

Justice?

As Father Daniel Miller begins his sentence of just over nine months in jail for molesting five boys several decades ago, the Catholic Church continues to face allegations of sexual misconduct by priests. The accusations in the Diocese of Pembroke all relate to historic occurrences decades ago.

However, the legacy of betrayal remains for these adults. In the case of Renfrew County, they are all men in their 40s and 50s who were abused when they were children or adolescents and at their most vulnerable. These boys were confused and traumatized by what happened to them and only able to speak of the incidents years and decades later. Stepping forward took a tremendous amount of courage, for the victim is often re-victimized in the court process as painful details are scrutinized repeatedly.

Many of these survivors of abuse remain committed Catholics, however most have a deep sense of distrust of the Catholic Church hierarchy. The church and the local diocese maintain they have reached out to these survivors of abuse, however some are hesitant to receive assistance from the very church where they were so betrayed.

Has the church provided justice to these men? Would monetary compensation be justice? Is a public apology justice? Truly, the only justice is ensuring this kind of abuse never occurs again. The church is no longer existing in the Middle Ages or even the 1950s for that matter. The unequivocal trust of people in authority or the church as an institution does not exist anymore. In the days when these offences occurred people had a trust in authority and a hesitance to challenge the authority of the priest or the church. This reverence for authority is lacking in 2013. If anything, scandals like this have made people cynical of those in authority and distrusting of all clergy. So what will restore justice for a community hurt by the betrayal of a few pedophile priests? In the search for justice, people have turned to the courts, but is true justice found there? Not in the cases in Renfrew County where priests have received anywhere from house arrest to nine months in jail to four years in jail.

The courts are still failing miserably to provide adequate justice to the victims of sexual abuse. The legal system needs to take these offences more seriously and implement penalties which show abusing a child is tantamount to killing a portion of their soul. A murderer would not receive 40 days for killing a child, but a pedophile in Canada can receive 40 days for sexually touching a child. It was not always so. In past generations a pedophile would have received a longer sentence, most assuredly jail time and even been whipped. Those were the same days when many of these offences took place, and the days in which children were afraid to speak out about abuse, knowing no one would believe them.

Our society has not provided justice to these survivors of abuse. The church has likewise failed to provide justice. Lives have been damaged and the trust of the community betrayed. As a community, we need to ensure we have zero tolerance of pedophiles in our churches, schools and clubs. As supporters of survivors of sexual abuse, we need to advocate for harsher penalties for those who abuse the most vulnerable among us. Harsh penalties serve as a strong deterrent. We need to do whatever we can to stop pedophiles in the future and provide true justice. Light sentences for pedophiles deter victims from going through the ordeal of testifying in court. The cost of prosecuting pedophiles is tremendous, from police investigation costs to court costs. This cost needs to be justified through longer sentences once a person is found guilty of abusing children. If this is not done, Canada will earn a reputation as a haven for pedophiles who know they can touch children and assault them and receive a slap on the wrist.

Many people in Renfrew County, and especially in Deep River where most of the victims originated from, were disappointed with the light sentence Father Miller received and rightly so. They are still waiting for true justice.

Letters

Children were exposed to cold during fire drill

Dear Editor:
To all concerned parents of the Eganville District Public School. If your child catches a cold or cough you can thank the school's fire drill held on November 25, -10 C, the coldest day of winter so far. With a cold wind coming across the Bonnechere, it made it even colder.

The children were put outside in this weather with no coat, no hat or coverings. Some even in their sock

feet. Just light t-shirts. And made to stand in this for 25 minutes, freezing. Meanwhile, all the teachers were prepared and dressed in winter coats, hats, boots, telling the kids to jump up and down to keep warm.

I feel whoever is arranging this it should be done with consideration to our children's health and comfort and weather conditions.

**Hubert Fiebig,
Eganville**

COPKA happy with charge

Dear Editor:
We are pleased that Constable James Baker was not injured when he ditched his cruiser on November 28, 2013. We're relieved that no members of the public were harmed.

