

HARVEY WEINSTEIN vs. BILL DONOHUE

Bill Donohue

For over two decades, Harvey Weinstein and I have been at war with each other. It started in 1995 when Miramax released the anti-Catholic movie, "Priest." Miramax was the creation of the two Weinstein brothers, Bob and Harvey; the parent company was Disney.

I was president of the Catholic League for only two years at the time. I realized right from the get-go that if I let this movie slide, Disney would see it as a sign of weakness, so I pulled out all the stops.

The movie portrayed five priests, all of whom were dysfunctional. Worse, their dysfunctionality was a function of the priesthood. In other words, the teachings of the Catholic Church were responsible for their depraved condition. The cause and effect was plain, and it made all the difference.

Two of the priests in the movie were having an affair: one with the female housekeeper, and the other with his newly acquired male friend. Another priest was a drunk, the country pastor was a madman, and the bishop was simply wicked.

At the end of the movie, the straight priest who was sleeping with the housekeeper defends the gay priest in front of the congregation. Using vulgar language, he asks the faithful at Mass whether God cares what men do with their sex organ, beckoning them to focus their attention on such real outrages as war, famine, and disaster.

I made the decision to confront Disney/Miramax, or what Cardinal John O'Connor called Disneymax, so I held a press conference at the Catholic Center of the Archdiocese of New

York. Surrounding the podium were huge toy animals featuring the Lion King, Mickey Mouse, Pluto, and the like. I wanted to make this all about Disney.

I had been tipped off that several executives from Disney/Miramax were in the audience. So I began by telling them to get out. I told them they could hold their own press conference in the street, where they belonged. They quickly grabbed their coats and pocketbooks and made a beeline to the door. The TV cameramen loved it.

The movie was scheduled to open on Good Friday, but after our protest caught fire, they quickly backed down, releasing it on a later date. It turned out to be a dud anyway, though some Jesuit priests loved it.

The next confrontation was even wilder. In 1999, the movie "Dogma" was released, but not before I obtained a copy of the script. The film featured Jesus and Mary having sex. A descendant of theirs was a lapsed Catholic who works in an abortion clinic. God was played by Alanis Morissette, a vulgar actress. The 13th apostle resembled Jerry Springer.

After reading the script, which I obtained the year before it hit the big screen, I wrote to Disney CEO Michael Eisner. "It looks as though Catholic sensibilities will be offended once again. Perhaps it is not too late for something to be done about this," I said.

On April 5, 1999, I issued a news release, "Disney/Miramax Poised to Anger Catholics Again." What prompted the release were news stories citing entertainment sources saying the Catholic League is going to go nuts when this movie is released. Two days later, Miramax faxed me its news release saying that Eisner told the Weinsteins that the movie could not use the Disney/Miramax label. This meant that the Weinstein brothers had to invest \$14 million of their own dollars to finance the film.

This was an important victory—Eisner bowed to our pressure. We didn't give up: we set our sights on having Disney sever all ties with Miramax. That eventually happened.

The drama was only beginning. Bully lawyers for the Weinsteins tried to intimidate me. They failed miserably. Here's what happened.

After "Dogma" star Ben Affleck remarked that "This movie is definitely meant to push buttons," I responded by saying, "The Catholic League has a few buttons to push, and we will not hold back." I thought nothing of it—it was just a tit-for-tat. Then I received a threatening letter from the Los Angeles firm of Mitchell, Silberberg & Knupp, representing the Weinsteins.

The firm chose Dan Petrocelli to go after me. He was a real heavyweight. Alan Dershowitz once said he was the best attorney in the nation. Among his victories was his successful prosecution of O.J. Simpson in a civil suit. But he ran into a brick wall when he tangled with me.

Here is what Petrocelli said:

"Statements like these may be interpreted to announce or imply an intention by the League to go beyond the bounds of legitimate and peaceful dissent or protest, and to stimulate, motivate, or incite danger or violence. Please be advised any such impermissible activity authorized, committed, or encouraged by the League that harms or threatens harm to any person will not be tolerated. We intend to hold the League fully accountable for any wrongdoing, injury, or damage it causes."

The letter was sent Overnight Priority Federal Express to the Catholic League at our office; we rented space at the time from the Archdiocese of New York. I immediately faxed Petrocelli the following missive: "You erroneously sent your threatening letter to 101 First Avenue. Our address is 1011 First Avenue. Please make a note of it."

After toying with the Weinstein firm, I then went public with their letter, and with my response:

"The letter by the Weinstein attorneys is wonderful. It proves who the true enemies of free speech really are. Now I don't even have to argue this issue anymore—all I need do is present their letter. It settles everything.

"I don't know how many years it has been since the lawyers of Mitchell, Silberberg & Knupp last took a course in constitutional law. But even if they are slip and fall hacks, they should know better.

"The Catholic League protest of 'Dogma' will now proceed with even more vigor than ever before. Fascistic attempts to silence us will never win."

I wasn't finished. Not only did I hold a press conference and write a critical booklet on "Dogma," which was widely distributed, I took out an op-ed page ad in the *New York Times* going after Disney for not dumping Miramax altogether. We were on the offense; Eisner and the Weinsteins knew it.

In 2002, Eisner was back in the fold with the Weinsteins. "40 Days and 40 Nights" was another Catholic-bashing film, though not as vulgar as the others. Just as it was about to open Disney held its annual shareholders' meeting in Hartford, Connecticut. On the day of the meeting, I took out an ad in the *Hartford Courant* asking Disney shareholders to dump Miramax.

The pressure we exerted was paying off. Disney's stock was plummeting: it dropped 32 percent between 2001 and 2002. Eisner was worried. In 2005, Disney officially split from Miramax.

The split didn't stop the Weinsteins from assaulting Catholicism. We waged war on Miramax in 2003 when it released "The Magdalene Sisters." It was the creation of Peter Mullan, who at the time compared the Catholic Church to the Taliban.

The movie portrayed all nuns as wicked persons who exploited unwed mothers. Mullan admitted that the movie "encapsulated everything that is bad about the Catholic Church." Two honest board members of the Venice Film Festival rightfully called it "anti-Catholic propaganda."

Catholics received a Christmas gift from the Weinsteins in 2003, and again in 2006. In 2003, they offered "Bad Santa," and three years later they delivered "Black Christmas." The former was the worst. Santa was presented as a chain-smoking, drunken, foul-mouthed, suicidal, sexual predator. He was depicted having sex with a bartender in a car and performing anal sex on a huge woman in a dressing room.

Next up was "Philomena." The Weinsteins really thought they would earn an Oscar for it, and indeed Harvey lobbied hard for it. His efforts were in vain. The 2014 film was based on a series of lies, many of which I detailed in a booklet.

The movie featured Judi Dench playing Philomena Lee, a young girl who got pregnant out-of-wedlock in Ireland in 1952 when she was 18-years-old. That part was true. But it was a malicious lie to say the nuns stole her baby and then sold him "to the highest bidder." It was also a lie to say Philomena went to the U.S. to find him.

We went after this propaganda film big time, so much so that those associated with it began to walk back their story. All of a sudden it became a movie that was "inspired" by true events. Harvey tried to manipulate Pope Benedict XVI into seeing it, but he failed.

Now the Weinsteins are working on "Mary Magdalene." Perhaps it would be more accurate to say Bob is working on it. Harvey is in therapy. He should be in jail.

Hollywood has long been home to anti-Catholics, and no one sits higher on this throne of bigotry than Harvey Weinstein. He tried to silence me, but failed. Now his own people have

turned on him.

There remains an issue that is bigger than Harvey Weinstein: the insatiable appetite for Catholic bashing that marks Tinseltown.

Late-night talk show hosts never stop ripping priests, making generalizations about them that they would never say about any of the many protected demographic groups. So why do they hate us so much?

There are many reasons why, but none is more important than sex. It is Hollywood that is obsessed with sex, not the Catholic Church (I can't remember the last time I heard a homily about sex). Hollywood is the land of free love, sexual exploitation, pederasty, and womanizing. It preaches a sexual ethic that knows no boundaries.

Then there is the Catholic Church. It respects boundaries and is opposed to the kind of sexual recklessness that Hollywood basks in. That's why it is hated. Yes, there have been priests who have acted badly, but every one of them violated the teachings of the Church. By contrast, Hollywood celebrities and executives who prey on others are acting in compliance with their "ethic" of libertinism.

The revelations about Harvey Weinstein are one thing. What about all the other big shots in Hollywood? What about all the journalists, lawyers, and politicians in the pockets of these men? Most of all, what about all the children who have been raped, groped, and exploited by these power brokers? While some of their stories have leaked out, there is so much more we don't know.

It takes no courage to condemn Hollywood titans who abuse women and children. But it takes plenty of guts to condemn the kinds of morally debased fare that Hollywood delivers. Let's face it, Hollywood is the most important cultural player in the nation (at least in the secular segment of society), and

what it has done to our culture can no longer be tolerated.

To some extent, we are all a product of our environment. Now ask yourself: What kind of environment has Hollywood crafted since the days when “Sound of Music” was released?

“What goes around, comes around.” That may be trite, but it is often true. Just ask Harvey Weinstein.

SNAP IMPLODES

Bill Donohue

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) has been sued before, and while it has been hurt by those filings, the latest one suggests the end is near. It can't come too soon.

The Catholic League has been tracking SNAP for years. From news releases to radio and TV interviews, we have kept the media abreast of just how corrupt the outfit is. We've sent people undercover to attend its public conferences; we've taken out ads in major newspapers; we've issued several lengthy reports; we've fielded complaints from its clients; and we've consulted with bishops and others. SNAP is a fraud.

The lawsuit by a former employee, Gretchen Rachel Hammond, registers several serious accusations against SNAP, all of which are supported by the Catholic League's own investigations of the group. The two together—an eyewitness account and our research—wholly discredit its reputation and completely disarm its supporters, namely, those in the mainstream media.

Hammond has sued David Clohessy, the executive director,

Barbara Blaine, founder and president, and outreach director Barbara Dorris; the case is before the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois. Hammond, a transgender person, worked for SNAP as its director of development between mid-2011 and early 2013. In that capacity, Hammond learned the truth about SNAP, and has now unloaded with the details.

Not surprisingly, after confronting SNAP officials about its ethically offensive and legally suspect work, Hammond was subject to retaliatory action. Consequently, the plaintiff suffered from stress and depression, resulting in health problems. Hammond is suing for a loss of wages as well. The lawsuit closes with a grave indictment: "SNAP acted willfully with actual malice, including a wanton disregard for the rights of others such that an award of punitive damages is appropriate."

Hammond uncovered a whole lot, all of which will be discussed. Most seriously, the lawsuit says that "SNAP routinely accepts financial kickbacks from attorneys in the form of 'donations,'" and in return SNAP "refers survivors as potential clients to attorneys, who then file lawsuits on behalf of the survivors against the Catholic Church. These cases often settle to the financial benefit of the attorneys and, at times, to the financial health of SNAP, which has received direct payments from survivors' settlements."

Anti-Catholicism Drives SNAP

Before addressing the legal issues involved, it is important to understand what makes SNAP tick. Hammond learned first-hand what the Catholic League has been saying for decades: SNAP is driven by a pathological hatred of the Catholic Church, not a concern for the welfare of victims.

"While SNAP claims that it is motivated by the interests of survivors, in fact," the lawsuit says, "SNAP is motivated largely by the personal animus of its directors and officers

against the Catholic Church.”

For example, Clohessy recommended that an alleged victim pursue a claim against the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, saying that every nickel it doesn't have is money that can't be spent on “defense lawyers, PR staff, gay-bashing, women-hating, contraceptive-battling, etc.” He then offered to refer the person to one of his lawyer friends.

