

get it corrected. There are priests that can be corrected and others that cannot. And, unfortunately, some do not even pose the issue to their bishop.

SKORKA: What do you mean by "corrected"?

BERGOGLIO: That they would do penance, that they would maintain their celibacy. The double life does not do us any good, I do not like it; it means sustaining deceit. Sometimes I tell them: "If you cannot deal with it, then make up your mind."

SKORKA: I would like to make a distinction between a priest who falls in love with a woman and confesses, and pedophilia, which is something completely different. It is a very serious problem that needs to be rooted out completely. It is another story if it is just two adults having an affair or falling in love with each other.

BERGOGLIO: Yes, but they need to correct the situation concerning pedophilia. We can rule out that celibacy carries pedophilia as a consequence. More than 70 percent of the cases of pedophilia occur in the family and in the neighborhood: grandparents, uncles, stepparents, neighbors. The problem is not linked to celibacy. If a priest is a pedophile, he is a pedophile before he is a priest. Now, when this happens, you can never turn a blind eye. You cannot be in a position of power and destroy the life of another person. In my diocese it never happened to me, but a bishop called me once by phone to ask me what to do in a situation like this and I told him to take away the priest's facul-

ties, not to permit him to exercise his priestly ministry again, and to initiate a canonical trial in the tribunal that corresponds to that diocese. For me, that is the attitude to have; I do not believe in the positions that some hold about sustaining a certain corporate spirit so as to avoid damaging the image of the institution. That solution, I believe, was proposed at some point in the United States: to move priests from one parish to another. That is stupid because, in that way, the priest carries his baggage with him. The corporate reaction carries such a consequence, and because of that I do not believe in these ways out. Recently, in Ireland, they uncovered cases that occurred for twenty years, and the current pope clearly said: "Zero tolerance with this crime." I admire the courage and the straightforwardness of Benedict XVI on this point.

SKORKA: In Judaism we do not have the type of religious hierarchy that the Church does. Therefore, each congregation is on their own to monitor their religious leaders. There is an aphorism in Talmudic literature³⁵ that says, "Respect everyone, and suspect them as well." Every man has to struggle with his feelings and can make mistakes; therefore, congregations have to have some kind of control mechanisms in place where the rabbis keep watch over their disciples, and vice versa. When a rabbi is found to have behaved incorrectly, he should be removed from his

³⁵ Derech Eretz Rabba 5

Bergoglio: Que hagan penitencia, que guarden su celibato. La doble vida no nos hace bien, no me gusta, significa sustanciar la falsedad. A veces les digo: "Si no lo podés sobrellevar, decidite".

Skorka: Me gustaría aclarar que una cosa es el cura que se enamoró de una chica y se confiesa, y otra muy distinta son los casos de pedofilia. Eso hay que cortarlo de cuajo, es muy grave. En tanto dos personas adultas tengan un amorío, que se amen, es otra cosa.

Bergoglio: Sí, pero que se corrijan. Que el celibato traiga como consecuencia la pedofilia está descartado. Más del setenta por ciento de los casos de pedofilia se da en el entorno familiar y vecinal: abuelos, tíos, padrastros, vecinos. El problema no está vinculado con el celibato. Si un cura es pedófilo, lo es antes de ser cura. Ahora, cuando eso ocurre, jamás hay que hacer la vista gorda. No se puede estar dentro de una posición de poder y destruirle la vida a otra persona. En la diócesis nunca me pasó, pero un obispo me llamó una vez por teléfono para preguntarme qué había que hacer en una situación así y le dije que le quitara las licencias, que no le permitiera ejercer más el sacerdocio, y que iniciara un juicio canónico en el tribunal correspondiente a esa diócesis. Para mí, ésa es la actitud a tomar, no creo en las posiciones que plantean sostener cierto espíritu corporativo para evitar dañar la imagen de la institución. Esa solución creo que se propuso alguna vez en los Estados Unidos: cambiar a los curas de parroquia. Eso es una estupidez porque, de esa manera, el cura se lleva el problema en la mochila. La reacción corporativa lleva a tal consecuencia, por eso no acuerdo con esas salidas. Recientemente, en Irlanda se destaparon casos que llevaban como veinte años, y el Papa actual dijo claramente: "Tolerancia cero con ese crimen". Admiro la valentía y la rectitud de Benedicto XVI en este asunto.