



UP FRONT AND PERSONAL  
**Ray Kelly for  
Vice President**

BY BILL REEL

A recent Ellen Goodman column in the Boston Globe implored John Kerry not to run for president in 2008. Goodman wrote that although she voted for Kerry in 2004, she's convinced he lacks what it takes to get elected. She apologized for weighing in on the 2008 election so far in advance but felt compelled to try to dissuade Kerry from running.

Goodman didn't say whom she favored in 2008, but don't be surprised if she ends up in Sen. Hillary Clinton's corner.

Goodman's piece prompts the announcement of my preferred ticket for 2008: McCain-Kelly.

Why John McCain for president? So far nobody but the Arizona senator strikes me as up to the job. I can't say I agree with him on everything but he comes across as honest, intelligent, trustworthy and - this is very important - electable.

Why New York City Police Commissioner Ray Kelly for vice president? Back in the 1980s and '90s I often got together with Msgr. John McCullagh, who at the time was pastor of St. Anthony's Church in Greenpoint and also an NYPD chaplain, a position he held for 20 years. A topic of conversation at lunch or dinner with the monsignor was his opinion of various city officials and police officials he encountered in the course of his duties. A calm, deliberate, charitable man, he seldom overdid praise or criticism. But I remember he always spoke highly of Ray Kelly, whom he'd met before Kelly rose to the top of the department. Kelly was a captain when the monsignor formed his opinion of him.

The monsignor was a retired Army chaplain who had served in Vietnam, parachuting into combat situations with the 173rd Airborne. He greatly admired leadership, and he thought Kelly excelled at it.

To me, Msgr. McCullagh - who died in 2004, God rest his soul - was a great priest and a great man, so naturally I took his opinions very seriously. They're still as good as ever as far as I'm concerned.

A couple of years ago I ran into a retired cop who, when on the job in East Harlem, was known for making drug arrests. He loved to lock up drug dealers. He might have been something of a cowboy. Anyway, I asked him why he'd retired early, and he frowned and said, "Ray Kelly has got everybody fighting terrorists instead of drug dealers."

I had to laugh. Knowing this cop's reputation, and allowing for hyperbole, I interpreted his remark to mean that the commissioner had expanded the job to include protecting New Yorkers from terrorism.

Then a year or so ago, The New Yorker ran a long article about how Kelly had transformed the department to deter terrorists. And more recently a 60 Minutes report delivered the same message.

Most voters probably think that a strong defense against terrorism should be the first priority of any administration. So I say let McCain choose Ray Kelly as his running mate and announce that if elected he'd put Vice President Kelly in charge of antiterrorism.

Wouldn't that be reassuring to most Americans? I believe the strategy could win the election for McCain-Kelly.

Skeptics will say Ray Kelly might be a fine leader but he doesn't qualify to run for national office because he has no experience in politics and, in fact, isn't even a politician.

But that's good! Voters are leery of politicians. Politics doesn't seem to work so well lately. Generally speaking, it appears the Republicans are incompetent and the Democrats are decadent. A nonpolitician running for vice president should inspire confidence in the ticket.

But, the skeptic will ask, can Kelly campaign? Does he know how to go about shaking hands and kissing babies?

Again, lack of conventional political skills shouldn't be a disadvantage. Let McCain do the campaigning. Vice presidential nominee Ray Kelly could stay right where he is, doing exactly what he's doing, and if the McCain-Kelly ticket triumphs he could resign as police commissioner and, in January '09, go to Washington and get to work.

I used to think Ray Kelly would be the next mayor of New York City. He's the obvious choice, but it says here he's needed at the national level - as vice president of the United States.

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Coordinated, Comprehensive Response  
**Diocesan Services Respond  
To Sexual Abuse Allegations**

In the four years since the clergy sexual abuse scandal broke, every (arch)diocese in the country has established services to address the problem. In the Diocese of Brooklyn that has included a Diocesan Review Board, a Victim/Survivor Assistance Coordinator, Virtus Safe Environment programs, Virtus training, a ministry to priests on administrative leave, background checks, and a toll-free telephone number to report allegations of sexual misconduct by clergy.

An outline of the work of two of the services follows: the Diocesan Review Board and the Victim/Survivor Assistance Coordinator.

As members of the Diocesan Review Board on sexual abuse of a minor by a clergyman, "we feel we're part of the healing process, addressing the problem and helping to restore faith in the Church as an institution and in the priesthood."