The Catholic League is in an even better position than Hammond to identify SNAP's hatred of the Catholic Church.

On July 8-10, 2011 SNAP held a national conference, open to the public, near the airport in Washington, D.C. There were approximately 110-130 people in attendance, all white, mostly female, aged 40-75 (mostly seniors or near seniors). They came from only a few states.

We know this, and much more, because I paid for two persons to attend the conference and report back. I subsequently published the findings online in a report, “SNAP EXPOSED: *Unmasking the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests.*” Copies were sent to all the bishops.

Here is how one of our confederates summed up his experience. “The recurring theme of the conference was the evil nature of the Catholic Church. The word ‘evil’ was used repeatedly to describe ‘the institution.’ There was no presumption of innocence: accused priests were spoken of as if they were guilty, and this was true of all the speakers, including the attorneys.”

It was no surprise that Jeffrey Anderson was one of the speakers. No one has ripped off the Catholic Church more than this diminutive lawyer from Minnesota. A former hippie and recovering alcoholic, in one settlement alone he netted half a billion dollars. He once described himself as a “dedicated atheist.” His goal, he plainly admits, is to “sue the s*** out of them [the Catholic Church].” His hatred runs deep: He has

sued the Vatican on several occasions, trying to hold the pope responsible for priestly misconduct from Boston to Bombay. He has never won.

Father Thomas Doyle, a Dominican, is another recovering alcoholic who has big problems with the Catholic Church. He blasted the Church for promoting “fear, power, and guilt,” saying that Constantine, not Jesus Christ, founded the Church.

Another speaker, Terence McKiernan, founder and president of BishopAccountability, told the small gathering of Catholic haters that he would like to “stick it to” New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan. He also accused him of “keeping the lid on 55 names” of predator priests. On several occasions, I personally asked McKiernan to provide me with his list of names, but he never responds. It’s a lie, and he knows it.

Richard Sipe, a former Benedictine monk, told the seniors, “The Church is corrupt,” and proceeded to make many unsupported accusations. He knew no one would challenge him because they all came to hear horror stories.

It would be a serious mistake to assume that this is just venting, idle banter coming from some malcontents. No, this is the mindset that drives SNAP to plunder the rights of priests. Take SNAP president Barbara Blaine. She has justified raids made by Belgian police on Catholic churches, and is adamant in her conviction, expressed at the conference, that while accused priests may have a legal right to countersue, they have no moral right to do so.

Clohessy was once asked about the rights of priests, and when pressed about what he means by pursuing “credibly accused” priests, he could not provide a clear answer, saying only that “there’s all kinds of criteria” determining what that means. In practice, SNAP makes no distinction between an accusation and one that has been substantiated.

The contempt that SNAP has for the rights of priests is bad

enough, but it pales in significance compared to its own conspiratorial savaging of innocent priests. Take the case of Father Joseph Jiang. SNAP accused him of sexually abusing minors.

SNAP said it knew who the victims were, but when pressed it could not name a single person. When ordered by a federal court to provide evidence, it refused to do so, resulting in sanctions. This was one reason why U.S. District Court Judge Carol E. Jackson accused SNAP of defaming Father Jiang. The Hammond lawsuit was right to seize on the judge's ruling.

The court declared that "it has been established that the SNAP defendants conspired with one another and others to obtain plaintiff's conviction on sexual abuse charges and that they entered into this conspiracy due to discriminatory animus against plaintiff based on his religion, religious vocation, race and national origin." Moreover, the court ruled that "the SNAP defendants' public statements about plaintiff were false and that they did not conduct any inquiry into the truth or falsity of these public statements, but instead made these statements negligently and with reckless disregard for the truth."

That's quite an indictment. SNAP officials conspired to make false charges against an innocent priest and did so because they hate the Catholic Church.

What makes this even more sickening is the fact that when SNAP learns of real sexual abuse, it does nothing about it. To be specific, David Clohessy is quick to condemn bishops for not reporting suspected priests, yet he never called the cops in the 1990s on his priest brother, Kevin, after learning that he abused a minor.

Kickbacks

Hammond's lawsuit lists one "donation" after another being made by plaintiff attorneys to SNAP. These SNAP-greasing

lawyers make up the lion's share of funds collected by Clohessy and company in any given year. For example, in 2008, "a Minnesota lawyer" contributed 55 percent—\$414,140—of SNAP's total donations for the year; three years later he contributed over 40 percent of total revenue. The lawyers, of course, love to write SNAP a check because that's how they get many of their clients.

SNAP is so thoroughly corrupt that it has even laundered money to itself via dummy organizations. "Tellingly, at one time during 2011 and 2012," the lawsuit says, "SNAP even concocted a scheme to have attorneys make donations to a front foundation, styled the 'Minnesota Center for Philanthropy,' and then have the Minnesota Center for Philanthropy make a grant to SNAP in order to provide a subterfuge for, and to otherwise conceal, the plaintiff's attorneys' kickbacks to SNAP."

Keep in mind that this is just what we know from the short time Hammond was working there. God only knows how many other rip-off schemes SNAP has been involved in over the years.

When Clohessy was deposed in 2012, in a case involving a priest in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, he was asked to disclose his source of funding. He refused. When asked specifically about monies SNAP receives from lawyers, he once again refused to answer. What really set him off was the question, "Does SNAP have any agreements with attorneys regarding referral of victims to those attorneys?" He never answered the question, saying only that he was "offended" by it.

At the 2011 SNAP conference, Anderson shamelessly conducted a fundraising appeal on the spot, matching dollar for dollar any donation made by an attendee. But he made it clear he would not match a \$10,000 donation by fellow attorney Jeffrey Herman. All total, \$30,000 was raised. So if Herman gave \$10,000, and Anderson matched all donations save for Herman's

contribution, that means the attendees dished out \$10,000. In other words, two steeple-chasing attorneys accounted for two-thirds of all the money raised. Without their input, SNAP would have folded years ago.

Corruption Abounds

SNAP's unseemly relationship with lawyers is not confined to funding. For example, according to the lawsuit, it "regularly communicates with attorneys about their lawsuits on behalf of survivors, receiving drafts of pleadings and other privileged information. The attorneys and SNAP work together in developing the legal theories and strategies of survivors' lawsuits." It's what they do with this information that matters most. "Attorneys and SNAP base their strategy not on the best interests of the survivor, but on what will generate the most publicity and fundraising opportunities for SNAP." Hammond's account raises serious ethical and legal questions about the way SNAP operates. Attorneys would give Clohessy, Blaine, and Dorris "drafts of complaints and other pleadings prior to filing, along with other privileged information," and then they would "use those drafts to generate sensational press releases on the survivors' lawsuits." Not surprisingly, they would then issue "press releases to media outlets and schedule a press conference on the day a survivors' lawsuit was filed."

What the lawsuit does not say is how this game is played to the disadvantage of the diocese being sued. For instance, after Clohessy completes his press conference speaking about a leaked lawsuit, the media ask the local bishop and his attorneys to comment. Of course, they cannot say anything about a lawsuit they have not seen. This is exactly the point: the Church is made to look bad.

Hammond's account is further validated by considering what Clohessy said under oath when deposed in 2012. He was asked about a lawsuit that was filed at 2:44 p.m. on October 20,

2011. How could he have had this information before it was filed in court? He used it as the basis of a press conference, blindsiding the Church in the process. Clohessy refused to answer the question.

In another case, a lawsuit had a file stamp of November 8, 2011 at 1:28 p.m. Again, Clohessy was able to post information about this before it was filed with the court. When asked to explain himself, he refused. He is a master of deceit.

Hammond shows how SNAP officials were more concerned about raking in the dough than in serving the interests of their clients. The lawsuit cites an email exchange between SNAP officials discussing a subpoena that was issued to them. The contents reveal much about their character.

One of them asked if they should mention the subpoena in their newsletter. It "may prompt more donations," the missive said, even though "on the other hand, it'll also upset more survivors...." Blaine's answer was vintage SNAP: "My initial response is that we err on the side of using it to raise money."

There it is in black and white: in a conflict between obtaining money and protecting survivors, take the cash and run. One of Blaine's colleagues agreed. What came next is priceless. An unidentified employee chimed in, cautioning everyone to be careful "what we put in e-mails, ok?" Too late for that.

The lawsuit also shows how Clohessy relies on attorneys to intimidate his critics. When a Kansas City blogger raised serious questions about the way lawyers grease SNAP, and how SNAP officials ask their clients to share some of the money they've won in a lawsuit, Clohessy asked an attorney involved in the case to reply. He said that if the writer were to get a letter from a lawyer, out of "fear" he may become "more temperate in his comments in the future." In other words,

let's see if we can silence the critic by intimidating him.

What does SNAP do with its money? The officials know how to have a good time. When traveling to The Hague in 2011 to file a lawsuit against Pope Benedict in the International Criminal Court (it went nowhere), they "used the funds raised by Plaintiff to pay for lavish hotels and other extravagant travel expenses for its leadership." Not only that, but "SNAP also uses funds meant to assist survivors on its own legal troubles."

SNAP is not an organization the way the Catholic League is. We have a staff that goes to work Monday thru Friday, reporting to our office in New York City. Not SNAP. When Clohessy was deposed, he testified that SNAP has a business address in Chicago. Who works there is a mystery. He didn't even know the zip code. He works out of his home, but it is not near the Chicago office. It's in the St. Louis area.

What does Clohessy do for a living? He said he fields phone calls from strangers who "share their pain" with him. So what does he do about their pain? "I console them and I may be on the phone with them for an hour." He said he doesn't charge a fee. So generous of him.

Declaring one's home a place of business raises legal questions. Clohessy was asked whether "at your house do you have an occupational license or a business license to do business out of your house?" He simply said, "No."

Under oath, Clohessy was asked if SNAP gives a portion of its funds to charity, as required by law. He replied, "I'm not aware of that." So what does SNAP do with its money? It was revealed that in 2007 it spent a total of \$593 on "survivor support." That was it. The following year it spent \$92,000 on travel. This is quite a racket.

How SNAP Exploits Survivors

On the first page of Hammond's lawsuit, it says "SNAP does not focus on protecting or helping survivors—it exploits them."

SNAP, the lawsuit says, "callously disregards the real interests of survivors, using them instead as props and tools in furtherance of SNAP's own commercial fundraising goals. Instead of recommending that survivors pursue what is in their best personal, emotional, and financial interests, SNAP pressures survivors to pursue costly and stressful litigation against the Catholic Church, all in order to further SNAP's own publicity and fundraising interests."

The media would have us believe that SNAP is a caring, survivor outreach organization in pursuit of justice. It is anything but.

If SNAP really cared about the victims of sexual abuse, it would employ professional counselors to deal with them. But as the lawsuit says, it "did not have a single grief counselor or rape counselor on its payroll." Moreover, it "never reached out to, or communicated with, grief counselors or rape counselors for the purpose of providing counseling to survivors through SNAP's network."

Worse, SNAP "would even ignore survivors who reached out to them." When Dorris was told about phone calls from aggrieved parties—persons who shared their traumatic experiences—she told Hammond "to simply not answer phone calls from survivors seeking assistance and counseling." In other words, just blow them off.

There is one Louisiana psychiatrist who did work for SNAP, Dr. Steve Taylor, but in 2011 he was sentenced to prison. His offense? Possession of child pornography. SNAP defended him! In fact, Blaine wrote to the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners pleading with them to cut Taylor some slack. And they have the nerve to pretend that they care about child sexual abuse.

SNAP claims to be a rape crisis center, but it is a lie. The lawsuit correctly references Clohessy's deposition, citing how the court labeled as "meritless" SNAP's assertion that it is a rape crisis center.

