

Appendix P: Psychological Identity or Spiritual Paternity: Trading Catholic Anthropology for Secularist Gruel

"In reality, we grow in affective maturity when our hearts adhere to God. Christ needs priests who are mature, virile, capable of cultivating an authentic spiritual paternity."

Pope Benedict XVI to priests of Warsaw, May 2006

The death culture of the last forty years is well described as a war against Fatherhood. "Patros archos" - the rule of the Father is the goal of Christian living and the central petition of the Our Father. To be against patriarchy is to be against the order of the Trinity and the sexual construct upon which revelation and sacramental order are based. To displace God as Father is to depersonalize our prayer life and turn religion from the biblical narrative of personal characters to the arid land of philosophical propositions and the enthusiasm of religious feelings. Feelings are fine, philosophical propositions are necessary, but God is Our Father and to lose that understanding is to lose contact with the personal gravitational center of the moral universe. The Father is not a metaphor—Father is His name.

To denigrate patriarchy is to insult the name by which both God and the priest are known. Fatherhood is the sexual role that makes sense of celibacy, orders the life of a parish and establishes the living link of an apostolic clergy to baptized Christians. Fatherhood is the definition of mature masculinity. Fatherhood is the full sexual synthesis of mind, heart and chest. When masculinity is suspect then fatherhood, which is "masculinity in full" becomes an enemy. That is apparently what happened in the last thirty years

and not just in Women's Studies programs at secular universities. Catholic colleges and high schools and our own St. Paul Seminary became resentment centers for feminist ideologues and their pathetic male lapdogs. We must understand this fundamental betrayal and weep as Peter wept. When interrogated by the feminist maidservant, our own seminary faculty stuttered and stammered—"I do not know the man."

To do the Will of the Father was the mission of Christ. He now sits at the right hand of the Father. The Church is called to return all things to the house of the Father. Our parishes are patriarchal households. Our pope is our papa. And yet to this day "overcoming patriarchy" is widely seen as a "justice issue" in Catholic halls of higher learning. It certainly was the rage in our seminaries---- training our priests to renounce their manhood as they betrayed the Father. Whatever were we thinking? How can we make up for our betrayal? As the seminary reforms itself, there are plenty of places we might spread the word that we got it all wrong back in the eighties and nineties and we want to correct any error passed on to high school counselors and church staff. The seminary owes itself reform and other diocesan institutions an aggressive reparation program for false teaching. This cannot be done by attrition. We are Catholics. Love means we **can** say we are sorry. A whole lot of people got things wrong and our youth should not have to pay for the intransigence of our poorly educated baby boomer bureaucrats. There is no reason to have another Catholic high school class be subjected to this tired tripe when we owe our children the rich sexual symphony of Catholic teaching on Fatherhood, apostolic fraternity, marriage and Mary.

Priestly Formation not Psychological Self

Wading through the purgatorial spiritual writings on sexuality of the seminary formation teams of the last three decades the fatal inversion presents itself. The spiritual advisors and experts steeped in the language and categories of psychology and personal identity substituted the self centered vocabulary of Abraham Maslow and Erik Erikson for the call of Christ and a Christian anthropology. The vocation to the priesthood, the historical and sacramental identity of the priest, and the particular community of fellow diocesan priests all shape a man from the outside. The call of God, the imposition of hands from the bishop, the rules of daily office and celibacy are categories from the outside. Formation draws an individual man into this tradition older and bigger and deeper than himself. If he can die to himself, he will become older and bigger and deeper himself—he will become father in a brotherhood of fathers doing the will of the Father. Instead, at SPS there was an unhealthy obsession with one's feelings, even one's fantasies as indicative of one's identity. (The gory details are in appendix S on spirituality and sexuality.) The notion of masculine maturation and fatherhood were studiously avoided to keep the language individualistic, and to steer clear of those twin terrors of sexism and homophobia. The fact of God's fatherhood and the necessity to die to oneself to put on Christ, the command of the Gospel and the obligations of priestly identity which might entail *formation*, not self discovery, seemed alien notions in the self absorbed cocoon of SPS spiritual life. The navel gazing replaced coming in contact with the reality of the cosmos ordered by the Father and assailed by the Evil One. (Satan, of course, like all characters who might draw us into a cosmic interpersonal reality beyond our

aspirations, feelings, and intimate friends, was neutralized by equating him with every person's inclination toward evil.)

