

**CASE STUDY**  
**CLIVE CHARLES LYNN**  
(1933- )

**DIOCESAN PRIEST**

Active in these dioceses:  
*Santa Fe, New Mexico*  
*Great Britain*



STATUS: SUSPENDED  
LOCATION: UNKNOWN

Irish-born Clive Lynn, specialist in youth work, ingratiated himself to those who missed devotionalist Catholicism, but alienated priests, laity, and bishops by his thefts, breaking of the seal of confession, assaults, and abuse. Archbishop Sanchez of Santa Fe put up with Lynn's increasingly bizarre behavior until Lynn's sexual abuse of boys attracted the attention of the police. Sanchez exiled Lynn from Santa Fe, and Lynn tried to make a new career as a teacher in Great Britain and a hanger-on of Opus Dei.



**Leon J. Podles**

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Although he was born in Dublin, Ireland in 1933, Clive Charles Lynn, armed with his “diploma in youth leadership,”<sup>1</sup> tried to begin his clerical career in the diocese of Aberdeen, Scotland. While in the seminary there Lynn taught at the St. Michael’s College for Boys in Alford. Then he went to the diocese of Paisley, Scotland. There he was dismissed from the seminary, but Bishop James Black of Paisley in 1968 assured Bishop Louis Reicher of Austin, Texas, that though Lynn had had a “chequered career” (not explained), there was “nothing of any serious nature detrimental to his character in matters of faith or morals or discipline” and Lynn was simply “a victim of circumstances.”<sup>2</sup> Although the Rector of the seminary had determined that Lynn was “not a fit candidate for the priesthood,” Black thought that Lynn had a “zealous nature” and “may well prove to be a worthy priest.”<sup>3</sup> Black did not explain the nature of Lynn’s problems, and with this vague recommendation Bishop Reicher accepted Lynn into the diocese of Austin, Texas, in 1968.

Soon Reicher decided that “he will not ordain him [Lynn] for this diocese.”<sup>4</sup> Lynn had worked as a deacon under five priests and had personality clashes with all of them. The complaints were all “very small ones” such as borrowing an alarm clock without permission, but plainly Lynn got on peoples’ nerves. He had “a mind of his own” and in short time has “acquired an uncommon number of unfriendly priests.”<sup>5</sup> However, Lynn was very active in “catechetical and C.Y.O. groups” and was “very popular with the people, especially the youth.” One pastor thought that perhaps priests were “jealous” of Lynn as “he does seem to take the limelight away from the pastor.”<sup>6</sup> This pastor recommended to Archbishop James Davis of Santa Fe that he took Lynn into his diocese. Davis did, and ordained Lynn in February 1969, despite being warned that Lynn had “his idiosyncrasies.”<sup>7</sup>

In 1968 Davis had appointed Lynn as deacon at the Holy Ghost parish in Albuquerque: and informed him that “it is expected that you will take special interest in the youth.”<sup>8</sup> It is natural that younger priests work with younger parishioners, but Davis’s words were ominous in light of the nature of Lynn’s “interest” in youth. Parishioners thanked Davis for Lynn and his “freshness, cheerfulness, and love of God.”<sup>9</sup> When he became pastor of Santa Rita the parishioners there were not as pleased. A parishioner at Santa Rita in Carrizozo, New Mexico wrote to Lynn that “after your performance before the congregation Saturday night, along with your obvious lack of Self-disciple, common courtesy and gross immaturity, I felt that I could never return to church in Capitan as long as you are the pastor.” Lynn had had a “childish tantrum.” He had also removed items from the Lincoln San Juan Church, but “only those which are of any value.”<sup>10</sup> The letter does not detail the nature of the tantrum. Other parishioners also complained.

Lynn’s letters were usually several pages, typed, single-spaced, with a liberal use of CAPITALS and underlining and exclamation points!!! In those pre-computer days he could not also use different fonts for emphasis. Lynn blamed “a few vociferous and mostly non or un-concerned Catholics”<sup>11</sup> as the source of complaints. Davis decided to move him to another parish.

In January 1973 Lynn asked for the church of San Felipe “since I am a former teacher and progressive Youth Leader... I could be of help in the large parish school there,”<sup>12</sup> a school full of boys. Instead Davis gave Lynn “an indefinite leave of absence” and warned him that he would get his salary only “after you turn over the parish of St. Rita, Carrizozo, to your successor.”<sup>13</sup> Davis admonished Lynn that “your difficulties with adults to date lead me to believe that you need to realize that we do not live in a world where everything and everyone is to our liking just because we have been ordained priests.”<sup>14</sup> Davis had been warned, and Lynn was living up to his reputation.

In September 1973 Davis appointed Lynn as assistant pastor of St. Joseph’s in Raton. Lynn responded that “the Raton appointment was impossible” and that he wanted to be co-pastor of St. Therese church with the Rev. A. Moore and the Rev. Elmer Niemeyer.<sup>15</sup> Davis at first sent a letter agreeing to this,<sup>16</sup> but immediately changed his mind and said there was “no assignment.”<sup>17</sup> Lynn insisted he wanted to be at St. Therese. Davis’s response was to forbid Lynn “to celebrate Mass publicly until further notice” until Lynn obeyed the Archbishop.<sup>18</sup>

Suddenly parishioners at St. Therese (Lynn insisted that their action was spontaneous) demanded that Lynn be assigned there, because he had “organized a wide variety of services for youthful parishioners”; “the most vocal supporters of the priest were a group of boys who told the *Journal* that Fr. Lynn had organized ‘all kinds’ of activities for them.”<sup>19</sup> He had indeed, and Archbishop Davis may have been having doubts about what those “activities” included. Davis wanted to assign Lynn to Nazareth Sanitarium. In February 1974 Davis explained to the Personnel Board that

If Father Lynn refuses to accept professional assistance, I recommend a leave of absence and a petition to the Holy See that he be returned to the lay state. It has become evident that he finds the priesthood too much of a burden. He seeks escape through identification with children. The parents are happy to turn the children over to him. The results are not good.<sup>20</sup>

Davis did not explain whether he knew anything specific or whether he just had a bad feeling about all this, but how “not good” the results were would become all too clear under the next archbishop.

