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Looking is not the same as finding.

By Paul V. Montesino, PhD, MBA.

I've always been fond of country music. In Cuba it was the "punto guajiro", where singers form themselves into teams and improvise their lines ingeniously. They sing, or chant, an unvarying melody, with intervals between stanzas to give the singers time to prepare the next verse. It is very creative and competitive. Sometimes the lyrics evolve into fistfights.

In the United States the term *country music* is used today to describe many styles and subgenres. "The origins of country music are the folk music of working class Americans, who blended popular songs, Irish and Celtic fiddle tunes, traditional English ballads, cowboy songs, and various musical traditions from European immigrants" (Wikipedia). I find many similarities between country music and "punto guajiros," but that is me. Both, the Cuban version and the American style give you a sense of the land, our land.

There was a popular country music score many years ago that was entitled "*Looking for Love in all the Wrong Places*". That title, for some unknown reasons, came to mind recently when I read the Pennsylvania grand jury report about the Catholic Church multi-year conspiracy to keep the abuse of thousands of children by hundreds of priests under wrap. The authorities had found many of those abuses in the wrong places, churches and chancelleries.

I am not trying to make a light irresponsible commentary about that tragedy with the title of a song. My use is not about the sickening practice by religious men who tried to violate the sanctity of the lives of so many young boys and girls to satiate their disgusting appetites. I use it because it describes us when we try to find godly love amongst what is obviously human weakness, not divine nature.

The institutional failure of the Church in Pennsylvania, as it has been documented elsewhere, was not a surprising failure of divinity, it was the usual display of weakness in humanity that feeds newspapers headlines and television news. We have a sense of the extent of these abuses because someone brought them first to our attention sixteen years ago in Boston. My Point of View articles of the years 2002 and 2003 are witnesses of the same practices that caused the resignation of one Boston Cardinal.

Hidden from our public awareness maybe the extent of similar abuses for the past twenty centuries. We just don't know. The Catholic authorities in Pennsylvania have announced the removal of bishop's names from some of their buildings. Is it possible that some names should

also be removed from the General Roman Calendar as well? To presume that the discoveries of the past two decades driven by newspapers and information technology is exclusive of a history that has used a high degree of power and silence of many years before is to limit not only the damage that was done, but the remedies that have not and must be.

But let's not fool ourselves; this is not an institutional problem limited to the Catholic Church. That is only part of a bigger problem. We must address our foolish practice of building human heroes we don't know and, most of all, don't deserve it because we are ignorant of their privacy. Whether it is politicians, entertainers or, yes, men of religious garb, it is time to enter the temple of our adorations and do the same that Jesus did when he cleaned the temple: throw the varmints out. It is also up to us, the adults, to make clear to our children that we don't condone adulation of others for adulation's sake. Children have to protect themselves not only from anonymous predators, but also from the false gods we create on an ongoing basis because we have lost the confidence and faith in ourselves.

And that is my point of view today.