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STUDY

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**ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL & THE CATHOLIC
CHURCH: A CASE STUDY**

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Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of the problem of child-abusing priests in the Catholic Church using data from the USA, UK and Ireland. The apparent scale of this issue raises crucial theoretical as well as policy issues. This paper explores various organizational explanations, linking it to traditional methods of 'confessional control' of organizational members. This is a novel concept which brings the issue into a wider organizational lens. Confessional control creates a series of guilt-laden identities that serve to maintain hierarchical control as well as social inclusion. Thus the process of recycling priests was part of a long-persisting pattern applied to child abuse cases. The theoretical implications of this are explored. The data consists of a series of cases across the three countries, partly drawn from a data-base of 4,000 alleged cases.

Key Words: organizational control; confession; church organization

INTRODUCTION – THE NATURE OF THE ISSUE

The issue of child-abusing priests has attracted a great deal of media and political attention, ethical concern, and been the subject of a number Church and other reports. In the USA, for example, it has led to the rise of the Voice of the Faithful (VOTF) in the Boston area, a group of Catholics seeking structural change within the Church (Carboni, 2005). It has also generated a number of survivor groups, such as Phoenix Survivors and MACSAS (Minister & Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors) in the UK and elsewhere.

The apparent scale of this issue raises crucial questions at both theoretical and practical levels. There are various possible tracks of explanation. The problem may be explained by inadequate or incompetent recruitment allied to self-selection processes (Plante, 1996, 307). Certainly, there were attempts at understanding in this direction. By the late 1990s Rome became involved in the deteriorating situation in its local churches. It was particularly worried about the USA where cases had begun to award victims with substantial monetary awards where evidence was proven against priestly abusers. The previous Pope at first blamed the 'irresponsible, permissive society, one that was hyper-inflated with sexuality' (Formicola, 2004). By 2002 it was reported that 'a cadre of predator priests existed in the Diocese of Boston and that the hierarchy had done nothing to confront and stop them.' By this time the Pope had shifted his public position about the causes of this child abuse and saw the cause as homosexuals, saying that 'people with such inclinations cannot be ordained.' (Formicola, 2004). However, as we will see, the issues have not been confined to one diocese or one country. Other explanations must have a bearing on the processes (Plante & Daniels, 2004).

Alternatively, the issues may be explained by mismanagement of the presented problems permitting multiple offences to occur. If the latter explanation holds, then it can take two forms – ad hoc and inadequate HR management processes or some form of collusion by the Church hierarchy (Laaser, 1991, 214). Either way, the burgeoning issue shines a light onto the organizational control processes within the Church and asks questions of us at a theoretical level about organizational structures and organizational control. This paper seeks to extend theory by introducing the notion of 'confessional control' and suggesting that this is crucial to understanding.

Unfortunately, the existing literature on churches is not very helpful. Religious organizations are relatively understudied and the organization studies literature focussing on them is fragmented and diverse. Firstly, and best-known, churches and other forms of religious organization have been studied for their role in understanding modernization (Weber, 1930; Miller, 1983). Secondly, considerable effort has been expended on the development of taxonomies of churches (Wilson, 1961, 1967), with particular emphasis given to the arguments for a development pattern from so-called 'sects' to 'churches'. Thirdly, drawing on the occupational tradition of research, the role of leadership and the professional status of the clergy has been a significant focus (Ashbrook, 1967; Fichter, 1961).

Thompson (1967) provided an overview of much of the religious organization literature emphasizing the centrality of the nature of belief systems of religious organizations to their analysis. In a follow up study of the development of the Church of England (Thompson, 1970), Thompson pointed to the potential for conflict between the clergy and other occupational groups in the church. Along similar lines, a study by Harris (1969) of church reform in the Diocese of the Anglican Church in Wales showed resistance by parish priests to reform.

Within an organizational studies framework, a study by Hinings & Foster (1973) used an Aston Studies approach to church organization. Hinings and Foster proposed a theoretical model of organizational structure in churches. (Also Hinings & Bryman, 1974; Hinings, 1979). This limited stream of work suggested that the 'type of theology' was linked to key dimensions of organizational structure resulting in centralization (Catholic Church) or decentralization with more local, autonomous units (Congregationalists). More recently, Bartunek (1984) studied a female order of the Catholic Church and applied Giddens' ideas of interpretive schemas with particular reference to the radical changes of the Second Vatican Council.

The limited literature on church organization is marked by an almost complete absence of study of internal processes or the processes of church management. This paper attempts to make a start to fill this theoretical void using extreme incidents (child-abuse cases) as a lens to theorize the processes within the Catholic Church. Church organizations have been assessed as voluntary organizations (Booth, 1995) or as professional service organization), but there has been no analysis of the employment relationship which exists in churches. Yet it is the institutionalised nature of the employment relationship and the specific control processes which, we will suggest, allows us to understand the dynamics of the various abuse cases affecting churches in the USA, UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere. This paper seeks to locate understanding of these processes within institutionalised structures of long-standing and to bring that understanding to bear to assist the development of management and organization theory

The sequence of the paper is that the methods are briefly discussed followed by an outline of the scale and spread of the issue which is still little appreciated. The next step is to build an explanation by focusing on the organizational origins of the church and the central role of bishops, particularly in connection with the employment relationship. Next, we examine the traditional processes of managing deviant employees within the church, before focussing on the confessional process. Finally, the limitations of the paper are discussed.

METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION

The study primarily relied on archival data sources, especially court records, published reports, church documents and accounts, and media sources, such as the Boston Globe and BBC Online. This has also included the valuable internet sites of action groups, such as *SurvivorsFirst.com* and the VOTF website (www.votf.org). These sources provided us with a data base of nearly 4,000 Roman Catholic priests. At this stage of our research, we have chosen here to present a small sample of 100 cases spread across three countries – the USA, UK and Ireland. We have also utilized our contacts within the Catholic Church recognizing the limitations of this.

SHINING A LIGHT ONTO ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESSES - THE IMPACT OF PRIESTLY CHILD ABUSE IN THE CHURCH

It might at first be thought that priests sexually abusing children is a recent explosion of immorality among clerics or an acknowledgement of moral failings brought on by psychological conditions now more widely recognized. In fact there is emerging research that suggests that the worst and most wide-spread outbreaks took place in the Middle Ages (11th, 12th, plus 14th, 15th centuries) (Anderson, 2004). Indeed in the eleventh century the priestly reformer, Peter Damien excoriated Bishops who failed to intervene to curb and discipline their priests who had been apprehended and accused of such crimes. In some cases Peter Damien found that guilty victims had expressed this feeling to their clerical abuser to be told that they would be absolved if they made their confession – after which they would be bound by the seal of confession from revealing what had happened to them (Damien, 1051). One 11thC. Bishop questioned as to why he had kept quiet about such grossly immoral priests, said that a priest was ordained for life and that therefore his Bishop owed him sustenance for as long as he lived. Ironically, it was in the same century that two Popes would reinforce the promulgation of priestly celibacy in the Western Church. For Peter Damien as a Church reformer, however, only by revealing the worst sins could the credibility of the church be safeguarded (Morris, 1989, 45).

More modern appeals within the Church for such openness refer once again to the apparent continued silence of the senior church managers who are responsible for curbing defaulting priests. For example, Winters: *'We all know that the sexual abuse of minors is horrific but somehow the Bishops did not react with horror. That is what truly shocks.'* (Winters, 2002; see also Carboni, 2005; www.votf.org).

Slowly, the modern Church has set up committees of enquiry. The Bishops in Canada set up a committee in 1989 (Rigali, 1994). The findings suggested that traditional church processes were no longer acceptable and that a church that shelters its ministers from accountability is hiding behind a veil of secrecy. In the USA a similar enquiry was set up between 1987–1992. The outcome here developed ideas of moral failing based on psychological addiction. The subtle distinctions between pedophilia, ephebophilia and paraphilia were introduced. In 1993 the committee turned to the care of victims, prevention and reassignment to ministry. They estimated that there were somewhere between 2000 and 4000 priests guilty of sexual abuse against minors and that their victim population would well be in excess of 10,000 children (Rigali, 1994). The higher figure of priestly abusers would have represented nearly 10% of active priests in ministry in the USA. Data-bases on child-abusing priests tend to indicate that these guess-estimates are realistic (e.g. see *SurvivorsFirst.com*) and these figures were repeated in a US Church Report of February 2004.

The apparent scale of this issue raises crucial questions about human resource management in the Church (Cozzens, 2000). A consideration of the traditional human resource management processes in the church and the long history of these cases indicates that recruitment and self-selection cannot be more than part of the story (Frawley-O'Dea, 2004, 28).

In order to investigate this issue, we have conducted an analysis of a sub-sample of priest cases in the USA, the UK and Ireland. The overall population is the number of Catholic priests who have been involved in child abuse since the 1950s. This parameter is, of course, unknown. Thus, the sampling frame consists of cases of priests who have been apprehended in the three countries and charged with offences of abuse against minors. There may be differences between the population and the sampling frame on the hypothesis that the offences brought before a court may well constitute the more extreme offenders. Here we

have presented a sub-sample. Thus we can track the number of offences committed by these individuals (not shown here) and the number of parishes in which such individuals have served *post-first offence* (column 5 in Table 2). Such abuse can be single instance or involve multiple cases. If it involves multiple cases, then these can be in one parish or involve movement between parishes. The data is presented in Table 2 at the end of the paper.