All fatherhood except God's begins with sonship. When we conform ourselves to Christ, we become adopted sons of the Father. Everyday in prayer we speak with our Father as a son. We understand fatherhood first by being a son. Christ has invited apostles and priests into a fraternal union. "As My Father has loved me so I love you."

The particular form of philia-the diocesan priesthood

This apostolic fraternity, this priestly *philia* is the love relationship which grounds the apostolic church in the Trinitarian communion. For diocesan priests, this philia is a very concrete set of men in a very specific place under a particular bishop. Understanding the evangelical power of this particular relationship acting in history is one of the ripening fruits of the Second Vatican Council. The priestly brothers are empowered to forgive sins, to baptize the nations, to cast out demons, to remember and live in the presence of Christ in the Eucharist.. The coming to public consciousness of the Church enacted by Vatican II will show its most dramatic forms in the worldwide synod of bishops and in particular diocesan fraternities. These ecclesial sacramental brotherhoods will be the evangelical carriers of the Catholic mission. If the Catholic reform of the seventh century was carried by monks , and the reform of the sixteenth century enacted by the great religious orders then the biblical personalism of Vatican II is going to be carried by a dramatic new consciousness of the diocesan priesthood as a sacramental form of Christian brotherhood.

These brotherhoods will forge the fathers who will revivify the parish as the father's household. These brotherhoods will be models for civic life. They will learn to harmonize the rich institutional symphony of catholic parish, hospital, educational and charitable life.

Spiritual Paternity, Chastity, and Celibacy

The priests are our fathers. Their spiritual paternity comes from their special relationship with Christ and His special relationship with the Father. The catholic ordering of life to Christ is lived out in diocesan parishes with our spiritual fathers in communion with their father the Bishop. It seems too obvious. It should be unnecessary to mention that fathers do not sleep with their brothers and they do not lie with their children. It is unthinkable. This may come as surprise to the old sex and spirituality teams at SPS, but we fathers do not think of our children that way. Honoring the incest taboo does not afflict us with some incredible sexual repression neurosis. This extension of the incest taboo is central to the priestly identity. It is enacted with grace and formation. It is not so impossible except in the hyper-sexed, pathological world of the conflicted homosexuals who so dominated the interior culture of the seminary for two decades. Physicians, even without the grace of sacramental orders, understand the importance of the de-eroticization of doctor-patient relationships. Far from being impossible, it is the norm. Should the concept be a major stumbling block for our spiritual fathers? Once spiritual formation is in the hands of men who are sexually mature and

not whining narcissists, we will again remember. Celibacy is not unnatural. It is breaking the incest taboo that is shameful, extraordinary and evil.

A father cultivates a deep affection and attraction toward the person and the beauty of his daughters. It is a great source of fatherly delight. There is a fatherly attraction that has no *eros* in it. It is full of life. It is not the homosexual's lack of feeling for the female. It is not the rake's lasciviousness. It is a father's love for a daughter. All women are daughters to the priest. That is a tough relationship to learn when the seminary feminists scold the young males about the evil of being "patronizing." How does he tell that angry old lady, "You are my daughter. I am "patros"- I can't help but patronize."

. Catholics do not think that repression of our feelings and desires is necessarily damaging. Say it all together class. "Repression is good." Freud did not understand the first or second part of that great Beatitude—Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Freud was not into baptism, penance, metanoia, conversion, kenosis, or dying to self to find a new life in Christ. He didn't know that when a man purifies his mind there is room for the angels and the saints, for the Queen of Heaven and for the Living God.

Seminary formation is about a brotherhood of men under the direction of a brotherhood of fathers becoming a brotherhood of fathers. Spiritual paternity is a relationship that supersedes teacher –student. It is more than professionalism. It is the maturation of the masculine personality. If a man cannot read he cannot become a priest. If he cannot be a father because his affectional maturity is arrested or misdirected, then he cannot become a priest. This is not a denial of his rights, but a choosing by the Church of Abel's fitting lamb.

