

JOAN VENNOCHI

## Who's king of the Hill?

WHO'S THE BOSS?

Obviously, it's early in the game. But the threatened gang of three like-minded Democrats — Governor Deval Patrick, Senate President Robert E. Travaglini and House Speaker Salvatore F. DiMasi — has yet to materialize. Instead, muscle-flexing is the first order of business.

From the Senate, especially Travaglini, it is making it as clear as any 3-year-old that Patrick isn't the boss of him.

Last month, Travaglini publicly stamped his foot and scolded the incoming governor for blaming the Legislature for wasteful spending. In the awkward aftermath, Travaglini said he "misspoke" and apologized. But the Senate president continues to take on Patrick, the first Democrat to win the governor's office since Michael S. Dukakis left office.

On Tuesday, Travaglini unveiled the Constitutional Convention to two quick votes to advance a constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union between a man and a woman. And he did it after Patrick personally lobbied legislators to use "whatever means appropriate" to kill the measure. The Senate president, said to be irritated by Patrick's interference, also voted "yes" to the amendment.

The next day, Travaglini declared tax increases off limits, saying, "Over the last two sessions, there has been no appetite

## Muscle-flexing is the first order of business.

in the Senate to increase taxes. After discussions with my colleagues, I can tell you tax hikes are still off the table going into this new legislative year." Those words were interpreted as a direct message to Patrick; and so were these: "Over the next few weeks and months, the Senate, House, and governor will begin to unveil detailed legislative priorities — and for those who have been paying attention lately, Democrats are never in uniform agreement on anything."

DiMasi is playing it cozier with Patrick. The House speaker voted against advancing the marriage amendment and expressed unhappiness over Travaglini's actions, saying, "I was surprised the vote took place so quickly." DiMasi also backed Patrick's last-minute effort to influence the outcome. Said DiMasi: "I, for one, was very glad he did get involved. He spoke very firmly about his position during the campaign. He was trying to fulfill a campaign promise, a commitment he made to ensure civil rights are not violated."

But DiMasi also warned that new initiatives "must be tempered by the fiscal realities of the day."

The specter of Democrats moving in ideological, tax-hiking lockstep is a standard Republican scare tactic. It worked well when Mitt Romney was running for governor in 2002; his opponent, state treasurer Shannon O'Brien, was clearly part of the Beacon Hill establishment.

But Patrick ran as an outsider, voters accepted him as one, and so, it seems, do legislators. Indeed, House and Senate leaders appear determined to reassert their power. A natural and necessary tension always exists between the executive and legislative branches. In this case, there is even keener motivation. While Republicans controlled the governor's office, Democrats controlled the Legislature and much of the agenda.

Now, Patrick is the big show, and change is a critical element of his agenda. That's scary for the status quo. As Patrick said in his inaugural address, "Change is not always comfortable or convenient or welcome. But it is what we hoped for, what we have worked for and what you voted for and what you shall have."

Patrick also concluded with a call to "rebuild our City on a Hill" and make it shine again — a striking pronouncement that quite possibly makes Travaglini and DiMasi wonder what Patrick thinks they're being doing.

The new governor must avoid too politically deadly alternatives: the so-called Gang of Three approach, which will kill his support with independent voters, or the style that characterized Dukakis's first term as governor. In 1974, Dukakis won election as an anti-establishment reformer. He was tossed out in 1978, a defeat he later blamed on his failure to reach out to legislators and others. He was reelected in 1982, with a renewed commitment to coalition-building.

Dukakis mentored Patrick on the merits of grass-roots campaigning. Hopefully, he also taught him that on Beacon Hill, success has less to do with being the boss and more to do with being the messenger who can get the key political players dancing to the same beat.

**Correction** In my Jan. 4 column, I wrote that 61 legislators voted to advance the amendment to ban gay marriage. In the end, 62 yes votes were cast.

Joan Vennoch's e-mail address is [vennoch@globe.com](mailto:vennoch@globe.com).

SEÁN P. O'MALLEY

## Rebuilding faith, five years on

THE FEAST of the Epiphany makes fully manifest the joy of the Christmas season. With the Magi and the shepherds, we worship and adore the Christ Child, the manifestation of God's love for all humanity. Five years ago, as we marked the feast on Jan. 6, 2002, the devastating revelations that Catholic clergy had sexually abused children shook the Archdiocese of Boston and the wider community. The contrast between the feast, which celebrates the light of Christ, and the dark and unremitting truth of clergy sexual abuse seemed, at first, impossible to accept.

But the truth of the abuse had to be confronted. These crimes against children were all the more heinous because they were committed by men who vowed themselves to emulate Christ, and were further enabled by the failure of the Church leadership to respond appropriately.

God came into the world in the person of Jesus Christ to lift us out of the darkness of sin. Only with the truth of clergy sexual abuse exposed could we again seek to walk fully in His light.

The Catholic community has worked diligently in recent years to put in place programs and policies to ensure the safety of children. We must, and will, continue our vigilance and improve on these efforts. Nothing less is acceptable. Our responsibility to children and families is paramount. It is our hope and

prayer that such protections will be in place in all settings in society where children depend upon the care of adults.