For 10 years, COPKA (Citizens for Respectful Policing) has consistently raised awareness of the problem of cruiser speeding, calling for safer OPP driving in our communities.

Many officers work very hard to keep our roads safe, but the behaviour of a few damages the reputation of the whole force. Unsafe OPP driving puts pedestrians and other drivers' lives at risk, and sets a bad example. The cost of repairing and replacing

OPP cruisers puts an added burden on already stressed municipal budgets and ultimately, taxpayers.

COPKA commends the OPP for charging Constable Baker with careless driving. We hope that officers who abuse their privileges on our roads by unsafe driving be given remedial training, and that all officers be encouraged to drive safely in our communities.

**Brian Tyrrell COPKA,
Citizens for Respectful Policing,
Killaloe**

Editor's Note: In all fairness to the officer, he will still be allowed his day in court, just like anyone else charged with careless driving.

Just because you are paranoid

"Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they aren't out to get you."

I am surprised by the reaction to whistleblower Edward Snowden's release of documents that show Canada collaborated with the United States to spy on G-8 and G-10 leaders at the summits in Huntsville and Toronto three years ago.

What surprises me is that anybody is surprised to hear that the Canadian government spies on other governments, and on its own people.

One of my earliest memories is of answering the door to two strangers in the mid-50s. I can still see the two men in my mind's eye: very tall, dressed in overcoats, wearing fedoras, polite and personable. They asked to speak with my father. Curious, I hung back and listened. My father was uncharacteristically rude. He told them to go away and not come back.

After he shut the door firmly, I asked him why he was rude to the men. He said they were RCMP officers looking for information about our neighbours, Walter and Martha. I was puzzled. So why didn't you tell them

A View from Killaloe



Kathy Lampi

what they wanted to know? I asked. I don't inform on my neighbours to the police, he said.

I was even more puzzled because I knew my parents did not particularly like or approve of those neighbours, and I said that. My father said firmly, that isn't the point. I am not an informer, he said. He went on to explain to me - I was about 10 years old - that

our neighbours belonged to the Finnish Organization, suspected of being a Communist front, and the RCMP was investigating Communists. Then he went back to whatever he was doing and that was the end of that. I have never forgotten it.

In the 1970s I knew a woman who worked at the border as a student one summer for Canadian Customs and Immigration. She told me to never give Killaloe as my point of origin when crossing the border.

"We have instructions to pull aside and search the luggage of anybody coming from or going to Killaloe," she said. "Say Barry's Bay or Eganville," she advised.

Apparently, Killaloe was considered a hotbed of radicals and American draft dodgers. I have never forgotten that either.

A few years back, I interviewed a retired RCMP officer. I asked him about what my father said, and what my friend had said. He shrugged. "We infiltrated the F.O. through the '30s and '40s and into the mid-50s. And Killaloe was certainly of interest in the early 1970s."

Just because you're paranoid...

Vote wisely

Dear Editor:

It occurred to me the other day while watching the news on TV that most of us are getting the short end of the stick at election time. There are too many extenuating circumstances surrounding the result of an expensive election. Polls, surveys and news media seem to stimulate some electors while others will vote the way their grandpa did and most just don't bother to take the time.

It is very difficult to teach young people about our democratic election process and I would even go so far as to say that a lot of adults, including seniors, just don't know enough about it. A lot of well meaning folks can't grasp the difference between provincial and federal politics let alone municipal and county politics.

When we are exposed to terms like popular vote, majority, minority, surpluses, deficits and balanced budgets it seems that our vote gets mired in a quagmire of uncertainty and considering that we took the time to vote for whomever we thought would represent us the best. In many cases we are disappointed when our candidate doesn't behave as we expected. The fact remains we voted for our particular person for whatever reason and if they happen not to be a part of the possible majority, they will be in the opposition side of the house. I thought we voted for regional representation, silly me.

Considering the mess we see in our provincial house, I personally blame each and every one of the members sitting and not just the party in power. When the opposition parties (2) cannot manage change or governance we have all lost our vote. It is so easy to stand and point fingers at someone else and unless you have a better alternative you might as well sit down.

