

In the Vineyard

April 24, 2008

“There's a connection now because the man made eye contact with survivors. You cannot deny that. We are real. We are not a number or a statistic.” *Abuse survivor Bernie McDaid commenting on the Pope's meeting with survivors of clergy sexual abuse at <http://www.thebostonchannel.com/news/15922469/detail.html>.*

In this issue: Whatever actions evolve from the Pope's visit and his pastoral outreach to survivors, VOTF and SNAP achieved considerable coverage in the media; VOTF National Representative Council has a full agenda for upcoming bi-annual meeting in Philadelphia; VOTF Bridgeport CT will address “Who Owns Our Church?” at their conference *this Saturday*; more distress in the St. Louis MO archdiocese over St. Stanislaus Kostka parish; FOSIL and VOTF are sharing some common ground in the interest of financial accountability – see Affiliate News; reminders, news items and more in SITE-Seeing, Etc.; happy and secure in your parish? Consider helping a St. Louis KS parish that is neither (SITE-Seeing, Etc.); the Pope has admiring words for making voices heard (See QUOTES for our time); and more.

NATIONAL News

Pope Benedict's visit to the U.S. might be remembered as bridge building – between Jews and Christians, between American Catholics and the Vatican, among civil/national warring factions, etc. – but it will be most valued on a personal level by the victims of clergy sexual abuse and their supporters. While VOTF and SNAP called for actions to accompany the much-appreciated and compassionate words of the Pope, the overall hope is that his example of pastoral outreach to victims of clergy sexual abuse will be modeled by hierarchs throughout the Church. Click [here](#) for an overview of VOTF press releases and media coverage of the Pope's visit.

- According to the *New York Times*, Cardinal Levada, head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, said that, “the Roman Catholic Church is considering changes to the canon laws that govern how the church handles cases of sexual abuse by priests.” See <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/19/us/nationalspecial2/18cnd-victims.html>.

At their April 25-27 bi-annual meeting, the **National Representative Council** will take up, among several other items, a “Preliminary Report to the National Representative Council (NRC) of Voice of the Faithful (VOTF) from the Ad Hoc Committee (Committee) to Study VOTF Policy Toward the National Review Board (NRB)”. See the report under NRC Notes and watch for the meeting recap in an upcoming *Vineyard*.

- The resolution calling for “*Church-wide re-examination and reform of the role of women in Church ministry and in the governance of the Church*” won the requisite 2/3 vote needed for passage by the **National Representative Council**. The proposal was co-sponsored by Peggie Thorp, Richard Moriarty and Mary Collingwood. The National Officers also have replied to the NRC's “request for

concurrence” in the resolution. Click here to read the Officers’ statement, the resolution and the vote tally.

- Welcome to Catherine Smith, the newly elected representative to the National Council for Region 12 (AK, ID, MT, OR, WA). Also, in Region 2 (NY), two Representatives have been elected for two-year terms. Jean McQuaid has been elected to replace Dan Bartley, and Ed Wilson has been re-elected.

AFFILIATE News

VOTF Bridgeport CT will hold their semi-annual conference this Saturday, April 26. Click here to read more about “Who Owns Our Church?”

In a similar regard, David Biersmith organized a **VOTF Kansas City** meeting with Fr. Marek Bozek, pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka parish in St. Louis MO. Fr. Bozek is the pastor who continues to stand up to Archbishop Burke in the latter’s attempt to wrest control of the parish from its long-established Board. The *Vineyard* will post a recap of the gathering in an upcoming issue.

- For the Archbishop’s perspective on control of the church, see <http://www.stlouisreview.com/abpcolumn.php?abpid=6320>.
- For recent Associated Press coverage on Fr. Tom Doyle’s banning from the Archdiocese, see <http://www.stltoday.com/stltoday/news/stories.nsf/religion/story/E5A2E2C0FD25231E8625742900014E4B?OpenDocument>
- For details of St. Stanislaus Board members’ excommunication by Abp. Burke, see <http://www.stltoday.com/stltoday/news/stories.nsf/religion/story/E5A2E2C0FD25231E8625742900014E4B?OpenDocument>.

