

STATE AND LOCAL

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"Did you say 'short on the sides' or 'short on the top?'"

Clergy may balk at ruling to report child abuse cases

Associated Press
AUSTIN — An attorney general's opinion saying state law requires even clergymen to report cases of child abuse could cause serious problems for the clergy in Texas, church officials say.

"I would go to jail before I would ever admit anything that was brought to me in confession," said Monsignor James Jamail, pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in southwest Houston. "I don't know a priest that wouldn't do the same thing," he said.

Attorney General Jim Mattox released an opinion Monday saying a priest or minister is legally bound to report cases of child abuse, even if he learned of it from an abuser who admitted it in confidence.

The 1975 law "requires a minister of an established church to report evidence of child abuse when confidentially disclosed to him by a parishioner," the opinion said.

Mattox also said state law doesn't give the clergy exemption from being required to testify in court proceedings involving child abuse.

An attorney general's opinion customarily carries the weight of law and remains in effect unless over-

turned in court or by the Legislature.

Several religious leaders said the opinion conflicts with church law and practices.

Tammy Edgerly-Dowd, a canon lawyer with the Diocese of Austin, said a Catholic priest cannot violate the promise not to repeat what is confessed, "unfortunately even at the expense of the children."

The canon law of the Catholic church, she said, explicitly states that it "is a crime for a confessor in any way to betray a penitent by word or any other manner, for any reason."

If the confidence is broken by the priest, she said, the penalty is automatic excommunication. She said it can be reversed only by the Vatican.

Mattox said he agrees, personally, that "you should have the right to talk to your spiritual adviser without the spiritual adviser being forced to divulge that conversation."

But he said, "As attorney general I frequently have to issue opinions that I don't personally agree with. The law is set by the Legislature, and the Legislature has spoken on this matter."

Tom Brandon, a Fort Worth lawyer with the Christian Legal Society, said clergymen likely won't follow Mattox's opinion.

Messina Hof growing with industry

Texas' wines building a reputation

By AMY NETTERVILLE
Reporter

J.R., oil wells, Blue Bell ice cream, and "Urban Cowboy" are only a few of the things that have made Texas famous.

And Paul Bonarrigo, owner of Messina Hof winery and vineyard in Bryan says the state's wine industry soon may be another claim to fame for Texas.

Bonarrigo says the wine industry in Texas has a great future because of the acres of new grapes it produces.

"We probably had less than 1,000 acres of grapes in the state less than five years ago," he says. "Now, we have around 6,000 acres, which is incredible."

"The last two or three years people would say, 'Did you hear Texas has wine?'" Bonarrigo says. "Now we've reached the age where you hear, 'Did you know Texas makes some pretty good wine?' — now that's progress."

Bonarrigo says Texas' recent popularity has definitely helped the Texas wine industry.

"There's no shortage of Texas pride," he says. "Three or four years ago, if the product was Texas, it sold just on that merit. Now the industry is becoming sophisticated enough that it has to be Texas and good. Texas and bad doesn't sell anymore."

Bonarrigo says the Texas wine industry in Texas has improved since the mid-70s.

"There were vineyards planted a few hundred years ago in the state, but not much really happened," Bonarrigo says. "Right now there are 20 vineyards in the state, Messina Hof is the 13th."

In 1977 the industry comprised only one or two wineries and a branch of experimental vineyards.

"Messina Hof was one of the experimental vineyards planted in hope that grapes would do well here," Bonarrigo says. "A&M was ac-

tive through the agricultural extension service and they assisted me in choosing original grape stock."

Messina Hof now produces 11 different kinds of wine and distributes them statewide.

"To market Messina Hof, I have to travel all around the state, giving wine seminars and promoting the wine in restaurants," Bonarrigo says. "As I go to different sections of the state, I find reaction from Texans to the Texas wine industry is very interesting."

"When people find out where our vineyard and winery is located, they always ask if our wine is Aggie wine. In the early phases, I thought about having a chateau Aggie because of our proximity to the University, but we never did produce it."

Bonarrigo says the competition between A&M and the University of Texas is even true in the new Texas wine industry.

"Messina Hof is in the heart of Aggieland and there's another vine-

yard, St. Genevieve, that has its corporate office in Austin," Bonarrigo says. "There's already been a few stories by wine writers in the state comparing Messina Hof, the Aggie wine, to St. Genevieve, the UT wine."

Bonarrigo says five years ago Texas was one of the lowest per capita wine-consuming states in the country.

"People were really very unenlightened about wine," he says. "But at the same time, there were more high-quality wines in Texas than any other place in the world. If you went to France and wanted some really outstanding French wine, they would tell you the place to go was Houston or Dallas."

Bonarrigo says Texas still has fine wines coming into the state — the difference now, compared to five years ago, is the percentage of Texans drinking wine.

Bonarrigo says Texans are becoming more cognizant of wine, but they still have a long way to go.

Sales tax collections up in Texas

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Fueled by retail sales growth and a broadening of the tax base lawmakers approved last summer, Texas sales tax collections are up this year.

The state comptroller's office reported Tuesday that Austin's sales tax receipts have increased by 25 percent so far this year, more than any other major city in the state.

Austin received \$5.4 million as its 1-cent share of the sales taxes collected in the city. The city's payments so far this year total \$30.2 million, up from \$24.2 million a year ago.

The comptroller reported sales tax increases of 5 percent for Houston, which has \$104.8 million in tax receipt payments for the year, the highest payment total for any city.

Texas cities receive 1 percent of all taxable retail sales as their share of the tax.

Yugoslavian tried for swindling affluent Austin man out of \$46,000

Associated Press

AUSTIN — A wealthy Austin man "obsessed" with finding his son who disappeared in the South China Sea testified Tuesday against a Yugoslavian accused of posing as a Soviet KGB agent to defraud the man.

