

Nonprofit Ethical Case: #NunsToo Movement

VOW OF SILENCE NO MORE: Catholic Patriarchy's Abuse of Nuns

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Presentation Sequence

- ❑ The Roman Catholic Church unpacked
- ❑ Summary: #NunsToo movement ([Podcast](#) to share narrative storytelling)
- ❑ Media coverage: [Video](#) – Vatican crisis turns to sexual abuse of nuns (1:45)
- ❑ Facts: Practical applications relating to nonprofit ethical leadership
- ❑ Compliance, individual, organizational, and systemic responsibilities
- ❑ Stakeholders Analysis
- ❑ Alternative Solutions or Remedies
- ❑ Discussion questions to spur critical thinking
- ❑ Resources



Retrieved from <https://deskgram.net/explore/tags/nunstoo>

The Roman Catholic Church Unpacked

The Hierarchy of the Church

Roman Catholic Church Hierarchy

The Catholic clergy is organized in a strict, sometimes overlapping hierarchy:

Pope: Head of the church, he is based at the Vatican. The pope is infallible in defining matters of faith and morals.

Cardinal: Appointed by the pope, 178 cardinals worldwide, including 13 in the U.S., make up the College of Cardinals. As a body, it advises the pope and, on his death, elects a new pope.

Archbishop: An archbishop is a bishop of a main or metropolitan diocese, also called an archdiocese. A cardinal can concurrently hold the title. The U.S. has 45 archbishops.

Bishop: A bishop, like a priest, is ordained to this station. He is a teacher of church doctrine, a priest of sacred worship, and a minister of church government. The U.S. has 290 active bishops, 194 head dioceses.

Priest: An ordained minister who can administer most of the sacraments, including the Eucharist, baptism, and marriage. He can be with a particular religious order or committed to serving a congregation.

Deacon: A transitional deacon is a seminarian studying for the priesthood. A permanent deacon can be married and assists a priest by performing some of the sacraments.

The Catholic Church



Summary: #NunsToo Movement

- ❑ 1,900 religious congregations around the world that includes over 500,000 women religious
- ❑ Nuns find their voice following the wave of the #MeToo movement
 - ❑ International Union of Superior Generals urge nuns to speak out
- ❑ Summit on clergy sex abuse convened in Rome from February 21–24, 2019
 - ❑ 10 women religious attended vs. the three that attend the Bishops Synod in September 2018
- ❑ Decades of persistent allegations of sexual and spiritual abuse of nuns by Catholic priests
 - ❑ Shrouded in secrecy
 - ❑ Internal investigation; no open records
- ❑ [Narrative stories](#) from the women religious supercede minimal available data
- ❑ Pope Francis openly acknowledges that nuns were sexually abused by clergymen

Media Coverage

Vatican crisis turns to sexual abuse of nuns (1:45):
Reuters World News (Feb. 5, 2019)



Screenshot from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-pope-emirates-plane-women/pope-says-he-is-committed-to-stopping-sexual-abuse-of-nuns-idUSKCN1PU283>



www.spadeglobal.org/news-press/media-coverage/

Nuns come forward with abuse allegations against Catholic priests: CBS Evening News (Feb 22,



Screenshot from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HP2IROSZdek>

Facts

- ❑ Scandal of religious sisters sexually assaulted, having abortions, giving birth to children not recognized by fathers (priests).
- ❑ Pope Francis acknowledges unchecked clerical power as the root cause of priests preying on young children; including adult women religious in at least seven countries (Europe, Africa, South America, Asia, Mexico, India, and the U.S.)
- ❑ Nuns keep silence for fear of retaliation against their own persons or their orders
- ❑ Lucetta Scaraffia writes in the February 2019 issue of *Women Church World* that the Vatican was aware of these problems as far back as the 1990s (note: how far back can one see when there is a shroud that is seemingly impenetrable).
- ❑ Last year, nuns speak out with the urgent support of the international association of women's religious orders – reports of abuse are filed with police and nuns report claims to their superiors.

Lucetta Scaraffia, editor in chief of *Women Church World* – monthly magazine distributed with the *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper.