The data shows that in one case there are up to 37 offences attributed to one priest and that in one case a priest in the USA was removed and sent to another active ministry on 22 separate occasions. The preliminary data suggest that deviant behaviour by priests was handled by a recycling method. This is reinforced by statements made under oath. Bishops have been required to say how they dealt with their priests when such immorality was brought to their attention. The results are consistent: Cardinal Egan admitted to ‘shuffling child molesting priests from parish to parish’ (Winter, 2002) and Bishop Thomas O’Brien confessed to having transferred predator priests to places where they again had access to and victimised children (Formicola, 2004). This recycling process has been a forceful complaint of the Boston Voice of the Faithful group (Carboni, 2005:H2). The facts so far for cases going through USA courts from 1950 – 2002 indicate 4,392 priests who were accused of abusing 10,667 children. In general the victims’ ages ranged from 11 – 14. The full figures are not yet available, but in at least 10% of cases it is admitted that no action was taken by the Church.

On the basis of this data it is clear that local explanations will not suffice. It is not a question of specific idiosyncratic bishops. This recycling of priests shows as a trend at least across three countries and twelve dioceses. It formed part of the praxis or policy of the Church. Why?

BUILDING A THEORETICAL EXPLANATION

THE ORGANIZATIONAL ORIGINS OF THE CHURCH & THE PECULIAR FORMS OF EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

In considering the question above, it is necessary to briefly examine the organizational origins of the church which takes us down avenues unusual in management or organization studies. The early Christian Church demonstrated an emerging bureaucratic structure from its very first decade of growth. Interestingly the New Testament avoids the traditional Greek word for priest, *iereus*, but our word ‘hierarchy’ derives from this source and would be literally translated as rule by priests. For the early Christian Church the priesthood of the Christos and his one fulfilling sacrifice could not be replicated by ordinary ministers of the Gospel bearing the term priest in that way. For them the term used would be *presbuteros*, which is more often translated as ‘elder’ and it is clear from the epistles of Paul that in many local churches there were often several such office holders who together formed the presbyterate, a form of Church rule to be found still in the Presbyterian tradition.

According to church tradition, Paul himself was responsible for setting up several local churches throughout Greece and Rome. The Acts of the Apostles relates how the role of *diaconos* first emerged in the Church as a form of service releasing the apostles to concentrate on their preaching role (Acts 6, 1-6). And so gradually as the founding apostle moved from church to church in different city states he left behind a *presbuteros* whom he appointed as *episcopos* or overseer/supervisor to look after the good order of that church during his absence. The pastoral epistles to Timothy and Titus, works later ascribed to Paul, outline the three functions clearly: firstly the deacon role of service and administration to the congregation (1 Tim 3, 8-13). Then the appointment of elders (Titus 1, 5-9). Finally there is the charge to Timothy himself to order all things as a teacher and overseer: *Refute falsehood, correct error, call to obedience – but do all with the intention of teaching.* (2 Tim 4, 1-5).

From that first generation of servants of the Gospel would derive the three-fold ministry of bishop, priest and deacon – layers of role and function with increasingly clearly delineated authority in which the principal source of ordaining power was the Bishop (Congar, 1966, 21). With the acceptance of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire in 313 the role of church leadership became important in ensuring the state and its religion were more co-ordinated. The Bishop of Rome came to inhabit a pole position of importance and influence as close to the Emperor in a desire to achieve consolidation of the secular and spiritual domains. This close association with the work of dominating and ordering wider society saw bishops play an increasingly important part in ordering their own affairs according to secular practice at the time, (Miller, 1983: 279). The bishop became a representative of centralised authority. As early as the 6th century AD we can see signs that the bishop became dominant in the ordering of his church or Diocese and that bishops were included within the aegis of an archbishop who wore a *pallium* presented by the Pope to symbolise central authority. St Benedict in his Rule for Monks indicates that during the election of an abbot, for example, the bishop shall have the power to intervene to nullify a false election by the community, (Chapter 64).

This increasing power to centralise authority found its full expression in the 12th and 13th centuries ‘when the church as an institution began to display some similarities with Weber’s model of bureaucracy’ (Miller, 1983: 280). By this time the Law of the Church or Canon Law reached its zenith. It exhibited the legal expression of authority of the type characteristic of a modern organization. Instrumental in this development of a bureaucratic organization in the Weberian sense was the Church’s borrowing of Roman law (Miller, 1983: 289).

However, within the emerging bureaucratic shell, the employment relationship, a crucial aspect of Weber’s model of bureaucracy, was markedly different (Littler, 1982). Employment relationships in the Church are marked by the notion of vassalage. The vassalage of the priest to his bishop is expressed in the service of ordination in which the ordinand places his hands between those of his liege lord and makes profession of his obedience. These priestly vows include the celibate state and parallel the professing of a member of a religious order. From then on, just as his call or *vocation*, comes from the Bishop, so the priest’s promotion will come solely from the Bishop and is sometimes referred to in Canon Law as *ad nutum episcopi* – literally translated as, ‘on the nod of the Bishop’. It should be emphasized that a priest is incardinated into the Bishop’s Diocese and cannot move to another Diocese without permission from his Bishop and acceptance by another Bishop into whose Diocese he will then again become incardinated. Thus many of the moves of parish that we will see take place within the same Diocese.

