



***Innocence Betrayed - A Dad's Story of Clergy Misconduct***

ISBN# 1-4241-8171-2

H J Wisocki and C J Szajnecki

**Synopsis**

How can a person recover from the devastation caused by a trusted pastor? The church is a safe haven, isn't it? Jim was proud of his four daughters, and they had no reason to believe there was evil lurking in their beloved church. His trust in clergy was unconditional. The new pastor came and methodically dissected the family, ripping them apart with such calculated expertise Jim didn't see it coming. By the time he realized what was happening, his family was almost destroyed, and he knew he had to take action to save his girls. His battle with the church administrators to right the wrongs was brutal, but Jim's faith in God was steadfast.

As a fictional story, the heart-wrenching details bring awareness to similar situations in churches of all denominations today. The book offers help and healing to those who have given their unconditional trust to religious authority figures.



### **Authors Bios**

Helen J. Wisocki was born in Detroit in 1951 and raised in Dearborn, Michigan. She attended Fordson High School in Dearborn where she met Curt J. Szajnecki, both graduating in 1969. Ms. Wisocki's love of writing grew in her senior high school English class where she was given unusual subject matter by her instructor, Mr. James Osterberg. He encouraged her to submit her short stories to magazines. Graduating two years later from Henry Ford Community College with a degree in Business, Ms. Wisocki moved to Los Angeles, working as an administration assistant and technical editor for an architectural firm. The divorced single mother of two raised a daughter and son in Massachusetts. She owns and operates her own retail business in the Newburyport area.

Curt J. Szajnecki was born in Detroit in 1951 and raised in Dearborn Heights, Michigan. After graduating from Fordson High School, he graduated from Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan, in 1973 with a Bachelor's Degree in Health and Physical Education. He spent many years in teaching and many more years in sales. The divorced father of four daughters advocates for children and adult victims of clergy misconduct. Reuniting with Ms. Wisocki at their 30th high school class reunion, a spark was ignited. They enjoy a long-distance relationship.

The book, *Innocence Betrayed: A Dad's Story of Clergy Misconduct*, took seven years to write. The fictional story takes you down the path of the pastor's grooming process of his vulnerable victim. It can happen to anyone who is unaware. The book offers suggestions as to what to do and not to do when reporting clergy misconduct to church authorities. It offers hope and help, bringing awareness to what's becoming a too-common problem in churches of all denominations today. This is an entertaining and informational book for anyone and everyone.

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## Endorsements

*"What happened to this devout, brave family is horrific. There are many important lessons to be learned from both their needless suffering at the hands of a shrewd predator and their further betrayal at the hands of church officials." - SNAP National Director, David Clohessy*

*"What happens when clergy abuse policies are violated or ignored? Often the answer is heartbreak and betrayal. When Curt's family unit is threatened and fragmented by a "holy man of God," Curt discovers he has only one weapon—the sword of truth. With this sword he begins a 10-year quest, slashing through the thickets of institutional indifference. As he struggles to keep his four daughters safe from abuse, he constantly encounters the demon of despair. His love for his children forces him to keep fighting. His story bears witness to the devastation of abuse, but most importantly, it gives hope that truth is paramount. This father makes all our families safer by sharing his pain-filled journey." - Janet Patterson, Advocate for SNAP*

*"Pastoral sexual abuse is a devastating event in a victim's life. But, too seldom are the secondary and periphery victims thought about or given proper treatment in order to facilitate healing. Yet their wounds are very deep and long-lasting as well. It can be incredibly difficult and painful for an unsuspecting husband and father to suddenly have to cope with the loss of his wife and family unit and to come to terms with the fact that a minister betrayed him. Yes, a minister - a man who is supposed to stand as a representative of Jesus to the congregation. This is a story of one man's journey, as a husband and father, to protect what was left of his family and his faith." - Samantha Nelson, The Hope of Survivors [www.thehopeofsurvivors.com](http://www.thehopeofsurvivors.com)*

*"Curt's experience is all too familiar to AdvocateWeb. Curt focused on every aspect of the harm done to his family and more importantly, himself, so that he could aid and assist his family through the struggles of healing from this egregious form of abuse. He refused to let it destroy his family or him and he fought back. This book is a testament to the walls that must be broken down in order for healing to effectively occur. AdvocateWeb is extremely proud of Curt and his family for their commitment to bring awareness and healing." - Cindy Boling, President AdvocateWeb [www.advocatweb.org](http://www.advocatweb.org)*

*"Curt - How very generous of you to share your personal journey with the world. Tragically, your story occurs too often in families. We all need to be guardians of our children's innocence. You have made a significant contribution by coming forward with your story. Your Web site is very effective in setting the tone for the story. I just know that your book will touch the lives of many people. Best wishes to you both. Curt is a living testament that it is possible to move beyond personal pain and anguish."- Author Beverley A. Young*