<https://www.apnews.com/8ecf9c9be8ae4264804abf85222c5123/gallery/media:0355831b919c42a9a31f5a8e80a1558b>



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Image retrieved from <https://apnews.com/f7ec3cec9a4b46868aa584fe1c94fb28/gallery/media:75dcc65a5950451bb0825bdd92fbc9c8>

Facts

- ❑ Aligning these scandals with historical evidence – in the early 1990s the HIV epidemic spreading in Africa moved priests to have sex with “safe” women, the nuns who were serving the priests.
 - ❑ Quid Pro Quo – Priests and Bishops demanding sex for letters of recommendation the nuns need to be accepted into certain religious congregations.
 - ❑ Whistleblowers are not protected and instead, threatened to be kicked out of religious order or parish.
- ❑ Sisters (title for nuns) from developing countries and from the wealthier countries are denouncing the abuse and with the #MeToo era, demanding women have more say within the ranks of the Holy See.
- ❑ In November 2018, the International Union of Superior Generals (U.I.S.G.) representing over 500,000 nuns advocated to their fellow nuns to come forward and tell their stories of abuse.
- ❑ Priests and bishops have great power over congregations of women: Coming out of the veil of silence, a nun in India filed a police report against her bishop for rape. The media coverage helped bring these types of stories into the light.
- ❑ Scaraffia published an article early this year that denounced the reality that nuns are treated like indentured servants by cardinals and bishops. Many women religious, regardless of their education, are servants (cooking and cleaning) for the clerics.



Image retrieved from <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/02/23/europe/vatican-abuse-summit-nun-intl/index.html>

Compliance

- ❑ Bishops, Priests, and other men in power have violated many different protection laws including Sexual Harassment laws, Sexual Abuse laws, and more.
- ❑ These laws were broken within the protection of a male dominated internal society. Thus, allowing for a long history of wrongdoing which is still not regulated or legally corrected.
- ❑ Consumer Protection Laws state the Church must make people aware of the abuse that has gone on before involving those who could be affected.
 - ❑ e.g. children, women



Image retrieved from <http://www.graymatteranalytics.com/2018/10/importance-compliance/>

Individual Responsibility

- ❑ The Pope and the College of Cardinals (the most senior officials and usually ordained bishops)
- ❑ Bishops and priests