On my own behalf and on behalf of the good and faithful men, women, clergy, and religious of our archdiocese, I again express my most heartfelt apology to all the children and young people, most now adults, who were abused by priests or other representatives of the Church. Your wounded hearts and shattered spirits have a special claim on the

## There is much yet to be done to regain confidence and trust.

Church, the body of Christ. We will forever be sorry for the harm you have suffered and humbly ask your forgiveness.

I also want to say a special word to the families of those who have been sexually abused. You trusted and loved your priests unconditionally. Tragically, that trust was betrayed. Many of you have extended to me the privilege of meeting with you over these past years. I have seen your broken hearts and tear-filled eyes. I have heard you share agonizing stories about your children, some of whom have even taken their own lives. You will always remain in my heart and mind. And, I pray that you will find consolation in the enduring compassion of the Lord.

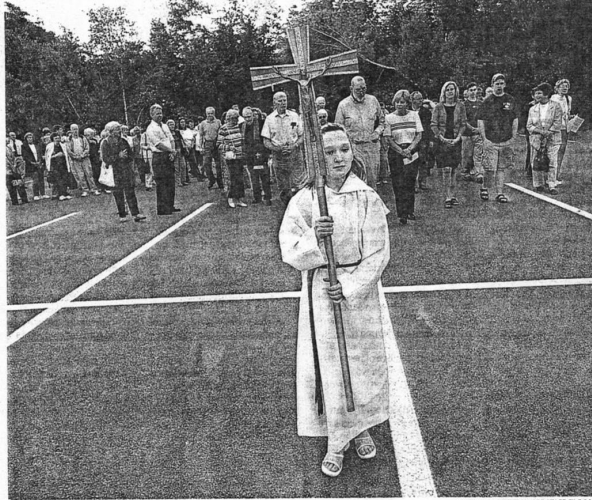
The impact of the clergy sexual abuse

scandal has reached deep into the lives of parishioners and the faith-filled priests who minister to them. They have borne the shame, grief, and confusion of these devastating revelations with heroic faith. For the clergy and parents, in particular, the ability to impart the gift of faith to children has been especially challenging. And, for the broader community, the scandal of clergy sexual abuse has given rise to anger and mistrust.

If there were no hope, we would indeed be despondent. But as we again celebrate the Epiphany, Jesus reminds us that He will be with us always, even in the most difficult moments. The Christ Child, in the arms of Mary, beckons us to draw close to the peace and protection of His holy embrace. In this love the process of healing can both begin and be sustained.

During the course of the past five years, we have learned much due to the generosity of so many who have committed themselves to the rebuilding of the Church. There is much yet to be done to regain confidence and trust. The Feast of the Epiphany reminds us that the Church's mission is to make God's universal love more visible in the manner in which we live out our faith. The star of Bethlehem continues to shine brightly. Together, guided by this light, we will find our way.

Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley is archbishop of Boston.



Altar server Hillary Sussek led a 2002 prayer vigil procession from St. Gerard Majella Church in Canton.

STEVEN KRUEGER

## Unanswered questions linger

JAN. 6, 2002 — the feast of the Epiphany, when the Magi followed a star to the Christ Child — was the day The Boston Globe broke the story about one priest who had sexually abused more than 130 children. More important was the revelation that three cardinals knew his history of sexual abuse and had knowingly transferred him to six different parishes over 34 years.

Unlike the three wise men who broke from Herod after meeting infant Jesus, the three cardinals followed the toxic secrecy of a hierarchical culture that became exposed that day.

It's been five years now, but for too many it has been a lifetime. This happens when your world is turned upside down, particularly your faith — or, in the case of the bishops, a threat to their power and privilege. While we've been told it's "history," the multitudes of those affected by the clergy sexual abuse crisis — from the victims and survivors to lay Catholics and the clergy who serve them, and, yes, even the once-revered leaders of the church, the bishops — still wonder when it really will be history.

With a history that dates back to the fourth century, the modern sexual abuse crisis began to emerge in 1984. However, the Globe article was the seminal story for the upheaval we are in today, with Boston as "ground zero." Like the "shot heard 'round the world" it has had far-reaching, revolutionary consequences — for the church and society — that few could have imagined.

As the headlines spread across the globe, so too did the crisis. More victims came forward — as repressed memories were unlocked or new courage was found. Attorneys general and grand juries became involved. Four dioceses filed bankruptcies. Today, the church continues to downsize. Bishops seek to close vibrant parishes while parishioners fight back. Now laity, along with victims, are seeking justice in courts of civil law. Statute of limitations reform legislation is sweeping the country. Many Catholics are taking responsibility while others are leaving for other faiths or forming new faith communities. Some just feel like they are in limbo — can it be?

At the same time, the institutional church has only responded to what has been forced on them by the court of public opinion

or the legal system. While there has been progress, it has been painfully slow, inconsistent, and too often lacking in the values of social justice and Christian charity. The expressions of sorrow, the prayers, the Masses, have all been said, but they have fallen short for too many victims, many of whom can not bear to end drive by a church. Policies based on an intention of "zero-tolerance" have been implemented to varying degrees but still only 15 dioceses disclose the names of known perpetrators. Today, bishops are attempting to reassert their authority on everything from gay marriage to who can wash liturgical vessels.

