

# ATTACK ON BISHOP FINN; PROTEST OF KC STAR-SNAP TIE

Beginning late October, we rallied behind Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop Robert Finn with vigor: we saturated the community with an ad that the *Kansas City Star* rejected for political reasons. Indeed, we hit virtually every Catholic church, school and lay organization in the area, along with other religious organizations, public and private schools and colleges, government officials, businesses and civic associations. We even contacted local bars, barber shops and beauty parlors. Here's what happened.

Last December, a police officer and an attorney were contacted by diocesan officials after a technician found photos of young girls on Rev. Shawn Ratigan's computer. While none of the pictures were pornographic, they were nonetheless disturbing.

Following the discovery of his fetish, Ratigan attempted suicide. He was then sent for psychiatric analysis: he was said to be suffering from depression, but was not diagnosed as a pedophile. After he violated strictures regarding his movement last May, the diocese contacted the authorities, *even though it had no legal mandate to do so*. It was then that even more disturbing photos were found.

In other words, Bishop Finn did what no other leader of any religious, or secular, organization has done: he put all the cards on the table and brought in the police *in a case where there was no complainant*. More than that, he asked for an independent investigation by a former U.S. attorney, Todd P. Graves.

Graves and a team of attorneys, former prosecutors and FBI officials issued a report concluding that while some matters may have been handled better, Bishop Finn was guilty of no

criminal wrongdoing (he had almost no role in this case). But that was not enough for the likes of the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP) and their lawyers. They drove public opinion on this issue, resulting in an unprecedented indictment of a bishop—on a misdemeanor, no less. Subsequently, they have been on a rampage finding new “victims” to sue.

At the end of October, Bill Donohue submitted a full-page ad (costing \$25,000) to be placed in the *Kansas City Star* exposing the shenanigans: it was turned down *without explanation*, even though the newspaper is in financial straits! The *Star*-SNAP alliance was indisputably cemented.

On November 15, Bishop Finn agreed to meet on a monthly basis with the Clay County prosecutor about any suspicious behavior of those in his employ; in return, charges have been dropped. Still to be settled are similar charges made by the Jackson County prosecutor.