

1 POST-TREATMENT OPTIONS

2 REV. STEPHEN J. ROSSETTI, PH.D.

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5 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: The post-treatment ministry  
6 options for clergy and religious who have been involved  
7 in sexual misconduct challenges us to those social,  
8 legal and pastoral considerations that may well force us  
9 into that uncomfortable, but necessary, zone of danger  
10 that will sharpen our skills to successfully handle all  
11 the twists, all the turns, and the thrills of the hills  
12 as we go up and down that mountain we call life.

13 We have today with us an excellent  
14 instructor guide. I am honored to present to you  
15 Stephen Rossetti, priest of the diocese of Syracuse;  
16 graduate of the Air Force Academy; former Air Force  
17 intelligence officer; former director of education at  
18 House of Affirmation; author of best sellers, I Am  
19 Awake, Fire on the Earth; editor of award-winning Slayer  
20 of the Soul, Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church;  
21 licensed psychologist; member of the National Conference  
22 of Catholic Bishops' Think Tank on Child Sexual Abuse;  
23 member of the board of directors of St. John's  
24 University Sexual Trauma Institute; currently executive  
25 vice-president and chief operating officer of St. Luke's

1 Institute; lecturer on issues of sexuality and  
2 spirituality to clergy and religious around the country;  
3 consultant to religious organizations on clergy and  
4 religious mental health issues.

5 Ladies and gentlemen, Reverend  
6 Dr. Rossetti.

7 REV. ROSSETTI: Thank you. It's great to be here  
8 with you all and I appreciate your coming. It's a  
9 difficult issue, post-treatment options. By the way,  
10 that in itself is a new sort of spin. It's a euphemism.  
11 You may want to sit. Its going to be a ...

12 It's a euphemism. I used to use the term  
13 "return to ministry, question mark," and that got so  
14 much negative responses that we've now changed the title  
15 to "post-treatment options." And that actually came  
16 from Everett McNeal, who has been helping out the NCCB  
17 on working out this issue because return to ministry is  
18 such a powerfully negative issue that it's hard to speak  
19 about it normally. And so post-treatment options is a  
20 way of sort of spinning it more positively because it  
21 faces you with a problem. The problem is, what do we do  
22 with these men after treatment.

23 I'll be speaking primarily about men.  
24 There are some women, of course, who have sexual  
25 problems, but it's primarily a male issue. And there

1 are about three or four types of typical cases of sexual  
2 misconduct that we see.

3           You're welcome to come and sit down in the  
4 front, if you like.

5           Primarily I'll be talking about child  
6 sexual abuse because that's the most difficult issue.  
7 What do you do with priests who sexually molest minors  
8 after treatment? That's the hardest issue to deal with.

9           Another issue, which is almost as  
10 difficult, is, what about the guys who are involved with  
11 anonymous and compulsive sexuality. For example, the  
12 guys who cruise pickup joints, porno shops, truck stops,  
13 that crowd, a lot of high frequency anonymous compulsive  
14 sexuality. Usually we see it in homosexuality more than  
15 heterosexuality.

16           And the third issue, which is becoming  
17 more critical these days, is sexual exploitation. What  
18 do you do with a priest who may have been involved  
19 sexually with a number of his counselees or a number of  
20 his parishioners, what do you do with them after  
21 treatment.

22           Now, there is a miscellaneous category, a  
23 bunch of guys, but they're less frequent, those are  
24 involved with other types of sexual behavior like  
25 exhibitionism, exposing himself, voyeurism, peeping

1 toms, sadism and masochism, those who enjoy sexual,  
2 perhaps violent sexual contact. But Those categories  
3 are less common. So I'll focus primarily on child  
4 sexual abuse and a bit on the other two issues on top of  
5 there.

6 Now, somebody said, do these priests go  
7 back to ministry. And I say that somewhat -- I don't  
8 mean to be too glib, but the answer to that is, they go  
9 back if the major superior bishop says they go back.  
10 And the reason why it's important to say that is because  
11 they're the ones who actually make the decision. There  
12 is no law against putting a child sexual abuser back  
13 into ministry. There may be some liability issues but  
14 there is no law against it. So it really comes down on  
15 his or her desk. That's where the decision lies. And  
16 So what you see is a variety of perspectives. Some  
17 major superiors will be much more lenient, others will  
18 be much more restrictive. Some will say, when I have a  
19 priest involved in sexual misconduct, I will never put  
20 him back into ministry. That's just his policy. And  
21 some will say that to the media but you realize that's  
22 not actually what they're doing. And some will say, no,  
23 no, we think about these cases and we talk about them,  
24 but in reality they never return anyone to ministry. So  
25 again depends on the personality and the perspective of

1 the superior.

2 I would again like to highlight how  
3 intense this issue is. Here was a newspaper story from  
4 Daytona Beach in last November, which really is typical.  
5 This could be any state of the union. What should we do  
6 with those who molest minors? Of the hundred people who  
7 called in, 21 said they should be castrated. Two  
8 suggested that we should cut off their hands or fingers.  
9 Several of them -- three of them suggested a type of  
10 tattooing across their forehead so it would identify  
11 them as offenders. And 13 said they would take the law  
12 into their own hands if the man was freed from court.  
13 As this one resident said, there has to be some justice,  
14 I would just kill the person. These are not uncommon  
15 responses, frankly.

16 Now, I think if nothing else, this is not  
17 to justify the heinousness of the crimes, but there is a  
18 Gospel prospective, which I think we need to bring to  
19 this issue. If there is any one thing the Catholic  
20 church has to bring that's unique is, in fact, a Gospel  
21 perspective.

22 Now, as you know, there is secular  
23 reporting laws sweeping the United States right now for  
24 sex offenders. In 47 states right now, there is a  
25 requirement for sex offenders to register after they get

1 out of jail. So they have to register with the local  
2 authorities. In 20 of those states, there is a  
3 requirement for some sort of public notification. It  
4 could be a 900 number where you call and -- for example,  
5 the neighborhood you could call and say, I would like a  
6 list of all the sex offenders who are living in my  
7 neighborhood. Some places put signs or posters up.  
8 Other places, they'll notify nearby schools and that  
9 sort of thing. So we see as a society a general  
10 movement towards registration, identification, public  
11 notification of anyone involved with a sex offense,  
12 usually child abuse and rape. It is in that context  
13 discussing going back to ministry becomes even a more  
14 difficult one.

15                   Now, the problem with this issue for a  
16 superior, if you're the person making the decision, you  
17 cannot make a decision that everyone is going to like.  
18 It's impossible. You can't do it. I was in Dublin  
19 recently and one of the chancellors there was upset  
20 that, for example, you've got the lawyers fighting  
21 against the psychologists and the lawyers will say one  
22 thing, they tend to be more negative obviously, and the  
23 psychologists tend to be more positive, and this  
24 chancellor was trying to get all his competing values  
25 into place and get the people to agree. And finally I

1 sat down with him and I said, you're not going to get  
2 these people to agree, they just have a different  
3 perspective. In the end, the decision falls on your  
4 desk and it falls on the bishop's desk. Your  
5 professionals are not going to agree on this issue.

6 Now, I think our primary value should be  
7 protecting children and projecting victims, number one.  
8 I think that's what it should be. Now, we had to  
9 somehow think about what our values are. When you have  
10 competing values, we have to say, what is our primary  
11 concern, what are we trying to do. And I think it  
12 should be primarily to protect children and protect  
13 victims. What are the best options for protecting them,  
14 I would place that first.

