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## The Fall of the Belgian Church

From the desk of [Alexandra Colen](#) on Thu, 2010-06-24 23:26

In Belgium, today, police searched the residence of the Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussels and the crypt of the Archbishop's cathedral in Mechelen. They were looking for evidence of cover-ups in the ongoing investigation into widespread pedophilia practices within the Belgian church in the decades during which Cardinal Godfried Danneels was Archbishop. Danneels retired in January of this year.

Police also confiscated 450 files containing reports of pedophile offences by members of the clergy, that had been submitted to an investigation committee which was established within the church to deal with pedophilia cases.

Since the revelation in April that Cardinal Danneels's close friend and collaborator, Mgr Roger Vangheluwe, the Bishop of Bruges, had been a practicing pedophile throughout, and even before, his career as a bishop, victims have gained confidence that they will be taken seriously, and complaints have been pouring in, both to the courts and to the extra-judicial investigation committee of the archdiocese. The new archbishop Mgr. André-Joseph Léonard, has urged victims to take their case to the courts.

His predecessor, the liberal Cardinal Danneels, who was very popular with the press in Belgium and abroad, was Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussels and Primate of Belgium from 1979 until 2010. The sympathy for pedophile attitudes and arguments among the Belgian bishops during this period was no secret, especially since 1997 when the fierce controversy about the catechism textbook *Roeach* made the headlines. The editors of *Roeach* were Prof. Jef Bulckens of the Catholic University of Leuven and Prof. Frans Lefevre of the Seminary of Bruges. The textbook contained a drawing which showed a naked baby girl saying: "Stroking my pussy makes me feel groovy," "I like to take my knickers off with friends," "I want to be in the room when mum and dad have sex." The drawing also shows a naked little boy and girl that are "playing doctor" and the little boy says: "Look, my willy is big."



The drawing also showed three pairs of parents. Those with the "correct" attitude reply: "Yes, feeling and stroking those little places is good fun." This "catechism

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discovered it among the schoolbooks of my eldest daughter, then 13 years old. On 3 September 1997 I wrote a letter to Cardinal Danneels, saying:

“When I see this drawing and its message, I get the distinct impression that this catechism textbook is designed intentionally to make 13 and 14 year olds believe that toddlers enjoy genital stimulation. In this way one breeds pedophiles that sincerely believe that children actually think that what they are doing to them is ‘groovy’, while the opposite is the case.”

I told Cardinal Danneels that, although I was a member of Parliament for the Flemish-secessionist party Vlaams Blok, I was addressing him as a Catholic parent “who wishes to remain faithful to the papal authority and also wishes to educate her children this way.” I insisted that he forbid the use of this book in the catechism lessons: “This is why I *insist* – yes, the days of meekly *asking* are over – that you forbid the use of this ‘catechism book’ in our children’s classrooms.”

Today this case, that dates from 12 years ago, assumes a new and ominous significance. Especially now that I know that Mgr Roger Vangheluwe, the pedophile child molesting Bishop of Bruges, was the supervising bishop of both institutions – the Catholic University of Leuven and the Seminary of Bruges – whence came the editors in chief of this perverted “catechism” textbook.

Monsignor Vangheluwe not only entertained pedophile ideas, but also practiced them on his 11-year old nephew. Hundreds of children who were not raped physically were molested spiritually during the catechism lessons.

After I started my campaign against the *Roeach* textbook, many parents contacted me to voice their concerns. Stories of other practices in the Catholic education system poured in. There were schools where children were taught to put condoms over artificial penises and where they had to watch videos showing techniques of masturbation and copulation.

Because Cardinal Danneels refused to respond to requests to put an end to these practices, I and hundreds of concerned parents gathered in front of his palace on 15 October 1997. We carried placards with the text “Respect for parents and children,” and we said the rosary. Cardinal Danneels refused to receive a delegation of the demonstrators. “I shall not be pressured,” he said in the libertine magazine *Humo* on 21 October 1997. The Archbishop’s door remained closed when we demonstrated again on 10 December 1997.

When we demonstrated at the palace of the Bishop of Antwerp on 19 November 1997, Mgr Paul Van den Berghe received a delegation of mothers that included a local councilor from the Christian-Democrat party and myself. Mgr Van den Berghe, who was the Episcopal supervisor for education, listened to the mothers, wept and promised to investigate the practices in the sex education and catechism lessons. He also announced this intention in a declaration to the press.

He must have been reprimanded by his colleagues, because on 24 November, after a meeting of the Bishops’ Conference, in a press release to the press agency *Belga*, the Bishop of Antwerp announced that, in spite of his promise, there would be no investigation. Today we know that one of the colleagues present at the Conference was the child molester Vangheluwe, which makes that incident, too, very unsavory indeed.

On 18 February 1998 we were at Cardinal Danneels’s door again, myself and a group of parents. Again the door remained closed. So on 18 March 1998 a group of two hundred parents went to the Papal Nuncio, the ambassador of the Vatican, in Brussels. But the Nuncio, who was a friend of Danneels, also refused to meet us. He had, however, alerted the police, who had several water cannons at the ready just around the corner.

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Meanwhile Danneels's friends in the press started a campaign against me. "Colen continues to pester the bishops," was the headline in *Gazet van Antwerpen*. One evening Toon Osaer, Danneels's spokesman at the time, phoned me to tell me that as a Catholic I had to "be obedient" to the bishops. In *Humo* Danneels insinuated that I was "conducting my election campaign."