Letter to editor: A VOTF correspondent found something missing in the Pew Report (noted in a previous *Vineyard*).

SURVIVOR Community News

There’s no better way to understand the impact of the papal visit on survivors and their supporters than to read SNAP’s coverage at www.snapnetwork.org.

SITE-Seeing, Etc.

St. James parish in Kansas, Ohio needs all the help it can get. To read about their plight, now in its eleventh hour, go to <http://reform-network.net/?p=1612>.

Rowman and Littlefield Publishers has published a blog on the Pope’s visit by **VOTF Bridgeport CT Joe O’Callaghan**. You can access the blog at www.rowmanblog.typepad.com/popexvi/2008/03/reflections-on.html. Lest you’ve forgotten, **Joe** is professor emeritus in the department of history at Fordham University.

He is past president of the American Catholic Historical Association and is the author of several books, notably [*Electing Our Bishops: How the Catholic Church Should Choose Its Leaders*](#); *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain* and *Alfonso X and the Cantigas de Santa Maria: A Poetic Biography*.

Another perspective on the Pope's visit comes from **Jay P. Dolan, professor emeritus of history at the University of Notre Dame** and author of *In Search of an American Catholicism: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension*. Jay is a longstanding VOTF supporter and a contributor to VOTF's first hard copy quarterly *Voice*. To read Jay's comments on some concerns in our Church that were *not* scheduled for discussion during the papal visit, go to <http://www.newsday.com/news/opinion/ny-opfocus5647055apr13,0,6605377.story>.

It's getting a lot faster/easier to read the *National Catholic Reporter*. Their new format has all the issue's contents headlined right there on the home page and only a click away. Try it at <http://ncronline3.org/drupal/?q=view/issue>.

Another Boston-born Church-reform effort made front page news in a recent *New York Times* story. Read about the **Council of Parishes** at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/14/us/14church.html?scp=1&sq=coalition+of+Catholic+parishes&st=nyt>.

Most Rev Geoffrey James Robinson DD, Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney, Australia, will be making many stops during his U.S. visit, including stops at VOTF affiliate meetings and VOTF co-sponsored gatherings such as those planned by VOTF Boston (see March 27 *Vineyard*; also, March 6 for initial report) and VOTF New Jersey on May 21. See www.rccrenewal.org for additional information.

Jason Berry's new film *Vows of Silence*, about Legionaries of Christ founder Father Marcial Maciel who won the favor of Pope John Paul II despite years of pedophilia accusations, is now available for purchase on DVD. To visit the film's website and/or purchase the DVD go to <http://www.vowsofsilencefilm.com/>.

DON'T FORGET! SUNDAY - MONDAY, JUNE 8-9: EDWINA GATELY RETREAT. Edwina will be conducting a retreat on the theme "Why the Church Needs Rebels" at the Evensong by the Sea Ecumenical Retreat & Spirituality Center (HarwichPort, MA). See web site for details at: <http://www.evensongretreat.com/Gately.html>. Please register in advance.

QUOTES for our time: "Among the countersigns to the Gospel of life found in America and elsewhere is one that causes deep shame: the sexual abuse of minors. . . . It is your God-given responsibility as pastors to bind up the wounds caused by every breach of trust, to foster healing, to promote reconciliation and to reach out with loving concern to those so seriously wronged." *Pope Benedict addressing the U.S. Bishops at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on April 16, 2008.*

“Historically, not only Catholics, but all believers have found here the freedom to worship God in accordance with the dictates of their conscience, while at the same time being accepted as part of a commonwealth in which each individual and group can make its voice heard.” *Pope Benedict at the White House Rose Garden, April 16, 2008.*