Bratislav Lalic is charged with swindling Douglas Pierce out of \$46,000. Pierce testified he has spent \$400,000 in his so-far futile search for his son, John.

Pierce identified Lalic in federal court as a man he knew as Alexander Ivanov, who identified himself as a KGB agent who claimed he could secure the younger Pierce's release from Vietnam.

Defense lawyer Joe Turner said during a break that Lalic was an "intermediary" connected with the Soviet embassy, and he might have been able to deliver the younger Pierce if the FBI had not intervened.

Douglas Pierce gestured toward the defendant and identified him as "wearing a suit I assume he's bought with my money."

John Pierce was aboard the Glomar Java Sea, an oil drilling ship that sank 200 miles from the Vietnamese coast on Oct. 25, 1983. There were 81 crew members. Thirty-five bodies

were found. Pierce's was not among them.

The elder Pierce, a former Marine and now a wealthy businessman, quickly began a full-time search for his son. He believes his son, a derrick hand on board, survived in a life boat and drifted to Vietnam.

Pierce said he was contacted by Lalic shortly after appearing on a network television show and discussing the \$100,000 reward he is offering. He said he also advertised the reward in Vietnamese newspapers and magazines.

In June 1984, two months after Pierce sought help from the Soviet embassy in Washington, a caller said he was a KGB agent working out of Washington.

Lalic said Soviet officials were convinced the Glomar Java Sea was a spy ship, but they did not believe the younger Pierce was aware of that, Pierce testified.

For \$16,000 in cash or gold and a promise to keep the deal secret, the caller said Pierce would be returned, the missing man's father said.

The money changed hands in a dimly lit park in Chicago on June 19, 1984, he added.

He recalled telling Lalic, "I hope to heavens you are for real. If not, I'll put a contract out on you and fill it myself."

Lalic later instructed Pierce and daughter Dale, a Fort Worth nurse, to go to Miami, where the son would be freed. The Pierces alerted Austin physicians who were prepared to treat the son. They also rented a medically-equipped private jet to speed the son back to Texas.

But the missing man was not returned.

After Lalic took a total of \$46,000 from the elder Pierce, he was arrested in San Antonio on Jan. 11. Two FBI agents had accompanied Pierce to a planned meeting with Lalic.

Lalic has pleaded innocent to three counts of fraud and one count of mail fraud. He faces a maximum of 35 years in prison if convicted of all counts.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jack O'Donnell told jurors that Pierce was "reluctant" to work with the FBI.

"This man was taking advantage of Mr. Pierce by dragging Mr. Pierce all around the United States, taking his money," said O'Donnell.

Flying Tomato is coming!

PIZZA BY THE SLICE!

NICE!

Watch For Us!
303 W. UNIVERSITY • 846-1616

CASH

for gold, silver, old coins, diamonds

Full Jewelry Repair

Large Stock of Diamonds

Gold Chains

TEXAS COIN EXCHANGE

404 University Dr. 846-8916

3202-A Texas Ave. (across from El Chico, Bryan)

779-7662

Fantastic Prices & Locations

Efficiencies-\$250.⁰⁰

2 Bedroom-\$350.⁰⁰ & up

All bills paid except electricity — No utility deposit with city

- * Shuttle Bus
- * Crystal Clear Pool
- * Tennis & Basketball Courts
- * Exercise Room w/Saunas

Huge Apartments-Lots of Closet Space

Plantation Oaks Apartments

1501 Harvey Rd.

Across from the new Post Oak Mall.

Mo.-Fr. 8-5 Sat. 10-5 Sun. 2-5

693-1011 Professionally Managed by Lewis Roberts Co.

X-Firm Mat. Sale

\$79.95

Bedding Liquidation

Twin or full sized mattress sets still in factory wrapping. Going fast at \$79.95 per set.

TEXAS FURNITURE OUTLET

712 Villa Maria

5 PC. FAMILY RM GROUP — \$229.95

Special limited offer on solid wood family room. Sofa, chair, coffee table & 2 end tables. Reversible cushions - our lowest price ever, so hurry!

TEXAS FURNITURE OUTLET

712 Villa Maria

FREE

5 PULSE transactions monthly

711 University Drive College Station, Texas Member FDIC

UNIVERSITY NATIONAL BANK

INTERURBAN

Join us Wednesday nights for **FROZEN margaritas!**

Only **ONE DOLLAR** from 9:00 pm until closing.

The **INTERURBAN** 505 University Dr.

"an aggie tradition"

AMAZING

2bd 1ba apartments for **\$399 plus** One Month Free*

TAOS

401 ANDERSON

693-6505

Open Daily until 7:00 p.m.

*9 or 12mo. leases

NO SECURITY DEPOSIT

Why move like this, when you can move like this.

CERTIFIED FURNITURE RENTAL

We Now Rent MICROWAVES and BUNKBEDS

5 Packages Tailored to Your Personal Tastes, Needs and Comfort.

Freshman Package	\$35.95
Sophomore Package	\$45.95
Junior Package	\$56.95
Senior Package	\$72.95
Graduate Package	\$82.95

(Add \$15-\$25 for each additional bedroom)

All Packages consist of a complete Living Room, Dining Room and Bedroom.

(Individual Pieces Also Available)

DEPENDS ON AVAILABILITY/STYLES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Stop by and enjoy a FREE Coke Compliments of Bryan Coca-Cola (WHILE SUPPLIES LAST)

CERTIFIED FURNITURE RENTAL

913-D Harvey Road Woodstone Shopping Center College Station, Texas 77840 (409) 764-0721

OFFER EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 30, 1985

Battalion Classified 845-2611