Clohessy told the court that he didn't have to comply with a request for internal documents, nor did he have to answer any questions. He cited Missouri law which protects the confidentiality of rape crisis centers. But when asked, point blank, "Did you identify yourself as a rape crisis center?", he said, "I don't know." At a later point, he admitted, "I don't know under the Missouri statutes exactly what constitutes a rape crisis center."

Clohessy was asked about his training as a rape crisis center counselor. He admitted that he had no formal education or training in that area. In fact, he is not a licensed counselor, and even admitted he has never taken formal classes in counseling sexual abuse victims. [He has a bachelor's degree in philosophy and political science.] Yet his lack of expertise did not stop him from falsely presenting himself as a counselor. In fact, no one at SNAP has ever been a licensed counselor.

When Clohessy was asked where his "counseling" sessions took place, he said, "We meet people wherever they want to meet, in Starbucks, at, you know—wherever people feel comfortable, that's where we meet." What do they do? He admitted that "the overwhelming bulk of our work is talking to, listening to, supporting sex abuse victims." He did not say who paid for the coffee in these "clinical" settings.

How SNAP Exploits the Media

The lawsuit charges that SNAP "manipulates and exploits media publicity surrounding survivors' lawsuits against the church to raise its own publicity and drive fundraising efforts." In a case involving Father Michael Tierney, et al., the trial

judge issued a gag order after SNAP made statements that “seriously jeopardize [the priest’s] ability to receive a fair trial in this case.” That gag order was then violated, leading to a very telling exchange.

Clohessy was put on the spot. “Has SNAP to your knowledge ever issued a press release that contained false information?” He didn’t blink. “Sure.”

Not only does SNAP lie to the media, it has a blueprint for doing so. At the conference, Clohessy gave some tips on how to sucker the media and stick it to the Church. Attendees were instructed that the best way to get the media’s attention is to hold press conferences outside a chancery. That way when the event is over, reporters can quickly seek an interview with some diocesan PR person.

What really works, the gathering was told, is to play on the emotions of reporters. “Display holy childhood photos!” What if no photos are available? “If you don’t have compelling holy childhood photos,” Clohessy said, “we can provide you with photos of other kids that can be held up for the camera.” It doesn’t matter whose kids are in the photo—what counts is that the media be seduced.

Clohessy also instructed attorneys to conduct interviews in front of the parish where the priest was assigned. Why? This is a good way to get clients and entice whistleblowers to come forward when they see the interview on TV.

It is important, Clohessy said, to use “feeling words.” He offered some suggestions. “I was scared. I was suicidal.” He counseled that it is better to come across as sad, not mad; doing so facilitates making an emotional connection with the audience. It was also critical to use the word “kids” as often as possible. That pulls at everyone’s heart strings.

Conclusion

What we know about SNAP, and what is alleged, is startling.

- It accepts kickbacks from attorneys
- It is motivated by a pathological hatred of the Catholic Church
- It has no respect for the rights of accused priests
- It lies about priests
- It lies to survivors
- It lies to judges
- It lies to the media
- It seeks to intimidate and silence its critics
- It blindsides diocesan officials with leaked lawsuits
- It abuses donations
- It exploits survivors by offering unlicensed counseling services
- It spends practically nothing on servicing survivors
- It manipulates the media by staging events
- It retaliates against employees who question its operations

In short, SNAP officials function as borderline gangsters out to destroy innocent persons. It is motivated by hate and exploits the very people it claims to serve. Justice demands that it be shut down by the authorities before it does any more harm.

SCHOOL CHOICE READY TO ROLL

Bill Donohue

The public school establishment had better fasten its seatbelts—the school choice movement is ready to roll. Donald Trump is committed to school reform and so are an increasing number of governors.

Our new president will have as his new Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, a strong school choice proponent. She championed the Indiana voucher program launched by Governor Mike Pence, our new vice president. Look for her to hit the ground running.

It is natural to fear competition—in any walk of life—which is why those at the top spend so much time looking in their rear view mirror. This is particularly the case when those in first place owe their position to laws and regulations that insulate them from competition. But the economic success of America is not due to monopolies and oligopolies; rather, it is due to the marketplace.

The same is true of education. The public schools have long been protected from competition by Democrats, virtually all of whom receive funding from the teachers unions. While there are many excellent public schools, there are serious problems deeply embedded in the system: the worst teachers are constantly defended—it is almost impossible to get rid of them—and the schools are top-heavy with unproductive, indeed meddling, administrators.

Only competition will change the status quo. The good news is that the need for change is the very issue that got Trump elected. Now is the time to strike.

There is plenty of evidence that the school choice movement is scaring the daylights out of the public school community. In December, there was a lengthy piece in *Mother Jones*, a left-wing magazine, on Pence's voucher program. It floated many myths that need to be debunked, among them being the idea that school choice is a failure.

The article, authored by Stephanie Mencimer, claims that a study by researchers at the University of Notre Dame found that in the first three years of the Indiana voucher program, students who left the public schools for a voucher school saw

their math scores decline and English scores stay flat (as compared to students who remained in public schools).

To begin with, the math decline extended to the first two years, not three. More important, the study was incomplete: it was not finished and did not use the most rigorous tests available. It must also be noted that when students transfer to private schools, their scores often do not improve immediately; after an initial period of adjustment, they more often do.

“Perhaps not surprisingly,” Mencimer writes, “the kids in these schools [those who transferred to private schools] aren’t performing very well on the state’s standardized tests.” Nonsense.

In 2014, 90.3 percent of the public school students in Indiana passed the reading test; 96.9 percent of those in private schools did. In 2015, 86.8 percent of public school students passed this exam; 95.6 percent of the private school students did.

Over the past few decades, almost every study on school choice programs has found that they succeed: they typically record a marked increase in the academic performance of students who have transferred to a private school. That is what worries the public school establishment: the data are not on their side. If they were, they would not be protesting school choice initiatives.

Another argument against school choice made by Mencimer is that monies spent on school vouchers come at “the expense” of public schools. In fact, as three Harvard studies confirm, public schools benefit when such programs are instituted.

Caroline Hoxby of Harvard’s Department of Education found that when public schools must compete with private schools and charter schools for funding, students in public and non-public schools do better. This is a win-win.

In Milwaukee, for example, Hoxby found “dramatic productivity improvements” in the public schools when school vouchers went into effect. She also noted a “burst of productivity growth” in Michigan public schools “once charter school competition reached a critical level”; there were “broadly similar” results in Arizona.

The Manhattan Institute, the most respected urban think-tank in the nation, studied how students in low-performing Florida schools did when faced with competition from students in voucher schools. They found that it was precisely in those schools—the struggling ones—where the most improvement was notched (a jump of 9.3 percent on math tests and 10.1 percent on reading). Most telling, low-performing schools that were not threatened with competition by vouchers failed to make similar gains in state testing.

The most recent study on school choice was published in October 2016 by Martin F. Lueken of EdChoice. His focus was not vouchers, but tax-credit scholarships. This initiative allows taxpayers to receive full or partial tax credits when they donate to nonprofits that provide students with private school scholarships. This program is available to individuals and businesses, and bypasses any direct subsidy to private schools.

According to Lueken, “these programs generated between \$1.7 billion and \$3.4 billion in taxpayer savings through the 2013-2014 school year. That is equivalent to up to \$3,000 per scholarship student.” Look for these initiatives to grow. They sidestep some traditional school choice hurdles while saving the taxpayers a bundle. It also makes it harder for the enemies of school choice to make their case.

Mencimer is also fretting over the alleged “windfall for religious schools” that school vouchers offer. *“Creationists, Catholics and a madrasa all received taxpayer funding,”* she emphatically said. Translated that means that bible-thumping

evangelicals, parochial-minded Catholics, and machete-wielding Muslims stand to benefit.

Regarding the latter, Mencimer is jittery. She tells us that “a madrasa, an Islamic religious school,” was recently home to a man who tried to join ISIS. Now it is not every day that a so-called progressive will admit to being fearful of a madrasa. However, when it suits their case—trying to frighten the rest of us—they are not above playing the Islamists card.

There is also something else going on here, and it bodes well for the future. Those who share Mencimer’s vision are no strangers to bashing evangelicals and traditional Catholics—they do so routinely—but their bigotry usually does not extend to Muslims. This is a good sign. Not to be misunderstood, it means that progressives fear an alliance among these three groups, one that could prove to be formidable. Orthodox Jews and Mormons are also likely allies.

“Almost every single one of these voucher schools is religious,” Mencimer writes. She never explains why almost all parents who participate in school choice programs elect to send their children to the religious school of their choice. Nor does she explain why the Obamas, the Kennedys, and the like, always send their kids to private schools, while denying school choice to the disadvantaged.

Radical secularists, led by the ACLU, have been suing state laws for decades trying to kill school choice programs. But they are on the wrong side of history. In 2013, as even Mencimer admits, the Indiana Supreme Court ruled that the voucher program passed constitutional muster, arguing that public funds went to students, not the schools.

Even more encouraging is what is happening in Nevada. In September, the state Supreme Court upheld the state’s education savings accounts, a program that allows parents who withdraw their children from public schools to use state funds

to pay for private school tuition and attendant services. It is the nation's first universal school choice program, one that is likely to be championed by the Trump administration. The ACLU lost in its effort to strike down this initiative as unconstitutional.

It is because these church-and-state objections are not working that so many progressives have decided to choose a different tactic: they are attempting to intimidate the incoming Secretary of Education, rallying the teachers unions against her.

Already, the atheists at Freedom from Religion Foundation are sounding the alarms. They are accusing DeVos of pushing a "theocratic agenda to destroy public, secular education." Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, says she is an "insult to public education." And the reliably worried Huffington Post is warning the public about her "conservative Christian worldview."

Politico, a prominent website, did some scratching around and found that in 2001 DeVos said she wanted to promote school choice as a way to "advance God's Kingdom." Look for some inquiring senator to question her about this when the hearings begin. Had she said her quest was to "retard God's Kingdom," those who are now protesting her nomination would be cheering.

DeVos is no extremist, which is why she has won the plaudits of Father Robert Sirico of the Acton Institute. What she, and her husband, Dick, preach is common sense. "We both believe that competition and choices make everyone better and that ultimately if the system that prevails in the United States today had more competition...that all of the schools would be better as a result." Amen.

There is another strength to private schools that people like Mencimer never address—safety. When I taught in Spanish Harlem

in the 1970s, I quickly learned that the number one reason why parents (mostly mothers) sent their children to St. Lucy's was safety: they knew their children would not be assaulted.

Across the street from where I taught was a public school. The violence was so bad that it had to be shut down. I sometimes accompanied my students home to protect them from gangs, and occasionally had to confront thugs—taking weapons away from them—who threatened my kids. But none of these incidents took place at St. Lucy's.

That safety matters has been documented by Paul Peterson and David Campbell of Harvard. They did an important study on the effects of 40,000 scholarships awarded to low-income families; the children were sent to the school of their choice. What they found, beyond academic improvement, was how “very satisfied” parents were with their school's “safety, discipline, and values.”

Trump may be a billionaire but he gets it on this point. Last July, at the Republican National Convention, he said, “We will rescue kids from failing schools by helping their parents send them to a safe school of their choice.” Yes, the schools must be safe, not just academically excellent.

How anyone can argue against school choice at this point is astounding. In 2010, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg donated \$100 million to Newark's public schools; it was matched with another \$100 million. It was a monumental failure—all \$200 million down the toilet. Most of the money went to the unions, consultants, and other vultures. What did he expect?

In 2014, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio refused to support school choice, instead electing to give \$839 million to improve failing public schools. The results are just in: it, too, was a monumental failure. Of the 94 schools that began the program, three met all of their targets.

Trump's support for school choice couldn't have come at a

better time.

