

BISHOP BARRES SUPPORTS RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Bishop John Barres' defense of accused priests:

No institution in the nation publishes the names of employees accused of sexual misconduct except for some dioceses in the Roman Catholic Church. They don't do it in Hollywood, the media, the public schools, or in any other religion. Just some Catholic dioceses. One diocese that refuses to go along is the Diocese of Rockville Centre on Long Island.

It is also challenging a portion of the New York State Child Victims Act: it maintains that the suspension of the statute of limitations that the Act entails is a violation of the due process clause in the state constitution.

Bishop John Barres is certainly concerned about the welfare of those young people who have been sexually abused: He has made good on efforts to institutionalize compensation for them. But he is also concerned about the rights of the accused, which is why his diocese is challenging the Child Victims Act.

On November 18, News 12 Long Island ran a news clip about "some demonstrators" who showed up on Sunday outside St. Agnes Cathedral, home of the diocese, to protest the court action taken by Barres. How many were "some"? Two. That's right—two demonstrators showed up. One of them, Robert Hoatson, is an embittered ex-priest from New Jersey who hates the Catholic Church. So this is what passes as news?

Kudos to Bishop Barres for standing up for the rights of the accused, as well as for the welfare of victims.