On the face of it, the leadership of bishops lays its claims on a legal-rational framework. In practice, it is reinforced with the ultimate sanction of divine representation in that the bishop holds the exalted state that he does in virtue of divine authority: ‘the superior is obeyed for the sole reason that he holds the place of God and exercises the authority of Him who says, ‘he who hears you, hears Me’ (Fichter, 1961: 259).

The tools of the trade for running a local church, if you are a priest, come from the appointment by the Bishop, induction to the parish or charge and remain the property of the Diocese, ruled over by the Bishop. As a priest you own no buildings, uniforms (vestments) are provided and tools like chalices, needed for conducting the services, remain in the keeping of the Church itself. Other aspects of bureaucratic control based on systematic rational-legal

rules are increasingly enshrined in Canon Law, which from the 13th century will play a key part in bureaucratizing not just secular priests but also their regular colleagues living from then on in designated religious orders ordained by Rome and reporting by a similar system of accountability to the Bishop of Rome (the Pope) (deLubac, 1950: 146).

Such divine authority places a high responsibility of the holder to discharge it in as just and carefully administered way as possible. The question of how this should be done becomes most critical in the context of clerics who err and sin in a public way. The Church is a community of believers and that belief includes forgiveness and also penance and satisfaction – making up for the sins of the past. Although the superior can use what St Benedict calls, ‘the knife of amputation’ lest one diseased sheep contaminate the whole flock’ (Chapter 28), the spirit of paternal solicitude is apparent in the most recent documents of the Church from the Council of Vatican II onwards.

MANAGING DEVIANT EMPLOYEES: POLICY, PROCEDURE AND PRACTICE

So, what is the procedure to be adopted by the senior manager (Bishop) when dealing with employees (priests) who fall down on the job? How far would the bureaucratic expectancies enshrined, say, in conventional employment law, equate with custom and practice in the Church? In order to assess this we need to examine Canon Law.

Canon Law provides the bishop with a process for dealing with those who have failed in some way in the section entitled: ‘*The procedure in the removal or transfer of pastors*’. In Canon 1741 the Code lays out the causes under which a pastor can be removed legitimately from his parish:

- A manner of acting which brings grave detriment or disturbance to ecclesiastical communion.
- Ineptitude or a permanent infirmity of mind or body which renders the pastor unable to fulfil his functions usefully.
- Loss of a good reputation among upright and responsible parishioners or an aversion to the pastor which it appears will not cease in a brief time.
- Grave neglect or violation of parochial duties which persists after a warning.
- Poor administration of temporal affairs with grave damage to the Church whenever another remedy to this harm cannot be found.

The following Canons indicate the procedure that now unfolds if one, or more, of the above five conditions are deemed to be met: the bishop can persuade the pastor to resign within 15 days (1740); he can issue a decree of removal (1744); *he can make provision for an assignment to another office* (1746; our italics); he can declare the parish vacant (1751). Certainly, these would seem enough powers to allow the Bishop to act in a concerted and determined way should he be so inclined. Notwithstanding, the processes of control are tightened by a simple statement concerning a general and unspecified ‘matter for dissatisfaction’ which can once again be remedied *ad nutum episcopi* – on the nod, by the Bishop.

Yet this apparent and authoritarian control is modulated by differing processes based on the key element of confession. The Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church which was promulgated by the Second Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church in the 1960s encourages pastoral support. The Bishop should be ‘solicitous for all his priests, compassionate and helpful to all who have failed in some respect.’ (Flannery, 1975, 565ff).

He should bring in such erring sheep and talk to them. They may, indeed, come clean about their situation and what better than that they should make a good confession, receiving absolution reserved for the truly sorrowful and then discussing how they may make amends in the future. Such a confession may be heard by the Bishop or, perhaps, by one of his curial priests. Once that moment of repentance is assured with the firm purpose of amendment, then the question what to do in the future can be discussed.

In past times it may be that such a confessional process was seen as part of the process of fatherly care which would be undertaken by the Bishop. The penitent cleric could then enjoy a resumption of good relations within the church, though it would obviously be better for all concerned if he could be accommodated elsewhere – somewhere where he is not so well known, perhaps. So, his identity could be concealed and he might be moved to another parish where he would be able to serve again. This process sets up reciprocities. The priest is now indebted to his bishop for this restitution to normal working life. The bishop must still trust his priest but he now has a measure of control based on knowledge and his concealment of an offence. The errant priest must trust that this secret will not be divulged. The apparent process of vassalage and authoritarian control within a bureaucratic shell converts into something else, but how to theorize that ‘something else’?