BIAS AND BIGOTRY AT THE BBC PART II

In her report on the BBC's response to Jimmy Savile, Dame Janet Smith contended that no one at the top of the BBC ever heard about Savile's decades-long history of rape, though much of it occurred on the BBC's premises. If we are to accept her conclusion, then why should we believe that the pope knew about molesting priests half-way around the world? After all, the BBC is tiny compared to the Vatican.

BBC senior management oversee approximately 23,000 workers; the pope oversees more than 5,000 bishops, 416,000 priests, 40,000 deacons, 54,500 non-ordained male religious; 683,000 female religious; and 117,000 seminarians. They work in 3,000 dioceses serving 1.27 billion members in 220,000 parishes in every part of the globe.

The BBC has produced several reports and documentaries on priestly sexual abuse, holding Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI culpable for what happened. The evidence, as we shall see, is speculative at best and non-existent at worst.

"Suing the Pope" was a 2002 documentary about Colm O'Gorman. He says he was raped by a priest when he was 14 and that it lasted for a few years. He told no one about it until 1995, when he was 29. Did "the Church" ignore his story? Not at all. The accused priest was arrested that same year; he committed suicide four years later. An admission of negligence and

payment for damages was forthcoming, but O’Gorman wasn’t satisfied: he sued the bishop, the Papal Nuncio, and Pope John Paul II. Obviously, O’Gorman got nowhere, but that he would even try to pin this on the pope speaks volumes about his agenda.

The BBC documentary was not simply about O’Gorman—he was hired to produce it. Of course, none of Savile’s many victims would ever be given the chance to produce a BBC documentary detailing what happened to them.

The BBC was so happy with O’Gorman’s self-documentary that he was assigned another project, the result of which was the 2006 documentary, “Sex Crimes and the Vatican.” It was a hit job on Pope Benedict XVI, as well as on the Vatican as a whole. This was followed in 2010 by another Panorama program, “What the Pope Knew”; it also smeared Benedict (O’Gorman was not involved in this one).

As will become evident, much of the information in both documentaries was either misleading or bogus.

“Sex Crimes and the Vatican” contended that in 2001, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (he became Pope Benedict XVI in 2005), issued a “secret Vatican edict” ordering bishops around the world to put the interests of the Church ahead of the welfare of the victims of priestly sexual abuse. According to the BBC documentary, bishops were expected to encourage victims to keep quiet. The 2001 report was said to be an updated version of the 1962 document, “Crimen Sollicitationis” (the Crime of Solicitation).

I read these documents, wrote about them, and discussed them on television. What the BBC, and others, said about them is a total falsehood (CBS was the worst in the U.S.). They manifestly do not reveal an attempt by the Vatican to put the interests of the Church above the interests of victims, nor do

they represent an attempt to silence anyone. No wonder so many bishops in the U.K. reacted so strongly against the documentary's lies. The distortions are many.

First, the 1962 document did not apply to sexual misconduct—it applied only to sexual solicitation. Second, the only venue that was addressed was the confessional. Third, because the policy was specifically aimed at protecting the secrecy of the confessional, it called for an ecclesiastical response: civil authorities were not to be notified because it involved a sacrament of the Catholic Church, not a crime of the state.

Fourth, if a priest were found guilty, he could be thrown out of the priesthood. Fifth, if the penitent were to tell someone what happened (perhaps another priest), he or she had 30 days to report the incident to the bishop or face excommunication. If anything, this proves how serious the Vatican was about an offense—it threatened to punish the penitent for not turning in the guilty priest. Sixth, the 1962 document was superseded by the 1983 Code of Canon Law and the norms established in 2001 for dealing with serious crimes involving the sacraments.

In March 2010, the BBC ran a story, "Pope Accused of Failing to Act on Sex Abuse Case." Taking the side of the accusers, the BBC blamed Cardinal Ratzinger for ignoring pleas by the victims of Milwaukee priest Fr. Lawrence Murphy. No one doubts that Murphy was wicked: he abused as many as 200 deaf boys extending back to the 1950s. What can be contested—indeed refuted—is the charge that Ratzinger bore some of the blame.

Though Murphy's crimes took place in the 1950s, none of the victims' families contacted the civil authorities until the mid-1970s. After a police investigation, the case was dropped. Fast forward to 1996—that was the first time the Vatican learned of the case. Cardinal Ratzinger, who was in charge of the office that was contacted, could have simply dropped the case given that the statute of limitations had expired. But he didn't: he ordered an investigation. While the inquiry was

proceeding, Murphy died.

“What the Pope Knew” was a two-part story that aired in September 2010, just days before Pope Benedict XVI arrived in England. The documentary tried to tag him with irresponsibility for his handling of cases in the U.S. and Germany. Professed enemies of the Church in the U.S., such as Minnesota lawyer Jeffrey Anderson, were interviewed; they were allowed to make the most sweeping and unsupportable comments imaginable, without being challenged. The show focused on two priests: Fr. Stephen Kiesle of California, and Germany’s Fr. Peter Hullermann.

In 1978, Fr. Kiesle was convicted of sexually abusing two boys and was suspended by his local church. His superior, Bishop John Cummins, wanted him defrocked in 1981, but the Vatican wanted more information. Cardinal Ratzinger had taken over the office in charge of these matters only a week before the Vatican made its ruling. Following Church norms at the time—the BBC makes this sound conspiratorial—Ratzinger said he could not defrock Kiesle because no one under 40 could be laicized, and the priest was in his thirties. Kiesle could have been ordered to stand trial, but because he was so close to 40, a decision was made to wait. On February 13, 1987, the day before Kiesle’s 40th birthday, he was defrocked.

It is important to note that Kiesle was removed from ministry following his conviction, and that in 1982, while still technically a priest, Kiesle married the mother of a girl he had abused in 1973. But to mention this fact would be to shift blame away from the pope, and that is not something that would fit with the BBC’s narrative.

The BBC also criticized Cardinal Ratzinger’s handling of Fr. Peter Hullermann, a priest who was convicted of sexually abusing boys while serving in Grafting, Germany. After his conviction, he was transferred to Munich for therapy. At the time, therapy was the preferred method for dealing with

abusers; this was true everywhere in the Western world. Once the therapy sessions ended, and Hullermann was certified as good to go, he was placed in a new parish.

How much did Archbishop Ratzinger know about Hullermann's case? It was his deputy who placed Hullermann in the new parish and who knew of the details of his case. From accounts published by the New York Times, we know that Ratzinger's office "was copied on a memo" about the transfer. But we also know from Church officials that sending memos was routine, and that they were "unlikely to have landed on the archbishop's desk."

Conclusion

If there is one BBC official who figures prominently in both the Savile case and the BBC's documentaries on the Catholic Church, it is Mark Thompson. He was Director General from 2004-2012, and he claims he never heard about Savile's record of abuse while working there. He was also in charge of the BBC when it aired stories alleging that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church knew about abusive priests all over the world. He left his top post at the BBC in 2012 for another top post: he became president of the New York Times Company.

Regrettably, Dame Janet Smith rarely mentions Thompson in her lengthy report. But she does quote him as saying, on the day Savile died, October 29, 2011, "we shall miss him greatly." Both men worked at the BBC for decades, but all Thompson knew about him, he says, is that he was a great entertainer.

If Thompson didn't know about Savile's sordid past when he died, which is implausible, he certainly knew before the end of the year. He conceded that he was told at the 2011 Christmas party that the BBC decided not to run the "Newsnight" exposé on him. He didn't have much choice: BBC reporter Caroline Hawley bared the truth. In addition, Thompson was given many daily news clips about Savile, but he

says he never read any of them.

On October 10, 2012, the chairman of the BBC Trust, Lord Chris Patten, spoke about the role that BBC officials, including Thompson, played in the decision to stop the BBC report on Savile. He said they “all knew there was an investigation and did not intervene to stop it.” But then something strange happened: Lord Patten’s office subsequently put out a statement saying that he “misspoke.” Tory MP Sir Roger Gale responded by saying that Lord Patten must go.

Even if we grant Thompson the benefit of the doubt on these matters, he did one thing before he left the BBC for his New York Times job that cannot be ignored. Thompson authorized his lawyers to write a letter to The Sunday Times in London threatening to sue if they decided to publish a detailed article about Savile. Unavoidably, the letter summarized the accusations against him, thus undercutting Thompson’s claim that he never even heard about Savile’s sex crimes while he was at the BBC.

So what did Thompson say when questioned about this? He said he never read the letter—the same letter whose content he authorized! Thompson then refused any further interviews, even turning down the New York Times. To top things off, his personal advisor said of the letter, “It’s not clear if he was shown it, but he doesn’t remember reading it.”

Lying. Covering up. Isn’t this what the BBC accuses the Vatican of doing? To be sure, high-ranking clergy in some dioceses did lie and cover up, but to believe that Thompson and other senior BBC officials didn’t know about Jimmy Savile, but the pope and his staff knew about abusing priests half-way around the world, is too much to swallow.

The BBC got off easy with Smith’s report; conversely, the BBC’s treatment of the Church was unfair.

BIAS AND BIGOTRY AT THE BBC – PART I

Bill Donohue

This is Part I of a two part series; the June Catalyst will feature Part II. These articles represent an abbreviated version of Donohue's monograph, "BBC Reports on Sexual Abuse: From Jimmy Savile to the Catholic Church." It was sent to the bishops, and to select media outlets in the U.S. and the U.K. The original is available online.

Donohue wrote this in the aftermath of a report on BBC icon Jimmy Savile, and his employer's reaction to his long history of serial rape. That report was written by a former judge, Dame Janet Smith; below is a shortened version of Donohue's analysis of her report on the BBC. The next Catalyst will address the way the BBC has treated senior officials in the Catholic Church over the priestly abuse scandal.

As will be shown in Part I, the Smith report exonerates all the senior management of the BBC—she claims none of them knew anything about Savile's conduct. Yet the BBC's reports on the Vatican, as will be shown in Part II, claim that everyone from the pope on down knew about instances of priestly sexual abuse all over the world.

Overview

The Dame Janet Smith Review Report on BBC serial rapist Jimmy Savile has many strengths and weaknesses. Her greatest strength is her ability to understand the sociological underpinnings of Savile's predatory behavior and the reasons why his conduct was not taken seriously at work.

Smith's greatest weakness is her readiness to exculpate the BBC hierarchy: she wants us to believe that *no one* in a senior management position ever knew anything about Savile's sexual offenses. What makes this so remarkable is Savile's long history of abuse: he worked at the organization for more than 25 years—molesting some of his victims on the premises of the BBC—and he bragged about his exploits in public.

The report was three years in the making and it runs more than 700 pages. By any measure, Jimmy Savile was one of the most beastly sexual abusers in recent history.

To get a sense of who Savile was, Americans can fathom a cross between Dick Clark of "American Bandstand" and comedian Jerry Lewis (this was how Bill Keller of the *New York Times* aptly put it). If we coupled this admixture with a heady dose of Michael Jackson and Pee-wee Herman, we get a sense of who he was. Regarding his behavior, he made the latter two look angelic.

What brought Savile instant recognition was his show "Top of the Pops," which debuted in 1964. It was broadcast early on Saturday evenings, bringing him to the attention of families. In 1975, he launched a new BBC show, "Jim'll Fix It"; it attracted 16.5 million viewers, an astonishing number even by today's standards. Two years later, he won a prestigious award for "wholesome family entertainment." One major newspaper said that this show made him the "favourite uncle to the nation's children." Yet by this time he had raped many of them.

Savile's role as a regular BBC host ended in 1994 when "Jim'll Fix It" went off the air. But he was not done: he co-hosted the final "Top of the Pops" show in 2006. He died five years later.

