

PRAY FOR THE CHILDREN

British actor Alec Guinness is considered one of the finest actors of the twentieth century, known for his ability to portray a wide range of characters. His conversion to the Catholic faith came about through interesting circumstances. Although known for his role in many famous films such as *The Bridge Over the River Kwai*, less well known is his film portrayal of G. K. Chesterton's beloved clerical detective, Fr. Brown. The film was being shot in a remote French village. One evening Guinness, still in costume, was on his way back to his lodgings. A little boy, mistaking him for the real thing, grabbed his hand and trustingly accompanied the "priest."



Alec Guinness as Father Brown

That incident affected Guinness. "Continuing my walk," he said, "I reflected that a Church that could inspire such confidence in a child, making priests, even when unknown, so easily approachable, could not be as scheming or as creepy as so often made out. I began to shake off my long-taught, long-absorbed prejudices." Later Guinness and his family were received into the Catholic Church.

How far we come since those days of such innocence! Today, due to the moral crimes against children committed by some priests, it is not unusual for parents to recoil in horror at the thought of entrusting their children to the care of priests. It is not the purpose of this article to speculate about the causes behind these monstrous crimes, although the fact that most abused children are boys makes it difficult to avoid the conclusion that a massive infusion of homosexuals into Catholic seminaries is a prime cause. Rather, this article provides a case study demonstrating that the danger to children requires both perverted clerics and negligent pastors and bishop. That is, without the negligence of pastors and bishops, even if they themselves are

not afflicted with disordered sexual proclivities, much of the harm done by perverted priests could not take place.

THE SOCIETY OF ST. JOHN

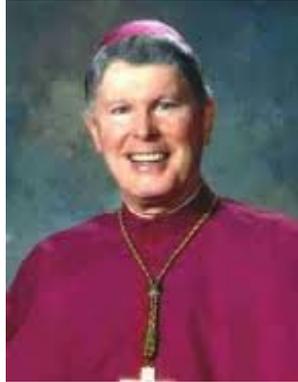
Enabler # 1 – Bishop James Timlin

James Timlin was Bishop of the Diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania, from 1984 to 2003. The Society of St. John (SSJ) was a clerical association of the faithful made up of priests incardinated in the Scranton Diocese by Bishop Timlin. The prime movers in creating the SSJ in Scranton were priests who had left the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX). Chief among them was Fr. Carlos Urrutigoity, a professor at the SSPX seminary in Winona, Minnesota.

Bishop Timlin made absolutely no inquiry or investigation concerning the fitness of Fr. Urrutigoity and Fr. Ensey (another SSJ priest) prior to incardinating these men and other SSJ priests into the Diocese of Scranton, and permitting them to be chaplains at St. Gregory's Academy, under the name Society of St. John. In his deposition taken in the sexual molestation lawsuit filed in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, Timlin described the normal diocesan policy utilized in selecting seminarians for the diocese, including psychological testing. However, in the case of Fr. Urrutigoity, Fr. Ensey and the other priests who had been expelled from the Society of St. Pius X, Timlin made no inquiry whatsoever. Timlin did not even bother to contact the SSPX to determine why they were expelled. He testified that he knew that they left the Society of St. Pius X because they "wanted to be regularized in the Catholic Church." When asked how he knew this, Timlin testified:

"That's what they told me"

It must be kept in mind that, at this time, the Diocese of Scranton was fully aware of the spreading priest molestation crisis, and had established a diocesan policy concerning clerical molestation in 1993.



Bishop James Timlin

From November, 1997 through September, 1999, the priests of the Society of St. John, including Ensey and Urrutigoity, were allowed by Timlin to live at St. Gregory's Academy, a Catholic boys prep school.

Even though the Scranton diocese never contacted the SSPX concerning these priests, the SSPX eventually learned that that Bishop Timlin had taken them into the diocese. Therefore, on February 10, 1999, Bishop Bernard Fellay of the SSPX courageously wrote a letter to Bishop Timlin, warning him that Fr. Urrutigoity was "dangerous" and had molested a seminarian from St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary. He also warned that Fr. Urrutigoity had been accused of the same acts at a seminary in Argentina. Finally, Bishop Fellay cautioned Timlin:

The reason why he got into trouble with the Superiors of the Society of St. Pius X is mainly because we felt he had a strange, abnormal influence on the seminarians and priests, whom he seemed to attach to his brilliant, charismatic personality. When he asked me to recognize the society he intended to found, among the reasons of my refusal, I explicitly mentioned this strange personal, guru-like attachment between the disciples and their leader.

