

Caffeine's Hidden Dangers

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: AIDS STILL OUT OF CONTROL / THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CELIBACY

Americans are hooked on caffeine. Ninety percent consume it in one form or another every single day. Over half consume more than 300 milligrams of caffeine every day. It is our nation's most popular drug. It is in coffee, tea, cola, chocolate, and a variety of other things.

Caffeine is an addictive drug. It operates on the brain, using the same mechanisms as amphetamines, cocaine, and heroin to stimulate the brain. Although it is milder than the others, it is manipulating the same channels. This is one of the reasons it is addictive.

If you think that you cannot function every day with it, and must consume it every day—you are addicted to caffeine.

Caffeine is trimethylxanthine. Its chemical formula is $C_8H_{10}N_4O_2$. When isolated in pure form, caffeine is a white crystalline powder that tastes very bitter.

Physicians use it as a cardiac stimulant and also as a mild diuretic (increases urine production). But regular folk take it for the apparent "boost of energy" or feeling of heightened alertness it gives. It is often used to help people stay awake longer.

Obviously, what is happening is that the body is tired and needs rest; but, instead, it is whipped into action. Beating a horse always hurts it. The body, repeatedly pushed into greater activity when it wants to stop for rest, is gradually damaged. Instead of recovering, organs gradually weaken. Eventually, the weakest ones become diseased, and the person wonders why it happened.

Caffeine occurs naturally in many plants, including coffee beans, tea leaves, and cocoa nuts. Because of this, it is found in a wide variety of food products. In addition, caffeine is added to many other foods, including beverages.

Here is a dangerous menu to think about:

- Coffee: Typical drip-brewed coffee contains 100 milligrams (mg.) per 6-ounce (oz.) cup.

Whether you are buying it at Starbucks or a store, drinking it at home or at the office, out of a mug or commuter's cup, you are consuming it in one of three sizes: 12 oz. (200 mg.), 14 oz. (234 mg.), or 20 oz. (334 mg.). That is a lot of caffeine!

- Tea: Typical brewed tea contains 70 mg. in each 6-oz. cup.

- Cola drinks: Coke, Pepsi, Mountain Dew, etc., contain 50 mg. per 12-oz. can. Jolt contains 70 mg. per 12-oz. can.

- Chocolate: Typical milk chocolate contains 6 mg.

per oz.

- Drugs: Anacin contains 32 mg. per tablet. No-doz contains 100 mg. per tablet. Vivarin and Dexatrim contain 200 mg. per tablet.

Sit down and calculate how much you are taking each day, and you might be surprised. Many people consume a gram (1000 mg.) or more every single day, without realizing it.

Just what does caffeine do when it gets into the body?

As your body becomes fatigued, adenosine is made in the brain, and binds to adenosine receptors. This causes drowsiness by slowing nerve cell activity. You want to stop and rest. You want to go to sleep. This is good, for you need the rest. In the brain, the adenosine also causes blood vessels to dilate (enlarge), so more oxygen can reach the brain during sleep.

But when caffeine is taken into the stomach, it travels quickly to the brain. Once there, it does what adenosine normally does; it binds to the adenosine nerve receptors. But, instead of slowing cellular activity, it speeds it up. The cell can no longer bind with adenosine, because caffeine is linked up with all its available receptors.

The cell begins accelerating its activity. Because adenosine is shut out, the brain's blood vessels began to constrict (narrow).

The increased neuron firing in the brain awakens the pituitary gland to action. Some kind of emergency must be taking place! So the pituitary signals the adrenal glands to produce adrenaline (epinephrine), the "fight or flight" hormone.

The longer-term effects of using caffeine tend to spiral down. Once the adrenaline wears off, you face even greater fatigue—and also depression. More caffeine is taken, and soon the body is jumping into emergency levels all day long. You become jumpy and irritable.

Because the half-life of caffeine is six hours, by the time you go to bed, you cannot get to sleep or you will not obtain the deep sleep you need. (If the last cup of coffee was taken at 3 p.m., by 9 p.m., you will still have 100 mg. in your body.) So the next morning you feel worse—and you need caffeine to get you out of bed.

You have started another day, beating the horse. This is why 90% of Americans consume caffeine every day. But if you try to stop, you will get terrible, splitting headaches as blood vessels in the brain dilate. So you go back to caffeine.