Savile's Predatory Behavior

"Savile had a voracious sex appetite," the report says. "So far as I can tell," Smith observes, "he never had and did not

want a lasting sexual relationship and he never had an emotional attachment to anyone with whom he had a sexual relationship." That's because he was a classic narcissist, incapable of giving himself to another human being. Savile did what he did—fondling, grabbing, raping—because that is what he wanted to do. How others felt, even those he did not force himself on, did not matter.

Before turning to Smith's report, consider what we know from other independent sources.

Savile was so sick that he actually assaulted his own niece. Sadly, her grandmother knew about it but kept quiet, and that is because her brother, Jimmy, made sure she had a comfortable lifestyle. Savile routinely got away with conduct like this. In 1976, when a man walked into Savile's dressing room and found him molesting a 9-year-old boy, he simply said, "Oops," and shut the door.

Here is what *MailOnline* said about Savile's victims in 2012: "The picture they paint is of a 'classic' child abuser, targeting vulnerable youngsters at schools, hospitals and children's homes....He plied them with treats—under the noses of teachers, doctors and BBC managers—and took them for rides in his Rolls-Royce....Savile sexually abused them in his car, his BBC dressing room, on hospital wards and in the bedrooms of girls at Duncroft boarding school in Surrey." Indeed, one of his victims at the latter institution said that he "treated Duncroft like a paedophile sweet shop."

Savile was evil. How else to describe a man who would rape a 12-year-old girl during a secret Satanic ritual in a hospital, screaming "Hail Satan" in a candle-lit room? What other word could be used to describe a man who performed sex acts on hundreds of dead bodies in a hospital where he was a volunteer—for over 60 years (1951 to 2011, the year he died)?

According to the U.K.'s National Society for the Prevention of

Cruelty to Children, Savile abused more than 500 people. But Smith, relying only on uncontested evidence, understandably puts the figure much lower. As a judge, she confined herself to 75 complainants, accepting the evidence of 72 of them. What she found is reeling.

Of the 72 victims that Smith interviewed, 57 were female and 15 were male. Twenty-one of the female victims, and 13 of the male victims, were under 16. Eight were raped (six female and two male; there was an attempted rape of one female victim). Forty-seven victims were the subject of indecent/sexual assault excluding rape (34 female and 13 male).

Savile was born in 1926 and started working in ballrooms and doing radio jobs in the 1950s. In 1959, he made his first appearance as a guest on "Juke Box Jury" at Lime Grove Studios. That same year he raped a 13-year-old girl at work. On January 1, 1964, he started his fabulously successful "Top of the Pops"; it was the beginning of his long career at the BBC. He then went on a rampage sexually assaulting and raping young men and women in bathrooms, his home, dressing rooms, his camper, and on staircases. So bold was he that he even sexually assaulted a 15-year-old girl on a podium during the recording of "Top of the Pops."

In 1974, Savile published his biography, *As It Happens* (more about this later). The following year he launched "Jim'll Fix It." He continued his predatory behavior, sexually assaulting a child (aged 10-12) in a church. In 1976, his autobiography was republished under the new title, *Love is an Uphill Thing*. That same year he raped a child of 10 or 11 in his dressing room.

Savile ceased presenting "Top of the Pops" in 1984, but it wasn't until 2006 that the final episode of this show was aired. In 2009, he was interviewed by the police following reports of sexual assault at a school, but nothing came of it. In fact, nothing ever came of any investigation. Savile died

in 2011, and six weeks later a BBC probe of his offenses was abandoned. But a year later, the BBC announced there would be two independent investigations.

Most of Savile's assaults took place in his residence, but he was not shy about attacking his victims at work. According to Smith, "Savile would gratify himself whenever the opportunity arose." Indeed, she learned of incidents "which took place in every one of the BBC premises at which he worked." Whether on the set, in dressing rooms—even when recording live on camera—he did exactly what he wanted.

Savile's victims were across age and sex lines. "Savile's youngest victim from whom I heard was just eight years old," Smith said. Of course, Savile's sexual appetite was not limited to the very young. He would seek gratification from men and women, boys and girls. Those most at risk were teenage girls.

The BBC's Response

The BBC had very relaxed norms in the 1960s and 1970s. They were effectively exploited by Savile. Smith found that officers would tolerate sex but not being drunk or coming to work late. For example, in 1969, a woman complained to her superiors after Savile grabbed her breasts but nothing was done about it. "The reaction of one of the managers was to show no surprise and to suggest that it would have been more surprising if Savile had not tried to touch her." Smith concludes, "That was an inappropriate reaction but one which is not surprising given the culture of the times."

Savile's bosses were actually worse than being indifferent to his offenses. For example, Smith describes how he "put his hand down inside her knickers underneath her bottom," and when the young girl complained, "a security officer was summoned and told to escort her off the premises. She was taken out and left on the street."

Smith contends that even though Savile's superiors knew of his conduct, the BBC's hierarchy was kept in the dark.

"In summary," Smith says, "my conclusion is that certain junior and middle-ranking individuals were aware of Savile's inappropriate sexual conduct in connection with his work for the BBC. However, I have found no evidence that the BBC, as a body corporate, was aware of Savile's inappropriate sexual conduct in connection with his work for the BBC." Similarly, "No senior manager ever found out about any specific complaint relating to Savile's inappropriate sexual conduct in connection with his work for the BBC."

The English media rejected Smith's exculpatory account of senior management. Indeed, most newspapers branded her report a "whitewash."

It can be debated how much or how little the higher ups in the BBC knew of Savile's behavior from managers below them. But it strains credulity to suggest that none of them knew of his very public admissions of sexual conquest: he wrote about them in his books.

In his autobiography, *As It Happens*, Savile bragged how he liked group sex, saying that his celebrity status meant that girls were "throwing themselves" at him. He estimated that about 20 percent of female audiences would "fancy" him, concluding that about 25 "super dolly birds" would be "putting the pressure on me" each night.

The *Guardian* loved his book, calling it "very funny." The review, as Smith notes, included a quotation about all the places Savile had sex: "trains and boats and planes and bushes and fields, corridors, doorways, floors, chairs, slag heaps, desks and probably everything except the celebrated chandelier and ironing board."

In short, Savile did not hide his sickness—it was there for everyone to see. His superiors were enablers, and for that

they should be held accountable. But no one was ever held accountable for anything he did, regardless of whether his victims were boys and girls or young men and young women.

Will Wilder and Me: The Quest For Literacy

Raymond Arroyo

You could say that the Will Wilder series, my first foray into fiction, started as a “soap opera.”

When they were younger, my children, during bath time would demand original stories for entertainment. To get them to advance to the next step in the bathing process, I would indulge the kids desire for new stories night after night. Most were slapstick tales about an impetuous, rule-breaking kid with a good heart and lousy judgment. Though I can't recall many of those yarns now, the head-strong boy and his family I had created never left my imagination. Over the years I made several attempts to situate those characters in a coherent storyline, but nothing really satisfied me.

Then while in Ireland on a trip with my sons, I stumbled across an article that changed everything. Irish media reported that a treasured relic from the thirteenth century, the heart of St. Laurence O'Toole, had been stolen from Christ Church Cathedral. O'Toole is apparently the patron saint of Dublin. The relic had been locked in a cage on a wall of the cathedral for more than 700 years. “With gold, and silver artifacts everywhere, why would anyone want to steal an ancient relic?” I thought.

Then it hit me: What if a 12-year-old boy—the one I had been telling my children about for years—snatched a relic of rare power? And what if that relic had been rescued and hidden away by his great-grandfather? I finally had a solid concept to drive my story. Over several years, I refined the narrative, expanded it and unearthed the supernatural, slapstick thriller that I suppose had been waiting for me all along.

In *Will Wilder: The Relic of Perilous Falls*, 12-year-old Will hurts his brother in a backyard accident and is punished for weeks. While on yard duty he learns that his great-grandfather, the founder of the town of Perilous Falls and an avid collector of antiquities, has hidden a special relic away. It is credited with holding back the town's floodwaters and is believed to possess healing abilities. Will figures he'll borrow the relic, touch it to his injured brother, get out of his punishment, and return it before anyone is the wiser. But once he snatches the relic, floodwaters begin to rise and Will unwittingly unleashes an ancient foe that will change his life and those around him, forever.

There are frights and fun galore in the series, as well as some characteristics unique to middle-grade fiction. While Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson* series has Greek mythology at its center and Ms. Rowling uses wizardry to propel *Harry Potter*, my story turns on sacred antiquities; historical items capable of summoning divine power. Many early readers have loved that most of the relics and items mentioned in the book can actually be found in museums, churches and libraries all over the world. I wanted to draw young people to the wonder of these touchstones and to help them experience the thrill of discovering them in person, no matter where they might live. The conversations that the book has already instigated among young and old are beyond gratifying.

This is also a rare children's book that features an intact, if imperfect, family. Think about it, most children's literature centers around an orphaned or abandoned child

making his or her way in the world. It has become such a cliché that I guess I unintentionally sought to avoid it. What I ended up with was a rich family saga about how the past can profoundly shape our future and how the cherished touchstones of our ancestors can light our way forward. It also speaks to our unique gifts and how it is incumbent upon each of us—especially parents—to nurture those gifts in the young.

More than an entertaining series (which I hope it is), Will Wilder is part of a larger mission for me. It is an effort to encourage literacy in the young. Through conversations with librarians and educators, I became sensitized to the scourge of illiteracy facing our country. The numbers are staggering. 21 million Americans can't read at all. According to the Department of Justice, one-fifth of high school graduates cannot read their own diplomas! 67% of all US fourth graders scored below proficient in reading. 67%! When you begin to understand the correlation between low fourth grade reading scores and incarceration later in life, the picture is very dire indeed. So I decided to do something about it. Last year I launched a literacy initiative.

We call it *Storyented* because I believe stories orient us in the world and help us discover our place in it as we grow. Our tag line explains it all: *Find your story. Find your way.* So once a month on TV, radio, and the internet we host a *Storyentation*: a chance for readers to connect with their favorite authors, live. I interview a best-selling author for a half hour about their career and newest work, then readers call in with their own questions. It's sort of a large scale, real-time, book club and it has been very well received. There are few places for authors to discuss their work in a big way, and few things are more important than putting young people in touch with good authors and good books. In addition to the reader/author engagement, Story-ented also provides families with literacy strategies to get their kids reading. We're at [www. Storyented.com](http://www.Storyented.com) and I hope you'll join us for a

Storyentation sometime soon.

Ray Bradbury ominously said: "You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them." There are a lot of reluctant readers out there today—especially boys. My hope is that the Will Wilder books will furnish boys and girls with intriguing tales they'll want to read.

Following a visit to a Catholic school in New Orleans last week I received the most wonderful letter from the principal. She wrote in part:

You had an impact on my students that can't be described. I watched my middle schoolers, BOYS, walk into school this morning holding your book. I saw students reading in morning care... I was floored. I don't know how you did it, but you got my kids to read. Thank you. Thank you.! Thank you !!!

I created Will to transport kids to places they might never have a chance to go and in an amazing turn, he has taken me to places I would never have gone—and together we have touched those we never expected to meet. Like Will, I suppose I have my own daring quest: to insure that kids find other epic, funny, moving, uplifting, and even scary books that will excite them enough to lose themselves in the art of reading. Our very future depends on it.

Raymond Arroyo is the New York Times Bestselling author of Will Wilder: The Relic of Perilous Falls, managing editor and lead anchor at EWTN, host of the network's "The World Over" and a Catholic League Board member. For more information on his book and a trailer visit www.raymondarroyo.com.