Lynn agreed to see a doctor, and Bishop Davis on February 14, 1974, invited Lynn “to live at my house.”<sup>21</sup> But on the same day, February 14, Davis again wrote Lynn directing him “to take up residence at Pius XII Villa” and if he failed to do so, “as of March 1, 1974, I shall not be responsible for anything you may do or wish to do unless you avail yourself of this opportunity. Neither will the Archdiocese continue to provide any salary, housing or other assistance.”<sup>22</sup> Davis must have learned something immediately after writing the first letter. On February 15, Davis again wrote Lynn and invited him “to take up residence in my home.”<sup>23</sup> On the same day Davis wrote the Rev. Ted Hunt, pastor of St. Therese church, “to change any and all locks...to prevent access...to father Clive Lynn.”<sup>24</sup> On February 17, Davis told Lynn “you are no longer welcome to take up residence in my home” and “you do not have faculties.” Davis again directed Lynn to reside at Pius XII Villa.<sup>25</sup>

Lynn organized a protest and said he might leave Santa Fe until Davis retired.<sup>26</sup> The archdiocese sued Lynn and asked the district court “to order the sheriff to remove Father Clive from St. Therese parish.”<sup>27</sup> Lynn hired a lawyer and protested his treatment. But Lynn was saved when Davis resigned in June 1974 and Robert Sanchez succeeded him as Archbishop of Santa Fe. Sanchez soon appointed Lynn as administrator of St. Anthony, and in 1976 made him pastor of St. Gertrude, indicating that “the youth of the Mora Valley will especially welcome your sincere desire to work with them.”<sup>28</sup> The dean of that area was the Rev. Sabine Griego, a sexual abuser.<sup>29</sup> Sanchez may even then have had an inkling of what that “work” with youth would involve.

Lynn had left the finances of St. Anthony in disarray. Unpaid bills had piled up.<sup>30</sup> By November 1977 some of the parishioners had had enough of Lynn, and asked for his replacement because of unspecified “sore grievances.” Lynn had his critics that they were “stupid and possessed by the Devil.”<sup>31</sup> This is not the last appearance the Devil will make in the history of Clive Lynn. Sanchez wrote the parishioners that he would discuss the matter with the personnel board.<sup>32</sup> Nothing happened.

A mysterious Father Bede appeared at St. Gertrude’s and the Vice Chancellor of the archdiocese wrote to Lynn, asking who the hell Father Bede was (expressed somewhat more politely, but with a strong note of exasperation).<sup>33</sup>

His parish critics, whom Lynn called “the militant few,”<sup>34</sup> kept writing Sanchez but with no specifics. But in August 1980 Brother Thomas R. Coleman wrote to Sanchez about Lynn. Lynn had frequently broken the seal of confession.

Father Lynn had told me the confessions of the children and teens and adults. He has told me their sins, mostly sexual ones and told me who did what. He has even mentioned them from the pulpit. In the case of one young man he called his mother to tell her of his confessed sins.<sup>35</sup>

Breaking the seal of confession leads to automatic (*latae sententiae*) excommunication and is a sin from which only the Pope can absolve.<sup>36</sup> Catholics are told that no priest would ever break the seal, that priest would prefer to die rather than break the seal.<sup>37</sup> Lynn was breaking it publicly and repeatedly and suffered no consequences. There was worse. Coleman continued

I am also greatly concerned about how Clive is not handling his sexual orientation. I do not care if a man is homosexual or heterosexual. It depends on what he does with it. Let me say that he has made advances to me and other boys, and this is a terrible scandal.<sup>38</sup>

Sanchez did nothing; Sanchez was sexually involved with numerous young women, and turned a blind eye to his priests’ sins.<sup>39</sup>

Lynn was acting and more erratic. He locked the fire doors of the church during services. The Fire Marshall’s office warned him not to do it<sup>40</sup> and Lynn did it again.<sup>41</sup> The Chancellor was anxious. If people were killed in a fire “the archdiocese could in no manner survive the financial loss that claims would produce in local courts.”<sup>42</sup> The loss of children’s innocence did not concern the archdiocese of Santa Fe; however the potential loss of money was another matter entirely.

In June, 1981, Kathleen Atkinson, who had been the Co-ordinator of Rape and Suicide Care Services at the Bridge Crisis Center in Las Vegas, New Mexico, and who had consulted with Roberto Chene of Catholic Social Services, wrote to Sanchez about “the behavior of Clive Lynn,” and indicated that she knew Sanchez was already “aware of it.” She was writing because of

my knowledge of the long-term, damaging effects of adults acting out their sexual distress on young people. In any private individual, such actions are inappropriate. Because of Father Lynn’s position as the Church’s example, arbiter and instructor of moral values for all young people in this parish, the problem is immeasurably compounded.<sup>43</sup>

Sanchez responded that the letter would be “discussed by the proper persons.” Sanchez’s action was to transfer Lynn from St. Gertrude’s to St. Joseph’s in Raton, with its “young and growing families,” that is, with lots of children. By this time Sanchez knew what Lynn was doing, and this phrase conceals a hidden leer.