THE CONFESSION

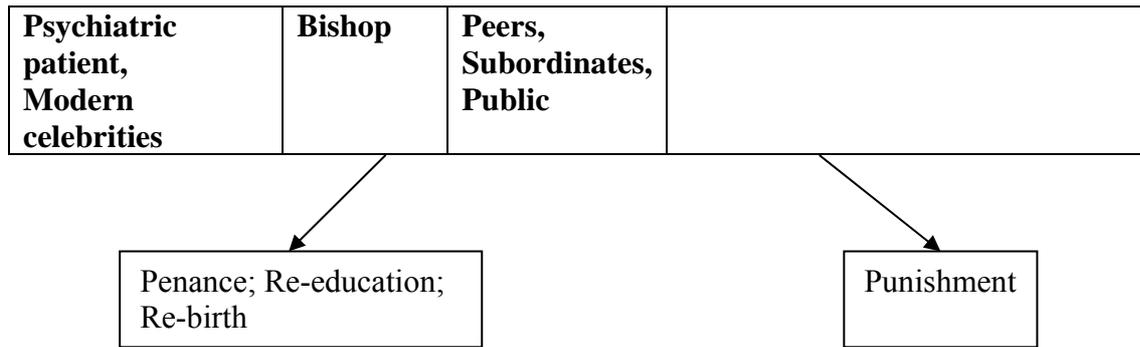
The concept of ‘confession’ is central to understanding the nature of the relevant organizational processes. The concept of ‘confession’ has received very little examination or analysis in the literature. Arguably it has been central to many organizational control processes and constituted a processual building block for identity and self-image. Yet, the existing limited literature is diverse and unsystematic, deriving from religious considerations (Lea, 1896; Burr, 1914; Dallen, 1986), or a narrow historical perspective (Tentler, 1977); or psychiatry (Rieff, 1973). The only general discussion with some sociological awareness is that by Hepworth and Turner (1982), partly based on Foucault – a discursive discussion which lacks any organizational perspective.

What is a ‘confession’? How are we to define the term? In general a confession can be defined as a statement (or series of statements) to a ‘confessor’ which carries a truth value about oneself concerning motives, actions, feelings and events. These events usually involve socially unacceptable behaviours. The truth value derives from the notion that speaking against ourselves, admitting guilt, makes the statement(s) warranted. (Cf. Hepworth & Turner, 1982:85). Confessions can be voluntary or coerced; they can involve absolution promoting social inclusion, or without absolution promoting social exclusion (Foucault, 1977).

On the basis of this definition, the next step is to establish some typology of the processes – this is done in Table 1 below.

Table 1 A Typology of the Confession

THE CONFESSION		
WITH ABSOLUTION Process of social inclusion		WITHOUT ABSOLUTION – Process of social exclusion. This process can be inquisitorial & lead to excommunication or death.
CONFESSANT	CONFESSOR	
Priest, Party member,	With Authority Without Authority	



The notion of confession in the Western tradition depends on the idea of a censoring self which promotes contrition. It is these underlying concepts of self that give confessions their warranty as ‘truth’. The sacrament of penance in the Catholic Church involved the important elements of contrition, confession, satisfaction and absolution (Hepworth and Turner, 1982:41). There was an historical shift from infrequent *and public* confessions to regular, private and obligatory confessions. This was linked to the development of a priestly monopoly for hearing confessions. The priest and the bishop had a sanctioned authority (the ‘power of the keys’) to control penance and absolution (Hepworth and Turner, 1982). Thus the confession became an institutionalised confessant/confessor relationship and process involving specific authority and, for most sins, absolution. The traditional Catholic sequence of [contrition→confession→satisfaction→absolution] is different from a [norm→deviation→punishment] cycle, as indicated in Table 1.

There is a paradox involved in a community of believers convinced that they are saved having a need of a confessional sacrament at all. If grace is apportioned to the sinner and salvation assured, then the rest of the believer’s life is waiting for the coming of the Lord in death or at the Second Coming. In the early centuries of the Church, however, certain personal failings could place the community of believers in an embarrassing situation: if sin is evident in church members, then the proclamation of the message of the Good News of salvation is difficult to make without evoking scepticism from non-believers.¹

In succeeding centuries the possibility of falling back into a sinful state became the focus of a public rite in which public sinners were excluded from the church, in some cases lying outside the door of the Church during the Sunday service during Lent and only at Easter being welcomed back into the body of the Church. Such drastic measures were reserved for those who had sinned in a public way, as for example joining the Roman army and thereby taking the oath to the divinity of the Emperor (and by extension, denying Christ). But the early fathers of the Church saw this service of penance to be one penance, just as there was only one baptism. There was, therefore, only one chance of erring and being restored to Church membership. Apart from such public sins, there are three sins that cannot be forgiven at all: apostasy, murder and adultery (McDonnell, 1993).

