexuals are also sexual predators. But, sadly, a certain percentage of any group



Illustration by Paul Lachine

of people are predators, whether lawyers, doctors, bankers or anything else. The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that, on average, there is one child molester per square mile in the United States. These predators do not look like monsters. Instead, they look and act quite normal, and they use their normal appearance and actions to gain access to their victims...

The Roman Catholic Church must take steps to identify potential child molesters in the priesthood. Unfortunately, while claiming that homosexuals are the cause of the problem may fool the general public, it will do nothing to protect children.

The Catholic sexual abuse scandal does not involve priests who have sex with other men; it involves priests who sexually abuse children. Most importantly, the scandal is not the result of the church's inability to identify sexual predators in the priesthood; instead, it is about what the church did after its abusive priests were identified.

This homosexual witch hunt

disrespects both the priesthood, and all of the good and noble priests, as well as the thousands of innocent victims whose lives have been ruined as a result of decisions made by the church. The church must abandon its search for a scapegoat and confront its own responsibility for those decisions.

Whether priests disobey the church's rules regarding celibacy by having consensual sexual relations, with men or women, is an issue solely for the church. Whether priests sexually abuse our children, on the other hand, is an issue for all of us.

WILLIAM F. McMURRY
Attorney at Law
Louisville 40241

Vatican's witch hunt

Thank you for your front-page article on the Vatican-ordered inspections of Roman Catholic seminaries to root out "evidence of homosexuality" and "faculty members who dissent from church teachings."

How refreshing to see that the Roman Catholic leadership is so in touch with the times — of the 17th Century! It appears witch hunts and closed-mindedness will always have a place in patriarchal hierarchies. Oh well, no matter. Dying religious institutions have no need for compassionate inclusivity of social outcasts or fresh theological perspectives of open-minded academics.

But who knows? Maybe the institution will thrive with the ever-increasing elderly male clergy and remaining pedophilic priests after the homosexuals and free thinkers have been exorcised.

DAVID L. CHERVENAK Jr.
Louisville 40223