AIDS Still out of control

Here is a brief overview of the massive problem found in one disease that sexual promiscuity has brought to mankind. The following excerpts are from "Search for a Cure," in the February 2002 edition of *National Geographic*. Subheads are ours:

THE NUMBER WHO HAVE IT

"In high-risk groups, a predictable percentage—from 1.5 to 6 a year, depending on sexual or drug habits—would be expected to become infected with HIV over the course of a trial [with experimental protection drugs] . . .

"In two decades AIDS has killed more than 20 million people worldwide. As infection rates have soared, so has the annual death toll. The disease claimed three million, most in their prime, in the year 2000 alone. Children left as orphans and jobs left vacant are now crippling burdens in the countries with the largest losses."

A FRAIL VIRUS WITH POWERFUL EFFECTS

"HIV seems full of contradictions. It can overwhelm the human immune system, yet the virus itself is fragile. Cold viruses linger on hands, and sometimes for days on doorknobs; but fresh air dries and destabilizes HIV in hours or even minutes. Contact with rubbing alcohol or chlorinated water quickly renders it inactive. Simple bar soap neutralizes HIV by breaking the chemical bonds of its lipids, or fats . . . Doctors conclude that the same antiviral compounds in saliva and stomach acids that protect us from a host of germs prove very effective against HIV in low concentrations.

"Once a person is infected with HIV, however, the virus attacks the very immune cells, called T cells, meant to fight it."

TYPICAL DEVELOPMENT

"During a period of typically eight to ten years HIV lurks in the body, mutating rapidly and thus avoiding recognition. It reproduces massively, and waits. Finally, at the introduction of a disease that an unimpaired immune system would normally control—tuberculosis or pneumonia, for example—the immune system is overcome by HIV so that it cannot fight, and the disease kills."

RAPID SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

[A chart showed the known number of people

with AIDS throughout the world, as of the year 2000. (**Notice the astounding increase since 1990 figures, which are in italics!**): North America: 920,000 (840,000) people / Caribbean: 390,000 (130,000) / South America: 1,400,000 (700,000) / Western Europe: 540,000 (415,000) / Middle East and North Africa: 400,000 (57,000) / Sub-Saharan Africa: 25,300,000 (7,000,000) / South and Southeast Asia: 5,800,000 (590,000) / Eastern Europe and Central Asia: 700,000 (5,000) / East Asia and the Pacific: 640,000 (4,000) / Australia and New Zealand: 15,000 (*less than 500*).

"Nineteen ninety-six was the year the thunder came,' Igor Ivanov said . . . Ivanov, a doctor at the Kaliningrad Regional Infectious Hospital, was referring to the year HIV cut loose in Russia amid the chaos of a collapsing economy. Unemployment shot up, and with it alcoholism and crime. Drug deals began to create a heroin market in Russia. Through shared needles, HIV reached . . ."

AIDS INHIBITORS

"If 1996 brought AIDS to Russia, the same year saw the advent in the West of protease inhibitors, drugs that suppress the ability of HIV to replicate.

"But protease inhibitors, often combined with other HIV drugs such as AZT, are far from prevention or cure. Their effects lift the death sentence of an HIV infection only for a time. Furthermore, they cost as much as \$15,000 a year, with huge drug-company profit margins, making them affordable in the U.S. and Europe but generally out of reach in developing nations."

EFFECTS OF INHIBITORS

"While drug therapy results are promising, the use of protease inhibitors and other antivirals, such as AZT, can produce grave side effects that include nausea, bone loss, diabetes, liver damage, raised cholesterol levels, and depression. And doctors do not yet understand why HIV drugs rearrange fat in the body. The face becomes sunken and the limbs wizened while fat piles up elsewhere. To see the bulging belly and the humped back of a patient who has taken antivirals for several years only underscores the need to find another way to inhibit HIV . . . [There are] 36 million incubators walking around with this virus, spreading it to other people."—*National Geographic*, February 2002.

The Catholic Church and Celibacy

Horrible stories are daily appearing in the public press about what Roman Catholic priests have been doing. We do not care to recount any of them here.

But it seems well to get to the underlying problem, which the media only gives slight mention to.