The contrasting practice of personal and repeated confession seems to have been derived from the monastic traditions of the 6th and 7th centuries. The Irish and Frankish penitentials offer

¹ One early indicator of how the Church dealt with such situations can be found in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians. There one of the new converts had been living in sin with his mother-in-law. An appeal to the Church founder, Paul, finds him replying that this sinner should be thrown out of the community (1 Corinthians 5).

confessors guidance for assessing the gravity of sins confessed and a list of appropriate penances for different sins committed. Initially, the Bishops objected to this practice but at the Council of Toledo in 589 accepted the principle of repeated confessions for the forgiveness of sins. These penitentials were eventually superseded by *Summae confessorum* – a manual for confessors, offering them extensive lists of questions to ask the penitent to ensure that they had confessed all their sins. These questions were thought to be vital to secure what was then called an ‘integral’ confession without which the absolution would be invalid (Anderson, 2002).

From the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, the emphasis of the sacrament became the contrition of the penitent and the prayer of absolution spoken by the priest. From this century the *summae* are all concerned with healing, comfort and consolation of the sinner (McDonnell, 1993). At this period the obligation to confess to the Parish Priest was imposed on Catholics. The priest had the power to withhold absolution if restitution was not accepted by the penitent and therefore assumed a role in judging how that restitution should take place. The theological tradition of the Church outlines the three important elements of sacramental confession: contrition, confession and satisfaction. ‘Confession is thereby a ritual of inclusion that forms a counterpart to rituals of exclusion, that is, anathematisation and excommunication (Hepworth & Turner, 1982, 43). Its purpose as a sacrament is therefore to bring the sinner back into harmony with the Church and its teachings. Its purpose is to include the forgiven one into communion with the Church. In Catholic theology the change of heart or conversion which is the heart of the sacrament of confession is adduced as a result of confessing to a priest. ‘The person’s guilt is effaced, and he can make a new start. Cleansed of sin, unified in strength, he can direct himself at following the dictates of the Divine Will’ (Berggren, 1975: 195).

After the Council of Trent in the 16th century, the use of the confessional box became more common and anonymity governed the confession of sin, the judgment of the confessor, the apportionment of a suitable penance and the granting (or not) of absolution. Associated with anonymity, was the so called *seal of confession*. It is evident that regularly hearing confessions of a familiar flock may give a priest access to information about crimes which may have taken place in the public arena. Talking to others about the content of confessions heard might give rise to the danger of witting or unwitting exposure of a penitent’s confidence. It was in the mid-18th century that Pope Benedict XIV brought in various rules to guard against such inadvertent revelation by confessors. While such concern for the confidence of the penitent was admirable and necessary, it would of course make it impossible for confessors to divulge knowledge of crime to the secular authorities even where it was considered that there was likelihood of those crimes recurring. The seal of confession locked in the essential confidentiality of the process as with other service workers such as doctors and psychiatrists.

Thus the developing institution of the ‘confession’ in the Catholic Church had several effects: first, it shifted the nature of the priest/Bishop employment relationship. It generated a set of guilt-laden identities for priests, which formed part of an exchange process between priest and Bishop. As we have indicated, the priest can become indebted to his bishop for the maintenance or restitution of normal working life. Post confession, the bishop must still trust his priest but he now has a measure of enhanced control based on knowledge and concealment of any offences. These processes of confessional control could be applied to drunkenness, petty misdemeanours, theft, and sexual offences. The issue of child abuse was dealt with along the same lines revealing the same organizational dynamics. The priority was given to maintenance of hierarchy and continued social inclusion within a permanent

employment relationship. The process of recycling priests was part of a long-persisting pattern applied to child abuse cases.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS & LIMITATIONS

Such processes of confessional control discussed above can be dysfunctional from the perspective of the wider community leading to organization-society conflicts. From the perspective of senior managers of an organization, the dysfunctions are more severe if the organization is based on an ethic of 'righteous' mission. But such dysfunctions can be drowned out by a culture of secrecy such that no one in the Church had a grasp of the scale of the issues. *In other words, secrecy, paradoxically, can be a control process that both generates control and leads to lack of control.*

The contention of the current authors is that the practice of confession between accused and the Episcopal hearings or investigation remains a danger and could even be said to play into the hands of serial offenders, even, perhaps making them feel invulnerable (Doyle, 2003). Confessional control may well appear to assure the Bishop of the repentance and firm purpose of amendment on the part of the erring priest. However, it also requires the seal of confession which precludes mentioning any information to secular authorities. The confessor can only encourage the penitent to go himself to the police. He cannot require it. Failure to advise bishops of this need to steer clear of sacramental involvement with accused clerics, however kindly meant, could leave the bishop open to the charge of having colluded with the accused to avoid justice and of recycling offenders to parishes where their past misdeeds are unknown.