Question period in our federal and provincial houses has become a total disgrace and some of us were nearly expelled from high school for behaving a lot better than these supposed honourable ministers do. Lying got us "kicked out" for sure and most of us boys didn't want to be in school in the first place.

If your peers take the time to elect you, they probably expect you to behave like adults in your playground. Not unlike juveniles it is common for some elected members to put blame on someone else when they get caught as long as the press is there to distort the facts.

For the better part, the electorate at large is losing faith and is just not bothering to vote. When only about 40 per cent of the electoral population take the time to cast a ballot, it would make one wonder if faith in our system has been lost. For some strange reason I always thought that when you were elected you were part of the process. Whether you were in "power" or in opposition, you were elected to govern. If the opposition performs strongly enough, they will probably be in power next time. I was taught this in school during the time that I actually attended.

When election promises and lies can convince a fickle public to vote for you, you really haven't accomplished anything other than making people think that it will be different this time 'round.

It's too bad we can't vote for the bureaucrats who are making our lives more and more difficult. I'm talking about the people that have taken our rural land rights and freedoms away and can indiscriminately "blacklist" your property as potential habitat for species at risk, making it less valuable on the market.

Oh yes, I forgot, we do in fact vote for their bosses. I recommend checking your ballot over very carefully before you make your "X".

**Harvey Reckzin,
Golden Lake**



Another man named John

I am attempting to write this article on the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

Most of the news channels are either showing Kennedy pictures or unveiling more conspiracy theories about his death. I couldn't help but wonder why we are keeping his memory alive 50 years later.

Again, there could be hundreds of theories, each with some merit. My guess would be because he stood out in the crowd, among world leaders, not only in his own time, but in the annals of history.

In a worldly sense, he was a rich man, but a poor man's friend -- none of that snobbiness, snottiness or uppityness that too often go with rich people. He was an amazing combination of so many qualities that people seem to admire in a leader, firmness when dealing with other world leaders and full of compassion when dealing with the downtrodden.

During his presidency, the cold war between the U.S. and Russia was a major challenge and the respect for him, both as a person and as a leader, helped greatly to calm the storm.

After the privacy regulations were lifted a few months ago the world got a closer look at the human side of J.F.K. and some of the tapes released were sort of hilarious.

If I remember correctly some member of the military brass in the Pentagon thought he was placing a feather in his cap by announcing that Jacques

An Old Man's Opinion

Not Necessarily Ours



Al Donohue

line was about to become a patient in a certain military hospital which the White House considered a major breach of security, putting her life in danger. After the president tore a strip off him, the poor fellow was lucky to escape in his underwear.

We got a flash of his Irish temper when he demanded to know "what kind of effin' stupid 'bastards' are running the Pentagon". (In his vocabulary, bastards are pronounced without the letter 'r'.)

About 12 years ago, thanks to our daughter, Colleen, and her husband, Joe, we were able to visit the Kennedy graves in the Arlington National Cemetery where I expected to see a large, expensive monument. Instead, we found a very modest one and small

name plates at the foot of John's and Robert's graves.

The pomp was missing, replaced by the eternal flame.

It struck me, while standing there, that the flickering of the gas-fed flame probably serves two purposes. It keeps alive the memory of the most loved American President at the same time reminding us that our lives, like his, can end as fast as a flame can flicker.

The four of us walked out of the cemetery, without a word being spoken, each of us lost in our own thoughts. The best way to describe the feeling is one that touches your very soul and I really think the flickering flame has a lot to do with creating that feeling.

I recall attending a funeral at Cormac, about 30 years ago, where one of the local old-timers informed me that the average length of time that a man can expect to be remembered is five weeks. I would say that J.F.K. has put that theory to rest in a big way. I am finishing this article after 10 p.m., and the TV screens are still flashing scenes from the life of a beloved president.

I think the most amazing feature of the Kennedy story is that the love for the man is as strong today as it was 50 years ago.

Unlike so many world leaders who are remembered with hatred for their cruel inhumanity to their fellowmen, the late president is remembered for exactly the opposite reason -- for his kindness and genuine humanity.

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"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

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