An unsigned report of February 9, 1982 indicated that Lynn sometimes appeared to be “intoxicated” and served liquor to “parents and children.” Lynn spied on people, peeking around doors and buildings, peering into parked cars with a flashlight,” used “altar to report to congregation what certain named individuals did at such and such a place sinwise.” Stories of Lynn’s sexual behavior were also circulating:

Possible HomoSexual tendency

An active church participant (A) informed another boy (B) that Father Lynn had made sexual advances toward him (A), touching his sexual organs. The boy (A) reported to boy (B) that he had grabbed a pencil in self defense and warned the priest not to bother him. Boy (A) apparently told his parents and he quit attending church activity.<sup>44</sup>

Sanchez at this point left Lynn at St. Joseph’s parish but directed him to see a psychiatrist and “under no condition” to return to St. Gertrude’s.<sup>45</sup>

About the same time a group of priests met to discuss the Lynn problem and asked Sanchez to act. The Rev. Mike O’Brien had been “hurt by a fellow priest,” that is, by Lynn. The priests pointed out “the consistently erratic behavior of Fr. Clive C. Lynn for the past twelve years and the lack of affirmative action on the part of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe to deal with his erratic behavior.” The priests recommended

First, Fr. Lynn be issued Canonical warnings by yourself warning him about violations of the confessional seal, mismanagement of Church funds and properties, assaults on a priest, etc. If these warnings are not heeded, we recommend that Fr. Lynn have his faculties suspended by the Archdiocese.

Secondly and more importantly, we recommend that Fr. Lynn receive residential psychiatric and/or psychological care at an institution dedicated to the care of priests, for example, Via Coeli or Affirmation House.<sup>46</sup>

Among the signatories was the Rev. Robert Lee Martinez.

Lynn got wind of the meeting and wrote a bitter letter to Martinez, who forwarded it to Sanchez. The parishioners continued to complain to Sanchez about Lynn, mostly about petty things, but the small problems proved that Lynn had a problem with “his

temper.”<sup>47</sup> Lynn heard about the complaints, and told one woman who was writing to Sanchez that the complaints were “the work of the devil.” Lynn continued to be zealous for the Catholic Faith. He preached that those who attended “non-Catholic weddings” were committing a mortal sin, and even giving a gift at such a wedding is a mortal sin.<sup>48</sup> Another parishioner wrote about the “intimidation” techniques that Lynn used in his sermons, and decided that Lynn was “a very sick man’ especially because

Fr. Lynn is very attracted to young boys. He is always finding ways to keep their interests. He is always taking them on trips out of town, buying them tapes, watches, and even money.

He is attracted to certain types of boys, usually quiet, troubled, and very naïve boys. They are usually from troubled homes or with very lenient parents.

These boys are always attracted to all these goodies they can receive. They are always so innocent.

There are many people questioning these things. They are wondering if there is more to these generositys.<sup>49</sup>

Sanchez knew quite well there was considerably more to these generositys. There was also the question of the source of the money Lynn used to take trips and buy gifts.

A parishioner wrote to Sanchez about “the very deceiving Father Lynn.” Lynn took \$3,821.71 out of a bank account for which he had no right to sign. He had taken \$2,600 without authorization from the bingo account.<sup>50</sup> Sanchez did nothing.

A woman wrote to Sanchez about “the allegations made concerning Father Lynn’s behavior regarding young men serving with him in the church.” The writer feels “uncomfortable.” Lynn had heard the rumors (which were true, as Sanchez knew), and confronted the writer at her workplace calling her a “wicked, malicious and a dangerous woman,” He threatened to mention her in his sermon as a “malicious gossip” and said that he was consulting a lawyer. The writer was convened that if the allegations were true, it would be “traumatic for the young boys involved.”<sup>51</sup>

The allegations were true. Another wrote that Lynn had slept with her son on a trip to Albuquerque. The boy initially denied that Lynn had made “sexual advances,” but when questioned by his mother, “he looks at me as if he is afraid to tell me, and he can’t bring himself to do it.”<sup>52</sup> Later when her son went to confession to Lynn in the sacristy at St. Joseph’s church,

He got [Victim A] and gave him the tickle torture and got him on the upper thigh so hard that it hurt, John asked Father Lynn to stop it and he wouldn’t say he wouldn’t. When [Victim A] came home he told me about it and I told [Victim A] not to be alone with Father John ever again.<sup>53</sup>

The mother said when was going to counseling and had turned the matter over to Social Services. The mother begged Sanchez to act.

The Colfax County Social Services investigated the complaint of sexual abuse and in December 1984 “have substantiated that complaint and incidents involving four other children.”

All five children have stated that they have been ‘tickle tortured’ for an extended period of time (three to ten minutes). Tickle torture involves Father tickling the child all over the body – including genitals and buttocks, and the Father holds the child so he cannot get away.

One child involved states that Father Lynn frequently tried to touch his genitals, but the child would pull away. Two of the children stated that father put money in their pockets and touched their genitals.

The children interviewed range in age from eleven years to seventeen years of age.