The trust/control relations existing between bishop and accused priest is necessarily changed when confession intervenes, however gained. Whether encouraged by the Bishop or requested by the priest, the danger that the seal of confession will thereafter give rise to the silence of apparent collusion must always appear likely, generating to the lay public the appearance and reality of a culture of secrecy (Morris, 2006).²

² The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has now laid down the need for each Diocese to appoint a competent person to assist those who have been affected by such sexual abuse experienced within the church. A board will be set up to advise the bishop in his assessment of allegations; review of policies and offer advice on all aspects of these cases (Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons, 2002, 4). The alleged offender may be requested to seek and may be urged voluntarily to comply with, an appropriate process in accord with Canon Law (2002, 7). What happens next may include exclusion from the clerical state. But if this is not applied then the offender 'ought to lead a life of prayer and penance. He will not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or administer the sacraments. He is to be instructed not to wear clerical garb, or to present himself publicly as a priest' (2002, 8B). In the UK the Episcopal Conference acted with similar determination, setting up the structures of Child Protection at both Diocesan and parish levels. There will be a National Child Protection Unit to advise the bishops and give guidance on the policies governing the procedures to be followed when such offences are divulged to the church authorities. The report which advised these changes was led by Lord Nolan and lays out that suspending a priest, or declaring him 'impeded,' will usually be an appropriate penalty for a conviction or caution for a child abuse offence (Nolan, 2001: 79).

At a broader level, these issues still lack any theorization in the management or organization theory literature. Many issues remain. It may be that some form of confessional control is more common in personal service and other organizations and has not been recognized in the literature because the theoretical lens has been lacking. This continuing research on the Catholic Church needs to be supplemented by other studies in different locations. Second, interview data with participants would be invaluable to further understand the 'sense-making' processes that occurred, though such data is notoriously difficult to obtain within Church organizations. Third we need more work on other churches and other religions in order to better assess the dynamics of the process. Nevertheless, we hope that we have contributed a start to theorizing these organizational processes.

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Name	Nationality	Ordination	When the church was first informed	Date Removed from the priesthood	No of Moves
Fr Tom Adamson	USA	1958	1964	1984	9
Fr Paul Aube	USA	1970	1975	2002	3
Fr Edward Avery	USA	1970	1978	1984	9
Fr John Banko	USA	1972	1995	2003	3
Fr Robert Barrett	USA	1963	1969	2000	9
Fr Richard Bartz	USA	1974	1987	2002	3
Fr Robert Becker	USA	1965	1965	1989	4
Fr Joseph Bennett	USA	1966	1974	2006	8
Fr George Bertold	USA	1963	1970	2000	7
Fr Albert Boulanger	USA	1962	1965	2002	3
Fr Francis Bass	USA	1948	1958		10
Fr Bernard Bissonette	USA	1958	1962		9
Fr Michael Bolesta	USA	1989	1990	2004	3
Fr Ray Bourque	USA	1954	1981	2005	12
Mgr Leland Boyer	USA	1949	1973	2002	4
Fr John Brickley	USA	1935	1966	1998	2
Fr Michael Buckley	USA	1955	1965	1997	9
Fr Albion Bulger	USA	1956	1974	2002	2
Fr Buongirno	USA	1984	1991		3
Fr William Burke	USA	1946	1970	1995	2
Fr Eugene Burns	USA	1955	1961	1992	8
Fr Robert Burns	USA	1975	1981	2001	2
Fr Lynn Caffre	USA	1971	1973	1994	3
Fr Clive Carey	USA	1960	1963	1977	5
Fr Albert Carman	USA	1945	1954	1980	7
Fr Michael Carroll	USA	1967	1973	2003	6
Fr Santino Casimano	USA	1975	1976	2004	4
Fr Vincent Cavalli	USA	1948	1966	1977	4
Fr Gerard Chalifour	USA	1952	1969	2002	9
Fr William Cloutier	USA	1975	1979	2003	4
Fr Joseph Cote	USA	1951	1970	2002	2
Fr Thomas Creagh	USA	1967	1983	2002	4
Fr David Cousineau	USA	1972	1973	1994	4
Fr Wallace Daley	USA	1955	1957	2000	9
Fr Richard Delahunty	USA	1965	1981	2004	3
Fr John Delli Carpini	USA	1976	1976	2005	5
Fr Neil Doherty	USA	1969	1979	2006	5
Fr Jeremiah Duggan	USA	1955	1970	1999	3
Fr Henry Dunkel	USA	1945	1947	1998	6
Fr James Ford	USA	1966	1968	2003	7
Fr Roger Fortier	USA	1980	1984	1997	6
Fr John Gallant	USA	1960	1980	2003	3
Fr Alfred Gallant	USA	1962	1972	2003	5
Fr Robert Gale	USA	1968	1979	2002	3
Mgr Peter Garcia	USA	1966	1961	1989	13
Fr Richard Geerts	USA	1948	1962		5
Fr John Gillespie	USA	1953	1958	2002	7
Fr William Goltz	USA	1950	1953	1991	12
Fr James Grimes	USA	1942	1958	1978	14
Fr James Janssen	USA	1948	1953	2004	12
Fr William Joseph	USA	1966	1970	2004	5
Fr James Henry	USA	1964	1987	2004	5
Fr David Kelley	USA	1974	1983	2005	12

