

Ongoing Church Closures

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A consequence of clerical abuse and cover-ups



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Catholic churches in dioceses throughout the country are closing and consolidating — and not owing to a lack of parishioners or money, mind you, but because of a lack of priests.

In 1975 there were 59,000 priests in the United States, compared to 35,000 today. Moreover, while the average age of U.S. priests in 1970 was 34, the average age today is 70 with more than 40% over the age of 65. Indeed, U.S. priestly ordinations have declined by approximately 40% over the past 50 years, from 805 in 1970 to 495 in 2020.



Anthony Gorgia, Stephen Parisi and Matthew Bojanowski

The archdiocese of Milwaukee has identified 135 parishes on its website that have been "closed and merged." The archdiocese of St. Louis listed 116 parishes as "closed parishes." Eighty-two churches and chapels in the New York archdiocese have either closed or been merged over the past years. In 1990, there were 19,620 parishes in the United States compared to 16,703 in 2020. That averages to about 100 church closures annually.

Catholics who fear that their parishes will be closed are asking, "Why is this happening when the Catholic population is much higher today than it was decades ago?" One of the primary causes for the growing priest shortage involves the ongoing sex abuse crisis that has, in addition to scandalizing and angering Catholics, cost U.S. Catholics some \$4 billion in legal bills and settlements.

In order to understand how the sex abuse crisis plays an important role in the Catholic priest shortage, one has but to visit priests' retirement homes in the United States, wherein one will encounter a number of not just elderly priests, but also a number of priests who were removed from ministry owing to credible accusations of abuse.

A decrease in vocations is also occurring as a result of reprisals against good priests and seminarians in the Church. Catholic families see how holy, gifted and dedicated priests like Frs. [Paul Kalchik](#), [Mark White](#), [Clay Hunt](#), [Eduard Perrone](#) and [Ryszard Biernat](#) (among others) are treated for exposing corruption and defending authentic Catholic moral teachings. Catholic young men read about how former seminarians like [Anthony Gorgia](#), [Stephen Parisi](#) and [Matthew Bojanowski](#) were coerced into leaving priestly formation for exposing homosexual predation and behavior within their seminaries. Equally scandalous and harmful toward fostering vocations is the fact that, in most cases, the Vatican has ignored the appeals of the unjustly treated priests and seminarians — while simultaneously failing to investigate and discipline the corrupt prelates who reprised against them!

Many U.S. bishops, archbishops and cardinals are products of minor seminaries where many of them were preyed upon not only by faculty members but also by upperclassmen who themselves were introduced to gay sex when they first arrived at the seminary. Insofar as these prelates live "in the closet" and do not wish to be outed, most of them tend to discriminate against heterosexual priests and promote fellow homosexuals as auxiliary bishops, seminary rectors or vicar generals. A number of these prelates (e.g., [Theodore McCarrick](#), [Daniel Ryan](#), [George Lucas](#), [Michael Bransfield](#)) have been reported to have engaged in sex with their own priests and/or seminarians.

It's not uncommon for normal, heterosexual men discerning the priesthood to discover how many gay bishops, priests and seminarians there are in the Church and to resultantly leave formation — one reason for the current drop in ordinations.



Cdl. Blase Cupich, Cdl. Wilton Gregory and Bp. Robert McElroy

Catholic families with more than one or two children are not only more inclined to produce vocations to the priesthood and religious life, but they also tend to be more demonstrably pro-life. When pro-LGBTQ prelates like Blase Cupich, Wilton Gregory, Robert McElroy and others support giving Holy Communion to pro-abortion officials like Joe Biden and Nancy Pelosi, they not only reinforce the San Francisco Bay Times'belief that "LGBT Rights and Abortion Rights Are Inseparable," but they also scandalize many pro-life Catholic families from encouraging their sons to become priests. How many pro-life Catholic young men are inspired to become priests when they hear how prelates like Wilton Gregory and Francis Malooly give communion to President Biden, who not only supports the killing of unborn children but who also is forcing Americans — against their consciences — to pay for it?

One does not need a degree in mathematics to realize that homosexually oriented bishops and vocation directors cannot draw enough candidates from the 2% of gay men in the U.S. population to staff U.S. parishes. While gays are attracted to the priesthood for a number of reasons (and Catholic parents of gay sons are often very supportive of their sons becoming priests), normal Catholic men find it much harder to forgo having a loving wife and children, which is a much larger sacrifice than avoiding engaging in homosexual relations. While marriage, which naturally tends towards fruitfulness and children, is a sacrament, the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that homosexual acts are "intrinsically disordered" and are "contrary to the natural law" as they "close the sexual act to the gift of life."

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As the percentage of gays in the episcopacy, priesthood and seminaries increases, one can anticipate an increase in clerical sexual activity. Studies show that at any one time, no more than 45% to 50% of priests faithfully practice celibacy. Straight men between the ages of 35 and 39, furthermore, reported a lifetime median of 10 sex partners, while gay men reported a median of 67 sex partners. With the appointment of pro-LGBTQ cardinals like Blase Cupich and Joseph Tobin to the Congregation for Bishops, one can anticipate a continued increase in homosexually oriented prelates; a decrease in heterosexually oriented seminarians and priests; ongoing breaches in the practice of priestly celibacy; and an increase in the rate of church closures well into the future.

Gene Thomas Gomulka is an abuse advocate, investigative reporter, and retired Navy captain/chaplain. Ordained for the Pennsylvania Altoona-Johnstown diocese, Father (Monsignor) Gomulka was reprised against by church leaders he confronted for underreporting and covering up abuse.

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