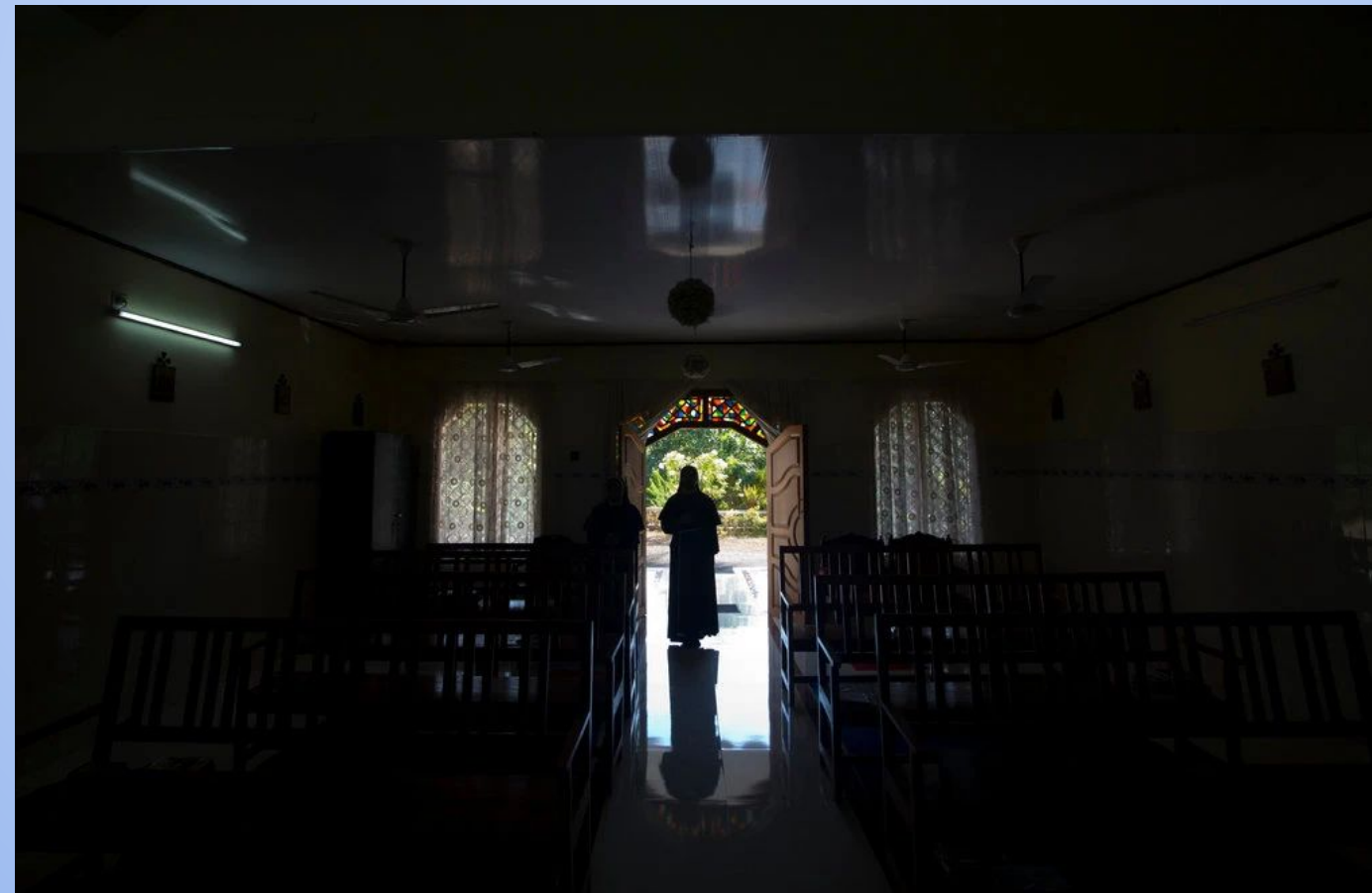


Image retrived from
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/06/world/europe/pope-francis-sexual-abuse-nuns.html>

Organizational Responsibility

- ❑ A strong and undeniable patriarchal culture prevents women within the Church from gaining any power to speak up.
- ❑ This culture is made of most males in the organization who do not continuously stand for equal treatment of people in the church.
- ❑ The secretive and protective culture of the entire organization is to blame for this ongoing issue.
- ❑ Recent news states the Pope has acknowledged the issue and expressed interest in ending it, however has not taken solid steps toward a solution. (Gonzales, 2019).



Image retrieved from
<https://www.globalsistersreport.org/column/justice-matters/trends/power-african-catholic-nuns-neds-be-unleashed-44411>

Systemic Responsibility

- ❑ Culture of “mediocrity, hypocrisy, and complacency”
 - ❑ – *Sister Veronica Openibo*
- ❑ There is a complete lack of ethical accountability for priests
- ❑ The corruption that takes place in the institution has a foundation of each man having dirt on another and promising to keep each other's secrets.

