

Saints and sinners: Seeking sexual equality in the church

If I were the pope — and you will be happy to know that I have not been approached — I would maintain the church's rule concerning an unmarried priesthood as the present pope has done. But I would also go to work on ordaining women ASAP, which Pope John Paul II has not done.

Ordaining women would, of course, help to alleviate the serious clergy shortage. But that would not be my main reason for doing it. Nor would the issue of equality enter into it (the argument put forth by various women's movements).

The trouble with equality is that it has come to stand for sameness — same duties, same roles.

Equality is the great leveler between the sexes. It eliminates the peaks and valleys that make the domestic landscape interesting. It destroys the variety and richness of married life and the in-

terplay of unequal forces that prompted the Frenchman to say, "Viva le difference!"

At best, equality between a husband and wife makes for happily married singles (rather than happily married couples), whose lives proceed along parallel lines rather than interconnecting ones. If you had a rope whose strands did not intertwine, it would break the first time you put any pressure on it.

The priesthood should be open to women, therefore, not on the basis of equality, but because a woman priest would bring something new and different — something related to her womanhood — to the office of priest. She would not be just a priest dressed in women's clothing.

At a woman's ordination conference I attended several years ago, much of the rhetoric was centered on the "injustice" and "inequality" of withholding ordination from women.



george plagenz

● saints & sinners

Perhaps it would be better to get away from talk of "empowerment" of women and stress that a priesthood with women in it would be more human and appealing.

Many of the women at the conference were warm, attractive feminine types. They did not fit into the classic mold of the saintly woman — "humorless, sexless, fearsome and forbidding" — as one nun at the conference described the stereotype of religious women.

Much of the scandal in the Catholic Church

today is being blamed on the celibacy requirement. If priests were allowed to marry — so the argument goes — a lot of what ails the priesthood would go away. Not everyone thinks so.

I had a talk once with a bishop who said, "We Catholics are fortunate to have a celibate priesthood. A lot of Protestants wish they had it."

He pointed to the time-consuming demands of the ministry and to the rising divorce rate among the Protestant clergy. Many ministers — like many priests — work 12 to 15 hours a day. Is this fair to their wives and children?

Then there is the problem a minister's wife has of living up to the expectations of the congregation her husband serves.

It is often said that a married clergyman is better able to counsel people with marital problems, but I wonder how strong that argument is. Being married gives a man certain insights into

married life that he wouldn't have otherwise. On the other hand, as one priest has pointed out to me, the minister's marital experience is confined to one marriage (or maybe two!). This experience would be of only limited help to him in dealing with the variety of marital problems that come to him.

Actually, there is a good deal of doubt about how effective clergymen are as marriage counselors.

"At least 15 percent of people visiting their physicians are primarily bringing a sexual complaint," says a medical school professor. "An even greater percentage of visits to clergymen are sexual in nature. But for some reason, doctors and clergymen are woefully naive about sex relations."

Is this another area where women priests would do a better job?

Former KKK leader becomes minister with mission to fight racism

By Clayton Bellamy

Associated Press Writer
TULSA, Okla. — Ku Klux Klan leader Johnny Lee Clary patted his white sheet as he waited in the radio station for this debate opponent, a civil rights activist.

Clary expected the Rev. Wade Watts to hate whites as much as Clary hated blacks. But then Watts stunned Clary. He walked into the broadcast booth, smiled and told the then-Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan that he loved him.

Clary was stunned. He had set a fire that damaged Watts' McAlester church — a crime for which he was never prosecuted. Still, he couldn't help but shake the reverend's extended hand, despite the KKK rule against touching blacks.

That night in 1979, Clary first began to doubt his racist convictions. In another decade, he left the Klan as Imperial Wiz-

ard and a couple of years after that he began his itinerant ministry against racism.

He now draws crowds around the world who come to hear his story of failure and redemption, of overcoming racism in one of its ugliest forms.

Clary credits much of his transformation to Watts, who marched with Martin Luther King Jr. and led the Oklahoma NAACP for 16 years. The men became close friends before Watts' death in 1998.

"He taught me what it was like to be black, what black people feel about the things they've been through," Clary said recently at his small Tulsa apartment, a poster of King behind him. "I became a man who looked at himself in the mirror and decided it was time to change that man."

Clary, who turns 43 this month, spent his early childhood in Oklahoma. But

when he was 11, his father committed suicide — shooting himself in the head with a handgun in front of his son — and the boy was sent to Los Angeles to live with his sister.

Living in a gang-ridden neighborhood, mostly among kids from other races, Clary didn't fit in. Racism he had learned in Oklahoma — he remembers his father directing a racial slur at a black man when he was 5 — became ingrained as Clary was shunted aside.

"Nobody seemed to care about this 14-year-old kid," Clary said. "I was about ready to give up when I turned on the TV and saw David Duke talking about the KKK."

The white supremacist's speech reminded Clary of talks his father had had with his uncle, a Klansman from Georgia. Clary wrote Duke, who sent a man to his Los Angeles door.

That Klansman wore a big belt buckle, glasses and a western shirt, and reminded Clary of his father.

"You've been through a horrible life," Clary remembered the man telling him. "What you need is a family, and the words 'Ku Klux Klan' comes from the Greek word 'kuklux' which means circle and 'Klan' from Scotland, which means family."

Clary joined the Klan youth corps, becoming an adult member at 17 and quickly rising through the ranks. Returning to Oklahoma, he became the Grand Dragon there and later the Imperial Wizard, a rank similar to national spokesman.

After meeting with Watts, Clary began to question his devotion to the Klan.

