

ARCHBISHOP CHAPUT ALREADY DRAWING FLAK

On September 8, Archbishop Charles Chaput was installed as the leader of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Not even a week went by before he began receiving flak from dissidents.

On the day of Archbishop Chaput's installation, Robert Hoatson was protesting the event outside the Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul. The Philadelphia Inquirer ran a picture of him on its website, and identified him in the newspaper as a priest. What they did not say is that he is a suspended priest from New Jersey who filed a lawsuit against the Catholic Church asking to be removed from the clergy. Predictably, Chaput's homily that day was attacked by victims' groups and dissidents for not being sufficiently contrite about the fate of alleged victims in the archdiocese.

As soon as Chaput's appointment was announced in July, the phony victims' group, SNAP, held a press conference condemning him. Sister Maureen Turlish, who leads the local Church-bashing group, Voice of the Faithful, lectured him on how to proceed. Another group of malcontents, Catholics4Change, demanded that they "become part of Church leadership." But wouldn't that make them part of the dreaded "institutional Church" they so deplore?

These people also lie. Turlish, for instance, is fond of saying that the two Philadelphia grand jury reports on the archdiocese document "facts." Similarly, a recent editorial in the dissident weekly, the National Catholic Reporter, condemned the last three Philly archbishops for being "complicit in hiding crimes and criminals." Specifically, it said the archdiocese "is a place where children, mostly boys, have been raped and molested, in some cases repeatedly." It did not use the word "allegedly," accepting as "fact"

accusations that have never been challenged in court!

What was really driving the early animus against Chaput is his persona: he is bright, courageous and orthodox. That is why Catholic professors like Nicholas Cafardi and David J. O'Brien were busy telling him not to address wider moral issues, especially in the upcoming presidential season. Fat chance. Guess they don't know his steeliness.