That is how Professor Bernard G. Helldorfer, the chairman, assesses the work of the board, which has met 68 times to discuss cases brought before it since Bishop Thomas V. Daily established the panel in late 2002.

**Trust in Review Board**

Reflecting on the response to their service, Professor Helldorfer said both now-retired Bishop Daily and his successor, Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, "have expressed their trust" in the work of the board.

Functioning as a confidential consultative body to the bishop, the eight-member panel is guided by the U.S. bishops' 2002 "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" and the accompanying "Essential Norms" for diocesan policies dealing with allegations of sexual abuse of minors by clergy.

The work can be daunting, requiring the review of sometimes "voluminous" files, said Professor Helldorfer, an attorney who directs the Legal Studies Program in St. John's University's Division of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies.

The process begins when the bishop asks the board to review a report he has received of an allegation against a clergyman. With authority to study all aspects of the case, the members read the documentation. They then outline a plan to investigate the allegation with a private investigator, who is a former detective in the New York City Police Department with experience in cases involving the sexual abuse of minors.

When the investigation begins, the investigator submits "regular detailed interim reports" to the board, Professor Helldorfer said. The board evaluates each report and determines whether further investigation is needed.

On the completion of the investigation, "we conduct a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the results of the investigation, develop a proposed recommendation and conduct a vote on the proposed recommendation," he said.

The writing of an executive summary follows, stating the essential elements of the review. After it is presented to the bishop for his consideration, he studies it further, makes his decision and responds to the summary with a letter to the board stating action to be taken.

The summary produced by the board is "well-reasoned," based on the amount of information available to it, the chairman said.

Professor Helldorfer said the board has reviewed some 25 cases, advising the bishop on 18 of them, indicating whether they have found an allegation credible and whether the clergyman should remain in ministry.

"Our role is to consult on the matter and advise the bishop, but not to judge on the merits of the case," he said. The final decision is left to the bishop after he undertakes his own review.

One of the eight board members, Msgr. Edward B. Scharfenberger, a civil and canon lawyer and pastor of St. Matthias Church, Ridgewood, said he is impressed with the calibre of individuals on the panel and their commitment to the work.

"It did not take long for the members to build up respect for one another" when they were chosen to serve their five-year terms, he said. "They have a depth of honesty and a breadth of concern for all the parties involved. We collaborate and work well together."

The panelists come from the fields of law, government, law enforcement, social service, family life, medicine, the priesthood and leadership in religious life. One was a victim of sexual abuse as a minor.

In addition to Professor Helldorfer and Msgr. Scharfenberger, they include Thomas A. DeStefano, former executive director of Catholic Charities who also sits on the National Review Board; Sister Veronica Greeley, former prioress of the Amityville Dominican Sisters; Joann Heaney-Hunter, professor of theology and director of the University Core Curriculum at St. John's University and a lecturer and author on the practice of Christian marriage and family life; John J. Laffey, former deputy chief of the New York City Police Department, former police commissioner of the City of Long Beach and now its City Manager; Dr. James J. Lynch, a physician in private practice in adolescent, adult and forensic psychiatry, and Luis A. Torres, Jr., an attorney in New York City government.

Conforming with the "Essential Norms" which say that the participation of the diocesan Promoter of Justice on the review board "is desirable," Msgr. William A. Varvaro, the former Judicial Vicar and pastor of St. Margaret's Church, Middle Village, serves in that capacity.

Professor Helldorfer said the chief investigator, Brenda Vincent-Springer, has performed investigations "with the

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# Services Respond to Allegations

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highest degree of commitment and integrity."

Added Dr. Lynch: "The board remains committed to the work of protecting the young people of our Diocese by advising Bishop DiMarzio."

## Victim/Survivor Assistance Coordinator

For Amityville Dominican Sister Ellen Patricia Finn, the past three years as Victim/Survivor Assistance Coordinator for the diocese have meant looking into people's hearts, seeing the incredible hurt they have endured and sharing their ever-present pain.

Despite her social work training and practice, such incidents never fully ease the anxiety before the next contact with a survivor...and the next...and the next. But then the unexpected happens and leaves an indelible mark and a story to be told.

Abused when he was a pre-teen, a victim grew to manhood developing a long history of alcohol dependence, becoming estranged from his parents and other family members, entering a marriage that became troubled and ended in divorce, and experiencing a seeming loss of faith in the Church.