National Representative Council Notes Spring meeting, April 25-27, 2008

Preliminary Report to the National Representative Council (NRC) of Voice of the Faithful (VOTF) from the Ad Hoc Committee (Committee) to Study VOTF Policy toward the National Review Board (NRB)

Philadelphia PA

Membership:

The three elected NRC members to the Committee solicited additional members from among VOTF Officers, BOT, and the four working groups of VOTF. Current members:

Frances Hofmeister (Working Group II)

Elia Marnik (BOT)

Kathy Mullaney (Protecting Our Children working group)

Hugh O'Regan (NRC), seated after resignation of Bob Schwiderski

Steve Sheehan (NRC & WG I)

Ed Wilson (NRC)

Pat Gomez (NRC), Chair

Formation & Tasks:

The Committee was formed and met for the first time on February 22, 2008. To date, the Committee has met six times via telephone conference calls.

The Resolution shaping our work lists 5 tasks:

1. Review the role of the National Review Board (NRB), its scope and its operations
2. Review existing policies and actions of VOTF in relation to the NRB
3. Examine the mission of the NRB to oversee implementation of the USCCB Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (*Charter*)
4. Examine the NRB's effectiveness in carrying out its mission
5. Make recommendations to the NRC for VOTF's role in monitoring and assisting the NRB.

Committee members understood our task to also include communication with the Office of Child and Youth Protection (OCYP) of the USCCB. The OCYP was created in the *Charter* and assigned three central tasks: to assist in the implementation of Safe Environment Programs; to develop an appropriate audit mechanism to assist the Bishops and Eparchs in adhering to the responsibilities set forth in the *Charter*; and to prepare a public, annual report describing compliance to the *Charter's* provisions.

Work to Date:

The Committee has reviewed various documents and reports issued by the NRB and the OCYP, including: 2007 Annual Report on the Implementation of the *Charter* and the Status Report of the NRB, December 2007.

Members have contacted and are continuing conversations with Judge Michael Merz, Chair of the NRB; Teresa Kettelkamp, Executive Director of the OCYP; and Jim Kelly, Fordham University and researcher involved with the John Jay “Cause and Context” study.

Focus on the 2007 Annual Audit Report:

The Committee is currently considering the larger context of how compliance to the 17 Articles of the *Charter* is unfolding. Committee members are disappointed and concerned that all dioceses and eparchies are not in compliance with the Articles of the *Charter*, and the Committee is discussing the practical use of the Audits.

Committee members are concerned about the high expenditures of resources related to implementation of the *Charter* and the auditing process. Our expectations are that Bishops/Eparchs would be highly committed to implementing all Articles of the *Charter*: safe environment programs; criminal background checks; and signed endorsements of standards of conduct. Yet 10 dioceses were found to be non-compliant with Article 12 of the *Charter*: to maintain “safe environment” programs and to acquire from staff and volunteers signed endorsements of standards of conduct (Codes of Conduct). For example, more than 5 years after the creation of the *Charter*, the question of compliance criteria to Article 12, how to judge compliance of dioceses and parishes with the bishops’ commitment to provide training to create and maintain a safe environment, has not been adequately addressed. And the Committee holds this concern as a priority.

Preliminary Recommendations to the NRC:

The Committee sets out these preliminary recommendations, and expects to submit our Final Recommendations of action items to the NRC by May 2008.