15 Now, many people sometimes will say, what  
16 we should do with child molesters, we should get rid of  
17 them because that is the best thing for children, that's  
18 the safest thing for children. You hear that comment  
19 all the time, let's get rid of them. What does that  
20 mean getting rid of them? As I explain to people  
21 somewhat facetiously, we don't beam them to the moon.  
22 Where do they go? Well, if we laicize them, if we  
23 release them from religious life or the priesthood, they  
24 go into society and there are children everywhere.  
25 People say, well, let's send them to where there is no

1 children. You know, name one spot. Name one spot. And  
2 so what really happens is people say, let's get rid of  
3 them. But what happens is they go into society without  
4 being treated, unsupervised and in unrestricted  
5 ministry, unrestricted life. So children are at greater  
6 risk in a scenario like that. If you simply release  
7 them into society, I maintain that without some  
8 supervision or restrictions, you're placing children at  
9 a greater risk. And when you release them from their  
10 social support, they can't find a job, you find them  
11 they're in greater possibility of relapsing.

12           So let's take a look at this issue  
13 rationally, if we can, and say, what is best for  
14 society, what is best for our children.

15           I know that reducing liability tends to be  
16 the issue that drives many of our decisions in this  
17 case. Now, I don't want to downplay the significance of  
18 that. We just had a thing this morning on protecting  
19 our assets. I know people are concerned about losing  
20 money, and it's not a minor concern. If we had to  
21 lose -- if we lose hundreds of millions of dollars on  
22 this issue, which we have, and it restricts what we can  
23 do for other types of ministries, then it's a real  
24 issue. So, again, I don't want to downplay the  
25 significance of reducing liability because it is an



1 issue. We would not be responsible stewards if we were  
2 not concerned about that. But I think in the end, our  
3 first concern should not be that, it should not be that.

4           Number three, a sensitivity to victims.  
5 That's very important. Say you've got a priest who was  
6 involved in sexual misconduct and you decide to return  
7 him to some form of public work and he stands up there  
8 in the pulpit and the victims see him. How do we think  
9 the victims are going to feel? You know, this is an  
10 obvious -- it's difficult. And in some cases, it's even  
11 more problematic. Let's say you got a priest who went  
12 to treatment because two victims came forward. And but  
13 when he gets in treatment, you realize there were  
14 probably maybe 15 more. Now, if you release him -- one  
15 bishop said, if I put him back into ministry where he's  
16 seen, am I going to inflame the other 13 victims. Are  
17 they likely to come forward and what is that going to do  
18 to the diocese, the parish, not to mention the liability  
19 issues. So that's a thorny issue. The bishop says,  
20 what should I do. I said -- I've got 13 more victims  
21 out there and who would now come forward and they're  
22 going to see this guy in the pulpit.

23           It's hard. I mean, you know, the victims  
24 will say, look, see how much I have lost because of this  
25 and yet this man is back to where he was before. That's

1 how it feels to the victims and I think we have to be  
2 sensitive to that too.

3           Another issue becoming more important is  
4 the last one in the top one. Perpetrator rights and  
5 Canon Law. In the early days of this issue, we pretty  
6 much ignored Canon Law in America. Canon Law didn't fit  
7 too well and we pretty much went along with the legal  
8 and psychological and secular model. What's happening  
9 now is Canon Law is starting to reassert itself in this  
10 area. And the Vatican is starting to do that too.  
11 These perpetrators do have rights obviously. Now, most  
12 cases where the guys are involved with child abuse of  
13 some sort, the cases are not adjudicated and so you  
14 never really have a legal court saying, yes, he's  
15 guilty; no, he's not guilty. And many times the cases  
16 are somewhat fuzzy. So what do you do when everyone  
17 believes he did some sort of crime but you haven't  
18 really proven it? Those are the toughest cases, I  
19 think. You've got one allegation that is kind of soft,  
20 maybe even two kind of soft allegations, he denies it,  
21 the whole thing becomes inconclusive. And then what  
22 happens is he reasserts his rights; I am innocent until  
23 proven guilty. Therefore -- and as a priest, you have a  
24 right under Canon Law to minister.

25           One of the more difficult issues these

1 days is that the Vatican in most cases has upheld  
2 priests being in ministry even if they have molested  
3 minors. If the priest appeal their cases to Rome, many  
4 times Rome will side with the priest and say, yes, he's  
5 done something wrong, but he needs to be reinstated into  
6 some form of ministry. And that is when the bishop  
7 starts appealing to Rome directly and it becomes sort of  
8 an in-house fight. Most of the fights we don't hear  
9 about now, but it's become very difficult. And right  
10 now Rome has pretty much sided with priests remaining in  
11 ministry and remaining in some active ministry.

12           The media response is obvious. When the  
13 media gets ahold of a guy going back into ministry, it's  
14 a very powerful issue.

15           Gospel values. Now, I want to be clear  
16 about this. Sometimes when people think about Gospel  
17 values, they say, well, we should forgive the guy.  
18 Which is true, of course. But what they mean by that is  
19 we should have a positive feeling towards him and what  
20 he's done and he should be returned to where he was  
21 before, returned to full ministry. That's not how I  
22 understand Gospel values. We are angry at crimes, as  
23 indeed we should. It does not mean we cannot be angry  
24 at the perpetrators. I don't think the Gospel is  
25 telling us that. I think it's an incorrect

1 interpretation of the Gospel.

2           The second thing is that to forgive  
3 someone does not necessarily mean that we should  
4 reinstate him where he was before. Now, you wouldn't  
5 take an alcoholic and say, we forgive you for your  
6 problem, therefore, we're going to make you a bartender.  
7 You know what I mean? It's not -- I think it's a false  
8 compassion to take a priest who has had a problem with  
9 minors, and even if he's done well in treatment, to put  
10 him back into ministry that involves minor. I don't  
11 consider that compassion. That is dangerous. It's  
12 dangerous for the children, it's dangerous for him. He  
13 can land up back in jail.

14           And the desires of the laity. Now, that's  
15 a very difficult thing and I'll talk about that a bit  
16 later. What do the laity desire? And, unfortunately,  
17 it's very conflictual. It's hard for a priest these  
18 days to stand up in front of his congregation and say, I  
19 had a problem with sexual misconduct, I was cruising the  
20 bars, but now I've been through treatment and I feel  
21 much better about myself. You know, the moment a priest  
22 stands up in front of his group and says, I have a  
23 problem with alcohol and I've gone through treatment and  
24 I'm back here to serve, people clap. You know, the  
25 priest stands up and says, I've got a problem with

1 cruising anonymous pickup joints and I'm here back to  
2 help you, they don't tend to clap, you know.

3           So if that's the issue, if he goes back to  
4 ministry, whom do you tell. You see, whom do you tell.  
5 Then if he does it again and the people will say, well,  
6 we didn't know he had that problem, you didn't tell us.  
7 You could see why people would be upset. Very thorny  
8 issue.

9           One of the things which I think we need to  
10 change is our perspective. This is the common statement  
11 you hear, that pedophilia is incurable. You'll hear  
12 that all the time, pedophilia is incurable. And the  
13 statement is misleading. The statement is misleading.  
14 The impression you get from reading the media is that  
15 all priests or brothers who are involved with sexual  
16 misconduct are pedophiles and they're doing this  
17 compulsively and have done it dozens of times.

