

ARCHBISHOP NIENSTEDT DESERVES JUSTICE

Recently, the Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis decided to temporarily step down. Archbishop John Nienstedt has been the subject of a non-stop crusade orchestrated by ex-Catholics, and Catholics in rebellion against the Church, simply because he stands for everything they are not: he is a loyal son of the Catholic Church.

A couple of weeks ago—out of the blue—came an unidentified male who claimed he was touched on his buttocks in 2009 by the archbishop while posing for a group photo. Nienstedt denied the charge, adding that he has never inappropriately touched anyone. Moreover, he has not been told the identity of his accuser.

Archbishop Nienstedt would not be subjected to this kind of treatment if he were the darling of Church dissidents. We've been tracking attacks on bishops for some time, and too often we have seen a concerted effort on the part of activists, both inside and outside the Church, to tar a bishop. What they hate more than anything else are the Church's teachings on sexuality; they are the ones who are obsessed with sex, not the rank-and-file.

There is no other leader, religious or secular, who would step down pending an investigation because some guy said he was touched on his behind four years ago in a group photo. It's time the bishops revised their "zero tolerance" policy. Too often, it means zero justice for the accused, thus undermining the legal principle of innocent until proven guilty.

The bishops ought to follow suit and junk this policy before it becomes the weapon of choice against them.