1. VOTF should continue the work of this Ad Hoc Committee and communications with the NRB and OCYP after our tenure has expired in May 2008 through naming a standing committee or working group comprised of VOTF members.
2. Approximately \$900K is needed to complete the “Cause & Context” portion of the John Jay Study. The Committee recommends collaborating with the OCYP and the NRB to find funding to complete the “Cause & Context” portion of the Study through contacting organizations that provide grants for this type of initiative or assisting in the grant writing process. The Committee suggests contacting: FADICA (Founders and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities), the National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management, the National Institutes of Health, or the Center for Disease Control.
3. Urge dioceses and future audits to track the location of former priests who have been taken out of ministry without public trial in cases that involved secret

- settlement agreements in the past between dioceses and abuse victims or their families. Names and address of these men should be on lists of sexual abusers, and their presence should be made known to communities where they live.
4. Prompt review of allegations of clergy sexual abuse, and prompt reinstatement of priests / clergy when allegations against them are determined to be unfounded or disproved by civil authorities and diocesan review boards (Article 5 of the *Charter*).
 5. Investigate diocesan web pages for information on how to contact victim assistant coordinators and safe environment coordinators. Is the information readily available on the web page, in the diocesan newspaper, and in parishes? Are the victim coordinators and safe environment coordinators easy to approach? What are their qualifications? Are they responsive to inquiries?
 6. Ensure that priests are educated about sexual abuse, that they understand the effects of this abuse on the person, the family, and the community, and monitor that they have been trained in abuse awareness and prevention. It is very strongly recommended that a presentation by a survivor of clergy abuse be included in this curriculum, so that attendees receive a full understanding of what it means to be abused by clergy and the long-lasting effects of clergy sexual abuse.
 7. Undertake a national effort to create Safe Environment programs in all parishes; parishioners would monitor the creation and implementation of child personal safety training and adult abuse prevention education, as well as ensure that criminal background checks are obtained for parish staff and volunteers, and that staff and volunteers have read and signed a parish-based or diocesan-based code of conduct.
 8. Ensure that international priests who come to minister in the US have appropriate background checks performed in their native country before they are assigned to US parishes; ensure that they are trained in abuse prevention programs; and ensure that international priests understand the social, cultural, and ethical standards of appropriate interactions and boundaries between adults and children.

Appendix I. Notes on – 2007 Audits

The Gavin Group of Boston was contracted to undertake 3 audits: '07; '08; and '09

- 2007 audit cycle = full, onsite audits
- 1 or 2 auditors per Diocese / Eparchy (D/E)
- OCYP conducted 13 pre-audit workshops for D/E personnel who were to be involved in the audit process, using actual audit documents to familiarize diocesan personnel w/scope and focus of the auditing processes

General Information about 2007 Audit:

- 5th Annual Audit
- 195 Diocese / Eparchies (D/E)
- 190 participated in the 2007 Audit
- 18 D/E not compliant in 2005 received focused audits in 2007 (?)
- 11 D/E requested full audits (?)
- All audits conducted on-site
- No review of personnel files (?)

- Relied on truthfulness & integrity of those providing information & statistical data

2007 Audit Results - from 190 (D/E) responding:

- 178 (D/E) compliant with Charter
- 10 (D/E) not compliant w/ Article 12 (Safe Environment programs; Codes of Conduct)
- 3 (D/E) not compliant w/ Article 13 (Criminal background checks – employees & volunteers)
- 2 D/E not compliant w/ Article 4 (Reporting allegations to public authorities, and complying with civil laws; however, both dioceses took action and were compliant by December 31, 2007)
- Total of 12 dioceses (some were non-compliant on 2 Articles)

Pilot Project: Parishes Audited in 9 Dioceses and 1 Eparchy

- Parish Audit tool created by Gavin Group in consultation with OCYP
- Parishes selected by agreement between D/E and the auditors: equal representation of urban, suburban and rural parishes that were audited
- Voluntary participation in Pilot Parish Audit process by D/E
- Parish visitation and interviews conducted with: pastors; volunteers; employees; educators; other school personnel – most interviewees selected by the audit personnel
- Examined parish implementation of *Charter*, to obtain “management information” (?)
- Judge Merz has stated: results justify extending parish-level auditing

CARA Survey (online questionnaire to D/E) - results included in 2007 Audit Report

- All (D/E) & Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) received questionnaires
- Dec 07 → Jan 08 was the CARA Questionnaire Audit period
- Purpose: to gather data on: new allegations of sexual abuse; \$ spent for POC efforts
- Responses received from 194 (D/E)

Note: (?) indicates the Committee continues to seek clarifying information

AFFILIATE News

VOTF Bridgeport CT

VOTF TO ASK AT CONFERENCE: “WHO OWNS OUR CHURCH?”

