

Testimonials

Trapped in a Closed World is timely, comprehensive and accessible to a broad readership. Peoples' acute insights on beliefs, values and practices that have led to sexual violence and cover-up scandals shows why the Church must stop tinkering with the clergy culture in the vain hope of rescuing it from these historical revelations.

Dr Jane Anderson, honorary research fellow, University of Western Australia

The reactions of the Catholic hierarchy to the child sexual abuse scandal confirms Ralph Linton's quip that the last thing a fish would notice is the water. Kevin Peoples spent three years in a seminary pond, and provides us with a well written account of his own struggle with the cultural murk, while interweaving it with the results of the many inquiries. All great tragedies have a mixture of the good and the bad, and the author describes them both in a book difficult to put down.

Kieran Tapsell, author *Potiphar's Wife: The Vatican's Secret and Child Sexual Abuse*

Peoples takes a hard look at the toxic culture of the Catholic Church, the madness of seminary training, and the tortured, lonely lifestyle of the clergy. *Trapped in a Closed World* is a serious contribution to the ongoing debate about the future of the institution we know as the 'Vaticanised' Catholic Church.

Chris Geraghty, former priest and retired judge

Through the prism of his own seminary training, Kevin Peoples enables his readers to see what has gone wrong. Clericalism, misogyny and mandatory celibacy are demonstrably major factors in this unfolding tragedy. This book is not for the faint-hearted, but the Scriptures assure us that 'the truth will set us free'.

Bishop Pat Power, retired auxiliary bishop, Canberra Goulburn Diocese

A deeply-felt account of a personal journey with faith and disillusionment.

Ailsa Piper, author *Sinning across Spain* and with Tony Doherty, *The Attachment*

Peoples makes a very personal and persuasive case that the institutional Catholic church must reform its closed culture if it is to respond positively to the lessons of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

John Warhurst, emeritus professor of Political Science, Australian National University

I highly recommend this book to anyone seeking to understand how, when, and why the open window dream of Vatican II lost out to the reality of secrecy, clericalism and the protection of the institution's power, identity and reputation at all costs.

Michael Morwood, author *It's Time. Challenges to the Doctrine of the Faith*

Kevin Peoples has brilliantly combined his experience as a student priest in a Catholic seminary with reflections on clerical child abuse and the Church's cover-up. With insight, humour, and extensive research, he shows that clerical abuse is linked to the history and culture of the Church with its authoritarian structures, misogyny and celibacy. A powerful, compassionate and courageous book.

Iola Mathews OAM, author *My Mother, My Writing and Me: a Memoir*

Peoples describes a toxic seminary and church culture which created clerical egotists who felt comfortable only with defenceless children. He links this to the solid research on the over-representation of Catholic clergy among clerical abusers worldwide and makes sensible suggestions for another Reformation. The book is a page-turner and a heartbreaker.

Helen Praetz, professor emeritus, RMIT University

Reading *Trapped in a Closed World* you warm to Kevin Peoples. That is the sign of a good memoir. He has a good story, knows his material and is a good teacher. It is a page-turning read. He describes the authoritarian style, enclosure from the world and misogyny that pervaded Springwood seminary. He shows how this was a seedbed for clericalism and narcissism; no check for any latent paedophilic inclinations, and a direct contributor to the denial and defensiveness of the church leaders that it produced.

Eric Hodgens, retired parish priest, alumnus of Corpus Christi College

It is essential that truth-telling about what has gone on behind closed doors is not left to abuse survivors alone. Through telling his seminary story, Peoples stands in solidarity with all who have suffered from the misuse of power by what is coming to be recognised as a heretical sect. Peoples shows these discredited leaders, and truth-seekers everywhere, how honest storytelling can be a path to liberation.

James Boyce, author *Born Bad: Original Sin and the Making of the Western World*

A profound contribution to understanding the sexual abuse crisis that has ravaged the Catholic Church. At once sympathetic and forensic, Peoples opens up a secretive world.

Barney Zwartz, formerly religion editor of *The Age*, is a senior fellow with the Centre for Public Christianity