Bishops — on the whole — still treat the direct victims as adversaries. The collateral victims, the people in the pews and faithful Catholic clergy, have yet to be meaningfully received at their rightful place at the table of church governance. Across the country, not one bishop has been held accountable for putting children in harm's way. More important, the devastating effects of childhood sexual abuse are still with many of the victims and will be for decades — if not all of their lives.

Too much truth is too disturbing for too many people. No matter how tired of it we are, and even though it no longer dominates the headlines, the clergy sexual abuse crisis is far from history. A question posed in that now historic story still remains unanswered, "Why did it take children out of John Geoghan's reach?"

The history of the crisis is still being written, and it will not be over until we know why it happened. More important, it will not be over until the truth is exposed in every diocese throughout the world; until victims are sought by bishops in the interest of justice; until the responsibilities by Catholics are necessarily taking are welcomed by the institutional church. It will not be over until we take the long journey of healing, through the gates of truth, acknowledgment and accountability. The crisis will not be history unless and until our bishops are asking us to do more than the name of justice and the protection of children than we are asking of them.

Steven Krueger, founding executive director of Voice of the Faithful, is a nonprofit consultant.

JEFF JACOBY

## The debate shifts to the left

THE 110TH Congress convened under new management last week, and in the House of Representatives, Democrats got ready to plow through an ambitious pile of legislation. Among the items on their punch list: increasing the minimum wage to \$7.25 an hour, expanding publicly funded embryonic stem cell research, cutting the interest rate on student loans, and imposing price controls on Medicare prescription drugs.

A more liberal policy agenda isn't all that will be moving into the spotlight. There will be a heightened focus on liberal arguments as well — which means we'll be hearing more about good intentions and less about good results. Political discourse will dwell even more on what it already does on "fairness" and "compassion" and "unmet needs" — and even less on factual evidence and the historical record.

The minimum-wage issue illustrates the pattern. Proponents of this quintessentially liberal prescription emphasize the difficulties faced by those trying to make a living and support a family while working a minimum-wage job. They point out how inflation has eroded the value of the wage. They contrast the soaring paychecks of CEOs at the top of the economic ladder with the pittance earned by those at the bottom. They frame the question as one of decency and sympathy: Don't you want to help the working poor?

"In the last nine years, Congress has voted itself seven pay increases," says Senator Edward M. Kennedy. "If a pay raise is important enough for members of Congress, then it is essential for the lowest-paid workers in this country."

Opponents, by contrast, point to data and economics. They note, for example, that most minimum-wage workers are neither poor nor family breadwinners, but singles in their teens or early 20s, often students working part-time while living with Mom and Dad. They argue that while a minimum-wage increase helps some people, it hurts others: If the cost of employing low-skill workers goes up, fewer low-skill workers will be employed. They invoke history, which shows that jobs are destroyed by minimum-wage hikes.

"The enactment of the first federal minimum wage law in 1933," writes economist Thomas Sowell, "raised the average wage rate in the Southern textile industry by 70 percent — and half a million black nationwide lost their jobs."

What is true of the minimum-wage debate is true of so many others. Affirmative action, sex education, energy policy, family law, criminal procedure — on issue after issue, people on the left are more likely to stress virtuous motives, while people on the right accentuate real-world outcomes.

Should income-tax rates be cut? Liberals say no, repelled by the apparent selfishness of enriching the well-to-do, when it is the poor who need more money. Conservatives say yes, knowing that tax relief spurs economic growth from which everyone benefits. Is bilingual education desirable? Yes, argues the left, concerned about the self-esteem of non-English-speaking children. No, insists the right, recognizing that children master English more quickly when they aren't stunted out into linguistic ghettos. Time and again, the pattern is clear: Liberals are galvanized by idealistic motives; conservatives find reality more persuasive.

This helps explain why the left is so often infatuated with the idea of its own benevolence — and why liberals are so quick to accuse their opponents of being not just wrong, but wicked.

Asked about political bias in the news media, UP's Helen Thomas once replied: "A liberal bias? I don't know what a liberal bias is. Do you mean we care about the poor, the sick, and the maimed? Do we care whether people are being shot every day on the streets of America? If that's liberal, so be it. I think it's everything that's good in life — that we do care."

And if liberals care, nonliberals must not care. "You have rolled back health and safety and environmental measures," Thomas scolded President Bush in 2001. "This has been widely interpreted as a payback time to your corporate donors. Are they more important than the American people's health and safety?"

Obviously these are only generalizations. Republicans are not always immune to the self-justifying halo of a policy's noble goals. Democrats are not always blind to outcomes. Just look, some might say, at the Republican-led war in Iraq. And there are certainly cynics in both camps who are more interested in power and self-aggrandizement than anything else.

But as a broad rule, intentions are the currency of the left, while results matter most to the right. That is why Bill Clinton could feel our pain, while Ronald Reagan insisted that facts were stubborn things.

Jeff Jacoby's e-mail address is [jacoby@globe.com](mailto:jacoby@globe.com).