“Who Owns Our Church?” will be the topic of a conference at Fairfield University on Saturday, April 26, 2008 sponsored by Voice of the Faithful in the Diocese of Bridgeport and The Aloysius P. Kelley, S.J., Chair of Catholic Studies.

David O’Brien, the keynoter, will speak on: “Who Owns Our Church? Trustees and Trusteeism in the American Church.” In the early nineteenth century boards of lay trustees owned parish churches and hired pastors. Conflicts between pastors and people, pastors and bishops eventually led the bishops to demand absolute ownership of parish churches. The battle over trustees was so intense that the term “trusteeism” has a

decidedly negative connotation among bishops and clergy today. In the State of Connecticut, ownership is now vested in the parish corporation consisting of the bishop, the vicar-general, the pastor, and two lay trustees appointed by the clerical members.

David O'Brien, professor emeritus of American Church History and former director of the Center for Religion and Ethics at the College of the Holy Cross, recently retired as a member of the Board of Trustees of Voice of the Faithful. His many books include: *Public Catholicism* (1996); *From the Heart of the American Church: Catholic Higher Education and American Culture* (1994); *Isaac Hecker, an American Catholic* (1992); *The Renewal of American Catholicism* (1972); and *American Catholics and Social Reform: The New Deal Years* (1968).

In addition to Professor O'Brien, Paul Lakeland, who holds the Aloysius P. Kelley, S.J., Chair of Catholic Studies at Fairfield University, will speak on "Who Owns Our Church? A Theological Perspective." Professor Lakeland, a long-time supporter of Voice of the Faithful, is well known as the author of the seminal book, *The Liberation of the Laity* (2003), and of *Catholicism at the Crossroads: How the Laity Can Save the Church* (2007).

Finally, speakers representing VOTF's three study groups will briefly address the issues of Church governance, the role of women in the Church, and Church finance. A free and open discussion of these matters by the speakers and the audience will follow.

The conference will open at 9:30 a.m. and conclude with mass at 4 p.m. All sessions will be held in the Oak Room of the Barone Campus Center. For further details and information about registration please see www.votfbpt.org.

VOTF Affiliate and FOSIL Working Together

[To learn more about FOSIL, go to fosionline.com. The Bishop Braxton of Belleville story was reported in the March 27 Vineyard.]

By Lester Himstedt, FOSIL Representative

FOSIL has been hosting Lay Synods for a number of years as a mechanism to inform Catholic adults on issues that impact them and their Church, and provide a public forum to discuss areas of interest and/or concern. These have included: Rights of Catholics in the Church; clergy sexual abuse; selection of a bishop. More information about previous Lay Synods is available on the website (fosionline.com), which indicates the format, topics and presenters.

Because of Bishop Braxton's misuse of restricted funds for other purposes, among other leadership problems, a majority of diocesan clergy have publicly asked that the bishop resign. FOSIL has echoed that request in a letter to Archbishop Sambini and Cardinal Francis George. There is a serious undercurrent of unrest about financial accountability

throughout the diocese, so we think that a Synod on this topic would provide a format for people to better understand and respond to this issue.

We would hope to host this event in late October or early November at some location in the Belleville area. It should be noted that Bishop Braxton will no longer allow us the use of church facilities, even though Archbishop Gregory had done so previously. Normally the Synods are held on a Sunday afternoon, lasting 3-4 hours.

We propose that the agenda will consist of an address by an expert spokesperson, followed by a panel discussion, ending with an opportunity for attendees to submit questions to the presenters and panelists, and offer their own comments to the attendees.