18           Andrew Greeley article about a year or two  
19 ago, he figured that the average number of victims a  
20 priest would have would be at least 50. Remember that  
21 article? And it's not true. It's not true. The Porter  
22 cases are unusual. James Porter, the Fall River case,  
23 he had over a hundred victims. They're unusual. They  
24 happen but they're unusual.

25           The study that we did found out that the

1 average numbers of victims was eight, a little over  
2 eight for the guys, a little over eight. Now, that's  
3 too many, I realize, but it's not what you're reading in  
4 the newspapers. The other thing is this: Pedophilia --  
5 most priests who sexually molest minors are not  
6 pedophiles. I don't know if you knew that. Most  
7 priests who sexually molest minors are not pedophiles.  
8 We use that word incorrectly. A pedophile is someone  
9 whose sexual object choice is a prepubescent child. So  
10 if he's going to sexually fantasize, he's going to  
11 fantasize about a seven or eight or nine or  
12 ten-year-old. That's his sexual object choice. Most  
13 priests who sexually molest minors are involved with  
14 postpubescent minors, 13, 14, 15. They're not  
15 pedophiles. Now, it is true that we're not likely to  
16 change someone's sexual orientation. We don't try. So  
17 if you've got a real pedophile, you're probably not  
18 going to change his orientation. What you can help him  
19 do though is you can help him to control his behavior.  
20 So we're looking for behavioral control.

21                   Fortunately, most priests are not  
22 pedophiles. And we use the term ephebophiles. It's a  
23 loose term. It's not in the diagnostic manual. But it  
24 refers to priests who molest postpubescent minors. Now,  
25 if you take a priest like that, chances are his issues

1 are not going to be around a deviant arousal pattern.  
2 It's going to be more along the lines of him  
3 psychosexually needing to grow up. For example, he may  
4 have a body of 40-year-old, but psychosexually he's  
5 probably about the same age as his victims, 12, 13, 14.

6           So what's the goal of treatment at that  
7 point? The goal in treatment is basically have him grow  
8 up sexually and emotionally, to develop peer  
9 relationships. Can we do that? Yes, many cases we can.  
10 Now, what treatment response tends to be among priests?  
11 Does treatment work? I would say about 70 or 80 percent  
12 of them, as a ballpark figure, do get better with  
13 treatment, they do. Seventy, 80 percent. That's  
14 conservative. Some of them get a lot better. Some of  
15 them get a little bit better. And there is maybe ten  
16 percent or so who walk out the same at the end of  
17 treatment they walked in at. That's typical with any  
18 psychiatric problem. If you have someone that is  
19 depressed, 80 percent of them are going to get better in  
20 treatment. Some are going to get a lot better in  
21 treatment, some are going to get a little bit better in  
22 treatment and some are going to walk out just like they  
23 walked in at. And that's normal.

24           Let me put this next thing up here.

25           Something that I would -- now, something

1 that I would maintain is that priests tend to be good  
2 clients in treatment. There is a variety of reasons.  
3 Now, here are some of the negative treatment indicators.  
4 If you have got somebody who has some of these problems,  
5 he may not do that well in treatment. For example, the  
6 first one, if he abuses very young children, those are  
7 the pedophiles, they tend not to do too well in  
8 treatment. So if you have got someone who is doing  
9 that, he's probably not going to do a whole lot better.

10                   Someone with a serious personality  
11 disorder. I was talking at lunch about someone who is  
12 sociopaths, other types. Someone with a very serious  
13 personality order is liable not to do that well in  
14 treatment.

15                   Someone who is in rigid denial, rigid  
16 projection; I didn't do it, he was coming on to me, I'm  
17 the passive victim of this 13-year-old boy. You'll hear  
18 that in the beginning. But if you're still hearing that  
19 at the end of treatment, he's not doing well. Rigid  
20 denial system. And his only problem is you, his  
21 superior or his community, who basically did him a dirty  
22 deal. And then we try to explain to them, well, how did  
23 you get the treatment to begin with, you know.

24                   Serious neuropsychological deficits.  
25 Whenever we see someone in the screening who has serious



1 neuropsychological deficits, brain wiring, is his brain  
2 wired badly. If his brain is wired badly, he's not  
3 going to do that well in treatment. We can help him a  
4 little bit.

5           And the last thing is a long history of  
6 compulsive behavior. Now, if you've got someone with  
7 several of these, you can be sure that he's going to be  
8 fairly treatment resistant.

9           In general though, I would say the priests  
10 that we get are good clients. And the reason why those  
11 screenings that you've been paying for all those years,  
12 you know, for candidates, they do help, they do help.  
13 What they do end up is getting rid of using the very  
14 seriously disturbed people. You'll screen out the  
15 mentally retarded, the people who are mentally  
16 handicapped, the seriously emotionally disturbed. I  
17 mean, how many priests do you know, for example, who are  
18 schizophrenic? I'm sure there are some. Every once in  
19 a while, you would see one, but not -- very few.

20           So what you've done in those early  
21 screenings is screen out the real bad cases, the obvious  
22 ones. I think it does -- as a result, I think we do get  
23 a better cut of clients. And how well they do in  
24 treatment almost always depends on what type of people  
25 they are coming into treatment. One of the most

1 interesting things I found the other day is we did the  
2 study on the average IQ of the priests that we've been  
3 treating at St. Luke's. Do you know what the average IQ  
4 was? Now, normal is a hundred. You read the article.  
5 It's 122. Now, that's in the upper seven percent of the  
6 population. So what you're getting is you're taking a  
7 guy who has some good cognitive skills, a good support  
8 system, a pretty good history of working, even though  
9 you might not think that. But basically from a clinical  
10 perspective, a fairly good history of working and a  
11 social support network. And most of these things are  
12 not present, these negatives. So you've got a guy who's  
13 probably going to do fairly well in treatment, and in  
14 general they do.

15                   The other thing to say that's different is  
16 we're changing our styles of treatment.

17                   Now, this next slide is going to be very  
18 busy but I will explain it to you. And this comes from  
19 the Safer Society in Vermont. They're the ones that put  
20 this together. Basically what it is is a survey of over  
21 one thousand treatment programs in the United States for  
22 sex offenders. The first thing that surprised me is  
23 that there are over a thousand treatment programs in the  
24 United States for sex offenders. But I'll show you the  
25 types of treatments that are being used today.

1                   It used to be that people did  
2 psychoanalytical treatment, the one-hour-a-week therapy,  
3 we sit down with a person for an hour a week, they lie  
4 down on the couch, and we talk to the person for a  
5 while. That does not work with people who are sex  
6 offenders. Just like it did not work with alcoholics.  
7 You can sit down with an alcoholic and talk about his or  
8 her problem all day and it's not going to help a lot.  
9 So a lot of those early studies on do these people  
10 respond to treatment are based on the old types of  
11 treatment.

12                   Here are the newer types of treatment.  
13 The first thing is 94.5 percent of all these treatment  
14 programs had -- the most important thing was the course  
15 in victim empathy, exactly right, a course in victim  
16 empathy. Many times the guys will come to treatment and  
17 they will say, the child enjoyed it, he liked it, he was  
18 coming on to me, and he was really into the whole thing.  
19 And then what he does not realize, the victims were  
20 confused, they were frightened, they were scared, they  
21 felt intimidated. So we help to teach them some victim  
22 empathy.

23                   Anger management. It's even more  
24 important than sexuality. Now, those of you who have  
25 dealt with some of these treatment programs realize how

1 important anger management is. And many of the men have  
2 perhaps even a bigger problem with anger than they do  
3 with sexuality. Big issue.

