



# Lead Us Not Into Temptation: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children

*Jason Berry*

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In the autumn of 1984, Jason Berry heard reports of the sexual abuse of boys by a priest in rural Louisiana. As an expectant father, he was horrified for the children. As a Catholic he reasoned that even a priest can commit crimes. As a reporter, he wanted to find out what had happened. In this ground-breaking book, first published in 1992 and still used in many newsrooms, Berry exposed a culture of corrosive secrecy in which bishops concealed a criminal sexual underground. One of Berry's sources accurately projected \$1 billion in church losses by century's end. *Lead Us Not Into Temptation* is the masterful narrative of an epic crisis as it unfolds. The story begins in one Cajun community numbed by the realization that a single priest abused dozens of children. A brave weekly newspaper reports that the bishop reassigned more predator priests, and for its effort finds itself counter-attacked by the daily press. As church officials sit in silence, lawyers battle over the price of victims' suffering. As the prosecutor bears down, Berry finds an eerie church insider who guides him into a labyrinth. The story moves to the Vatican Embassy in Washington, D.C., where a secret pedophilia report warns American bishops of the staggering implications if a forthright policy is not soon adopted. Yet cases keep surfacing. New York City, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Chicago, Cleveland, Honolulu, Seattle, New Orleans and in Canada as Berry unpeels a web of suffering and struggles for justice. While abusive priests are reshuffled, Berry follows a Vatican crackdown on liberal theologians. As Vatican officials attack gays, Berry profiles gay priests and seminarians. *Lead Us Not Into Temptation* is as much about journalism as the cover-up culture the author exposed a decade before *The Boston Globe's* major series. In this updated edition, *Lead Us Not Into Temptation* stands as a fair and fearless portrayal of the Catholic Church's worst crisis in centuries. Jason Berry's book stands too as a haunting affirmation of faith. "The greatest scandal in the history of religion in America." -- From the foreword by Andrew M. Greeley "[Has] the same narrative excitement as Woodward and Bernstein's *All the President's Men*. There is even a mystery whistle-blower, equivalent to Deep Throat, whom Berry dubs "Chalice" and who meets a sorry fate in the denouement." -- *The Nation* "Berry is the rare investigative reporter whose scholarship, compassion, and ability to write with the poetic power of Robert Penn Warren are in perfect balance... [T]he church itself could not have asked for a more fair-minded instrument of its own indictment." -- *USA Today* "*Lead Us Not into Temptation* is frequently as compelling as a novel, but it is also a thoughtful, restrained examination of an explosive subject that in less skilled hands could easily have been exploited and sensationalized." -- *Cleveland Plain Dealer*

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