

- I sat for hours the other day trying to write my homily. I couldn't do it. I realized that I have nothing more to say until I address the elephant in the room, Philadelphia. I am blazing angry about that. I can't believe that abusing children is a thing we do in the Church. Worse than that they tolerated it in Philadelphia for 70 years. I am ashamed on my church. I am very angry with those in charge. I want to say, "Get your finger out and do your job. Take responsibility and make the difficult decisions."
- I have always been fascinated by the crowd. Lots of us hide in crowds. Lots of people in the crowd knew what was going on but they said nothing, and I get it. This is not an easy thing to talk about. How do you start a conversation about this? It is hard to be courageous when you know the minute you open your mouth there is no turning back. You know you are going to cause lots of trouble and upset. You wonder will they believe you? Will they punish you for saying anything?
- I remember when I joined the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart I used to look at the priests of my Order. I was so proud to be one of them. These were perfect people. These were Christ like people. These were my role models on how to be a good priest. Some of the were like Indiana Jones working on the missions, others were world class scholars, others were amazing Pastors. I saw them as dedicated, as holy men, as good men. Gradually I started to live with them. I got to know them as people. They began to remind me of my brothers at home. Some of them shocked me at how petty they were, some were very selfish, others very intolerant, angry all the time, more considered themselves to be superior, more very dismissive. I was shocked to discover that they were sinful people just like the rest of us. They were the same as everybody else. In fact I decided that I was a better priest than most of them.
- I hate the way we have all been let down. I feel cheated. You asked me to put my trust in you, and you let me down. Personally, I feel like the legs have been chopped off my priesthood. How can I speak with any kind of moral authority when some of you have begun to think that all priests are pedophiles? I am not stupid. I have seen the looks, I see you step back, the stares from afar. I remember in the 90's, I worked as a high school chaplain in Ireland. The scandal unfolding in Philadelphia right now was unfolding in Ireland at that time. It was an awful time. People was very upset. I took a bunch of our teenagers on retreat. One of the exercises we did was designed to let them talk about the Church. They were all given markers and scissors, colored papers and they had to do a presentation and lay it out on the floor. At the end all the groups presented and then I got to ask questions. One group stood out.

- In the middle of their presentation they put a large garbage bin. Everything in their presentation was covered in brown wrapping paper. I asked them to explain it. They used the same sentence every way they could to emphasize. "The brown paper...this is the shit covering the Church. The Church is covered in shit. There is shit everywhere. Everything is shit." What concerns me right now is that you are more concerned that I said the word shit than what I am talking about. I think it is time we said things the way they are. Let me put it another way. The shit has hit the fan and we are all covered in it. We can't believe what we are seeing. After all our effort to build up the Church this is our reality. We are in shock. I can't believe it. I am so disappointed.
- Those responsible must be brought to account. Being a Bishop is not about wearing flashy Church robes and expensive rings. It is also about making important decisions that affect people's lives for generations. So, dear Bishops, how about less of the enquiry and the committee. How about some honest decision making?
- We can shout and scream all we want. We should. I know some of you will leave the church because of this. I know some of you have been looking for an excuse to leave and now you have found a good one, at last. The bottom line is this, we are all covered in shit. At some point we have to begin to clean it up again. I feel so sorry for the children who were abused. I hope we don't spend too much time feeling sorry for ourselves that we forget to give comfort to the victims. If we proclaim that the Church is loving and compassionate, then how about we start to clean up the Church by being loving and compassionate towards the victims.