We have worked closely with members of the VOTF St. Louis MO affiliate, and co-sponsored a previous presentation by Fr. Tom Doyle. We are currently working with them and SNAP in developing a stand-alone Speaker's Bureau that will hopefully be able to reach out to parishes in the Belleville IL and St. Louis MO (Arch)dioceses with information about the outstanding issues related to sexual clergy abuse, and how to "protect our children."

Resolution to Call for Church-Wide Re-Examination of the Role of Women in Church Ministry and Church Governance

National Officers Response to Proposal on Women in the Church

The Officers have reviewed the “Resolution to Call for Church-Wide Re-Examination of the Role of Women in Church Ministry and Church Governance” that was recently passed by the NRC.

Recognizing the fervent and deliberate debate around this proposal, the officers want to thank you for the rigorous nature of vetting that occurred. Now that the proposal has passed, we do have some serious concerns about implementation both from timing and content point of view. We ask the NRC to engage in a thoughtful and thorough discussion and approval process about the proposal’s implementation plan.

Our particular concerns are:

- A) The implementation plan must demonstrably complement our mission and goals.
- B) It must make clear that VOTF is not calling for the Ordination of Women at this time.
- C) Timing should not detract from the implementation of previously approved proposals, such as the proposal calling for a study of the mandatory celibacy issue.
- D) What metrics will define success?

VOTF Officers

Dan Bartley, Janet Hauter, Kevin Connors and Julie McConville

National Representative Council Vote

POLL QUESTION: Should the National Representative Council adopt the Resolution entitled RESOLUTION TO CALL FOR CHURCH-WIDE RE-EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN CHURCH MINISTRY AND CHURCH GOVERNANCE? [The parenthetical numbers refer to the region covered by the representative. [Click here](#) to identify the states in each region.]

CHOICES AND RESULTS

- I vote in favor, 15 votes, 68.18%
- I vote against, 7 votes, 31.82%
- I abstain, 2 votes, 0%

INDIVIDUAL VOTES

- I vote in favor

Kris Ward (6)

Ed Friedl (6)

Bob Schwiderski (3)

Chuck Miller (4)

Lisa Kendzior (10)

John Marshall Lee (1)

Ron DuBois (1)

Bud Bretschneider (3)

Rich Moriarty (4)

Steve Sheehan (1)

Joseph Juhasz (13)

Pat Gomez (1)

Jim Jenkins (11)

Doug Roach (14)

David Biersmith (9)

- I vote against:

Susan Vogt (5)

Jim Beyers (7)

Ed Wilson (2)

Jane Merchant (1)

Hugh O'Regan (11)

Bill Culleton (3)

Sheila Peiffer (2)

- I abstain

Kevin Mondloch (7)

Rosa Maria Montenegro (14)

LETTER to the Editor

I have just finished reading thousands of words printed in the Pew Report re: Why Catholics are leaving the church. Nowhere in the 34 printed articles [27 male, 7 female!] did the subject of clergy sexual abuse appear as a, or *the*, reason why people are leaving the Catholic Church.

I am a born Catholic, wife, mother of three sons, and have seven grandchildren. I studied at Emmanuel College in Boston for a Masters in Pastoral Counseling, received a M.A. at Andover Newton Theological School, and became certified as a member of the National Assoc. of Catholic Chaplains. When the clergy sexual abuse was finally exposed, that

was it for me. Gradually, I realized I cannot stand up in my church and pay homage to the same structures that created this monster.

Rather than integrate married priests and women priests, we continue to believe “the crisis is over”...keep aging priests at their posts, or put inappropriate ones in their place. What would Jesus do, I keep asking? I believe he would rage at the “money changers” who protected themselves rather than our children. He would spend his time with the victims.

All those who wrote articles for this study were preaching to their own choirs....and they were all off key. *Elizabeth A. Walsh, Reading, MA*