Such incidents, as might be expected, were “very disturbing to the children involved,” and Social Services hoped “some action will be taken to stop further molestation of children in our community.”<sup>54</sup>

As required by New Mexico law, Social Services turned the reports over to the District Attorney. But “the District Attorney has declined to prosecute, citing that “this is a church matter.” Lynn was protected by the clericalism that the laity and government officials shared: “The District Attorney has refused to intervene and the children’s parents have stated that they do not wish to independently file charges against Father Lynn because he is a priest.” Social Services felt stymied, appealed to Sanchez for “any assistance you can provide in protecting the children.”<sup>55</sup> Sanchez was in no hurry to protect children.

In April 1985 the mother of the molested boy asked who no action has been taken,” “what is the reason for the length of time that this matter is taking and why we have not been advised as to the status of the investigation.” The mother pleaded with Sanchez for the information because “our faith is at stake.” She concluded the letter: “WE PLACE OUR FAITH AND LIFE IN YOUR HANDS AS A MAN SERVING OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.”<sup>56</sup> Sanchez’s response was to transfer Lynn and send him for psychological testing, and responded to the mother that she has received no information because “these conversations and discussions to be of a most delicate and confidential nature.” They were delicate and confidential because they concerned protecting Lynn from the criminal justice system to avoid embarrassment to Sanchez and possible revelation of his own violations of celibacy. The parents of the molested boys were not satisfied and wrote to Sanchez that “we do not believe that you share our concern and our anxiety with this traumatic situation.” They noted the “cloud of secrecy” that had descended over the case, and observed that “nothing has happened’ and therefore they did “not believe that you, nor the other agencies mentioned, are doing your best to “alleviate the situation.” They correctly concluded that the delicacy and confidentiality were designed “to protect, not our children, but the clergy and the church.”<sup>57</sup> The parents threatened to go public. Sanchez handled their complaints by refusing to accept certified mail from the parents.<sup>58</sup>

Sanchez thought that he had gotten Lynn out of town, but Lynn kept showing up in Raton. The parents of the abused boys wrote to Sanchez “with continued despair.” His appearance in Raton was deeply disturbing to his victims. The parents knew that Lynn has been transferred again and again because of his “‘suspect’ behavior,” and want

something definitive done. The parents have begun to doubt the good faith of the clergy: “our confidence and belief in the clergy has been visibly shaken. We do not question the guiding principles of Holy Mother Church. We question some practices of these who minister the doctrine.” The children have been left without counseling or treatment, and “the situation is very grave. The parents asked “What must we do to convince the powers that be that something must be done so that there may be justice and compassion?”<sup>59</sup> If they were looking to Sanchez for justice and compassion they were making a serious mistake.

When Sanchez was later questioned who it took him a year to remove Lynn from Raton, even after getting specific allegations from parents, Sanchez replied:

“Why the time went on and removal from the parish did not occur at that time, I don’t have any particular explanation.”<sup>60</sup>

Sanchez also made no effort to locate victims to offer them help. Sanchez was asked:

*Attorney:* “After you were convinced that Father Lynn had sexually molested boys in Raton, did you make any efforts to communicate with the people in the prior parishes he had served, either Mora or St. Therese, to find out whether any boys had been molested by him there?”

*Sanchez:* No sir, I did not.

*Attorney:* And did you not feel the responsibility as Archbishop to make such an inquiry and thereby help these children if they existed?

*Sanchez:* Making an inquiry of that nature simply did not occur to me.”<sup>61</sup>

(snip)

*Attorney:* So was it not within your contemplation in, let’s say, 1986, when you removed Lynn, that people who molest children tend to have molested children before?

*Sanchez:* It did not occur to me. It did not occur to me.”<sup>62</sup>

Thinking about children and protecting children from harm was not high on Sanchez’s list of proprieties.

The situation was indeed very grave. Some of the child victims were deeply disturbed by the abuse. Victim A wrote:

On September 19 [1985], on Thursday, my mother was changing the furniture around the room. It was a little after dark and I was sitting on the couch. The day before, the school took us to the State fair. A year before that, I was taken to the State Fair by Father Clive C. Lynn where he touched my private parts while staying at the East Howard Johnson’s Hotel in Albuquerque....

My mother was changing the furniture, as I said, when she left the room. In the carpet of the living room floor I saw a demonic face looking at me. The face seemed to turn its head from one side to the other but the eyes kept focus on me. I whispered out loud to the face that I hated it. It scared me but I tried to erase it from my mind. That same night, I dreamed that someone had put a toy dog into my room. The Devil animated it and it began to bark at me. I tried to scream, but I was petrified. It wouldn’t let me pass into the kitchen. The dream scared me so bad I had to pray to God for reassurance.



The face in the carpet and the dream happened the night after I came back from the State Fair. I think that the night I spent with Father Lynn a year before caused these things to happen.