4 Cognitive distortion, some of those nuts  
5 ideas they have about victims, about society, about  
6 themselves, I am a lousy person, I am a rotten person,  
7 that sort of thing.

8 Relapse cycle. One of the most important  
9 things is everyone has their own offend cycle. I was  
10 treating a guy the other day, he walked in the first  
11 time and he basically says, it just happens, all of a  
12 sudden, bang, I'm there, it's happening. Or one guy was  
13 cruising, for example, he said, well, I just find myself  
14 in this porno shop. I said, wait a minute, you just  
15 found yourself in the porno shop, you mean, so the  
16 Enterprise beamed you from your rectory over to the --  
17 no, no, no, you got into your car, you turned the thing,  
18 you drove over there. But then the question comes, what  
19 were all those factors going on before. Nothing. He  
20 said, it just happened. Well, as we're starting to go  
21 through therapy now, he realizes that he's got his whole  
22 offend cycle. For example, someone will say something  
23 to him, something will happen where he starts feeling  
24 devalued or disappointed or discouraged. He gets  
25 depressed, he starts feeling angry, he starts feeling

1 anxious, he starts to fantasize about it, he finds  
2 himself driving closer and closer to these places and  
3 then he finds himself driving up and down the strip for  
4 a while and then he finally goes in and makes a sexual  
5 contact with someone. There is a whole offend cycle.  
6 He needs to learn that cycle. So when he feels angry or  
7 disappointed or discouraged, he can do something  
8 different. So what we're talking about is changing --  
9 intervening in this relapse cycle. Very important.

10                   Now, a lot of other things. When you can  
11 see all the things -- the types of things that are done  
12 in treatment programs. And I would say we probably use  
13 two-thirds of these, which is typical: Social skills,  
14 communication, sex education, all those things.

15                   But, of course, personal victimization and  
16 trauma, two-thirds of the priests that we have who  
17 sexually molest minors themselves were sexually molested  
18 when they were children. Now, that's an important  
19 issue. Two-thirds of the guys we have who molest minors  
20 themselves were sexually molested.

21                   There is a way in which -- I think the  
22 Gospel values have something to say about this today.  
23 They were saying, these guys are bad and the victims are  
24 good. Or we were in a conference, I think, Lane, you  
25 were there this summer, and I remember one of the guys

1 stood up and said, victims should never ever, ever be  
2 treated in the same program we treat offenders. He  
3 pounded his fists. He went on and on and on and  
4 everybody was looking at him like, you don't understand,  
5 you can't separate them out of a treatment program.  
6 First of all, almost all of our perpetrators themselves  
7 were victims. We spend a lot of time working on  
8 victimization.

9           And then when you work with victims, you  
10 find out some of them later were, in fact, perpetrators.  
11 The line between them is not so clear. It's not so  
12 black and white.

13           I think what the Gospel does have to say  
14 to us, that we should not judge. That's I think the  
15 thing I take from the Gospel, we're not here to judge,  
16 we're here to serve and to help.

17           So I guess the short period on that is  
18 that child sexual abuse is a complex issue. You know,  
19 what is -- there are two different guys, for example.  
20 How can you compare a guy who has molested dozens of  
21 prepubescent minors with a guy who has been involved  
22 with one 15-year-old girl. I mean, both those cases are  
23 bad, both of them are illegal, both are immoral and both  
24 of them are hurtful. But when you talk about what we  
25 are going to do with them after treatment, we're going

1 to have to treat them in a different way. They're going  
2 to be unique. So if you stand up and say, we will never  
3 return a child molester to ministry or to our community  
4 or to whatever, we're making a sweeping statement that  
5 we may want to think about before we say something like  
6 that. Because you're including a lot of different folks  
7 in that same type of statement.

8           Okay. Here is what I would say -- here is  
9 the clinical factors I would look at if you're  
10 discussing what should we do with this person, you know,  
11 where should we go with the person. The first thing is  
12 clinical background and diagnoses. For example, as I  
13 said, you're going to treat a man who is involved with  
14 one 15-year-old differently than you're going to treat  
15 these men involved with dozens of prepubescent minors.  
16 You're going to treat a man who is involved with -- who  
17 is violently involved with kids differently than you  
18 might treat someone who is cruising pickup joints.

19           So you're going to want to look at his  
20 clinical background and diagnoses. You need some  
21 sophistication dealing with each one of these guys, you  
22 know. What is his background, what did he do, and what  
23 are his diagnoses.

24           Okay. Next one I would look at is  
25 response to treatment. Is he still in a case of denial.

1 Does he have no victim empathy. Does he take no  
2 responsibility for his actions. Does he know what his  
3 relapse cycle is. If you've got a guy who said, I did  
4 this, I'm sorry I did it, I know I hurt my victims, and  
5 he means this sincerely, not just a superficial thing, I  
6 take responsibility, it's my fault, it's not the  
7 superior's fault, it's not my parent's fault, it's my  
8 fault and I know what my relapse cycle is and I'm  
9 willing to work on this, you've got a guy who is doing  
10 fairly well in treatment.

11 If you've got a guy who is still blaming  
12 some other people, then that's not good.

13 Okay. The next thing, a comprehensive  
14 after-care program. This is going to be real important,  
15 I think. Residential treatment or any type of treatment  
16 is just the beginning. He's going to need a long-term  
17 after-care program and an after-care contract. For  
18 example, he's going to want to be in some sort of  
19 ongoing treatment. He's going to want to be in maybe a  
20 12-step program or some sort of support group. And he  
21 is going to want to continue with his spiritual life.  
22 Many times the guys will -- one of the risk factors is  
23 when their spiritual life begins to deteriorate. And  
24 it's going to be important also to have -- I believe to  
25 be monitored and supervised.



1                   Monitoring and supervision. Now, this is  
2 in the external form, by the way. We're not talking  
3 about a spiritual director. Many organizations or  
4 religious organizations are starting to train  
5 supervisors, monitors. How would this look, what does  
6 this look like? He would probably sit down with his  
7 monitor, his supervisor, maybe once every couple of  
8 weeks or so, talk about his case, talk about his -- for  
9 example, let's say he's someone who cruises. He would  
10 want to talk about his -- any feelings or thoughts he's  
11 had about this. If he's been involved with adult women,  
12 for example, an exploitation, he'll want to talk about  
13 his fantasies about women, about any sort of contacts  
14 he's had with women in the last few weeks, is he working  
15 his after-care program, is he working his spiritual  
16 life, that sort of thing.

17                   One of the ideas is that when you see a  
18 guy who is getting close to relapsing, you're going to  
19 want to intervene. And that's why the -- one of the  
20 things you know is that if a guy is not working his  
21 after-care contract, he's much more likely to relapse.  
22 So if his contract says, I'm going to be in therapy, I'm  
23 going to stay away from kids, I'm going to see my  
24 superior once a month, I'm going to meet my supervisor,  
25 I'm going to go to 12-step meetings, if you see him

1 start not doing all those things, see -- well, usually  
2 you get rationalizations, I can't go to therapy because  
3 it's too far away or it's too expensive or it's too this  
4 or it's too that. And even though you're paying the  
5 bills, he's saying it's too expensive, you know. And  
6 you say, wait, when was the last time you worried about  
7 bills, you know. It's funny when you hear it though,  
8 you hear those.

9           The reason why I'm not going to 12-step  
10 meetings any more is because the meetings stopped at  
11 this place and no more, I can't find a good one in town,  
12 I don't trust them. Something like that.