Modern Catholicism, the Antithesis of Fundamentalism

Robert Royal

Anti-Catholicism in America stems from many sources. Historically, of course, this predominantly Protestant nation had a built-in prejudice against Catholics, on theological grounds. But there were many other factors as well. Our mostly British early Americans also resented it when large waves of immigrants—Irish, German, Polish, Italian, and many others who were largely Catholic—began to dominate the social and political landscape in the major Eastern cities, Chicago, and elsewhere. During the same period, Catholics also became prominent in business, society, and culture, so much so that the American establishment had to come to terms, somewhat reluctantly, with the presence of what it had earlier regarded as a foreign faith, with divided loyalties.

That's pretty much where things stood until the mid-1960s when a new factor entered into the equation. It's hardly a secret that the moral and cultural revolution associated with "the Sixties" moved in direct opposition not only to traditional Catholicism; it abandoned the morals, and often the faith, of mainline Protestantism as well. There had been a liberal Christianity in America and Europe for several decades that had tried to reduce Christianity to a vaguely spiritual inspiration with uncertain moral content, but nothing like this. These developments put in doubt the very basis of what counted as "Christianity," which now seemed reduced to essentially two commandments: "judge not" and "tolerance" of what all Christian groups had earlier thought intolerable, especially with regard to sex.

In order to make this revolution plausible, the old ways had to be redefined. A group of Protestant leaders centered around

the Princeton Theological Seminary had earlier developed what they called Christian “Fundamentals” against the very liberal theology that would eventually lead to quite novel forms of faith and morals. They happily called themselves fundamentalists, thinking they could defend a kind of Mere Christianity, as C. S. Lewis later called his own efforts in this vein. But after the 1960s revolution, the term “fundamentalist” was used much more widely by those who were not part of the movement. It became—and still is today—intended to be a term of abuse, and today anyone who adheres to what were common faith and morals is very likely at some point to hear him or herself described as a fundamentalist.

This has also become an extremely useful stick to beat Catholics, “traditional” Catholics as we’re now forced to say, as if the rich Catholic tradition of philosophy, theology, scripture studies, magisterial teaching, art, architecture, poetry, music, and liturgy counts for nothing. Primarily because of its sexual mores, the Catholic Church, too—at last in the perspective of popular culture and no small part of the media, the academy, the political system—is nothing other than a “medieval” holdover, which is to say that for purposes of public discourse Catholics can be dismissed in just the same way as the new national and international elite dismiss rednecks from the American South and traditional believers in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Southern Hemisphere generally.

It was not always so. I wrote my latest book *A Deeper Vision: The Catholic Intellectual Tradition in the Twentieth Century* (Ignatius Press) to document how utterly wrong that view is. At least for the first two-thirds of the twentieth century—and I’d argue in the papacies of St. John Paul II and Benedict XVI after the great disruption of the 1960s—the Church gave birth to and nourished a dazzling group of philosophers, theologians, novelists, poets, thinkers of all

kinds. And they were appreciated and taught at some of the most prestigious universities in the world. Current secular culture knows little of this because it cannot see over the Iron Curtain of sexual license that it has erected, as if real Christianity never got going until 1968. That is only to be expected. But it's quite sad that even few Catholics know much about this extraordinarily rich cultural period in their own tradition. Hence, my effort to offer this readable, accessible survey.

Let's be clear, the great Catholic tradition is not restricted merely to matters of sex or abstract ideas, important as both are. One of the telling characteristics that I recount in my book was how urgent Catholicism seemed to everyday life for many people in the twentieth century, sunk as they were in what seemed the inescapable and meaningless world of scientific materialism and a philosophical nihilism that was slowly undermining all traditions.

Jacques Maritain, for example, who some Catholics will know went on to become the most influential Catholic philosopher of the twentieth century, felt these twin threats in his very bones. In 1901, he and his future wife Raïssa (a Jewish refugee from Russia, later a poet and mystical writer) were walking in the Jardin des plantes in Paris. They were both studying science at the University of Paris, and the vision of the world that science presented was so depressing that they decided they would kill themselves if they couldn't find something more worthy to live for.

They did, almost by direct divine guidance, through a series of personal encounters with figures like Leon Bloy, Charles Péguy, Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, and others. It's important to understand what Catholicism brought to people like the Maritains – and there were many such in the twentieth century – because several of the things they found most bleak about the scientific materialism of their day are still with us, if in a somewhat different form.

To begin with, what is a human person, that odd being that politicians, celebrities, media types claim we must “respect” and “accept,” but with no notion as to why, other than the vestiges of what was once widespread Christian belief? The Judaeo-Christian values stemming from the very first pages of the Book of Genesis give us clear reasons why the person is something unique—namely that God made us in His own image and likeness, male and female. And as the Bible tells us later, knew us in the womb even before we were born. The human person, as Maritain and others argued has intrinsic dignity and worth—if we see how we are connected to the source of all goodness and truth. Without belief in that divine connection, as we now see in the disrespect shown to children in the womb, those near the end of life, and many vulnerable beings in between, the human person is just another animal to be managed for domestic purposes.

The public connection here is not accidental, and was evident quite early to the great modern Catholic philosophers and theologians as well. The human person made in the image and likeness of God has a mind that can understand the good and the true, and a freedom of the will that enables us to embrace and follow them both. The whole modern democratic order, as the Declaration of Independence asserted, depends on our recognizing that “men have been endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights.”

Atheist regimes, such as Communism, saw things quite differently; instead of dignity and respect towards every individual, they put all value in the collective, which very soon led to high body counts as people began to conflict with the implacable dictates of the Party. Something similar occurred with Fascism and Nazism. Those murderous movements found value in the *Volks* or “the people,” and made the state the embodiment of all value. The very term “totalitarian” was invented by Benito Mussolini—and he did not mean it as a term of criticism but a claim for political totality: “everything

within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state.” It was no surprise that he and Hitler sought to intimidate and marginalize one of the few institutions capable of standing up to the totalitarian state: the Catholic Church.

Communism and Fascism alike were reacting to what they regarded as the disorder of excessive individualism in the democracies—a problem, but not nearly as dangerous as the misguided remedies these movements proposed.

It was out of these modern disorders, which led to tens of millions of corpses in the Gulags, concentration camps, political prisons—not counting the wars to which they gave rise—that people like the Maritains developed notions such as Christian Democracy. Jacques was one of the major architects of CD parties, which were important in combating all forms of political tyranny, but especially Fascism and post-WWII Euro-Communism. He was also instrumental in writing the U. N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which—whatever the subsequent shortcomings of the U.N.—enshrined some common understandings of what human beings are and how they must be treated.

I mention all these real-world consequences of modern Catholic thought because they are an often-ignored dimension of the twentieth century, which cannot be properly understood without the role Catholicism played in responding to various crises in Western societies. As the great historian Christopher Dawson was perhaps the first to recognize, the West entered into a general cultural crisis in the twentieth century, and it needs the global remedy that only an institution like the Church can provide.

But it’s also important for us today to realize that there is a vital and specific *content* to Catholicism without which our world is headed for renewed woes. Many people today misunderstand Pope Francis’ emphasis on mercy, for example, as if it simply makes reflection on sin and evil irrelevant in a

fuzzy forgetfulness of the past. But as he's said in his recent book *The Name of God is Mercy*: "The Church *condemns* sin because it has to relay the *truth*, 'This is a sin.' But at the same time it embraces the sinner who *recognizes* himself as such, it welcomes him, it speaks to him of the infinite mercy of God." [emphases added]

His image of the Church as a kind of "field hospital" in an ongoing spiritual battleground has captured the world's attention. This is a useful image—if we understand it properly. And the way to understand it best is to familiarize ourselves with how some holy and brilliant modern Catholic people have tried to address our current difficulties utilizing the riches of the Catholic tradition. Without that developed knowledge and wisdom, the Church would be like a doctor with a good bedside manner who knows no medicine. He can hold your hand and comfort you, but he can't do what a real doctor is supposed to do: cure you.

We have tremendous resources in modern Catholicism that are being neglected, even as they are most needed in our troubled twenty-first century. We need to get to know some of our great brothers and sisters in the faith—not only the Maritains, but figures like Edith Stein, Joseph Pieper, Henri de Lubac, Christopher Dawson, Alasdair MacIntyre, Elizabeth Anscombe, Karol Wojtyla, Joseph Ratzinger, and many, many more. That's why I wrote my book. If we don't take advantage of the wisdom and insight they have to offer, then we risk becoming mere Catholic "Fundamentalists."

Robert Royal is the founder and president of the Faith & Reason Institute in Washington, DC and is a member of the Catholic League Board of Advisors.

SHINING THE LIGHT ON “SPOTLIGHT”

The following report written by Bill Donohue was published on the Catholic League's website on November 2. It was sent to those in the media and entertainment industries as well as Catholic dioceses throughout the nation.

The movie “Spotlight” is bound to spark more conversation about the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church. Unfortunately, much of what the American public knows about this issue is derived from the popular culture, something this film will only abet. Therefore, the time is ripe to revisit what the actual data on this subject reveal.

When the *Boston Globe* sent the nation reeling in 2002 with revelations of priestly sexual abuse, and the attendant cover-up, Catholics were outraged by the level of betrayal. This certainly included the Catholic League. The scandal cannot be denied. What is being denied, however, is the existence of another scandal—the relentless effort to keep the abuse crisis alive, and the deliberate refusal to come to grips with its origins. Both scandals deserve our attention.

Myth: The Scandal Never Ended

When interviewed about the scandal in 2002 by the *New York Times*, I said, “I am not the church's water boy. I am not here to defend the indefensible.” In the Catholic League's 2002 *Annual Report*, I even defended the media. “The *Boston Globe*, the *Boston Herald*, and the *New York Times* covered the story with professionalism,” I wrote.

A decade later things had changed. In the Catholic League's 2011 *Annual Report*, I offered a critical assessment of the media. “In a nutshell,” I said, “what changed was this: in 2011, unlike what happened in 2002, virtually all the stories

were about accusations against priests dating back decades, sometimes as long as a half-century ago. Keep in mind that not only were most of the priests old and infirm, many were dead; thus, only one side of the story could be told. Adding to our anger was the fact that no other institution, religious or secular, was being targeted for old allegations.”

It became clear that by 2011 we were dealing with two scandals, not one. Scandal I was internal—the church-driven scandal. This was the result of indefensible decisions by the clergy: predatory priests and their enabling bishops. Scandal II was external, the result of indefensible cherry-picking of old cases by rapacious lawyers and vindictive victims’ groups. They were aided and abetted by activists, the media, and Hollywood.

Regarding Scandal II, more than cultural elites were involved. “In 2011,” I wrote, “it seemed as if ‘repressed memories’ surfaced with alacrity, but only among those who claimed they were abused by a priest. That there was no similar explosion of ‘repressed memories’ on the part of those who were molested by ministers, rabbis, teachers, psychologists, athletic coaches, and others, made us wonder what was going on.”

The steeple-chasing lawyers and professional victims’ organizations had a vested economic interest in keeping the scandal alive; the former made hundreds of millions and they, in turn, lavishly greased the latter. But it wasn’t money that motivated the media and Hollywood elites to keep the story alive—it was ideology.

To be specific, the Catholic Church has long been the bastion of traditional morality in American society, and if there is anything that the big media outlets and the Hollywood studios loathe, it is being told that they need to put a brake on their libido. So when the scandal came to light, the urge to pounce proved irresistible. The goal was, and still is, to attenuate the moral authority of the Catholic Church. It

certainly wasn't outrage over the sexual abuse of minors that stirred their interest: if that were the case, then many other institutions would have been put under the microscope. But none were.

There is no conspiracy here. What unfolded is the logical outcome of the ideological leanings of our cultural elites. Unfortunately, "Spotlight" will only add to Scandal II. How so? Just read what those connected with the film are saying.

Tom McCarthy, who co-wrote the script with Josh Singer, said, "I would love for Pope Francis and the cardinals and bishops and priests to see this [film]." Would it make any difference? "I remain pessimistic," he says. "To be honest," he declares, "I expect no reaction at all."

