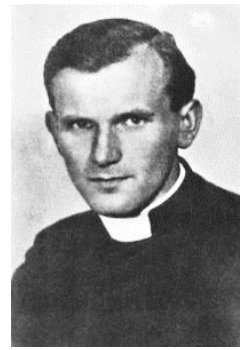




# Church Clergy and Laity Have the Solution to the Sexual Abuse and Cover-Up Crises and to the Entire Culture of Death



by Michael J. McMonagle

My desire to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ through His Church has motivated my leadership for the Pa. pro-life movement for the past 39 years. The movement has generated some significant successes, such as reducing the number of abortions in Pa. from approximately 66,000 in 1980 to approximately 30,000 in 2017. Our Commonwealth has also served as a leader in passing life-saving legislation, pro-life activism and providing abortion alternatives services.

The Catholic Church's faithful advocacy has proven essential to these successes. Thus, other leaders in this movement and I weep at the recent revelations regarding the former Cardinal McCarrick cover-up and the Pa. Grand Jury Report. These revelations not only reduce the Church's moral authority, redirect Her public priorities and increase apathy, but they indicate that some Church clergy have actually been participating in the Culture of Death.

Recognition that all human beings are created in God's image serves as the basis of the Church's pro-life position. A proper view of human sexuality as a *gift* rather than an *objectification* is essential to that position.

God is an eternal exchange of love between three persons in which the love between God the Father, and God the Son, is God the Holy Spirit. The conjugal relationship between husband and wife reflects God's image, as this love can literally become a third person, i.e., a child. Thus, the four vows exchanged by husband and wife - free, total, faithful and fruitful - describe this relationship and, thus, God's image.

This layman's description summarizes Pope John Paul II's *Theology of the Body* (TOTB), which he issued in weekly talks from 1979 to 1984 in hundreds of pages. The TOTB provides the basis to the Church's position on all issues involving sexual morality and the sanctity of human life from contraception, sterilization, in-vitro fertilization, pre-marital sex, adultery, homosexual behavior, pornography, human trafficking and euthanasia. These behaviors all violate one or more aspects of God's image.

Yet, except for a relatively small sub-culture, the Church's laity and clergy have been highly reluctant to teach, preach and live TOTB for one primary reason.

A small but significant minority of the Church leaders and at least half of the laity simply reject the Church's teachings on sexual morality. This rejection has been boldly proclaimed since Pope Paul VI's July 25, 1968 encyclical, *Humanae Vitae* (HV). This encyclical emphasizes that contraception violates the total gift of spouses in their conjugal relationship.

This rejection also serves as the primary reason for the apathy - and inconsistency - of many Catholics towards protecting the sanctity of all human life. Those Catholic laity who are properly outraged by Catholic clergy sexual abuse of children, yet remain apathetic - or even supportive of killing children before birth - need to repent for this inconsistency.

A direct line connects this rejection of HV to the formation of a homosexual sub-culture that enables and covers-up former Cardinal McCarrick's abuse as well as the abuses revealed by the Pa. Grand Jury Report. This Report and the 2002 John Jay Report reveal that at least 80% of these abuses occurred on teen males. Thus, the most accurate label for this crisis is *homosexual abuse*, not *pedophilia*.

Richard Fitzgibbons, M.D. is a Philadelphia area medical doctor, psychiatrist and member of the John Paul II Pontifical Academy for Life and Family. In a recent article, he summarized his insights as to the reason for these crises.

"Priests and bishops who embrace the situational ethics that fueled the massive worldwide rebellion against HV regularly have grandiose, disproportionate thinking concerning the assertion of the primacy of the personal conscience as taking precedence over the sixth and ninth commandments and 2,000 years of Church teaching. Such grandiose thinking intensifies narcissism in priests, bishops and laity.

"Also, the failure of bishops and priests to live and to preach the truth about sexual morality by their silence and passive-aggressive anger against HV further weakened their male confidence. These grave errors both predispose them to act out sexually and to be fearful of correcting someone like Cardinal McCarrick, whose abusive behaviors were known to them."

On July 25, 2018, the Church observed the 50th anniversary of *Humanae Vitae*. Yet, most pulpits, in Pa. and across America, remained silent on HV, contraception and the TOTB. Respect Life Sunday, October 7, 2018, offers another opportunity to demonstrate necessary courage and true repentance by addressing the root cause of these scandals and faithfully, zealously and effectively proclaim the TOTB. The website [www.HV50Philly.com](http://www.HV50Philly.com) can provide tremendous assistance in making this proclamation.

*Michael J. McMonagle lives in Lansdale and is the President of the Pro-Life Educational Foundation.*