

ROYAL COMMISSION

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HOW DID THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH GET ITSELF INTO DISGRACE?

A list of how clergy and some Catholic laity have disgraced their own church follows:

- Too many priests know nothing apart from the church and are often sexually and socially immature, sometimes acting out their emotional and psychosexual immaturity on families. The church is a protective refuge for them.
- Priests will manipulate (not very bright) parishioners to act out against perceived enemies by stalking, slander and other forms of criminality.
- The clearly stated belief that "My bishop will protect me", no matter what. "Bent" bishops support their clergy against laity, no matter how inept, threatening or corrupt the priest. Sadly, priests are rarely fired; apparently they are too close to God for such treatment.
- The unquestioning status given to priests by laity because of **what** they are, not **who** they are.
- For homosexual clergy, it is common for their mutual homosexual bonds to be far stronger than any concern for church, Christ or laity.
- Communal celibacy does not create perversion, but it certainly attracts some psycho- sexual misfits.
- The dominant role played by priests in employing teachers and other church employees is dangerous; it gives unscrupulous priests great power over those who have mortgages and families or who are simply desperate for status denied them by the outside world.
- A powerful clerical resentment of police and law, regarding such bodies as having no business whatsoever in church business, no matter how illegal.
- Parish schools which are priests' playgrounds.
- Older parishioners who are sometimes quite well aware of "Father's needs", history and proclivities, but are keen to ignore them, silence being considered the greater good.
- Blatant anti-Semitism, subtle racism, misogyny and fear and resentment of "outsiders" who are not of what Cardinal Pell called "the tribe", mostly those of Anglo – Irish descent.
- Poorly educated priests who have massive social resentments.
- Lack of financial accountability to the laity.

I do not believe all clergy do fit the above categories, but in my experience and that of others, many seem to.

Some possible solutions:

1. Rotate clergy through dioceses periodically so that they cannot form cliques to be used in their internal wars, or their attacks on some laity. If the Anglicans can do this, so can Catholics.
2. Periodically issue regularly audited financial statements for interested laity.
3. Ensure that all clergy have "Working with Children" police checks – just like all other workers in these areas.
4. Ensure that all Catholic schools have mandated school councils, with the priest simply being one voting member among others.
5. Ensure that if parents who complain, or who are concerned about some aspect of their child's education or treatment, are ignored or "stonewalled" by the local Catholic Education office can, if necessary, appeal to an appropriate state body with statutory power to intervene. It is largely taxpayers' money after all, which supports Catholic schools.
6. Make it difficult for individual rogue priests to hide behind the legal and financial power of the Church. Repeal the "Ellis Defence"; a moral travesty.
7. Tighten up the laws on both stalking and stalking by proxy, clerical specialities.
8. Make it impossible for clergy to be directly responsible for employing teachers, and principals in particular, as such staff have been used to stalk and abuse children and mothers selected by clergy. The Catholic Education Offices need to be the employers who subject applicants to panel interviews based on genuine suitability for the job, rather than "Catholicity" i.e., appropriate racial ancestry and willing to do whatever clergy want, whether illegal or just plain stupid.
9. Make the non-charitable parts of the church subject to fair taxation. It is not a privileged member of the community; it has forfeited that right. (This applies to all such bodies)
10. Dramatically improve the quality and quantity of educational standards of the priesthood. Do not create priests because, as a monsignor said, "Priests come in all shapes and sizes and with a priest shortage, we just have to take what we can."

Perhaps the Church needs to reconsider its relationship to Christ.

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