

## Papal Dreams

The night I watched  
*Mea Maxima Culpa,*  
*(My Grievous Fault),*  
about the sexual predation  
by Catholic priests of  
mostly young boys,  
I dreamed that Pope Francis  
was in town, visiting a local church.

I approached him and told him  
that I had something important  
to share with him.  
His smile was like candlelight.  
He put his arm around my shoulder  
and led me down the aisle  
toward the altar, his arm  
a comforting presence.

He stopped just below the altar  
and nodded to a priest who placed  
a white vestment over my head.  
Confused, I wondered if I'd be  
an altar server as girls may do  
in Catholic churches that have  
not yet been cleansed of Vatican II reforms.  
But this was happening in front of everybody.\*

Patricia S. T. Edmisten  
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\*The poet denies any aspirations to the priesthood, but she does yearn for sweeping reform in the Roman Catholic Church.