

CARDINAL LAW R.I.P.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the death of Cardinal Bernard Law:

Cardinal Law was a champion of the unborn, a sincere friend of Jews, and a civil rights activist who embraced the cause of African Americans. Sadly, he will also be remembered for presiding over the clergy sexual abuse scandal.

Two of the most diabolical priests in the nation served in the Archdiocese of Boston—John Geoghan and Paul Shanley. Geoghan preyed on young boys, and Shanley had with sex with males of all ages, from children to adults.

It was Law's predecessor, Cardinal Humberto Medeiros, who appointed Shanley his "representative for sexual minorities," a bizarre role for any priest. This occurred in 1970, at a time when homosexual priests were actively abusing young men all across the nation. Shanley took advantage of his post, arguing publicly about the merits of man-boy sex; he was also named chaplain to Dignity, the dissident homosexual Catholic group.

By the end of the decade, Medeiros put an end to Shanley's ministry, but the damage had already been done. Shanley would later criticize two new oaths issued by the Vatican: the Profession of Faith and the Oath of Fidelity. The archdiocese did nothing about it. Indeed, it excused Shanley from taking the oath. It was delinquent decisions like this that created this monster priest.

Cardinal Law was a theological conservative, but he did not govern as a conservative. Indeed, it was his relaxed stance, allowing bishops subordinate to him to make decisions about molesting priests that got him into trouble. Had he confronted those who pushed for less stringent rules governing sexuality, there would have been no crisis. Ironically, those who

promoted this agenda then blamed him when news of the homosexual scandal hit the news.

In taking the measure of any leader, we must weigh his strengths alongside his weaknesses. He had plenty of both.

Cardinal Law is now with the Lord. May he rest in peace.