The purity which is the perfection of chastity carries a great reward—the pure imagination becomes cleared of the clutter that blocks us from seeing the Catholic drama and its players. There is heaven and hell. There are the angels and the saints. There is Jesus at the right hand of the Father and Mary—a physically real woman as Queen of the relationship called Heaven. And in the purified Catholic imagination there abides an ever growing awareness of the events 2000 years ago—a clarified sensibility of the characters who walked the Holy Land in that First Era. The mind must be cleared of a lot of rubbish to clear a space to unite with the mind of the Church to accomplish the “Will of the Father”. A lot of clutter has to be cleared out for men to learn to unite with others in a neural-religious manner so they might live as an ordained community in remembering, considering and contemplating the will of the Father. Blessed are the pure in spirit; for they shall see God. That is the reward for some heavy duty repression--- let us all learn to repress. And let our joyous priest fathers teach us how and why healthy necessary repression allows all of us to live the virtue of chastity so we might better seek the things above.

Let our priest fathers teach us as they live the perfected virtue of chastity. That can be done— and it can be done well. If at first it is hard to practice any virtue, later it becomes much easier and becomes its own reward. But the virtue has to be practiced in mind, in words, in deed and in community. It is the world enslaved by sin that treats chastity as an impossibility. It does not know the lightness of the burden or the sweetness of the proper yoke. How could they know in our archdiocese? Over 100 priests including the vice rector and director of seminary admissions signed a hysterical letter threatening a Eucharist famine if the discipline of celibacy remains. Several years later let us hope the priests see that letter in its true light-not a

prophetic speaking of truth to power but an utter embarrassment to the priesthood and our local church.

There is a pearl so precious that a man does not complain of its cost; in fact he barely remembers what he forsook to find that pearl. The invitation of Christ to the celibate to enter the fellowship of the priestly covenant does not produce a whining protest movement. The celibate priest who has experienced the friendship of Christ and the love of the Father is now allowed to share in bequeathing the Father's Mercy in the forgiveness of sins and making contemporary His Son's life in the Eucharist. He calls other men as the apostles called their brothers—"come join us, we have found the Lord." The vocation crisis is always a local crisis. If there is a crisis in vocations it is because there is a crisis in the identity and fraternity of the local priesthood.

The crisis was certainly not a result of the sacrifice of celibacy. What is truly sacrificed in the vow of celibacy was barely mentioned in the homo/hetero confusion of the last three decades. It is not "genital centered pleasure"—a great hetero/ homo non distinguisher there. What a seminarian gives up to become a father is that he never gets to be a dad. He gives up human fatherhood—the biological strategy for immortal life. The farmer enjoys planting but his real joy is in the harvest--- that is what the celibate forgoes. Like Abraham, he is willing to sacrifice his son to do the will of the Father. Like God, the Father, he sacrifices his son for the sake of the whole world. The celibate priest completes the patriarchal triad of sacrifice by giving up fathering a son. He sacrifices his son to better draw all things unto the Father in Heaven. He forgoes the Darwinian theory of immortality by regeneration and posits the Christian strategy of eternal life through love of Christ. He is a dramatic manifestation to the world. He is

man in full—this spiritual father. Fatherhood is cosmic, it is Trinitarian, it is personal, it is common—it is as old as a Russian village and as new as the soft patriarchs of American suburbs. Fatherhood is honored from Confucian China to tribal Africa. But at the St. Paul Seminary—polite people didn't talk that way. And **today**, in Catholic high schools throughout the archdiocese, our students are taught that homosexuality is gay and patriarchy is oppression. How many seasons can any Catholic father wait before we correct that little holdover from the bad old nineties at the seminary when Bill McDonough was the sex expert and brother Kevin McDonough was the smiling celebrant at a “welcoming gays” high school liturgy. Where are the fathers for these confused youths? If there really is a new day in the diocese, this travesty could be changed by fiat. We could celebrate with a high school assembly Mass by a new vicar general in May, celebrating the true Queen of heaven and earth—our mother Mary.

Maybe fatherhood is a little more than a metaphor. Maybe the war against patriarchy is a war against the very nature of our religion and the moral structure of the universe. There **is** a war against patriarchy. As Catholics, that means a war against us. Let us recapture our seminaries so they fight on the side of the Father. Let us recapture our colleges and high schools so they will honor Our Lady. The Evil One first rebelled against the Father when God revealed to Him that he would have to serve His Son who turned out to be a man not an angel. “Down with patriarchy” said Satan. It is really a pretty old and tired refrain. Let us renounce Satan and join Mary looking for Christ. When we find Him, we too will be reminded, “Did you not know that I must be about the work of my Father?”