Touchingly, the boy still feels some affection for Lynn:

I had the highest regard for him until the night he touched me. Even now, I still miss him: I do not miss Father Lynn the man, I miss Father Lynn the priest. What I want done is to get Father Lynn the psychiatric help he needs, I pray to God that he may stop touching people the way he does. He has still left his mark on me.<sup>63</sup>

Even this victim in some liked Lynn, and among those who were unaware of the abuse Lynn had his admirer and even vehement supporters. He (despite his denials of responsibility) orchestrated support to head off discipline from bishops, but he could always find willing dupes. What did they find in him that was attractive? Sanchez described him as

“somewhat given to what I would call traditional devotions. Much of his own ministry would not be too far removed from pre-Vatican II type of service. Many people do surround him and admire his dedication to those fundamental approaches to faith and devotion, while others refuse to deal with him and go to another Church. In his celebration of the liturgy it seems he is somewhat taken up with externals many candles, lots of incense and altar boys; occupied with many things. He seems to attract the young altar boy in large numbers and had succeeded in organizing CYO groups and large classes of CCD for our youth.”<sup>64</sup>

Lynn could defend orthodoxy with vigor. He condemned the “godless sex education” in the Raton Middle School, “the immodest, biological, amoral forms of the sex education courses.” By contrast, “we actually believe in the Ten Commandments of a God who reveals. Speaking for Catholics, we go further and even believe in the authority of Christ, His Church, and His vicar.”<sup>65</sup>

This traditional, devotionalist Irish Catholicism and his ability to appeal to youth won the approval of many parishioners. This might explain his appeal to some Catholics who cherished the old days of submissive obedience. One person praised him because of the way he celebrated Mass: “the liturgy was solemn and dignified; the singing and chanting of the rest, the participation of the congregation, the arrangement and decoration of the altars all took me back many years.” “He conveys a sense of dignity coupled with a great affection for young people.” The writer had heard one man say “what a difference he had seen in his children” at the parish, how “they no longer talked back to him or his wife and they were far more obedient and respectful.”<sup>66</sup>

At first Sanchez sent Lynn to Colorado Springs, where he studied for a master’s degree in psychology and worked at a school. As he had already received substantiated allegations of abuse, when Sanchez allowed Lynn to study counseling and to teach at a high school, Sanchez appears to have gone beyond carelessness to the verge of being an accessory before the fact to the felony of child abuse.

Sanchez wanted Lynn out of Santa Fe and preferably out of the United States. When the archdiocese later received a call from the chancellor of the diocese of Westminster London about “C. Lynn, who is a problem at a boys’ school” the person who took the call in Santa Fe noted: “better he’s in England than here.”<sup>67</sup>

Sanchez insisted that Lynn go to the House of Affirmation in Whitinsville, Massachusetts. The House of Affirmation was run by the fraudulent Rev. Thomas Kane and hosted a ring of pedophiles. However, there were some real therapists on the staff, because Lynn did not like the evaluation, which he claimed was characterized by “contradictions and sheer nonsensical statements,” “extraordinary incomprehensibility, gross ambiguity, and often enigmatic contradictions.” Lynn called the place “a madhouse,” because he was interviewed by a “non-Catholic and lapsed Catholic chainsmoking” who criticized him for being “clerically dressed,” for going “too often to confession,” and for having “too much religiosity.”<sup>68</sup> Sanchez had sent the House a “totally ruinous letter.” Lynn dug through canon law to find rules that would force Sanchez to reinstate him and blames “Dennis” [Rev. Clay Dennis] for all his problems.

Lynn in March 1986 asked Sanchez for a five-year leave of absence, preferably “with monthly salary” so that Lynn could care for his aged Irish parents.<sup>69</sup> Lynn fully expected Sanchez to grant his faculties so that he could serve as a supply (fill-in) priest and make some money that way

But on April 18, 1986, Father Lynn was suspended from all faculties. Sanchez wrote vaguely of “a consistent pattern of your difficulties” and Lynn’s refusal “to enter into a program of therapy,” but at least Sanchez informed Lynn that “I am revoking with this letter all faculties to exercise public worship.”<sup>70</sup> Lynn’s response was to write to the Rev. Clay Dennis, who criticized Lynn in a newsclip, threatening an action for “scandal and libel in the civil courts”<sup>71</sup> and to write Sanchez that “I have no intention...of permitting certain people to continue blasting my character” and “I simply need legal action to silence such slander.”<sup>72</sup> Some archdiocesan officials saw the truth about Lynn, although their motives for acting against him were not, as we shall see, the highest.

Lynn left the United States. He wrote Sanchez in November 1986 that he had found “a fine teaching post in one of the schools operated by the Church” in Paisley, Scotland, and asked Sanchez for a letter giving him permission to work in another diocese. Without such a letter Lynn might lose his school job, and therefore might have “to return at once for your help and hopeful appointment in the archdiocese.”<sup>73</sup> Sanchez did not give in to this threat. Osgood then showed up in Leeds, England. The bishop there wrote to Sanchez to inquire about Lynn’s status. Sanchez replied that “Father Lynn was suspended from all faculties,” that is, he could not function as a priest. Sanchez also told the truth about Lynn: “social workers had investigated and substantiated allegations of sexual misconduct with children by Fr. Lynn.” Sanchez had ordered Lynn to undergo treatment, and Lynn refused. Sanchez claimed to be “anxious for Fr. Lynn to return.”<sup>74</sup>

Sanchez and Lynn deserved each other. They played a game of ecclesiastical chicken. Sanchez was aware that both Social Services and the District Attorney knew that

Lynn was a sexual abuser; presumably the District Attorney had expected Sanchez to deal with the problem. Sanchez's solution was to get Lynn out of Santa Fe, out of New Mexico, and out of the United States. Lynn wanted a declaration that he was in good standing. Sanchez could not give this because too many people knew of the abuse. Had he consulted an attorney, an attorney might well have warned Sanchez that if he gave a letter testifying to Lynn's good character, and Lynn used this letter to obtain a position in which he abused boys, Sanchez might well be found an accessory before the fact to a felony.