13           They stop working their contract, that's  
14 when things start getting dicey.

15           Okay. An appropriate ministry available.  
16 Now, this can be tricky. Let's say you've got a man who  
17 is sexually involved with many adult women, he's been  
18 exploiting them. Clearly you would not want to put him  
19 in a ministry that includes adult women. Do you have  
20 something like that. If all you've got is parishes,  
21 then you may not have anything like that. If you want  
22 him to go back to ministry that does not involve minors,  
23 do you have something like that. Now, dioceses have  
24 harder times than religious orders do. Many bishops  
25 tell me on the phone, Steve, we don't have a ministry

1 like that. Or tell a Christian brother that he can't go  
2 back to working in schools with kids, you know. That  
3 kind of cuts -- that kind of really narrows it down a  
4 little bit. So it's a real problem. They say, well,  
5 send him somewhere else. Great. You have the  
6 Provincial Christian Brothers who call up the Lasolet  
7 Fathers and say, look, we've got this Christian brother,  
8 he's has been molesting minors, how about you taking  
9 him. It's tough.

10 Now, there actually are some bishops,  
11 whose names we hold closely to our hearts and we'll  
12 never release, who are more likely to take a good  
13 treatment prospect, a guy who is on treatment and has  
14 none of those negative things, he might take them.

15 One bishop had a priest who was in another  
16 country, I won't tell you which one, but a priest who  
17 was charged with child sexual abuse. They laicized him  
18 locally with the local court, their local Canon courts  
19 what they call them, ecclesiastical courts, and then he  
20 appealed it and Rome said, well, you're right, he did  
21 abuse those minors, and he does deserve a punishment but  
22 we're not going to laicize him forcibly. Instead what  
23 we should do is we should have him spend ten years in a  
24 monastery. Imagine that. Perspective religious life,  
25 you know. Religious life has incarcerated sex

1 offenders. It's terrible. It's just terrible, isn't  
2 it? We just kind of shake our heads going, whew.

3                   Vatican II. There was a council between  
4 now and Trenton called Vatican II.

5                   Okay. So something about this issue  
6 really brings back some sort of primal responses on a  
7 lot of levels from everybody, obviously including Rome.

8                   Okay. A periodic review. The last one is  
9 periodic review. I think the case -- if you have  
10 someone back in some form of ministry or wherever he is,  
11 I would review the case on a periodic basis. If you've  
12 got a review committee or provincial council or whatever  
13 it is, I would review the case and I would want regular  
14 input from his therapist or whomever. So those are the  
15 clinical factors I would look at when discussing a guy's  
16 case.

17                   Now, what are the options right now being  
18 used. What are the post-treatment options that people  
19 are using today. The first one, perhaps the most common  
20 issue, common one, or one of the most common is what I  
21 call limbo. You thought limbo was gone. No. There are  
22 a lot of our priests who are currently living in limbo.  
23 So basically what I mean by limbo is that they're just  
24 sort of floating. I mean, they've got a place for them  
25 to stay maybe and their case is being talked about. And

1 I would say a good portion of the cases, the guys are in  
2 limbo. I don't mean that as a criticism of our system,  
3 because if I were in your shoes, I might end up in the  
4 same category. But recognize it's not good for the guys  
5 who are in recovery obviously, you know, when someone is  
6 sort of floating. I mean, you hear cases of guys, they  
7 don't know what to do with the guys, it's even hard to  
8 find them a place to stay. One diocese who had a number  
9 of guys after treatment decided to start a house for  
10 them. So they decided to open up a house for our former  
11 sex offenders and they were going to open up this house.  
12 So, of course, they had to go through a zoning board.  
13 You know the rest of the story. Okay. So then they  
14 went to another town and went through their zoning  
15 board. And after three towns, the chancellor told me,  
16 he said, we're not going to do this again, I can't take  
17 it, getting beaten up that badly. And, of course, we  
18 know what it's like too. At St. Luke's, we recently  
19 moved, and we went through a zoning fight and we won the  
20 fight due to, I think, a real open-mindedness on the  
21 part of the county counsel and also the fact we lived in  
22 the same county for 15 years and never a problem. But  
23 still with all that muscle behind us, we still had  
24 problems. So it's not so easy.

25 Now, there is another option today which

1 has just surfaced. Did the hear about the signator's  
2 decision for Bishop Wuerl in the Cipolla case in  
3 Pittsburgh? Basically what happened was Bishop Cipolla  
4 (sic) took him out of ministry. Cipolla appealed it to  
5 Rome. The signator came back and said, you've acted  
6 dastardly towards him and you need to put him back in a  
7 parish. And then Bishop Wuerl went back to Rome and  
8 said, you don't understand the situation here. And  
9 fortunately, of course, he has a lot of clout in Rome,  
10 as you know, and so he went back and the signator  
11 reversed his decision. And they did by a little change  
12 in the perspective of Canon Law. And that is using  
13 Canon 1044.

14                   Now, Canon 1044 is an administrative  
15 decision when a priest has a certain psychic defect,  
16 quote, unquote, a psychic defect. It was generally used  
17 for a priest who would become schizophrenic or psychotic  
18 and just can't celebrate the sacraments, so they will  
19 take away his faculty. He's still a priest but  
20 administratively he's no longer functioning as a priest.  
21 Now, they expanded the use of the psychic defect and  
22 they said that a priest who sexually molested minors in  
23 this case, the bishop was given the authority to take  
24 him out of active ministry. He's still a priest but the  
25 administrative decision is that he can't function as a

1 priest, he's unable to fulfill his ministry. Now, that  
2 is a change. And it's going to be interesting to see  
3 whether superiors end up using this Canon 1044. It's  
4 definitely a departure from the past. And it holds some  
5 promise for those bishops who would like to take their  
6 men out of ministry but need some canonical punch to do  
7 it.

8                   The negative part of that is, of course,  
9 if you expand the bishop's jurisdiction to remove a  
10 priest from ministry, it makes a lot of priests very  
11 nervous because they're afraid of arbitrarily losing  
12 their ability to minister.

13                   So the next one is retiring. And many of  
14 the priests will retire early. The man is still a  
15 priest, he's still connected with whomever you are, but  
16 they retire them early. And many times that works  
17 because the guys are older when the offenses are  
18 surfaced.

19                   Now, the issue of laicization. Is  
20 someone -- a friend of mine, Shawn, you all know Shawn  
21 Salmon. Shawn wrote me a letter a couple of months ago  
22 and said one of the things that concerns him is that  
23 they're approving these voluntary laicizations by return  
24 fax. And obviously if you have voluntarily asked to be  
25 laicized and show that you cannot lead a celibate life,

1 your request is going to go through extremely rapidly  
2 through the Vatican, so you're going to be laicized post  
3 haste.

4           The problem comes, of course, with  
5 involuntary laicization. Can the church do this? Of  
6 course the church can. Will the church do this? In  
7 most cases, the answer is no. I only know of one case  
8 where -- now, there probably have been others -- one  
9 case where an ecclesiastical court involuntarily  
10 laicized a guy for child sexual abuse and it was  
11 overturned by Rome.

12           I do know one case recently where the Pope  
13 himself intervened after an archbishop went to him  
14 basically directly and said, I want you to laicize this  
15 man.

16           But basically right now, Rome is not  
17 involuntarily laicizing men for sexual misconduct  
18 issues. They're just not doing it. So basically what  
19 that means is you're stuck with the person. You know,  
20 you're stuck with this person still being in orders of  
21 some sort. It's not happening.