On 5 January 1998 the daily newspaper *Het Volk* interviewed Patrick Vanhaelemeesch, a catechism teacher in the diocese of Bruges and one of the co-authors of *Roeach*. He gave some details about the illustration concerning masturbating toddlers in the catechism book. He said that the illustration was intended to convey the message that "toddlers experience sexual lust." Vanhaelemeesch revealed that the committee of bishops had mentioned this illustration in an evaluation report of the catechism book. The report stated: "The presentation of the sexual-pedagogical attitudes is rendered ridiculous in the eyes of the pupils by the text balloons." According to Vanhaelemeesch this criticism "indicates that the bishops had no objections at all to the message conveyed [i.e. toddlers experience sexual lust], but feared that the pupils would not take it seriously."

When I had exhausted all possibilities and it was clear that the Belgian church did not want to hear the parents, I decided to sever all ties with the Catholic education system. I took my five children out of school and set up a homeschool together with other parents, so our children would be educated in a Catholic environment.

I sent a letter to all the cardinals in the world to inform them about the contents of the *Roeach* textbook. "Please be assured that this Dicastery will give your report all due consideration, answered Mgr. Clemens, Cardinal Ratzinger's personal secretary, for the Congregation of the Faith in Rome; Cardinal Gagnon from Rome appreciated "the just battle which you are conducting"; "The matter which you raised is very important," wrote Cardinal Arinze from Rome.

I received letters of support from cardinals from all parts of the globe. "I share your concern. It is important that you do not leave the matter uncontested," wrote Cardinal Meisner of Cologne; "You have good reasons to be concerned," wrote Cardinal Wamala of Uganda; "I feel strongly enough to write to Cardinal Danneels in the hope that he may enlighten me," wrote Cardinal Vidal of the Philippines; "If I have the opportunity to discuss with Cardinal Danneels the matter you have drawn to my attention, I will do so," wrote Cardinal Williams of New Zealand; "I shall try to do something in order to help you," wrote Cardinal Lopez Rodriguez of Santo Domingo; "I am aware that your concerns have been brought to the attention of Cardinal Laghi, Prefect for the Congregation for Catholic Education," wrote Cardinal O'Connor of New York.

On 27 February 2010 the daily newspaper *De Standaard* wrote that these letters "enhanced Rome's perception of the weak church leadership in Belgium." Hence, the liberal Danneels was replaced by Mgr Léonard. Rome hopes that he will be able to restore the church in Belgium. I share this hope. However, it is a pity that it has taken so long. The damage that has been done is greater than anyone could have imagined.


*Dr. Alexandra Colen MP is a member of the Belgian House of Representatives.*

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## Courage

Submitted by [debendevan](#) on Sat, 2010-06-26 23:23.

Dr. Colen,

It takes a great deal of courage to pursue the course you took in the face of the unholy alliance of false priests and an anti-Christian media. Here in the U.S. the rot in our own church has left significant damage as well. That said, I am hopeful that this cleansing of the Catholic Church presages a new vitality in faith and example from not only the untouched clergy but also the core of credible, convicted Catholics. But that may be a long time in manifesting itself.

However, what concerns me as much are the winds blowing from Rome. Here in the U.S. there are swarms of Rome-dispatched auditors whose intent appears to be to arbitrarily confiscate large amounts of property currently held by the 400 religious communities here. This presages not only unseemly disputes in the secular legal system here but further fissures between Rome and the American Catholic church. And, as you have shown, the Vatican's prelates often have little reason to abjure their own and shepherd the flock without being swayed by secular vanities.

My concern, as an American Catholic, is not only the rot in our national heirarchy but how far that rot has permeated the core in Rome.

It is courageous that you have pushed this far on the Belgian Catholic Church. It is encouraging to read that there are prelates who have not sunk to such abysmal depravity from other points of the planet. But it will take a healthy dose of courage to carry this through to a renewed Catholic church globally.

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## Harmful To Minors

Submitted by [SteveP55419](#) on Sat, 2010-06-26 02:09.

Thank you Dr. Colen.

In 2002, a manuscript ('Harmful to Minors') that advocates lowering the age of statutory rape to 11 years was accepted for publication by the University of Minnesota Press which is owned by the University of Minnesota, a tax-supported land grand institution here in Minnesota, USA. The book points out that some adults, who were molested as children, tell researchers that they look back on the experience as pleasurable. It then draws the conclusion that since pleasure is good, adults should be legally free to engage in sexual acts with children.

I wrote a letter of protest to the president and chancellor and received dismissive, condescending replies -- carrying on about freedom of speech. I wrote a letter to each of the 12 regents of the university and received no replies. I believe that each of these people, which is to say those in a position of power, viewed my objections as a challenge

At the time of this controversy, a local Lutheran minister with a television ministry spoke out against the university. Just this week (8 years after the book affair) this man is being accused of being a secret homosexual by a homosexual activist group. Supposedly, he is being 'outed'. Evil is brazen and attacking the innocent wherever it finds them.

Thanks again for your courage and perserverance.

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### **The Lioness Of Flanders**

Submitted by [Capodistrias](#) on Fri, 2010-06-25 01:25.

Thank you, Dr. Colen. You are a great role model for your fellow Catholic parents. I'm sure you are a welcomed sight for the poor Catholic clergy embattled and besieged by the evil within their ranks.

Meanwhile in the great state of Barney Frank:

[http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2010/06/24/condoms\\_secretcy\\_for\\_provincetown\\_pupils/](http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2010/06/24/condoms_secretcy_for_provincetown_pupils/)

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