Mark Ruffalo plays a reporter, and, like McCarthy, he says, "I hope the Vatican will use this movie to begin to right those wrongs." (my italics.) He is not sanguine about the prospects. Indeed, he has given up on the Church.

The view that the Catholic Church has not even begun to "right those wrongs" is widely shared. Indeed, the impression given to the American people, by both the media and Hollywood—it is repeated nightly by TV talk-show hosts—is that the sexual abuse scandal in the Church never ended. Impressions count: In December 2012, a CBS News survey found that 55 percent of Catholics, and 73 percent of Americans overall, believe that priestly sexual abuse of minors remains a problem. Only 14 percent of Americans believe it is not a problem today.

Commentary by those associated with "Spotlight," as well as movie reviewers and pundits, are feeding this impression. But the data show that the conventional wisdom is wrong. The fact of the matter is that the sexual abuse of minors by priests has long ceased to be an institutional problem. All of these parties—Catholics, the American public, the media, and Hollywood—entertain a view that is not supported by the

evidence. "Spotlight" will only add to the propaganda.

In 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) commissioned researchers from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice to conduct a major study of priestly sexual abuse; it covered the years 1950 to 2002. It found that accusations of the sexual molestation of minors were made against 4,392 priests.

This figure represents 4 percent of all Catholic priests. What was not widely touted is that 43 percent of these allegations (1881) were unsubstantiated. To qualify as "unsubstantiated" the bar was set high: the allegation had to be "proven to be untruthful and fabricated" as a result of a criminal investigation.

In other words, roughly 2 percent of priests were likely guilty of molesting minors. Accusations proven to be false should carry no weight in assessing wrongdoing, yet the fabrications are treated by the media as if they were true. It must also be said that this rate of false accusations is much higher than found in studies of this problem in the general population.

More than half of the accused priests had only one allegation brought against them. Moreover, 3.5 percent accounted for 26 percent of all the victims. As computed by professor Philip Jenkins, an expert on this subject, the John Jay data reveal that "Out of 100,000 priests active in the U.S. in this half-century, a cadre of just 149 individuals—one priest out of every 750—accounted for a quarter of all allegations of clergy abuse."

These data give the lie to the accusation that during this period the sexual molestation of minors by priests was rampant. It manifestly was not. Even more absurd is the accusation that the problem is still ongoing.

In the last ten years, from 2005 to 2014, an average 8.4

credible accusations were made against priests for molestation that occurred in any one of those years. The data are available online at the USCCB website (see the reports issued for these years). Considering that roughly 40,000 priests could have had a credible accusation made against them, this means that *almost 100 percent of priests had no such accusation made against them!*

Sadly, I cannot name a single media outlet, including Catholic ones, that even mentioned this, much less emphasized it. The Catholic News Service, paid for by the bishops, should have touted this, but it didn't. This delinquency is what helps to feed the misperception that the Church has not even begun to deal with this problem.

In 2011, researchers from John Jay issued another report, "The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests in the United States, 1950-2010." While the document was often critical, it commended the Church for its forthrightness in dealing with this problem. "No other institution has undertaken a public study of sexual abuse," the report said, "and as a result, there are no comparable data to those collected by the Catholic Church." Looking at the most recent data, the report found that the "incidence of child sexual abuse has declined in both the Catholic Church and in society in general, though the rate of decline is greater in the Catholic Church in the same time period."

So much for the myth that the Church has not yet "begun" to address this issue. Every study by the John Jay researchers shows that most of the abuse took place between 1965-1985. This is not hard to figure out: the sexual revolution began in the 1960s and fizzled out by the mid-1980s. Libertinism drove the sexual revolution, and it hit the seminaries as well, especially in the 1970s. Matters slowed once AIDS was uncovered in 1981. It took fear—the fear of death—to bring about a much needed reality check.

Myth: Celibacy is the Root Cause

On October 28, 2015, a columnist for the Boston Globe wrote an article about "Spotlight" titled, "Based on a True Story." Similarly, script writer Tom McCarthy said, "We made a commitment to let the facts play."

No one disputes the fact that predatory priests were allowed to run wild in the Boston Archdiocese; the problem was not confined to Boston, but it was the epicenter. That molesting priests were moved around like chess pieces to unsuspecting parishes is also true. Ditto for the cover-up orchestrated by some bishops. This is the very stuff of Scandal I. Where the factual claims dissolve, however, is when the script claims to know what triggered the scandal.

"Spotlight" made its premiere on September 3 at the Venice Film Festival. A review published by the international French news agency, AFP, noted that "in Spotlight's nuanced script, few in the Catholic hierarchy have shown any inclination to address whether the enforced celibacy of priests might be one of the root causes of the problem."

The celibacy myth was debunked by the John Jay 2011 report. "Celibacy has been constant in the Catholic Church since the eleventh century and could not account for the rise and subsequent decline in abuse cases from the 1960s through the 1980s." But if celibacy did not drive the scandal, what did? The John Jay researchers cite the prevalence of sexually immature men who were allowed to enter the seminaries, as well as the effects of the sexual revolution.

There is much truth to this observation, but it is incomplete. Who were these sexually immature men? The popular view, one that is promoted by the movie as well, suggests they were pedophiles. The data, however, prove this to be wrong.

When the word got out that "Spotlight" was going to hit the big screen, Mike Fleming, Jr. got an Exclusive for Deadline

Hollywood; his piece appeared on August 8, 2014. The headline boasted that it was a “Boston Priest Pedophile Pic.” In his first sentence, he described the film as “a drama that Tom McCarthy will direct about the *Boston Globe* investigation into pedophile priests.” This narrative is well entrenched in the media, and in the culture at large. Whenever this issue is discussed, it is pitched as a “pedophile” scandal. We can now add “Spotlight’s” contribution to this myth.

One of the most prominent journalists on the *Boston Globe* “Spotlight” team was Kevin Cullen. On February 28, 2004, he wrote a story assessing a report issued by the National Review Board, appointed by the USCCB, on what exactly happened. He quoted the head of the Board’s research committee, well-respected attorney Robert S. Bennett, as saying it was not pedophilia that drove the scandal. “There are no doubt many outstanding priests of a homosexual orientation who live chaste, celibate lives,” he said, “but any evaluation of the causes and context of the current crisis must be cognizant of the fact that more than 80 percent of the abuse at issue was of a homosexual nature.”

Bennett was correct, and Cullen knew it to be true as well. “Of the 10,667 reported victims [in the time period between 1950 and 2002],” Cullen wrote, “81 percent were male, the report said, and more than three-quarters [the exact figure is 78 percent] were postpubescent, meaning the abuse did not meet the clinical definition of pedophilia.” One of Bennett’s colleagues, Dr. Paul McHugh, former psychiatrist-in-chief at Johns Hopkins University, was more explicit. “This behavior was homosexual predation on American Catholic youth,” he said, “yet it is not being discussed.” It never is.

So it is indisputable that the *Boston Globe* “Spotlight” team knew that it was homosexuality, not pedophilia, that drove the scandal. Yet that is not what is being reported today. Indeed, as recently as November 1, 2015, a staff reporter for the *Boston Globe* said the movie was about “the pedophile priest

crisis.” This flies in the face of the evidence. In fact, the John Jay 2011 report found that less than 5 percent of the abusive priests fit the diagnosis of pedophilia, thus concluding that “it is inaccurate to refer to abusers as ‘pedophile priests.’”

The evidence, however, doesn’t count. Politics counts. The mere suggestion that homosexual priests accounted for the lion’s share of the problem was met with cries of homophobia. This is at the heart of Scandal II. Even the John Jay researchers went on the defensive. Most outrageous was the voice of dissident, so-called progressive, Catholics: It was they who pushed for a relaxation of sexual mores in the seminaries, thus helping to create Scandal I. Then they helped to create Scandal II by refusing to take ownership of the problem they foisted; they blamed “sexual repression” for causing the crisis.

So how did the deniers get around the obvious? Cullen said that “most [of the molested] fell victim to ephebophiles, men who are sexually attracted to adolescent or postpubescent children.” But clinically speaking, ephebophilia is a waste-basket term of no scientific value.

Philip Jenkins once bought into this idea but eventually realized that the word “communicates nothing to most well-informed readers. These days I tend rather to speak of these acts as ‘homosexuality.’” Jenkins attributes his change of mind to Mary Eberstadt, one of the most courageous students of this issue. “When was the last time you heard the phrase ‘ephebophile’ applied to a heterosexual man?” In truth, ephebophilia is shorthand for homosexuals who prey on adolescents.

Even those who know better, such as the hierarchy of the Church, are reluctant to mention the devastating role that homosexual priests have played in molesting minors. In April 2002, the cardinals of the United States, along with the

leadership of the USCCB and the heads of several offices of the Holy See, issued a Communiqué from the Vatican on this issue. "Attention was drawn to the fact that almost all the cases involved adolescents and therefore were not cases of true pedophilia" they said. So what were they? They were careful not to drop the dreaded "H" word.

Further proof that the problem is confined mostly to gay priests is provided by Father Michael Peterson, co-founder of St. Luke's Institute, the premier treatment center in the nation for troubled priests. He frankly admits, "We don't see heterosexual pedophiles at all." This suggests that virtually all the priests who abused prepubescent children had a homosexual orientation.

The spin game is intellectually dishonest. When adult men have sex with postpubescent females, the predatory behavior is seen as heterosexual in nature. But when adult men have sex with postpubescent males, the predatory behavior is not seen as homosexual in nature. This isn't science at work—it's politics, pure and simple.

I have said it many times before, and I will say it again: most gay priests are not molesters but most molesting priests have been gay. It gets tiresome, however, to trot this verity out every time I address this issue. That's because it means nothing to elites in the dominant culture. Just whispering about the role gay priests have played in the sexual abuse scandal triggers howls of protest.

There is plenty of evidence that Hollywood has long been a haven for sexual predators, both straight and gay. The same is true of many religious and secular institutions throughout society. But there is little interest in the media and in Tinseltown to profile them. They have identified the enemy and are quite content to keep pounding away.

There is no doubt that the *Boston Globe* "Spotlight" team

deserved a Pulitzer Prize for exposing Scandal I. Regrettably, there will be no Pulitzer for exposing Scandal II.

MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN: MADE FOR EACH OTHER

In November 2014, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith sponsored an international colloquium on the complementarity of man and woman in marriage; it was co-hosted by several Pontifical Councils. Pope Francis opened the event with a stirring address, and he was followed by approximately 400 scholars and religious leaders from around the world.

Plough Publishing House has just published an excellent book, *Not Just Good, but Beautiful: The Complementary Relationship Between Man and Woman*, that is based on some of the presentations.

Bill Donohue chose to excerpt three of the contributors: Pope Francis, Johann Christoph Arnold, and Rick Warren. The Holy Father needs no introduction. Mr. Arnold is a senior pastor of the Bruderhof, an international communal movement dedicated to a life of simplicity, service, sharing, and non-violence. A good friend to the Catholic community (he is especially close to Father Philip Eichner, the Catholic League's chairman of the board), he offers an Anabaptist perspective. Rick Warren is the best-selling Christian author who is known the world over for his cogent insights into contemporary issues.

We hope you enjoy reading these selections. For book information, see p. 2.