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## Reviews

*Authors H.J. Wisocki and C.J. Szajnecki have written a book that is so riveting, spellbinding, it'll take your breath away and at the same time will shock you. You won't be able to put this book down for a moment. This story could be about any clergy in any church and how they get away with abuse and abuse of their powers. The Pastor Bill Roberts is one of the most deceitful, cunning and charming devilish persons I've come across in a long time. This book is very well written and brings forth a story that will chill your blood and make you question your religious leader's motives and his ways of teaching and preaching. I will not give away the ending of this book, I do know everyone should be aware of a devil in preachers disguise. I give authors Wisocki and Szajnecki five stars \*\*\*\*\* for a great book well written. - Author Joseph Frank Baraba*

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*In Helen Wisocki and Curt Szajnecki's blockbuster book, "Innocence Betrayed - A Dad's Story of Clergy Misconduct", they deftly illustrate what any family can suffer at the hands of a less than scrupulous spiritual figurehead. When Dee and Jim welcomed their new pastor to their church, little did they realize the devilishly evil heart he hid under his robes. When this man tries to move in on Jim's family, he is suspicious, but being a good Christian, he tries to overlook certain things, and is glad his wife is finding fulfillment in doing church work. He does not expect this 'man of God' to go against the church's code of misconduct and the Ten Commandments so blatantly.*

*As you read, you will become part of this family while they are torn apart and enter a realm of chaos. Family units are supposed to be held together by the churches they attend and the counseling they afford. In this shocking case, the opposite was true. If you have wondered why even the most infamous incidents involving churches where a minister, pastor or priest who perpetrate evil deeds disappear from the news after once being reported, this book will offer some explanation. You will also see, like our own federal government, church governments can be just as shady and conduct cover ups of the misconduct of their trusted members and employees.*

*This is not a new phenomenon, and seems to occur in most religions. I am certain many cases are never reported and do not make the media unless there is murder, molestation or rape involved. While most churches are safe places and the majority of clergymen are honest, this book may change your view of organized religion forever, and make you question the actions of clergymen everywhere regardless of denomination. Prepare yourself to be alarmed and become very suspicious of any actions by clergy.*

*I consider this book an important 5-star book, especially for parents everywhere to read.*

*Zada Connaway, Author of "Mother's Journals: parts 1, 2 and 3"*

ISBN # 1-4241-6969-0

<http://www.freewebs.com/zadaconnaway/>

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**Book Excerpt – *Innocence Betrayed – A Dad’s Story of Clergy Misconduct***  
Chapter 1 – Meet the New Pastor

It was August of 1984, and Jim Sajek, a hard-hitting football player who earned the title of “class clown” in high school, was now the father of his third daughter. Growing up, he was always a husky child, with the broad shoulders of a football player, flame red hair, and a wide grin that would easily turn into a contagious laugh. He learned early in life that if he poked fun at himself when other kids teased him about his size, he could make friends and walk away with his head held high instead of crying. He did silly things to entertain his friends, like drink hot sauce on a dare. He’d hold his breath until he turned purple to make the girls in home room giggle.

Jim came from a blue-collared, sports-oriented Midwestern family, the second son of a family of three boys and two girls. After graduating from high school in 1969, he had to prove to Hillsdale College that he was serious about his schooling and pull a “B” average in summer-school classes before admittance in the fall. He pulled the grades. He honed his communications skills and learned about getting along with all types of people, the haves and the have-nots. Jim played football and learned about overcoming pressure and taking responsibility for his actions. At college he was taught to think independently and to ask questions in all areas of living and learning. He graduated in 1973 with a Bachelor’s Degree in health and physical education.

Jim enjoyed fatherhood. He reinforced his principals and determination with his children. He loved his wife, Dee, whom he met one summer at a mutual friend’s party before starting his first teaching job as a junior high school physical education instructor. She played volleyball and basketball in college, and now worked as a nutritionist at a nearby hospital. They married a couple years later. In June of 1980, their first daughter was born. Within the next four years, they had two more girls.

Jim was raised in the Catholic faith and attended parochial school through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. He went to Mass six days a week, had religion classes in school every day, and his parents sent him to weekly catechism classes. He was taught that priests had a direct connection with God and had the power to forgive sins. He learned respect for all clergy, Catholic or otherwise. It was an honor to have a priest come and share a meal with the family. It was an honor to have a priest come and share a meal with the family. When his parents invited their parish priest over for dinner, everyone was on his or her best behavior and raced around the house beforehand, making sure all was in order. Never did Jim see a story in the paper about clergy abuse, nor did he question the safety of the church. He believed that if there was a thunderstorm or a hurricane, God’s house was a safe place to go, and everyone there was protected from danger. He believed that there should be no fear where God lived, because He will keep you safe.