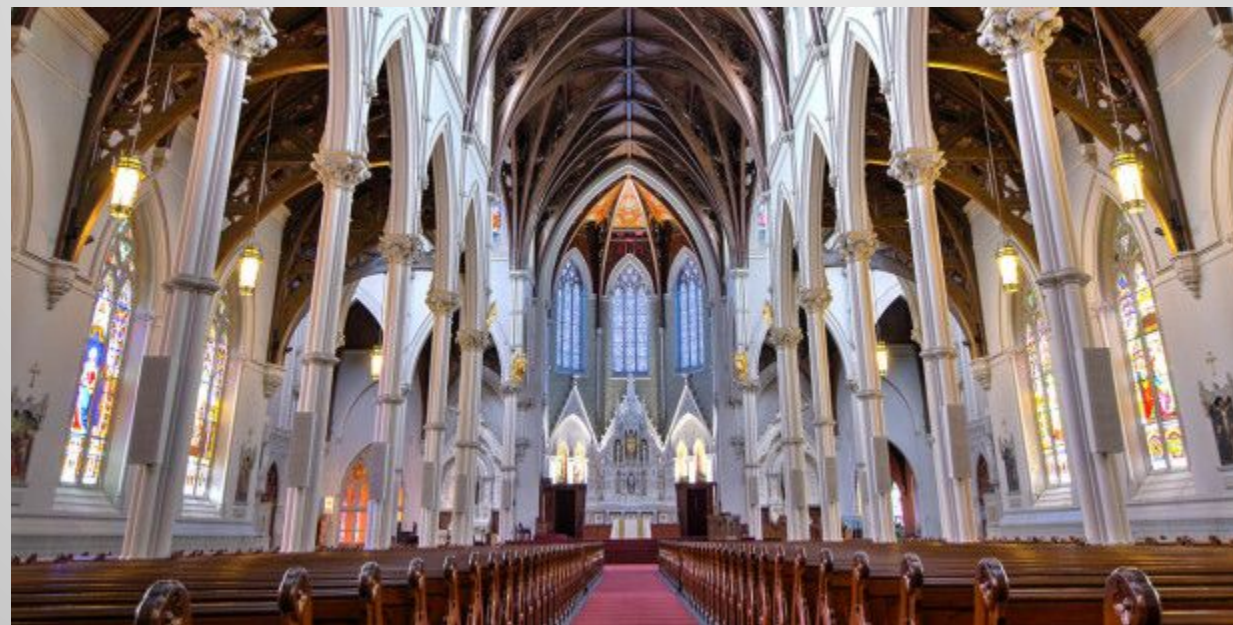


Image retrieved from <https://aleteia.org/2018/02/07/3-historic-catholic-churches-you-have-to-visit-in-boston/>

Stakeholders Analysis

- ❑ Nuns are a key part in the structure of the Catholic Church. With stories of abuse coming out, less women will be willing to join as a Nun, therefore weakening the Church's recruitment rate.
- ❑ 72% of U.S. Christian women say religion is “very important” in their lives, compared with 62% of the country's Christian men, according to Pew Research Center. (Fahmy, D. & Fahmy, D., 2018)
 - ❑ When women learn how holy women are treated, they are terribly offended by the church. As the majority of churchgoers are women, this should be heavily considered by leadership.
- ❑ Parishioners (Catholic followers) have to deal with reconciling their faith with Church corruption
 - ❑ Restoring trust
 - ❑ Working as part of the collective to protect the vulnerable
- ❑ Will world leaders be complacent or will they hold the Church accountable for breaking national and international humanitarian laws, regulations, and statutes?

Alternative Solutions or Remedies

- ❑ Legal action against the local dioceses for violations of county, state, federal laws (*e.g. Title VII and Consumer Protection Laws*).
- ❑ Legal action against international dioceses/churches for violations against United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR).
- ❑ More women at Vatican meetings with voting privileges.
- ❑ Compensation for nuns who were abused, forced to leave their religious congregation, forced to have abortions, or suffered from physical and mental abuse.
- ❑ Implementing a strategic Collective Impact model to tackle the complexity of the power dynamic that perpetuates the continued abuse of nuns and minors
- ❑ Associations, such as Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), that advocate for the rights of victims of sexual abuse by Church clergy.



Image retrieved from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0707wor>

Image retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0707w0r>

Discussion Questions: Spurring Critical Thinking

1. How can the Pope, as the sole leader of the Catholic Church, manage the dichotomy of the good the Church accomplishes in the light of all the sexual abuse scandals that have plagued it through the decades? With the violation of the rights and dignity of women coming to light, where does the Pope draw the line and lift the institution to a higher standard in the public's eye?
2. Nuns are an integral part of the Church with 72% of U.S. Christian women say religion is “very important” in their lives, what should the Pope do in order to maintain the integrity of the Church and to uphold the values of the Church?
3. Can there be internal reform within a fully established religious organization that is a nonprofit, but does not answer to the same national and international nonprofit sector guidelines?
4. The Church leads from positional power using coercive, reward, and legitimate power bases to lead its congregation. These inherent power bases erode the mission of the Church and threatens the dignity of its followers. Can a case be made that the Church uses the teleology as its approach to ethics? In other words, how does its positional power feed into the theory that the end always justifies the means to get the results the Church wants?

Discussion Questions: Spurring Critical Thinking

5. Regardless of the world learning about the nuns sexual abuse by clergy, the Catholic Church is a nation of its own. What can the public do to make the Church accountable? Can the Church, with all its protection from the age old edict of separation between church and state, be held accountable?
6. Given that the Church acts as its own government. What means are available to create an international set of guidelines that can serve as oversight to issues of sexual abuse with the Church?
7. The Action Center Leadership model says a leader only achieves success when three elements are balanced perfectly. These three elements include accomplishing the task, building the team, and empowering the individual. Where does the Pope have opportunities for improvement when considering this model?
8. While looking at French & Raven's Five Forms of Power, we learn about Legitimate (Title) power. Many leadership positions in the Church are seen this way. How do you think this affects overall culture?

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