

## **Whatever Happened to Social Justice: Church Bureaucrat as Generational Narcissist**

*David Pence MD*

The revolt against the Catholic Church in England was fueled by an enormous land grab of church property and wealth by reformers. Something very similar appears to have happened in the last forty years to the Catholic Church in America. In a national economy that increasingly is based on services like health care and education there abides a colossal complex of land, buildings and jobs providing these necessary and ever more costly services. An intergenerational reservoir of past social capital and good will bequeaths to these institutions large transfers of private wealth to supplement their work.

But somewhere along the way something happened to the people who worked for the “Catholic complex”. They replaced the trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost with feminism, gay rights, and pacifism. They questioned the “resuscitation” of Christ but established the immortality of job tenure as both a matter of faith and social justice. Just when the profound Catholic intellectual tradition was needed to answer the materialists and sexual revolutionaries, the universities sold their Catholic birthright for a bowl of Ivy League porridge. Just when we needed to explain the communal necessity of authority, people who derided

Americanism in politics became ultra nationalists in a war against the foreign Vatican. Just as the urban infrastructure of parish schools and high schools were needed to serve the black and Hispanic poor, we closed those doors and built the middle class ministries and bureaucracies of national conferences, diocesan commissions and the empowered parish staff. Urban territorial parishes became metro centers for feminists and gay rights. As the metrosexuals preached liberation, the urban poor lived in a lawless matriarchy and hungered for the patriarchy of God, the protection of men and the social cohesion of marriage. The parish priest who could have been father to the urban orphan boys entertained boyfriends his own age at the symphony. The church bureaucrat in an increasingly shrunken universe of concern directed her centering prayer on retaining her job. She saw this as striking a blow in the titanic struggle against patriarchy. Among church employees a new eschatology developed. They were no longer virgins vigilant for the return of the male King but careerists confident that “history” would usher in the sexually indifferent *paradiso*.

It has been a peculiar kind of generational revolt: seizing the institutional wealth of the previous generations and charging unprecedented fees to the next generation of students and patients needing the Universities, high schools, and hospitals. Like so many

mainline Protestant clergy, the employees lost their faith but have maintained their livelihoods.

This dreadful bureaucratization of the church is mirrored in a similar bureaucratization of civic life by the rise of a party largely run by government employees. Their civic betrayal of their religious forefathers, manual laborers, and the poor is as complete as the church bureaucrats betrayal of the faithful.

There came a time in China when the mandarins no longer believed in the mandate from heaven. They ran the government but did not believe in its Divine character. Communist bureaucrats experienced the same disillusion with the significance of their historical calling and became a regime unto themselves. When the time came to fight, the Marxist edifice collapsed. Catholic Church employees face a different situation. In the Church, the culture of disbelief and dissent among the hired people contrasts with a renewed faith in the pews and a new breed from the seminaries.

Thus a first task of a revived masculine priesthood will be to return the model of the patriarchal household to parish and diocesan life. **(Ed note: 80% of the readers of this article will wince at “the patriarchal household”—this test demonstrates that you have not yet completely extracted your feminist brain implant)**

Reclaiming the physical infrastructure bequeathed by the old immigrants will be followed by a tsunami wave of renewed indigenous converts and immigrating Catholics from the southern

hemisphere. These most fervent Catholics will fill our churches and schools with worship, work, learning, and children. They will recall this momentary adulation of homosexuality and feminism as a last gasp, bizarre mutiny of the barren affluent. Just over the horizon the new Pentecost is swelling in the hearts of men and nations of the Christian southern hemisphere. The wealth and talents of the American Catholic tradition with our universities, schools, hospitals and parish life can be at the service of this Christian world movement. That would be social justice.

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