Dee also felt a strong connection with God, attending the Baptist church and several different churches as a child. Now she and Jim were parents, together deciding that they wanted some place different to practice their faith. Wanting to steer clear of a church with rigid rules and regulations, they needed to find a comfortable church with a pastor that gave good sermons.

Asking fellow teachers for recommendations to a church in 1985, Jim was told about a pastor preaching at the nearby United Methodist Church who was witty and

captivating. Come on down, he makes people laugh. “Let’s go see this guy,” Jim said. “He sounds like me.”

Jim and Dee liked what they saw, and they joined the congregation, having the three girls baptized in the church at the same time. The United Methodist Church was the perfect fit for the Sajek family. The church was very kid-friendly, something they both loved. Children were cared for during services in either the nursery, Bible study classes or youth group.

A fourth daughter was born in 1988, and they named her Kate. She and her oldest sister, Laurie, had their dad’s blazing red hair and big brown eyes. All four were blessed with beautiful features, and they grew tall and lean like their mother. That year, the pastor that drew the family to the church left, and a new soft-spoken, mild-mannered pastor named Pastor Warren replaced him.

Family life was filled with sports, dance classes and church functions, where the girls were around others their age. They attended Bible study classes in the lower grades and youth group in the upper grades, while the adults enjoyed a peaceful Sunday church service. The girls grew up with a solid religious background. They sang in the youth choir, performed in church plays, attended week-long choir camp in the summer, and the older girls helped build homes for the poor. Church was the center of their family life. Outside of the church activities, the family loved to camp and got together often with extended family members for parties. Jim was content with life, but he left teaching when the babies came for a more profitable career in sales to support his growing family.

On Sunday morning in late September 1993, the family was about to meet another new pastor. Dee insisted that the family get there on time. Although a challenge, Jim felt it was worth the morning insanity.

Laurie, a tall and gangly 13-year old, ran from room to room looking for her hairbrush. Lisa was two years younger, with brilliant blue eyes and light-brown hair. She raced around the house looking for a top she wanted to wear that Laurie borrowed the week before. Molly, nine years old, pulled her blond hair into a ponytail on top of her head and put on a special dress to wear to meet the new pastor. Kate looked like a baby doll in frills and lace.

Dee stepped out of the bedroom dressed in a tailored navy blue pantsuit, her shoulder-length blond hair curled in a flip, and she ran through the house rounding up the family. “Hurry up, we have to go.”

Kate ran to her dad who held out her coat. She pushed each arm through the sleeves, and her dad pushed Kate’s thick hair into a bonnet, tying the strings in a bow. He picked her up, and Molly jumped from a kitchen chair onto his back for a piggyback ride. He got them to the van, buckled them into their seats, and started the engine. When they were all accounted for, the van took off for the ten-minute ride to church, everyone chatting in different conversations.

“How about a trip to the cider mill after church?” Jim asked.

“Yeah!” the girls yelled. “Can we, Mom?”

“Sure,” Dee said. “Right after coffee hour. I brought a casserole and a batch of brownies, but we won’t stay too long. It’ll be fun going for hot apple cider and doughnuts.”

As Jim drove his family to church, it never crossed his mind that he was delivering his little lambs into the fires of hell instead of the house of God.

## Press Release

### *Local author's story of clergy scandal, battles church administrators*

Dearborn, MI - When a trusted pastor betrays a family and church administrators ignore a dad's pleas for help, a book is born. *Innocence Betrayed - A Dad's Story of Clergy Misconduct* is a fictional story of a man's ten-year quest to protect his four daughters, psychologically tortured after the minister devastates the family unit.

Main character, Jim Sajek, has many plates spinning as his pastor manipulates and dissects his family with calculated expertise, separating husband and wife, parents and children, sister and sister. With his steadfast faith in God, Jim wouldn't give up, determined to become a survivor and not a victim.

Helen Wisocki collaborated with Curt Szajnecki on a story to bring awareness to the public and help to the victims of clergy misconduct after reuniting at their 30-year high school reunion in Dearborn, Michigan.

Author Joseph Frank Baraba says *Innocence Betrayed - A Dad's Story of Clergy Misconduct* "is so riveting, spellbinding, it'll take your breath away and at the same time will shock you." He gives co-authors H. J. Wisocki and C. J. Szajnecki a five-star review for a book that "is very well written and brings forth a story that will chill your blood."

Author Zada Connaway says, "If you have wondered why even the most infamous incidents involving churches where a minister, pastor or priest who perpetrate evil deeds disappear from the news after once being reported, this book will offer some explanation."

David Clohessy of SNAP (Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests) says, "There are many important lessons to be learned from both their needless suffering at the hands of a shrewd predator and their further betrayal at the hands of church officials."

[www.innocencebetrayedbyclergy.com](http://www.innocencebetrayedbyclergy.com)

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Publish America - Paperback - 403 pages - \$24.95

Book available at: [www.publishamerica.com](http://www.publishamerica.com)  
[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)  
[www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com)