"When I heard the Klan and the skinheads say they wanted to kill all the blacks, I used to think of Rev. Watts, and

think, 'Do you really want to see this man hurt?'" Clary said. "He was such a good man that I started doubting all these things I was supposed to teach."

In 1989, Clary called the Klan's Grand Council and told them he was quitting.

A couple of years later, Clary said he felt God was calling on him to preach. He soon called Watts and asked forgiveness. The reverend, in turn, asked him to deliver a sermon to his all-black church, the one that Clary had set ablaze.

When Clary came to the white, pillbox church in McAlester, he was too nervous to think about the last time he'd been there, he said. Reporters had gathered for his first public appearance since leaving the Klan.

Watts, the uncle of Rep. J.C. Watts, R-Okla., had warned his faithful the week before that the former KKK leader was coming. Many stayed home.

The worshippers in the worn wooden pews crossed their arms and stared at Clary with lowered brows, he said. He got no "Hallelujahs" or "Amen" when he told the congregation about his reformation.

Finally, he asked if anyone would like to know Jesus as their savior, and a teenage girl cried and ran to the pulpit to hug Clary. The ice was broken.

Soon afterward, Clary and Watts traveled across the South together preaching against racism and protesting at Klan rallies.

"He became like family to us," Betty Watts, the reverend's widow, said. "He always came down (to McAlester) to tell us how much he loved us."

Clary estimates his ministry, which he calls Operation Colorblind Inc., has helped thousands avoid or escape a life of racism.



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Pastor: Don Crutcher
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899-7368
Sunday: Sunday School: 9 am
Worship Service: 10 am
Evening Service: 6:30 pm
Wednesday: Evening Bible Study: 7 pm

Calvary Gospel Church
Pastor: Rev. Steve Rains
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Wednesday: Adult Prayer and Worship: 7:00 p.m.
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Pastor: Matthew Delp
Third & Caldwell
899-2080 or 899-3797
Sunday: Sunday School: 9:45 am
Worship Service: 10:50 am
Evening Service: 6 pm
Wednesday: Evening Service: 7 pm

First Baptist Church
Pastor: Bud Chester
Fifth & Center • 899-3450
Sunday: Sunday School: 9:15 am
Morning Worship: 10:30 am
Evening Worship: 6:30 pm
Tuesday: Mens' Prayer Group: 6:00 am
Thursday: Night Bible Study: 7:00 pm

Seventh Day Adventist Church
1160 Cattletrail
Pastor: Arlin Cochran • 785-332-2888
Saturday: Sabbath School: 9:30 am
Worship Service: 11 am

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Pastor: Loren Strait
Eighth & Arcade • 899-5233
Sunday: Worship Service: 10:30 am
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Activities: Junior High & High School Youth Groups, Adult Bible Study, Choir, Men's and Women's Groups, Devotions Study, Monthly Fellowship
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Pastor: Rev. Carol Moore-Ramey
Sunday: Sunday School: 9:15 am
Worship Service: 10:30 am

Sonrise Christian Church
Ninth & Caldwell • 899-5398
Minister: Tony Kafka
Youth Minister: Doug Bean
Sunday: Worship Service: 9:30 am
Sunday School: 10:45 am
Wednesday: Junior/Senior High Meeting: 7 pm
Adult & Children's Classes: 7 pm

Emmanuel Lutheran Church
13th & Sherman • 899-6161
Pastor: Scott Grimshaw
Sunday: Sunday School: 8:45 am
Worship Service: 10 am
Wednesday: Confirmation: 6 pm

Kanorado United Methodist Church
Pastor: Leonard Cox
399-2468
Sunday: Sunday School: 9 am
Worship Service: 10:15 am

Goodland Bible Church
109 Willow Road • 899-6400
Pastor:
Sunday: Sunday School: 9:45 am
Morning Worship: 11 am
Evening Worship: 6 pm
Wednesday: Call for location

Grace Fellowship Church
104 E. Hwy 24 • 899-6423
Pastor: Bob Snyder • Residence: 899-0134
Sunday: Sunday School: 10 am
Worship Service: 11 am
Youth Group at Gattshall's at 5:30 pm
Adult Bible Study 6 pm

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
13th & Center
899-2115 or Rectory 899-2114
Priest: Father Charles Schneider
Deacon: Gretchen Talitha
Adult Forum: Sunday : 8:30 am
Morning Prayer: 9:30 am 1st & 5th Sundays
Holy Eucharist: 2nd, 3rd, & 4th Sundays: 9:30
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Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
1200 15th Street • Burlington, CO • (970) 664-2470
Sacrament Meeting: 9:30 am
Sunday School: 10:45 am
Priesthood/Relief Society: 11:30 am

Word of Life Foursquare Church
223 E. 10th
899-5250
Pastor: John Coumerilh
Sunday: Worship Celebration & Kids' Church: 10:30 am

United Methodist Church Brewster:
Pastor:
Worship Service: 10:45 am CST
Sunday School: 9:45 am CST
Winona:
Minister: Rev. Bob Winters
Worship Service: 9 am CST
Sunday School: 10:15 am CST

Iglesia Del Dios Vivo
La Luz Del Mundo
Spanish Speaking Church
Minister: Esteban Ortiz B.
1601 Texas • 899-5275
Daily Prayer: Sunday thru Saturday: 5 am & 6 pm
Sunday: Sunday School: 10 am

Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Pastor: Father Daryl Olmstead
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Sunday: 8 am and 9:30 am
Spanish Mass: 1st & 3rd Sunday: 2 pm

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