Sanchez therefore dug in his heels and refused to give Lynn a letter saying he was a priest in good standing. Lynn lamented "the cruel injustice my own bp. seems to insist in inflicting upon me," then said that without such a letter he could not get a job in Great Britain, and would have to return to Santa Fe for an assignment. Lynn blamed Archbishop Sanchez's advisors (Clay Dennis, M. O'Brien, Johnny Lee [Sanchez]), and proposed that Archbishop Sanchez give him a letter and that those malicious advisors need never know about it.<sup>75</sup> Archbishop Sanchez did not take the bait.

Sanchez admitted to Bishop Konstant about Lynn that "allegations of sexual misconduct with minors are still existent" and that "future lawsuits in this regard are possible in the civil courts, as well as the possibility of a criminal charge being made." But Sanchez praised Bishop Konstant for his "patience and compassion," and speculated that perhaps Lynn would do better in his own "cultural environment," and wondered "Bishop Konstant, if you have in mind a possible beginning of a process for Father Lynn of incardination into your diocese" Sanchez assured Konstant "If...you are willing to initiate a process toward incardination, I would be ready to excardinate him."<sup>76</sup> Konstant said no: "there is no question of his being incardinated into this diocese."<sup>77</sup> He also informed Sanchez that he had told Lynn "it is essential for him to return to his own diocese as soon as possible in order to clarify face to face with you what his position is."<sup>78</sup> Lynn kept threatening to return to Santa Fe because Sanchez's refusal to give him a letter of recommendation kept Lynn from getting the positions he wanted, especially positions in a Catholic boys' school. Sanchez of course did not want Lynn in the jurisdiction of American courts and police.

On October 12, 1989 the Archdiocese of Santa Fe agreed to pay \$554,000 as settlement of a lawsuit that alleged that Lynn had abused a nine-year-old boy at St. Gertrude's in Mora during 1978 and 1979. The victim's attorney, Anthony Fontana, said that Sanchez "seemed concerned for his client and claimed 'no knowledge of this stuff going on before.'"<sup>79</sup>

Lynn was always threatening to sue people who criticized him. Even after the 1989 settlement of the lawsuit, Lynn had a lawyer attempt to extract a letter from Sanchez testifying to Lynn's status. The lawyer, Thomas R. Orr, in 1990 wrote Sanchez about the "false accusation being circulated by a certain individual in Mora County to the effect that payments allegedly received by him from the Archdiocese are "hush money" relating in some way to Father Lynn. Orr continued that "Father Lynn has not in any way been involved in incidents which would justify making such payments to any person, and

is entitled to your complete cooperation in defending his good name and standing with the Church,” and therefore, “we make demand that he be provided with the letter that he has requested, in the form attached hereto,” or Orr would “take steps.” The letter that Orr insisted Sanchez sign indicated that “Father Lynn is man of virtue and honor” and “Father Lynn has my full blessing to both teach and administer the sacraments with full faculties.”<sup>80</sup>

Sanchez of course refused, and wrote that “Father Lynn’s priestly faculties remain suspended” and that this was “an internal ecclesiastical matter” and therefore would not “fall within the jurisdiction of the civil lawyers or the civil courts.”<sup>81</sup>

To add insult to injury, Lynn somehow convinced Opus Dei in Ireland that he was a good, conservative priest. Therefore, according to a postcard that Lynn sent Sanchez, “I am privileged to concelebrate Mass with the Holy Father at 10 AM tomorrow (17<sup>th</sup>) at the beatification of Josemaria Escriva, a gift I received from Opus Dei in Ireland.” With this stamp of approval, he repeats his request to Sanchez: “Will you please give me a written note re permission to minister”<sup>82</sup> Abusers, when they can, try to associate themselves with some revered figure (the Pope, Mother Angelica, Mother Teresa) in order to establish their bona fides.

Later that year Chancellor Rev. Ron Wolf of Santa Fe wrote to the Apostolic Nuncio in Great Britain that Fr. Clive Lynn “is a known pedophile.” Wolf expressed concern “for the welfare of young persons in your area,”<sup>83</sup> but, of course, if the archdiocese of Santa Fe had turned Lynn over for prosecution, he would not have had the chance to molest anyone else.

The Chancellor, Ron Wolf, in a memo contemplated laicizing Lynn, but realized that canon law put a serious obstacle in the way. Canon law provides that if a delict (a crime) was in part caused by illness, the penalty must be reduced. Perhaps the writers were thinking of organic disease, such as a brain tumor, or of alcoholism. But the concept of disease has been extended to other proclivities, and Wolf notes that “on the case of Clive Lynn he [Rev. Michael Cote, canonical consultant at the Apostolic Nunciature] says it might be difficult to do a canonical process. The concern he brings out is the imputability of the person if pedophilia is indeed an illness.”<sup>84</sup>

Although Wolf had expressed concern for the safety of children in Great Britain, this concern did not find expression in any actions of archdiocesan officials. Sanchez had ignored the 1980 warnings of Brother Thomas Coleman, and had not insisted that the District Attorney prosecute Lynn after Social Services had substantiated numerous allegations. An investigation in 1980 or a prosecution in 1985 would have ended Lynn’s career as a molester, and the implication is strong that Sanchez asked the District Attorney not to prosecute and promised to get Lynn out of New Mexico.