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Name	Nationality	Ordination	When the church was first informed	Date Removed from the priesthood	No of Moves
Fr Thomas Kelly	USA	1962	1973	2005	4
Fr Robert Larson	USA	1958	1972	2006	6
Mgr Richard Loomis	USA	1976	1974	2004	11
Fr Frank Martinez	USA	1982	1987		5
Fr Robert Marcantonio	USA	1967	1970	1999	3
Fr Francisco Mateos	USA	1958	1976	2003	4
Fr Robert Mayer	USA	1964	1982	1994	4
Fr Tom McConachy	USA	1981	1973 (sic)		5
Fr Richard McLoughlin	USA	1969	1968	2004	5
Fr George Miller	USA	1963	1977	2002	2
Fr Joseph Monaghan	USA	1962	1969	2005	3
Fr Francis Murphy	USA	1957	1960	2003	5
Mgr Daniel Murray	USA	1973	1973	2003	3
Fr Michael Nocita	USA	1977	1977	2002	6
Fr Martin O'Loughlen	USA	1961	1965		5
Fr James O'Neil	USA	1968	1976	2004	4
Fr John Baptist Ormecha	USA	1965	1983	2002	4
Fr Donald Osgood	USA	1955	1956	2002	4
Fr Gary Pacheco	USA	1974	1975	2005	3
Fr John Peters	USA	1944	1962	1997	6
Fr Louis Pick	USA	1939	1947	1969	7
Fr Joseph Pinah	USA	1972	1970s	1999	6
Fr John Poirier	USA	1971	1978	2002	3
Fr Raymond Prybis	USA	1967	1984		5
Fr Rudolph Renteria	USA	1979	1981	2002	4
Fr George Rucker	USA	1946	1967	2002	6
Fr William Schwartz	USA	1958	1960s	2005	7
Fr John Sheahan	USA	1960	1961	1976	4
Fr Silva-Flores	USA	1978	1979	2002	3
Fr Louis Stallkamp	USA	1967	1974	2003	6
Fr Louis Telegdy	USA	1942	1961	2005	10
Fr William Wiebler	USA	1955	1971	2003	3
Bishop Patrick Ziemann	USA	1967	1967	1999	3
Fr John Lloyd	England & Wales		1991		Ordained in spite of previous abuse perpetrated as a teacher
Fr Jo Jordan	England & Wales		1990		Ordained in spite of previous activity as an abuser known to the Archbishop
Fr William Hofton	England & Wales		1980		Ordained in spite of previous conviction and placed in London Parish without the

Name	Nationality	Ordination	When the church was first informed	Date Removed from the priesthood	No of Moves
					knowledge of the Child Protection Officer
Fr Michael Hill	England & Wales		1971	1997	3
Fr Sam Penney	England & Wales		1971		3
Fr Noel Barrett	England & Wales		1973		5
Fr Eric Taylor	England & Wales		1975		3
Fr Ted O'Malley	England & Wales		1987		3
The Ferns Report*	Diocese of Ferns (Ireland)				
Bishop Herlihy	Ferns				
Bishop Comiskey	Ferns				
Bishop Walsh	Ferns				
Fr Donal Collins	Ferns		1966		2
Fr James Doyle	Ferns	1974	1972		2
Fr James Grennan	Ferns		1988		
Fr Sean Fortune	Ferns	1979	1976		5
Monsignor Michael Ledwith	Ferns		1983	1995	1
Canon Martin Clancy	Ferns		1965	1992	3
Fr Alpha	Ferns			Cases pending	
Fr Beta	Ferns				
Fr Gamma	Ferns				
Fr Delta	Ferns				
Fr Epsilon	Ferns				
Fr Iota	Ferns				3
Fr Kappa	Ferns				
Fr Lamda	Ferns				
Fr Zeta	Ferns				
Fr Daly	Australia	1952	1957		8.

Table 2 Sample of Accused/Convicted Priests (USA, UK & Ireland)

*The details of priests against whom accusations are outstanding do not yield details of places in which they served. Evidently this would risk revealing their identities before any case is heard against them. However, the Inquiry notes that it has identified approximately 100 complaints against 21 priests operating in a Diocese with a clergy complement of 360 priests. The Ferns Inquiry makes the following comment from a report commissioned in late 2000 by the Irish Bishops' Committee on Child Abuse published in 2003:

“Child sexual abuse by clergy has occurred over an extended period. Therefore some awareness of the problem must have existed among the clergy, most likely senior members of the Church, for some time. However, the way in which inappropriate sexual behaviour was interpreted by senior Church personnel varied. Anecdotally, sexual contact with male children was sometimes understood as homosexual behaviour rather than child sexual abuse per se. The emphasis was on the moral implications for the offending cleric and a confessional approach was used.”

The Inquiry stated that in failing to follow the compelling advice given by Rev Prof Feichin O'Doherty and others, both Bishop Herlihy and Bishop Comiskey placed the interests of individual priests ahead of those of the community in which they served.

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