Therefore, had Bishop Timlin not been negligent, and had he simply made one phone call to the SSPX prior to incardinating Fr. Urrutigoity and his followers, he would have learned that Urrutigoity had been involved in two instances of molesting seminarians. This inquiry would have also caused any reasonable person to require proper screening and psychological testing of the other priests who left the SSPX with Fr. Urrutigoity, including Fr. Ensey.

Timlin's negligence is further demonstrated by the fact that, even after he received the warning letter from Bishop Fellay, he nevertheless allowed

these priests to live at the boy's school, St. Gregory's Academy, and to continue acting as their chaplains.

Although the Catholic Church has semi-independent religious orders such as the Dominicans, Franciscans and Jesuits, the Society of St. John was not such an order, but was rather a Public Association of the Faithful. Public Associations of the Faithful are bound in obedience to their local bishop. (Canons 609 – 612 of the Code of Canon Law).

In the sexual molestation lawsuit filed by one of the former students of St. Gregory's Academy, the Diocese of Scranton argued that Timlin's failure to contact the SSPX before incardinating the Society of St. John priests was a moot point because, after he eventually received the warning letter from Bishop Fellay, he authorized an "investigation" which proved that the charges were "inconclusive." This argument was and is absurd.

First, let us examine the charges arising out of Fr. Urrutigoity's conduct with the Winona seminarian. In his deposition, former seminarian M.S. testified that Fr. Urrutigoity grabbed his penis after they had left the seminary at Winona.

Bishop Timlin testified that the diocese "could not come to a conclusion as to whether he [Urrutigoity] was guilty or not" and could therefore not inflict a canonical penalty on Urrutigoity. Timlin wrote back to Bishop Fellay stating:

"....In effect, I am left unable to ascertain the truthfulness of the allegations against Fr. Urrutigoity and, therefore, I am without the required certitude to take any action in his regard."

However, the issue of negligence with regard to protecting children is not whether a canonical penalty should have been imposed on Fr. Urrutigoity. The issue is whether Timlin was negligent in assigning him to reside at a boy's school and permitting him to be chaplain at the school. Bishop Timlin was confronted with this issue at his deposition. His incomprehensible answer was as follows:

- Q. Now you felt there was no canonical penalties that you could inflict upon Father Urrutigoity. Question: Did that mean that you had to leave him in a situation where he would have access to minor boys?
- A. I wouldn't be obliged to do anything actually but I mean we did not feel that there was anything --- he was not in charge of boys

at that time. If I recall he was still living up at the Saint Gregory Academy. The Fraternity of the Society of St. John really had not begun to, it was beginning to function, just beginning, but they didn't have any house of their own. He was not in charge of the boys at Saint Gregory's.

ATTEMPTED TRANSLATION – “No, I did not have to allow Fr. Urrutigoity to live at the boy's school but, so what, he wasn't in charge of the boys.”

The sexual scandal caused by the SSJ was accompanied by a financial scandal. As early as December 9, 1999, the Scranton Diocese knew that the SSJ priests were “living in splendor,” and that they had purchased a \$75,000 table and had spent \$500,000 in just six weeks. Yet, several months later, on October 26, 2000, Bishop Timlin wrote a letter to Catholic activist Thomas Drolesky stating, “I am morally certain that there has been no wrongful, unlawful or capricious use of funds on the part of the Society of St. John.”

Bishop Timlin also never bothered to investigate the molestation charges leveled against Urrutigoity in Argentina. The Argentina connection also demonstrated that the Diocese could not seriously argue that it has true concern for screening out dangerous sexual predators. The priest who was expelled with Fr. Urrutigoity for homosexual conduct at the Argentine seminary was Fr. Bernardo Ferrara. At the time of the molestation lawsuit, Fr. Ferrara was still a member in good standing of the Scranton-based Society of St. John, although he was working for co-defendant Fraternity of St. Peter in France. When Timlin was confronted at his deposition with a letter he wrote to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in a successful attempt to bring the priest into the U.S., Timlin testified under oath that he did not know any Fr. Bernardo Ferrara and did not know that he had also become a priest of the Society of St. John.