22           Now, the question of return to ministry of  
23 some sort. I will address this at the end and I will  
24 give you some figures on a study we just did on how many  
25 of these guys are back in ministry now. What



1 percentage, how many, a two-year study that we just did.  
2 And some of the problems with that is whom do you  
3 inform. Let's say you take a guy who has been cruising  
4 the pickup joints and you take him, you send him back to  
5 a ministry. Again, whom do you tell? Well, we strongly  
6 encourage the people to tell this to people around him.  
7 For example, you send him back to live in a rectory, the  
8 pastor of the rectory should know, the other priests  
9 should know. Any sort of full-time paid ministers I  
10 personally would recommend know. In other words, the  
11 core staff should know this man's background.

12                   Now, that gets into some disclosure  
13 issues, and this is from a psychological perspective I'm  
14 telling you. Now, there are some legal issues too.  
15 Imagine that you had a problem -- some of you lay people  
16 here, imagine you had a problem -- some sexual problems  
17 in your current job, you move on to a new job, imagine  
18 how you would feel if your employer told the other  
19 people in the place your past history. Is that fair?  
20 Is that even legal? You know, there is some real strong  
21 issues around that.

22                   But from a clinical perspective, that's  
23 what we're recommending and that's pretty much what has  
24 been done.

25                   Can you tell the people to whom this guy

1 ministers? Well, imagine if he goes back to a nursing  
2 home and you want to go around to all the 85-year-old  
3 residents and tell them that your chaplain had a problem  
4 molesting minors or used to cruise the joints or has  
5 problems flashing himself, you know. You see what I  
6 mean? It's a tough problem.

7                   Okay. The next one. We're seeing a  
8 little bit more of these this days, temporary secular  
9 employment. L.A. was the first one that spoke to us  
10 about this and we liked the model. Let's say you've got  
11 someone who is a good prospect, has done well in  
12 treatment, but you're not quite sure. You're saying to  
13 yourself, you know, maybe. Well, one of the things you  
14 can do with a guy like that is say, look, how about if  
15 you work full-time in lay employment, you find yourself  
16 a job, you work full-time for one to three years, we'll  
17 review your case later. Now, it's important not to use  
18 this issue as a way of stalling making tough decisions.  
19 If you know the guy is not going to go back to ministry,  
20 you should tell him as soon as you know. So don't let  
21 him string on for five years. Don't let him do this and  
22 then say, well, we never really intended to put you back  
23 into ministry anyway. You see what I mean? It's got to  
24 be a real option. If you're seriously thinking about  
25 putting him back into ministry but you say, let's wait,

1 one of the things that some people do is they have him  
2 work in secular job for one to three years to actually  
3 show a longer term recovery. It's not a bad option.  
4 It's not a bad option.

5 Do you have some questions about that?  
6 You're looking puzzled.

7 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Just wondering about  
8 disclosure ... (inaudible).

9 REV. ROSSETTI: The question was disclosure  
10 issues for the priest looking for employment. That is a  
11 problem. But most of the guys, remember, do not have a  
12 criminal background. Most of them do not have a  
13 criminal background. So, in fact, my understanding of  
14 that, and any of the lawyers can correct me, most of the  
15 guys are not obliged to reveal that about themselves.  
16 Now, of course, we do not expect them to apply to teach  
17 in a high school. There are certain limits of what we  
18 are going to do. So we have some clear ideas about the  
19 type of work you should look for, you know.

20 Yes?

21 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

22 REV. ROSSETTI: The statement was -- especially  
23 for the tape -- that you're absolutely right, secular  
24 employment, they may not be asking you questions like  
25 that, may not be able to, but clearly more and more in

1 ministry, if you're going to go into a diocese, they're  
2 going to give you a form, have you ever been accused of  
3 misconduct.

4           One superior was telling me a few minutes  
5 ago that, in fact, this has been dooming one of his guys  
6 who was not found guilty but was just accused. And so  
7 he answered truthfully and he was not allowed to  
8 minister in that place. There are some ways, I think,  
9 in which we have to be careful we don't violate a  
10 person's civil rights. Now --

11           UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

12           REV. ROSSETTI: Yeah, hopefully, as you're  
13 saying, the superiors or whoever is employing the person  
14 will look at the case with some fairness and equity.  
15 But there is a certain amount of hysteria still going  
16 around and fear, you know. When you think about sexual  
17 misconduct issues, you say, gosh, he may be innocent,  
18 but this might cost me a million and a half. So, you  
19 know, it's tough.

20           The last issue is just basically called  
21 warehousing, another option. And unfortunately the  
22 church has a long history of this actually. There were  
23 clerical prisons not so long ago and it's -- one of the  
24 ways we get stuck with this is that, you know, you're a  
25 priest in a -- you're a priest forever. So if you've

1 got a priest forever who has, in fact, molested -- done  
2 something serious enough that he can't go back to  
3 ministry, where do you put him? Well, if he's a serious  
4 risk -- let's talk about the ten percent who go through  
5 treatment programs and don't change. What are you going  
6 to do with that ten or fifteen percent? Well, let's say  
7 he's a compulsive ten or fifteen percent so children are  
8 at risk around this person or he's at risk for cruising  
9 or whatever or he's just not treatable. One bishop --  
10 actually, one major superior called me up and said,  
11 Steve, I've got this guy, he's been through 26 treatment  
12 programs. I thought he was kidding. I said, really. I  
13 said, you really put a lot of money into this guy. He  
14 said, yeah, 26 programs. I said well -- he started  
15 going through all the programs. He was serious, it was  
16 26 programs. I said, you probably did about 22 too  
17 many. But, you know how it is, they keep trying.  
18 Although most of them, I must admit, were one-month  
19 programs, but still 26 programs. And I said, well,  
20 there is no sense sending him here because you might get  
21 him off your hands for six months, but he's probably not  
22 going to get any better after 26 programs. So what are  
23 you going to do with him? Well, you know, we have -- I  
24 guess I made the right -- word is not right, but  
25 contracted with him to take care of his needs, at least

1 physical needs, so what do you do. Well, what's  
2 happening now is we see springing up around the country  
3 is basically clerical warehouses, not a lot of them but  
4 there is more than there were five years ago. You know,  
5 there are a couple of more and I think we're going to  
6 see a few more. Just someplace to put the guys.

7                   Now, it's hard to make a program like  
8 that, what would I say, humane. And that is the real  
9 challenge. Can you take ten or fifteen guys who are  
10 extremely dysfunctional and make them living at least  
11 human, at least human. And that's a real challenge.

12                   Starting this summer, we at St. Luke's are  
13 working with three or four religious communities and  
14 we're starting a pilot project, trying to develop a  
15 community of unassignables called Taber House. We're  
16 trying to combine a religious spirit -- there will be a  
17 religious superior who runs the community, with also  
18 some clinical expertise. Some of our therapists will  
19 manage the guys on a day-to-day basis.

20                   Yes, Greg?

21                   UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Looking at the treatment  
22 options ... (inaudible).