Sanchez wanted Lynn far away, outside of the reach of American law, and preferably outside Sanchez’s responsibility. Sanchez’s personal corruption may have contributed to his carelessness about the safety of children; but other bishops who

apparently were celibate acted the same way. Sanchez did not want bad publicity, and he knew that Rome would not cooperate in defrocking Lynn.

The extraordinary indifference that the Archdiocese of Santa Fe showed toward the safety of children was, alas, not unusual. Priests were protected from the law and given a sense of immunity. Priests know that bishops disliked public confrontations, and Lynn manipulated this dislike. In Santa Fe the personal corruption of Archbishop Robert Sanchez made things worse, but Santa Fe was not extraordinary. Court cases and grand jury investigations showed similar toleration of abuse in Boston, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles.

Lynn's traditionalist Catholicism was probably not simply a mask he used to get sex and money to finance sex. His style of Irish Catholicism emphasized obedience and control, and attracted the type of personality that wanted to control people, to make them into obedient marionettes. Sexual control is the most initiate form of control.

I have also noted the numerous mentions of the devil that recur in the history of Clive Lynn. The devil is the ape of God, and Lynn was the ape of a traditional Irish Catholic priest. Those priests were, whatever their faults of rigidity, often chaste and benevolent. Catholics in New Mexico after Vatican II so thirsted for the old, secure ways that they, or at least some of them, were willing to turn a blind eye to Lynn's erratic behavior and to his unusual interest in boys.

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<sup>1</sup> Curriculum Vitae, Clive Charles Patrick Lynn

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Bishop James Blair to Bishop Louis J. Reichner, March 6, 1968.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Bishop James Blair to Bishop Louis J. Reichner, March 6, 1968.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Rev. John T. Payne to Archbishop James P. Davis, n. d.

<sup>5</sup> Letter from Bishop Louis J. Reicher to Archbishop James P. Davis, January 15, 1969.

<sup>6</sup> Letter from Rev. John T. Payne to Archbishop James P. Davis, n. d.

<sup>7</sup> Letter from Rev. Edward F. Jordan to Rev. Lucien C. Hendren, Chancellor, Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

<sup>8</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Rev. Clive C. Lynn, November 8, 1968.

<sup>9</sup> Letter from Mr. and Mrs. Leon A. Dunn to Archbishop James Peter Davis, November 18, 1968.

<sup>10</sup> Letter from Mrs. Ofelia Salas to Rev C. C. Lynn, February 29, 1972.

<sup>11</sup> Letter from Clive C. Lynn to Archbishop J.P. Davis, October 7, 1972.

<sup>12</sup> Letter from Rev. Clive C. Lynn to Personnel Board, Archdiocese of Santa Fe, January 23, 1973.

<sup>13</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Rev Clive Lynn, March 5, 1973.

<sup>14</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Rev Clive Lynn, March 5, 1973.

<sup>15</sup> Letter from Clive C. to Archbishop Davis, October 19, 1973.

<sup>16</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Rev. Clive Lynn, January 24, 1974.

<sup>17</sup> Letter from Rev. Clive C. Lynn to Archbishop Davis, January 28, 1974.

<sup>18</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Rev. Clive Lynn, February 1, 1974.

<sup>19</sup> Scott Reaven, "Petition Protests Priest's Removal," *Albuquerque Journal*, February 4, 1974.

<sup>20</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Very Rev. Francis X. Eggert, Chairman, Archdiocesan Personnel Board, February 11, 1974.

<sup>21</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Rev. Clive C. Lynn, February 14, 1974.

<sup>22</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Rev. Clive C. Lynn, February 14, 1974.

<sup>23</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Rev. Clive C. Lynn, February 15, 1974.

<sup>24</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Rev. Ted Hunt, February 15, 1974.

<sup>25</sup> Letter from Archbishop James P. Davis to Rev. Clive C. Lynn, February 17, 1974.

<sup>26</sup> "Father Lynn May Leave Diocese," *Albuquerque Journal*, February 18, 1984.

<sup>27</sup> "Archdiocese Sues to Remove Father Lynn," *Albuquerque Journal*, February 20, 1974.

