

# ACCUSED PRIESTS AND RABBIS

On February 20th, the *New York Times* featured a story on a priest from the Diocese of Bridgeport who was arrested, Msgr. Kevin Wallin; it was the second story on him that the paper had featured in recent weeks. On the other hand, however, two New York rabbis have been arrested this year. Yet each of them only merited one story in the *Times*. On January 31, Rabbi Yoel Malik was arrested. Rabbi Nathan David Rabinowich was arrested on February 14. (Only the print editions are being counted.)

- Msgr. Wallin was arrested for drugs.
- Rabbi Malik was arrested for sexually abusing three teenage boys. He was charged with twelve counts of sexual abuse, four counts of criminal sexual contact, eleven counts of endangering the welfare of a child, and a single charge of forcible touching.
- Rabbi Rabinowich was charged with four sexual offenses, including the attempted rape of a fourteen-year-old girl. The total number of words in the *Times* story on the priest was 3,496 (whereas today's front-page story merited 2,745 words). At the same time, the total number of words devoted to the two rabbis combined was 828 (the stories appeared on pages 22 and 25, respectively). It's not just the *Times* that gives rabbis a pass: the *New York Daily News* had two stories on Malik (only mentioning him by name in one!); the *New York Post* ran one story on him; the *Daily News* ran one story on Rabinowich; and the *Post* had none.

While Msgr. Wallin has multiple problems (he is a cross-dressing drug addict and, like Malik, he is a practicing homosexual), he is not a child rapist. So why the heightened interest in him, and the relative disinterest in the rabbis? It obviously doesn't turn on the nature of the offense.

Malik's arrest came less than two weeks after another member of his ultra-Orthodox Jewish group, an unlicensed therapist,

was sentenced to 103 years in prison for sexually abusing a young woman from the time she was twelve. By the way, a rabbi who publicly criticized this rapist had a cup of bleach thrown at him, burning his eyes and face. It never made the front page of any news- paper.

We wonder why it is that the media continues to harp on the homosexual scandal in the Catholic Church that ended a quarter century ago. Over the last- decade the number of credibly accused priests has averaged in the single digits, among a popula- tion of over 40,000. No religious or secular group can match that. Yet today much larger scandals continue in other communities, secular and religious, that continue to go largely unaddressed.