For the Diocese of Scranton to assert that all of this does not constitute evidence of negligence on the part of Bishop Timlin and the Diocese was simply mind-boggling. To appreciate the absurdity of this position, one must imagine the final argument to the jury that would have to be made by Bishop Timlin's attorney had the molestation case gone to trial:

“Now, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, the plaintiff would have you believe that Bishop Timlin was negligent for not contacting the SSPX seminary from which Fr. Urrutigoity was expelled before assigning him to live at a boy’s school. It is true that a seminarian from there accused Fr. Urrutigoity of grabbing his penis. But this was eventually investigated and was determined to be inconclusive, which means maybe it happened and maybe it didn’t. It is also true that a seminarian in Argentina accused Fr. Urrutigoity of grabbing his penis. But...Argentina...heck, what do they know?”

Of course, the molestation case never went to trial because it was settled for present and future payments of over \$400,000 paid to the victim. Contributing to the settlement was the Diocese of Scranton, the Fraternity of St. Peter, and the Society of St. John.

At some point Bishop Timlin had been informed that SSJ priests were sleeping in the same beds with boys. Instead of immediately removing these priests, he simply told them to stop the practice. Of course, once the sexual molestation claim was made against Fr. Ensey and Fr. Urrutigoity, the two priests who molested the St. Gregory Academy student, Bishop Timlin really had no choice but to send the priests for a psychological evaluation. He sent them to the Southdown Institute in Toronto, known for treating priests with mental illness, addiction and other problems. Concerning the reports from Southdown, it states in the Minutes of the diocesan Independent Review Board dated March 21, 2002, that Rev. Urrutigoity’s problems were classified under an “umbrella of personality disorders, principally antisocial and narcissistic.” As for Rev. Ensey, the Minutes state that his “sexual attraction is toward adolescent boys, a stage that he appears to be locked into.” The Minutes recommended that both priests be removed from active ministry.

Enabler # 2 – Bishop Joseph Martino

Joseph Martino became Bishop of Scranton in 2003, and almost immediately began the process of formal suppression of the SSJ. Bishop Martino had the clear authority to do this because the SSJ was not a separate religious Order – they were priests of the Diocese of Scranton. In his deposition, taken in the pending lawsuit against the Scranton Diocese by the Justin Martyr House of Studies, he testified that the SSJ priests “gave me the creeps.” He admitted that Fr. Urrutigoity’s conduct around children was “disgraceful”

and conceded that there is simply no innocent explanation for priests sleeping with boys. He testified that Fr. Urrutigoity is a man of “loose morals” and that he “wanted nothing like that in my Diocese.” Bishop Martino rated as “highly credible” the October 15, 2003 letter written to him by Rev. Richard Munkelt, who was formally affiliated with the SSJ. That letter includes the following statements:

- That as a former member of the SSJ, he had personal knowledge of the gravely immoral behavior of the SSJ.
- That SSJ founder and former Superior Carlos Urrutigoity has had a long habit of bedding down at night with young men.
- That Rev. Urrutigoity supervised gatherings of young men on the Shohola property involving heavy drinking.
- That the SSJ promoted a theology of pederasty.

The Vatican is now going forward with formal canonical proceedings to defrock SSJ priest Eric Ensey because the youth that he molested was a minor when he molested him. On the other hand, canonical proceedings are not going forward to defrock Fr. Urrutigoity because this same young man was “barely” 18 when molested by him.



Bishop Joseph Martino

Nevertheless, Canon Law does provide a mechanism by which Fr. Urrutigoity could have been prevented from functioning as a priest outside of the Diocese of Scranton. Bishop Martino could have refused to excommunicate Fr. Urrutigoity, thereby preventing him from establishing a new headquarters for the SSJ cult in any other diocese in the world. In his deposition, Bishop Martino correctly explained that any priest who acts as

Catholic priest must be formally incardinated in that Diocese. Similarly, that priest must be formally excardinated from that Diocese in order to be taken in as a priest in another Diocese. Therefore, although Fr. Urrutigoity could not be defrocked, excardinating him would, in the words of Monsignor McDaid of the Vatican's Congregation of the Clergy, get Fr. Urrutigoity "out of [Bishop Martino's] hair" but give him the freedom to seek refuge in another diocese. That is precisely the route taken by Bishop Martino as described in his deposition.

On April 26, 2005, Bishop Martino sent an e-mail to Scranton Diocesan Chancellor Early asking him to compose a letter to the Vatican Congregation of the Clergy concerning the status of the SSJ and instructing Early:

"You might also throw in some schmaltz about how the death of Pope John Paul II and the election of Pope Benedict XVI has no doubt prostrated them with grief and now joy."