Why is the Roman Catholic priesthood so corrupt? Why are homosexuals attracted to it? Why are parents afraid to let their children be near a priest? Why are priests and nuns taught to stifle their normal affections? Why are so many priests leaving the priesthood? Why are so few young men interested in becoming priests?

A primary cause is the evil dogma of celibacy.

You may recall my recent study on homosexuality in the Catholic priesthood (*Catholic Priests and Homosexuality [WM-1032-1033]*). According to Catholic sources, which I quoted, about half of the priests are now homosexual.

The underlying problem is the papal requirement of celibacy. If the priests were permitted to marry and have normal homes, the present crisis in the Roman Catholic Church would not exist.

I have prepared this present study to provide you with the background of this problem,—and why the Vatican does not dare abolish it.

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES

The Apostle Paul specifically condemned those who were “forbidding to marry” (*1 Timothy 4:3*). He also said that a bishop should be “the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded . . . one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity” (*1 Timothy 3:2, 4*). Likewise the elders (*Titus 1:5-6*) and the deacons (*1 Timothy 3:12*) should each be the husband of one wife, “ruling their children and their own houses well.” The Apostle Peter was married (*1 Corinthians 9:5*) during the time that Paul was an apostle, which, according to Vatican tradition, was the time when Peter was supposed to be the reigning pope in Rome (A.D. 42-67). We also know that he had a mother-in-law (*Matthew 8:14-15*) prior to the time that, according to Catholic doctrine, Jesus appointed him to the position of first pope (*Matthew 16:18*).

God gave marriage to mankind as a precious gift (*Genesis 2:18, 24*); and it is honorable (*Hebrews 13:4*). It is a type of the most sacred union of the church with Christ (*Ephesians 5:23-33*).

In view of the clear teachings of Scripture, how did celibacy get started in the Catholic Church?

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CATHOLIC TEACHING

By a strange inconsistency, the Church of Rome declares that marriage is a sacrament; that is, something regarded as specially sacred or holy. Yet it denies mar-

riage to its priests, monks, and nuns—who supposedly are the most holy people in the church. Rome says that celibacy is a state superior to marriage.

Ascetism (living alone in the desert) was practiced in the pagan religions and early entered Catholicism. From the fourth century, ascetism became more widely practiced.

It was not until A.D. 1079, under the strong hand of Hildebrand, known as Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085), that the priests were required to be celibate. But, for centuries thereafter, they continued having either secret wives or concubines.

Popes Urban II (1088-1099) and Calixtus II (1119-1124) tried, with partial success, to get the priests to separate from their concubines.

The decree of the First Lateran Council (1123) declared the marriage of all in sacred orders invalid. But it was the Council of Trent (1545) which finally settled the matter once and for all. It pronounced a curse on any priest or nun who married.

Among its decrees, it said any priest or nun who married was automatically excommunicated. A married man who wanted to become a priest must leave his wife, and his wife was also required to take the vow of chastity or he could not be ordained.

“Whoever shall affirm that the conjugal state is to be preferred to a life of virginity or celibacy, and that it is not better and more conducive to happiness to remain in virginity or celibacy, than to be married, let him be accursed.”—*Council of Trent, Canon 10*.

Thus during the first five centuries of the Christian era, Catholic clergy were permitted to marry and have families. For more than a thousand years after the time of Christ, Catholic priests, without too much opposition, had wives.

But faithful Catholics are presented with a rewritten history:

“[Celibacy] became established as the regular discipline in the Western Church toward the end of the 6th century when Pope Gregory the Great imposed it on all clerics in major orders.”—*Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary, article, “Celibacy,” p. 111*.

Here is an even more inaccurate statement!

“Although celibacy was practiced by the majority of clergy in the first three centuries of the Church’s history, it was after the Council of Elvira in 305 that the law became more definite. A council held at Rome in 386 and two later councils at Carthage imposed continence on all bishops, priests, and deacons.”—*The Catholic Encyclopedia, p. 100*.

Now let us look at the facts. The three councils, mentioned above, may have been fictitious or their celibacy decrees may have been forged centuries later.

Rome did not begin demanding celibacy for several centuries after the time of Constantine I (A.D. 312-337). Gregory's edict was not given till 1079.

