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'Sex abuse is the Catholic 9/11'

by John L. Allen Jr.



C'era Una Volta un Vaticano

ROME -- Massimo Franco is a veteran journalist who writes for *Corriere della Sera*, the most prestigious daily newspaper in Italy. Recently he published a book titled *C'era Una Volta un Vaticano* (Once Upon a Time, there was a Vatican?), arguing that underneath the PR meltdowns and internal crises of the Vatican under Benedict XVI lies a radical historical shift ? from the Vatican as the chaplain of the West, to the Vatican as representative of a minority subculture.

For centuries, he argues, the Vatican thought and acted like the representative of a cultural majority in the West ? a mentality forged in the era of Christendom, and given new life during the Cold War, when the Vatican and the great Western powers were fundamentally on the same page. It's no longer adequate to the changed cultural landscape of the 21st century, he says ? and the inability of senior Vatican personnel to adapt to this new world is the fundamental force, he argues, beneath their apparent disorientation.

Francisco Franco sat down March 1 for an interview to discuss the trials and tribulations of Benedict's papacy.

To read Allen's interview with Franco, see: '**Sex abuse is the Catholic 9/11**'

John Allen is in Rome for the next week. Check back to NCRonline.org frequently for more reports and exclusive coverage.

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