Of course, to devout Catholics who believe that the Pope is the Vicar of Christ on earth, the death of the Pope is truly an occasion of grief.

To provide an ecclesiastical fig leaf for enabling the SSJ to regroup in some other diocese, Bishop Martino conditioned Rev. Urrutigoity's excardination upon requiring Rev. Urrutigoity to attend a 30 day retreat. However, Bishop Martino admitted in his deposition that he did not meet with Fr. Urrutigoity after the retreat, and in fact, had never met Fr. Urrutigoity. In his deposition, Bishop Martino admitted that Urrutigoity was morally unfit for the ministry before the retreat. He therefore admitted that the only way that Fr. Urrutigoity was fit for the ministry after the retreat would be the occurrence of a miracle.

Enabler # 3 -- Rogelio Ricardo Livieres Plano, the Opus Dei bishop of the Diocese of Ciudad del Este, Paraguay

To his credit, Bishop Martino formally suppressed the Society of St. John in the Diocese of Scranton, based upon the financial and sexual scandal it had created. The SSJ appealed the suppression to Rome, but the Vatican upheld Bishop Martino's decision. However, some time later, this writer received reports that a bishop in Paraguay had taken in the SSJ priests and allowed them to be established in that diocese. After writing to the Papal

Nuncio in Paraguay, this writer received the following response in March of 2006:



Asuncion, 22 March 2006

N. 08/06

Dear Mr. Bendell:

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of the last 28th of February in which you informed me about your concerns regarding the Society of St. John and its presence in Paraguay.

I can assure you that the two priests of the Society of St. John who were temporarily in the Diocese of Ciudad del Este have been sent away in the last weeks by Bishop Rogelio Livieres, and it seems that it does not remain any trace of this Society in Paraguay.

Sincerely Yours in Christ


+ Orlando Antonini
Apostolic Nuncio

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Yet a view of the present website of the Ciudad del Este diocese shows that the SSJ priests are firmly entrenched in that diocese. Fr. Urrutigoity, a priest with an antisocial and narcissistic personal disorder and molester of young men, has been elevated to the rank of monsignor, as have

several other SSJ priests. The diocese website can be found at <http://diocesisdcde.info/index.php>.

Enabler # 4 – Fr. John Horgan

Fr. Horgan is a priest of the Diocese of Vancouver, Canada. Although fully aware of the Scranton sexual molestation settlement and the suspension of the SSJ by the Diocese of Scranton, which was upheld by the Vatican, Fr. Horgan has been soliciting funds from Vancouver Catholics to be sent to the SSJ priests in Paraguay. SSJ priest Fr. Dominic Carey has publicly stated that these priests could not be sustained in Paraguay without the financial support provided at the urging of Fr. Horgan. Fr. Horgan has also permitted SSJ priests to visit in the Vancouver diocese, with numerous visits from sexual predator Eric Ensey. Fr. Horgan also knows that there are pending canonical proceedings to defrock Fr. Eric Ensey, arising out of Ensey's molestation of a minor. Despite this fact, Fr. Fr. Ensey has accompanied Fr. Horgan on two pilgrimages along with other Catholics. On pilgrimage, Ensey wore clerical garb, and Horgan never advised his fellow Catholics that Ensey might pose a danger to children.

Fr. Urrutigoity also accompanied Fr. Horgan on one of the pilgrimages.



Fr. Horgan picture with sexual predator Fr. Ensey during October, 2011 pilgrimage

CALL TO ACTION

I am asking readers of this article to consider taking the following action in order to protect the welfare of children and youth from sexual predators such as Fr. Ensey and Fr. Urrutigoity.

1. Write to the Archbishop Michael Miller of Vancouver, Canada, asking him to forbid Fr. Horgan from financially supporting the SSJ priests in Paraguay. Archbishop Miller should also correct the damage that Fr. Horgan has done by publically disavowing the SSJ and publicly forbidding Fr. Ensey from visiting his diocese.
2. Write to the Holy See, requesting that Paraguay bishop Livieres be ordered to cease harboring the SSJ priests.
3. Pray to the Immaculate Heart of Mary that the scourge of clerical sexual molestation be blotted out from the life of the Church.

Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us.

James Bendell

Most of the facts contained in this article can be verified by consulting the following two lawsuits filed in the State of Pennsylvania:

- Case No. 2002-434, Court of Common Pleas of Pike County
- Case No. 3 CV 02-0444, U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania

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