Both before and after the Council of Trent decision in 1545, concubinage, secret marriages, and adultery continued.

In an attempt to suppress vice among the clergy, Emperor Charlemagne (800-814), a strong Catholic supporter, issued this edict:

"We have been informed to our great horror that many monks are addicted to debauchery and all sorts of vile abominations, even to unnatural sins. We forbid all such practices and command the monks to cease wandering over the country."—*Charlemagne, quoted in T. Demetrius, Catholicism and Protestantism, p. 26.*

Unperturbed that its priests were enjoying themselves, the Vatican figured out a way to make some money on what was happening. The Irish historian, William Lecky wrote:

"An Italian bishop of the tenth century described the morals of his time, saying that if he were to enforce the canons against unchaste persons administering ecclesiastical rites, no one would be left in the Church except the boys. A tax was systematically levied on princes and clergymen for license to keep concubines."—*William Lecky, History of European Morals.*

Bernard of Clairvaux protested against enforcing celibacy on the clergy as contrary to human nature and divine law, saying:

"Deprive the Church of honorable marriage, and you fill her with concubinage, incest, and all manner of nameless vices and uncleanness."—*Writings of Bernard of Clairvaux.*

In 1536, Henry VIII of England appointed commissioners to inspect all monasteries and nunneries in the land. So terrible were the cruelties and corruptions uncovered that a cry went up from the nation, that all such houses without exception should be destroyed! The fall of the monasteries was caused by "the monstrous lives of the monks, the friars, and the nuns," said Parkes who added:

"Clerical concubinage was the rule rather than the exception, and friars openly roamed the streets with women on their arms. Many of the priests were ignorant and tyrannical, whose chief interest in their parishioners was the exaction of marriage, baptism, and funeral fees, and who were apt to abuse the confessional."—*Henry Bamford Parkes, A History of Mexico.*

Though more hidden, the problem has continued on down to the present time. Now it is breaking open!

THE PROBLEM TODAY

Now you can better understand the cause of the problem confronting the Catholic Church in America today. Here are some current statistics gleaned from the media:

There are now 63.7 million Catholics in America. Of these, 65% are white, 25% are Latino (and growing fast!), 4% are black, and 3% are Asian.

The number of priests and nuns keeps shrinking each year. The high point came in the mid-1960s, when there were 180,000 priests and 60,000 nuns. Every year, since then, their ranks have lessened; today there are only 79,462 priests and 46,041 nuns. It is an open secret that the requirement of celibacy is the cause.

Each year, the majority of priests and nuns are getting older. The average age is now 62 for priests and 69 for nuns. At the same time, the number of students studying to be priests keeps falling. The high point was in the mid-1960s, when there were 20,000 seminarians. Today, there are only 3,541.

In 1965, about 500 parishes in America had no resident priest. Today 5,300 have none! That is 27% of the total. The church has been using more deacons to fill the vacancies—about 500 in 1975, and 13,348 today.

Vatican II mandated that celibacy must remain in force; and Rome would be embarrassed if it relented on a long-held tradition—even though it is ridiculous and destroying the church.

As if that is not enough, Catholics all over America and elsewhere in the world have awakened to the problem. Lawsuits are now in progress in Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Missouri, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

Announced verdicts and settlements in U.S. sexual-abuse cases over the past two decades total about \$400 million. Experts believe an equal amount has been spent in secret payoffs. More and more victims are telling their story. The number of lawsuits is rapidly becoming a flood. Insurance and cash reserves are nearly exhausted. "Churches and schools will be closed and shuttered to pay verdicts," predicts Patrick Schiltz, dean of a Catholic law school in Minneapolis. "Without doubt, some dioceses will go into bankruptcy," he adds.

Each of the 195 Catholic dioceses in the U.S. is an independent financial entity, with its own insurance and property. In 1997, the Dallas diocese had to take out loans, mortgage its chancery building, and sell land to come up with \$11 million of the \$31 million settlement not covered by insurance. Much of the liability insurance held by the various dioceses is now exhausted.

But more lawsuits start every day. The situation keeps getting worse. And Rome dares not get rid of celibacy; for to do so would be to admit that centuries ago it made a terrible mistake. And, as you know, "Rome never errs."

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