Seeing reports of sexual abuse by clergy in the media, he reported his experience to the diocese, and Sister Ellen became involved in his case. She contacted her counterpart in the diocese in another state where the victim was living, who identified a local counselor.

The victim, still hurting, at first resisted the family counseling offered him, his wife, whom he had married civilly, their child and two children from the wife's previous marriage. In time he agreed to attend the sessions.

Other positive steps followed. "The family was connected to a wonderful parish community in their state," Sister Ellen said, and the couple attended a Retrouvaille program to help couples who need healing in their marriages.

When the Brooklyn Diocesan Review Board investigated the case, the members found the allegation to be credible. Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio read the board's summary and agreed with its findings.

Subsequently, the bishop met the couple and apologized to the victim in his own name and in the name of the Church. Their conversation was "moving, open, honest and very challenging," Sister Ellen said.

As time went on, the couple

"wanted desperately to be welcomed at the table of the Lord," she said. Working with the tribunal in their couple's home diocese and their therapist, she helped prepare the paperwork required to begin the process of seeking an annulment of the victim's first marriage.

In the period of time that passed as the annulment proceeding progressed, the victim made contact again with his parents, who were "thrilled to have their son back," Sister Ellen said.

Eventually the annulment was granted. The couple chose the Saturday before Palm Sunday to have their marriage sacramentalized; it coincided with the anniversary date of their civil marriage. They invited Sister Ellen to attend, and she presented to them a papal blessing, a gift from Bishop DiMarzio.

She smiled remembering that the couple was "so very grateful" to the bishop for his role in helping them come back to the Church, and that they had wanted him to be the best man.

No longer estranged from his family and having returned to the Church of his youth, the victim/survivor told his story to his parish. "The same Church whose priest abused me, has been here to help me heal and welcome me home," Sister Ellen recalled him saying.

## Church at Its Best

"This indeed was the Church at its best, working together to care for the lost sheep who returned to the fold in time for Easter and the Resurrection of Our Lord," she said.

"It's a redemption story," Sister Ellen acknowledged, "but it's an isolated one."

In her time as Victim/Survivor Assistance Coordinator, she has met with 69 individuals. "The pain they still suffer from the abuse they experienced is so very deep," she said. "Many have lived tormented lives, caught up in various forms of substance abuse, estrangement from family, friends and Church, feeling isolated and abandoned."

Sister Ellen, whose primary work is as associate executive director of Catholic Charities, said she feels "privileged to be invited to enter the lives of people who have been hurt. Most are spiritual people."

That the abuse came "from someone who represented God has troubled the victims almost beyond repair," she said, adding that they live "within the crosscurrents" of anger and pain, betrayal and forgiveness, hope and dismay, atone-

ment and denial.

"Given the fact that their abuse is something they will never forget, we hope and pray they can come to forgiveness, healing and wholeness," she said.

"The compassion Bishop DiMarzio showed to the out-of-state family that came back to the Church before Easter was so important to their resolution to return," she said.

Sister Ellen's effectiveness as a diocesan victim/survivor assistance coordinator was recognized two years ago when the Office for Child and Youth Protection of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops named her one of 10 model coordinators in the country.

**Toll-Free Number for Reporting Sexual Abuse**

The Diocese of Brooklyn maintains a toll-free telephone number (888) 634-4499 for reporting allegations of sexual abuse by clergy, employees and volunteers.

## Discover New Network of Catacombs in Rome

ROME (CNS) - Archaeologists repairing a Roman catacomb have discovered an unusual network of underground burial chambers containing the elegantly dressed corpses of more than 1,000 people, a Rome official said.

The rooms appear to date back to the second century and are thought to be a place of early Christian burial. Because of the large number of bodies deposited over a relatively short period, experts believe a natural disaster or epidemic may have occurred at the time.

The corpses, dressed in fine clothes embroidered with gold thread, were carefully wrapped in sheets and covered in lime. Balsamic fragrances were also applied, according to Raffaella Giuliani, chief inspector of the Roman catacombs.

The discovery will be officially presented in June by the Pontifical Roman Academy of Archaeology, which excavated the site in collaboration with Rome's Ecole Francaise and the University of Bordeaux in France.

Giuliani said the chambers were found in 2003, when experts were repairing a cave-in located in the Catacomb of Sts. Peter and Marcellinus.

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