23                   REV. ROSSETTI: Greg, it's a good question. I  
24 think this is when we start thinking about -- I think  
25 the thing we're missing from the whole child abuse

1 issues and sexual misconduct issues is a real Christian  
2 perspective. Not a sappy Christianity, but a real  
3 strong sense of who we are as Christian people. You  
4 know, sometimes I've done some education to bishops too.  
5 For example, they'll say, well, we had to do this  
6 because St. Luke's told us with this guy or we had to do  
7 this because the lawyers told us. I say, wait a minute,  
8 bishop, I am advising you from a clinical perspective,  
9 obviously we're pastoral people too, but this is a  
10 clinical perspective. You have to use our perspective,  
11 you have to do what the legal folks tell you, you take  
12 all of that together and then you as a superior make the  
13 best pastoral decision that you can make. You don't  
14 have to do it because a psychologist told you, you don't  
15 have to do it because the lawyers told you, but you have  
16 to know what the consequences are if you don't.

17           Now, what Greg is saying is absolutely  
18 right. If you take a man who has got a compulsive  
19 problem with minors and you laicize the man forcibly,  
20 what is -- is he at greater risk for re-offending. Look  
21 at the James Porter case, remember Porter in Fall River  
22 abused over a hundred minors. What did he do when they  
23 laicized him? He went to Minnesota in New Olm and  
24 molested his baby-sitter, who he was convicted of that,  
25 and perhaps some other children too. Once he's released

1 from the church circle, you've got a man who is free to  
2 do as he wishes, you know. Again, remember, most of  
3 them do not have to report themselves to authorities  
4 because they're not criminally adjudicated. So it's a  
5 real issue.

6                   This came home to me recently with the  
7 John Calicott case. Remember John Calicott was accused  
8 of molesting some minors and recently was reinstated in  
9 his parish in Chicago. Any Chicago people here? My  
10 gosh. If I blow this, let me know, you can correct me.  
11 This is what I was told by some Chicago folks. John  
12 went to treatment and my understanding was the parish  
13 asked for him back. And I know there was some reticence  
14 on the part of the ecclesiastical superiors to send him  
15 back for obvious reasons. Now, John is a black priest  
16 from a black parish. But they insisted, they said, we  
17 want him back. And I know of another case like that.  
18 They said, no, no, we'll send you somebody else. And  
19 they said, no, no, we want him. So that in itself is  
20 unusual. I only know of two cases like that. And so --  
21 and the interesting thing I heard was that the people in  
22 the parish said, you know, this idea of getting rid of  
23 people, that's a white people's way of dealing with  
24 things. They said, you white people just want to get  
25 rid of your problems, but, in fact, that's not the way



1 the black community does it, we're going to take him  
2 into our parish ourselves and we're going to monitor him  
3 ourselves.

4                   Now, I can't think of a former child  
5 molester who is going to be in safer hands than that.  
6 You've got 3000 people around him who are watching him,  
7 you know. That's ideal. But what you've got is a  
8 parish who has universally recognized this man's gifts  
9 and said, we want him for his gifts, we'll accept the  
10 weakness, but we'll take care of that weakness  
11 ourselves. The problem with most parishes, they're not  
12 at that spot. They don't want him back. But, Greg, I  
13 think it's an important issue.

14                   Let's not kid ourselves by saying, we've  
15 gotten rid of our problems. We may have gotten rid of  
16 the liability maybe. But are we doing what's best for  
17 society? Think about it. I would say though that I  
18 would never return a man back to ministry with his  
19 target population. I would never return a man back who  
20 has got problems with adult women and have him go back  
21 to counseling women or teaching women or one-to-one work  
22 with women. If he's been molesting a lot of adult women  
23 and exploiting them, I would never send him back to  
24 where he would work one-on-one with women. I just  
25 wouldn't do it. It's not good.

1                   Okay. I would like to talk about some  
2 guiding principles that I would recommend when you're  
3 thinking about these cases. The first one is that each  
4 case is unique. And that's so important, I think. I  
5 can't give you sort of a recipe on how to deal with each  
6 case, but I can say that each case is unique, so think  
7 about each case separately. Look at them, what is the  
8 situation; what was his problem; how well did he do in  
9 treatment and what are some other factors going on in  
10 his life. Take a look at the whole case.

11                   Next one. There is no perfect choice.  
12 It's very important because superiors around the globe  
13 are agonizing over this decision. They want to do the  
14 right thing. But what they find out is there is no way  
15 of doing the right thing that is a decision that  
16 everyone is going to like. You just can't do it. And  
17 so there is no perfect decision. You're going to have  
18 to make a very messy decision. It's a messy decision.

19                   Next one. I think it should be a team  
20 decision. Take the monkey off your back. I think it's  
21 too much weight for one person to carry. The decision  
22 is just too hard. I would say get a provincial council  
23 around you, get an advisory team, some sort of group  
24 that can sit down and make that decision. It also helps  
25 in media at crunch time. You bishop, you major

1 superior, returned this person back to ministry. Yes,  
2 but I also took this under advice of my advisory  
3 committee which includes a professional lawyer, a  
4 psychologist, a social worker, a pastoral theologian, a  
5 moral theologian and that sort of thing and this is what  
6 my professional group said. Again, I would make that  
7 team multi-disciplinary. I would include legal folks,  
8 clinical folks and some theological/pastoral people.  
9 You might want to include some parents too in that  
10 decision, some lay people. I think it would be a good  
11 idea.

12 I think we need to know what -- how we're  
13 making the decision. Many times the decision is based  
14 on either what the psychologists say or what the lawyers  
15 say. Let's look at what are our first principles. I  
16 think our first principles would be to protect children  
17 in the case of child molesters. What is the safest  
18 thing to do for children.

19 And finally I would say as much openness  
20 as possible. I think we need to be open with the  
21 priests involved, here is why we're making the decision,  
22 here is what we're going to do. Now, it's hard to be --  
23 you want to be open with as many people as you can  
24 without violating his rights to confidentiality. For  
25 example, again, I would tell the pastor of the parish or

1 anywhere else that he's going what's going on. So those  
2 are the principles I would use in making a decision.  
3 It's always going to be messy.

4                   There is -- this is important: There is  
5 no risk-free society. I wrote that article you may have  
6 read in American Magazine on returning child molesters  
7 to ministry. I got a letter from an attorney and he  
8 said, you know, Steve, I read your article and I  
9 disagreed with it. He said, what I didn't like about  
10 it -- although he misquoted me a bit -- he said, there  
11 is a chance of one out of 300 that the guy will  
12 re-offend, one out of 300. Well, that's not the facts  
13 actually. But he said that. He said, one out of 300 is  
14 too many. So one out of 300 is too many. I said, well,  
15 in that case, you don't want to have any priests in your  
16 diocese because the chance of any priest re-offending is  
17 higher than one out of 300. One out of 300 is less than  
18 one percent and I suspect the offense rate over  
19 someone's lifetime of the clergy, I'll bet, just  
20 clinically guessing, it's at least two or three percent.  
21 That's a minimum. And it's probably higher. But that  
22 would be conservative.

23                   So there is no such thing as a risk-free  
24 society. For example, our whole parole system is based  
25 on that. You take someone out of prison on parole, is

1 there a likelihood that a murderer is going to do it  
2 again. Yes, you know. Basically it's frightening, I  
3 know, to think we're living in a society where we're  
4 surrounded by people who have problems. After  
5 working -- for example, driving down the road, you  
6 wonder why there are so many car accidents. After  
7 working in the mental health field, I wonder why there  
8 are not more. Because some of these people riding  
9 behind the wheel of a car are not operating on all their  
10 cylinders. So when you start to think about it, we're  
11 living in a society that is inherently dangerous. And  
12 the question is, how much risk can we take and can we  
13 stand. Now, that's very uncomfoting. But that's the  
14 way it is. And then if you send them to jail, most  
15 child molesters go to jail, I think, for just a couple  
16 of years, two to three years. Most murderers, how long  
17 do they go to jail for, how long do they really go to  
18 jail for? Six. They're back on the streets. All these  
19 people are back on the streets. We're surrounded by  
20 them.