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- <sup>28</sup> Letter from Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez to Rev. Clive Lynn, October 15, 1976.
- <sup>29</sup> Paul Logan and Mike Gallagher, "Sanchez Slow to Examine Accusations," *Albuquerque Journal*, March 20, 1998.
- <sup>30</sup> Letter from Rev. A. Auman to Mr. Joseph Dupuis, Comptroller, July 16, 1977.
- <sup>31</sup> Letter from Miguel Romo to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, November 22, 1977.
- <sup>32</sup> Letter from Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez to Miguel Romo, December 23, 1977.
- <sup>33</sup> Letter from Rev. D. J. Starkey, Vice-Chancellor, to Rev. Clive Lynn, January 3, 1978.
- <sup>34</sup> Letter from Concerned Parishioners of St. Gertrude to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, February 1980.
- <sup>35</sup> Letter from Br. Thomas Coleman to Archbishop Sanchez, August 2, 1980.
- <sup>36</sup> Code of Canon Law, 1388 §1
- <sup>37</sup> John Nepomuk (Nepomocene) was court chaplain of the Emperor Wenceslaus IV of Bohemia in the fourteenth century. He was also confessor to the Empress Jane. Wenceslaus became jealous and tried to force John to reveal what he had learned from the empress in sacramental confession. John refused, and the king ordered him thrown from the Charles Bridge in Prague and drowned.
- <sup>38</sup> Letter from Br. Thomas Coleman to Archbishop Sanchez, August 2, 1980.
- <sup>39</sup> Paul Logan and Mike Gallagher, "Sanchez Slow to Examine Accusations," *Albuquerque Journal*, March 20, 1998.
- <sup>40</sup> Letter from Fire Marshall's Office, Santa Fe, to Rev. Clive Lynn, January 20, 1981.
- <sup>41</sup> Letter from Ralph B. Garrity, Fire Services Chief, to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, February 26, 1981.
- <sup>42</sup> Rev. D. J. Starkey, Chancellor, to Rev. Clive Lynn, March 5, 1981.
- <sup>43</sup> Letter from Kathleen C. Atkinson to Archbishop Robert Sanchez, June 29, 1981.
- <sup>44</sup> Re: Father Clyde Lynn, November 9, 1982.
- <sup>45</sup> Letter from Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez to Rev. Clive Lynn, March 19, 1982.
- <sup>46</sup> Letter from Rev. Vidal Martinez et al to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, March 29, 1982
- <sup>47</sup> Letter from Mrs. Eliza Romero to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, September 10, 1982.
- <sup>48</sup> Letter from Mrs. Andrew R. Valdez to Archbishop Sanchez, June 23, 1983.
- <sup>49</sup> Letter from A very concerned Parishioner of St. Joseph Parish in Raton, N. M. to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, October 6, 1984.
- <sup>50</sup> Letter from Joe Sanchez to Archbishop Robert Sanchez, October 24, 1984.
- <sup>51</sup> Letter of Isabel Gonzales to Archbishop Robert Sanchez, November 7, 1984.
- <sup>52</sup> Letter from [-----] to Archbishop Sanchez, November 14, 1984.
- <sup>53</sup> Letter from [-----], first page with addressee and date missing.
- <sup>54</sup> Letter from Jean Clark, Supervisor, to Rev. Johnny Lee Chavez [Dean of the Personnel Board], December 21, 1984.
- <sup>55</sup> Letter from Juan R. Vigil, Secretary, Human Services Department, to Archbishop Roberto Sanchez, February 28, 1985.
- <sup>56</sup> Letter of [-----] to Archbishop Robert Sanchez, April 30, 1985.
- <sup>57</sup> Letter of [-----] to Archbishop Robert F Sanchez, May 13, 1985.
- <sup>58</sup> Letter of [-----] to Archbishop Robert Sanchez, June 13, 1985: "We question why a personal letter to you, which was certified, return receipt requested, with restricted delivery, was returned to us.... Is someone keeping information / correspondence from you, or did you not want to hear of our concerns?"
- <sup>59</sup> Letter of [-----] to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, December 1, 1985.
- <sup>60</sup> Deposition of Robert Sanchez, p. 309, ll. 8-10.
- <sup>61</sup> Deposition of Robert Sanchez, p. 311, 23 – p. 312, l .8.
- <sup>62</sup> Deposition of Robert Sanchez, p. 313, ll. 13-16.
- <sup>63</sup> Testimony of Victim A, dated November 10, 1985, enclosed with letter of note 59.
- <sup>64</sup> Letter from Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez to Richard J. Gilmartin, Director, House of Affirmation, Whitinsville, Mass., August 21, 1985.
- <sup>65</sup> Letter to the Editor, "Dangerous Sex," n. d.
- <sup>66</sup> Letter from Mrs., Melinda F. Whitney to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, November 19, 1984.
- <sup>67</sup> Note dated October 26 (no year).
- <sup>68</sup> Letter from Clive Lynn to Archbishop [Sanchez], November 1, 1985.
- <sup>69</sup> Letter from Clive Lynn to Archbishop [Sanchez], March 12, 1986.
- <sup>70</sup> Letter of Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez to Rev. Clive Lynn, April 18, 1986.
- <sup>71</sup> Letter from Clive Lynn to Clay [Dennis], March 23, 1986.

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<sup>72</sup> Letter from Clive Lynn to Archbishop Sanchez, April 29, 1986.

<sup>73</sup> Letter from Clive Lynn to Archbishop Sanchez, November 20, 1986.

<sup>74</sup> Letter from Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez to Bishop David Konstant of Leeds, England, January 13, 1987.

<sup>75</sup> Letter from Clive Lynn to Archbishop Sanchez, July 6, 1987.

<sup>76</sup> Letter from Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez to Bishop David Konstant, December 3, 1987.

<sup>77</sup> Letter from Bishop David Konstant to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, January 4, 1988.

<sup>78</sup> Letter from Bishop David Konstant to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, March 7, 1988.

<sup>79</sup> "Archdiocese Attorney Says He Opposed Settlement Secrecy," *New Mexican*, March 31, 1993.

<sup>80</sup> Letter from Thomas R. Orr to Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, July 19, 1990.

<sup>81</sup> Letter from Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez to Thomas R. Orr, July 30, 1990.

<sup>82</sup> Postcard from Rev. Clive Lynn to Archbishop Robert Sanchez, May 16, 1992.

<sup>83</sup> Letter from Rev. Ron Wolf to Bishop Barbarito Luigi, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio to Great Britain, July 28, 1993. Wolf sent an identical letter to Msgr. Gerada Emanuela, Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland, August 25, 1993.

<sup>84</sup> Memorandum from Rev. Manuel Viera, Judicial Vicar to Rev. Ron Wolf, Chancellor, November 12, 1992.