

# SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN SEMINARIES IS RARE

In a joint effort by researchers at the University of Notre Dame's McGrath Institute for Church Life and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University, a study of U.S. seminarians found that six percent have experienced some form of sexual harassment. It was also determined that 84 percent said that their administration and faculty took reports of sexual misconduct very seriously. Seventy-five percent said such behavior was "not at all a problem," and nearly nine in ten said there is none or little talk of sexual promiscuity at their seminary.

This is a significant change from the 1970s when sexual misconduct at U.S. seminaries was a serious problem. The sexual revolution flourished during that decade, impacting the Church as well as the larger society. That was a time when Fr. Andrew Greeley spoke about the "Lavender Mafia" of homosexual subcultures in the seminaries.

The media are not likely to run with this story as it doesn't fit into their narrative of sexual misbehavior in the Church. They certainly will not do what I will do now—compare the situation in the seminaries to other venues.

In 2013, Hollaback! commissioned a College Harassment Survey and found that 67 percent of students experienced harassment on campus. In 2006, the American Association of University Women reported that nearly two-thirds of college students experienced sexual harassment at some point during college. In 2018, an online survey by Stop Street Harassment found that 81 percent of women and 43 percent of men said they experienced some form of sexual harassment during their lifetime.

By any measure, conditions in the seminaries have vastly

improved.