21                   So I think our goal is not to develop a  
22 risk-free society, our goal is to make a prudent  
23 decision. Given all the things that we know, what is  
24 the best decision I can make. And it's all you can do.  
25 And you gotta be able to sleep at night with that

1 decision.

2           The other thing I would do is I try to be  
3 supportive of the superiors and bishops who make these  
4 decisions. Sometimes the bishops or superiors look at  
5 me and say, Steve, we cannot return this man to  
6 ministry. And I say, bishop, that's okay, I'm not the  
7 person in your shoes. And I've become more and more  
8 respectful of someone in a position of authority like  
9 that. It's a very difficult decision. And I can't -- I  
10 can't criticize anyone who makes a decision either way.  
11 I respect his decision. I'll give him my best input,  
12 but then that's really where the buck stops and you  
13 really begin to realize the weight of -- the crushing  
14 weight sometimes of authority when you realize that he  
15 or she is the one that has to make that final decision.  
16 And it's an awesome responsibility. They just have to  
17 make a prudent decision.

18           Now, what is -- by the way, we got about  
19 nine minutes left. I want to go through what is really  
20 happening out there. And feel free to ask me any  
21 questions in the next nine minutes.

22           Yes?

23           UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

24           REV. ROSSETTI: The re-offense rate for priests?  
25 Re-offense or initial offense rate?

1 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

2 REV. ROSSETTI: So if you laicize a priest, is  
3 his offense rate going to be like the other -- like that  
4 of an average layman?

5 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

6 REV. ROSSETTI: I'm not quite sure I get it.  
7 Does someone -- what is the question? In other words --

8 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

9 REV. ROSSETTI: If we laicize someone, we're  
10 sending him back out to society, should we -- should  
11 that be an inhibitor because there are people out there  
12 doing that anyway. True, but you don't know about the  
13 other one. You know about him. Him you know. I would  
14 say the minimum, I would say this, maybe going back to  
15 something that Greg asked about, I think you can morally  
16 make a case for at least putting the man into treatment.  
17 Treat him as best you can and then laicizing him. I  
18 think you make a moral case for that, although we  
19 shouldn't fool ourselves in thinking that's the safest  
20 thing for children. Because I think the safest thing is  
21 to put them in a restrictive ministry which does not  
22 involve minors and have them be supervised. But that's  
23 an enormous burden on the order and some orders can't do  
24 that. Some orders don't have the resources or the  
25 supervisors to take care of that. But simply to dismiss

1 them all categorically is -- I think it's imprudent.

2 Yes, ma'am.

3 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

4 REV. ROSSETTI: So, in other words, the question  
5 was, even though this person may not be re-offending  
6 against their target population, would they re-offend in  
7 another way, misuse their power. It's an excellent  
8 question.

9 I would say this, some of the people are  
10 dysfunctional in a variety of levels, which would be --  
11 which really hurt the community. And then I would have  
12 some real problems with them being in a community  
13 because they would be a real weight. Although, as we  
14 all know, every community seems to have one or two and  
15 they're not molesting minors. You're sort of stuck with  
16 some. But, for example, if this person molested minors  
17 and would no longer work with minors and would start to  
18 work with elderly, would they abuse their power with the  
19 elderly. Well, I have not seen a large crossover from  
20 abusing minors to abusing elders, for example. But some  
21 of those same psychic dynamics are going to be in place.  
22 You're hoping the person is getting better. But I would  
23 say this: If the person is really dysfunctional in a  
24 variety of levels and is dragging the community down,  
25 then I would have some problems with returning them to



1 the community obviously. It's a tough call.

2                   Yeah. They tend not to re-offend in other  
3 populations though. Child molesters tend not to cruise.  
4 Cruisers tend not to molest adults. I don't see a lot  
5 of crossover among priests. There are some population  
6 of offenders that do cross over a bit, but I have not  
7 seen a lot in our groups. They tend to focus on what  
8 they're into.

9                   Yes?

10                  UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

11                  REV. ROSSETTI: Are homosexually-oriented people  
12 more likely to molest minors or cruise?

13                  UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

14                  REV. ROSSETTI: Well, most priests who molest  
15 minors molest boys. Then people will say, oh, he must  
16 be gay. But actually many times they're heterosexual,  
17 believe it or not, and they're molesting boys. It  
18 doesn't make sense. It's a long clinical discussion.  
19 But basically most children are molested by males and  
20 most of the victims are women actually. So heterosexual  
21 men tend to molest. I mean, women tend to be molested  
22 more by adult males. Now, it's also true that --  
23 because most the cases are incestuous of some sort.  
24 Most males who molest outside the home molest boys,  
25 which includes priests. But many times they're not gay.

1 The best clinical studies say there is no link between  
2 homosexuality, per se, and child sexual abuse. So  
3 although there is a lot of -- people are saying, I'm not  
4 taking gay priests any more because they're child  
5 molesters, which is not true. But that is sort of that  
6 idea floating around.

7                   This is a two-year study, '94, '95. Here  
8 is what it turns out, that 54 percent of the 57 guys who  
9 molested minors will return to ministries, whereas for  
10 other sexual disorders, the return rate was 63 percent.  
11 So if you're molesting minors, the chance that you're  
12 going to return to ministry is 43 percent. If you have  
13 other sexual problems like cruising, exploiting women,  
14 63 percent is the chance of you returning to ministry.  
15 Now, this is not surprising to you, I'm sure, that if  
16 you're religious, you're much more likely to return to  
17 ministry than if you are a diocesan priest.

18                   Now, returning to ministry, by the way,  
19 could involve being the archivist, you know, some sort  
20 of work. I would say now many times it's not, they're  
21 going out, saying mass, whatever. But I'm saying the --  
22 if you're religious, the chance of going back to  
23 ministry if you molested minors was 82 percent, 82  
24 percent. If you're religious and you have other sexual  
25 problems, the chances also were 82 percent. So there is

1 a much more likelihood you're going to go back to the  
2 community and be involved in some sort of limited  
3 ministry. And of those that went back to unlimited  
4 ministry, it was nine percent of those who molested  
5 minors and 15 percent of those who have other sexual  
6 problems. So basically what happens is about half or  
7 almost a little more -- almost a majority of those with  
8 sexual problems are going back to ministry, but they're  
9 limited ministries. They're limited ministries.

10           If you're a real pedophile, the chance of  
11 you going back to ministry are very low. If you're a  
12 diocesan priest and you're a pedophile, the chance of  
13 you going back to ministry are zero. There is zero for  
14 five. Ephebophilia are those who molest adolescents,  
15 and the return rate is higher.

16           So what I like to say about this graph is  
17 what's happening is there are a lot more going back to  
18 ministry than you realize. And that's why I'm not sure  
19 what to do with this graph because it's going to  
20 embarrass people. If the media got ahold of it, I'm not  
21 sure what they would do with it, you know.

22           Yes, Mario.

23           UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

24           REV. ROSSETTI: The question was, why are  
25 religious more likely to return someone to ministry. A

1 variety of reasons. One, a stronger sense of commitment  
2 to this person. You see that in religious life. You  
3 just have a stronger sense of commitment ...

4 (Whereupon, the tape concluded.)

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