Pope Francis

It is fitting that you have gathered here in this international colloquium to explore the complementarity of man and woman. This complementarity is at the root of marriage and family, which is the first school where we learn to appreciate our own and others' gifts, and where we begin to acquire the arts of living together. For most of us, the family provides the principal place where we can begin to "breathe" values and ideals, as well as to realize our full capacity for virtue and charity. At the same time, as we know, families are places of tensions: between egoism and altruism, reason and passion, immediate desires and long-range goals. But families also provide frameworks for resolving such tensions. This is important. When we speak of complementarity between man and woman in this context, let us not confuse that term with the simplistic idea that all the roles and relations of the two sexes are fixed in a single, static pattern. Complementarity will take many forms as each man and woman brings his or her distinctive contributions to their marriage and to the formation of their children—his or her personal richness, personal charisma. Complementarity becomes a great wealth. It is not just a good thing but it is also beautiful.

In our day, marriage and the family are in crisis. We now live in a culture of the temporary, in which more and more people are simply giving up on marriage as a public commitment. This revolution in manners and morals has often flown the flag of freedom, but in fact it has brought spiritual and material devastation to countless human beings, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. Evidence is mounting that the decline of the marriage culture is associated with increased poverty and a host of other social ills, disproportionately affecting women, children, and the elderly. It is always they who suffer the most in this crisis.

The crisis in the family has produced a crisis of human ecology, for social environments, like natural environments, need protection. And although the human race has come to

understand the need to address conditions that menace our natural environments, we have been slower to recognize that our fragile social environments are under threat as well, slower in our culture, and also in our Catholic Church. It is therefore essential that we foster a new human ecology and advance it.

In these days, as you embark on a reflection on the beauty of complementarity between man and woman in marriage, I urge you to lift up yet another truth about marriage: that permanent commitment to solidarity, fidelity, and fruitful love responds to the deepest longing of the human heart. Let us bear in mind especially the young people, who represent our future. It is important that they do not give themselves over to the poisonous mentality of the temporary, but rather be revolutionaries with the courage to seek true and lasting love, going against the common pattern.

Johann Christoph Arnold

Last year my wife was diagnosed with a serious cancer and more recently she suffered a heart attack. It seemed that the devil tried everything to prevent us from coming to Rome but, praise God, we are here today.

I share this because we are just like everybody else, with our struggles and challenges, and have come to understand how important it is to belong to a community of believers that protects the values that sustain marriage. This is true in the Bruderhof, the church community that I come from, and it is so in all the great faith traditions that are here today. This is why I have hope that marriage as God intended it will shine forth even in these dark times.

While serving as elder of this movement for the last thirty years, I've watched the moral and spiritual decline of Western civilization, along with the tragic breakdown of the family. All the more, we have been determined to uphold the sanctity

of life, and of sex and marriage.

We believe that marriage is more than a private contract between two people. God did not have in mind merely the personal happiness of separate individuals, but the establishment of God-fearing relationships in a communion of families under his rulership. Marriage is part of God's original creation and sanctifies each generation as being "made in the image of God." God created male and female that through their union they might fill the earth and flourish. In God's plan, every child has a father and a mother.

In my own church community, there are people from all walks of life, including some from very broken families. Like couples everywhere, couples in our church have to work hard to nurture the kind of love that truly lasts. Sometimes they find themselves in crisis due to mistrust, unforgiveness, or sexual immorality. But through the help of God and of fellow church members, miracles of reconciliation and healing can and do happen. Prayer is a crucial part of this process: as the old saying goes, "Couples that pray together, stay together."

To protect marriages, we as individuals, families, and churches must hold each other accountable and encourage each other. Our children need to see a life of modesty, simplicity, hard work, and most of all love to God and neighbor.

We must never be afraid of the ridicule and slander our witness will bring. As the apostle Paul wrote:

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper times we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. (Gal. 6:7-9)

So, let us hold our heads high knowing that if God is for us, who can be against us? Let us give living witness together

that God's plan for marriage and children is joyful, true, and everlasting. Nothing will be able to stop us from proclaiming this childlike and simple message. It is God who holds the final hour of history in his hands, and he will be victorious.

Rick Warren

In Hebrews 13:4 we are given this clear command: "Marriage is to be honored by everyone."

Sadly, today, marriage is now dishonored by many. It is dismissed as an archaic, manmade tradition, denounced as an enemy of women, discouraged as a career-limiting choice, demeaned in movies and television, and delayed out of fear that it will limit one's personal freedom.

Today marriage is ridiculed, resented, rejected, and redefined. What are we going to do about this? The church cannot cower in silence! As you have heard, there is too much at stake.

When a culture claims to care about children, we must point out that children who grow up with both a mother and a father grow up healthier, happier, and stronger. They are less likely to fail in school, less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol, less likely to do jail time, and less likely to experience distress, depression, and thoughts of suicide. They are also less likely to perpetuate these problems to the next generation.

When a culture claims to champion women, we must point out that women who marry and stay married have lower rates of depression, have a lower risk of being a victim of crime or violence, and have a higher net worth than those living with an unmarried man.

When a culture claims to care for the poor, we must point out that the dissolution of marriages disproportionately hurts the poor. A single mother with children has never been a viable

economic unit, and poor children get hurt the most by the economic consequences of divorce. Children who grow up without both mother and father are more likely to live their entire lives in poverty.

And what about men? Men who marry and stay married have fewer illnesses, fewer injuries, and live longer than single men. They earn more money and amass more net worth than single men with similar education and job histories, including men who live with unmarried women.

On CNN I was asked, "Can you imagine ever changing your mind about gay marriage?" I said no. "Why?" I said, "Because I fear God's disapproval more than I fear your disapproval or society's." As Saint Peter has said, "We must obey God rather than men."

The only way to always be relevant is to be eternal. What is in style goes out of style; no revolution lasts. Every lie eventually crumbles under its own deception. Cultures rise and fall, cultures come and go, but the Word of God and the church of God continues. It isn't necessary to be on the right side of culture or the right of history. It is just necessary to be on the right side!

In many ways, the debate over the definition of life, of sex, and of marriage is, in reality, a question of leadership. Who is going to lead? Will the church follow the crowd, or will the church lead the crowd? In Exodus 23:2 God says "Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong." Why? Because history shows that the majority is often wrong. The dustbins of history are stuffed with the conventional wisdom of cultures that proved false. Truth is not decided by a popularity contest.

WHY FR. SERRA DESERVES TO BE CANONIZED

Bill Donohue

This article is adapted from Bill Donohue's longer piece, "The Noble Legacy of Father Serra." To read the full text, click [here](#).

Who Was Father Serra?

Junípero Serra was born on the Island of Majorca, off the coast of Spain in 1713, and died in Monterey, California in 1784. Partly of Jewish ancestry, this young and sickly boy applied to enter the Order of St. Francis of Assisi; he became a Franciscan in 1731.

He is known as the greatest missionary in U.S. history, traveling 24,000 miles, baptizing and confirming thousands of persons, mostly Indians (in 1777 the Vatican authorized Serra to administer the sacrament of confirmation, usually the reserve of a bishop). He had but one goal: to facilitate eternal salvation for the Indians of North America.

Were the Indians Perceived as Being Inferior?

Culturally, the Indians appeared inferior, but they were not seen as racially inferior. Take, for example, the Chumash Indians of Southern California, the first California Indians to be contacted by Spanish explorers. When the Franciscans first met them, they were struck by how different they looked and behaved. The women were partially naked and the men were totally naked. Serra, in fact, felt as though he was in Eden.

Moreover, the Indians had no written language, and practiced no agriculture. They lived by hunting, fishing, and gathering. They ate things that the missionaries and the soldiers found

bizarre, including roots, seeds, birds, horses, cats, dogs, owls, rats, snakes, and bats. These primitive habits, along with other practices, convinced them that changes had to be made.

How Did Father Serra Get Along with the Indians?

For the most part, they got along well. This had something to do with the fact that the Catholic Church led the protests against inhumane treatment of the Indians; the Spanish crown ultimately agreed with this position. It cannot be said too strongly that the primary mission of the Franciscans was not to conquer the Indians, but to make them good Christians. The missions were supposed to be temporary, not some permanent take over.

The Indians drew a distinction between the way the Spanish soldiers treated them and the way the Franciscans did. So when some Indians would act badly, the soldiers blamed them and sought harsh punishments. The priests, on the other hand, saw murderous acts as the work of the Devil. Also, the soldiers were always anxious to take land from the Indians, but they were met with resistance from the priests.

Both the colonial authorities and the missionaries vied for control over the Indians, but their practices could not have been more different. With the exception of serious criminal acts, Serra insisted that all punishments were to be meted out by the priests. While he did not always succeed in challenging the civil authorities, he often did, the result being that the Indians were spared the worst excesses.

The Franciscans also sought to protect Indian women from the Spaniards. The missionaries carved out a very organized lifestyle for the Indians, keeping a close eye on attempts by Spanish men to abuse Indian women. The Friars segregated the population on the basis of sex and age, hoping to protect the females from unwanted advances. When sexual abuse occurred, it

was quickly condemned by Serra and his fellow priests.

Was it Violence that Decimated the Indians?

No. What killed most of the Indians were diseases contracted from the Spaniards. According to author James A. Sandos, "Indians died in the missions in numbers that appalled Franciscans." He describes how this happened. "When Spaniards in various stages of exploration and expansion entered into territory unacquainted with disease," he writes, "they unwittingly unleashed disease microbes into what demographers call 'virgin soil.' The resulting wildfire-like contagion, called 'virgin soil epidemics,' decimated unprotected American Indians populations." Professor Gregory Orfalea is no doubt correct to maintain that it is doubtful if Serra ever understood the ramifications of this biological catastrophe.

Isn't It True that the Clergy Flogged the Indians?

By 21st century standards, flogging is considered an unjust means of punishment, but it was not seen that way in the 18th century. Fornication, gambling, and the like were considered taboo, justifying flogging.

Serra, who never flogged anyone (save himself as an expression of redemptive suffering), admitted there were some excesses, but he also stressed something that is hard for 21st century Americans to understand: unlike flogging done by the authorities, when priests indulged the practice, it was done out of love, not hatred. "We, every one of us," Serra said, "came here for the single purpose of doing them [the Indians] good and for their eternal salvation; and I feel sure that everyone knows that we love them."

There is also something hypocritical about using 21st century moral standards to evaluate 18th century practices. Abortion-on-demand is a reality today and that is barbaric.

Some Contend that the Indians Were Treated the Way Hitler Treated Jews?

This is perhaps the most pernicious lie promoted by those who have an animus against the Church. Hitler committed genocide against Jews; there was no genocide committed by Serra and the Franciscans against the California Indians. Hitler put Jews in ovens; the missionaries put the Indians to work, paying them for their labor. Hitler wanted to wipe out the Jews, so that Western civilization could be saved; the priests wanted to service the Indians, so that they could be saved.

Sandos pointedly refutes this vile comparison: "Hitler and the Nazis intended to destroy the Jews of Europe and created secret places to achieve that end, ultimately destroying millions of people in a systematic program of labor exploitation and death camps. Spanish authorities and Franciscan missionaries, however, sought to bring Indians into a new Spanish society they intended to build on the California frontier and were distressed to see the very objects of their religious and political desire die in droves. From the standpoint of intention alone, there can be no valid comparison between Franciscans and Nazis."

Moreover, as Sandos writes, even from the standpoint of results, the comparison fails. "Hitler intended to implement a 'final solution' to the so-called Jewish problem and was close to accomplishing his goals when the Allies stopped him. In contrast, neither Spanish soldiers nor missionaries knew anything about the germ theory of disease, which was not widely accepted until late in the nineteenth century."

Those who make these malicious charges know very well that Jews never acted kindly toward the Nazis. They also know, or should know, that acts of love by the Indians toward the missionaries are legion. No one loves those who are subjecting them to genocide.

Were the Indians Treated as Slaves?

No. The historical record offers no support for this outrageous claim. Slaves in the U.S. had no rights and were not considered human. The missionaries granted the Indians rights and respected their human dignity.

It is also unfair to compare the lifestyle of the Indians to slave conditions in the U.S. "The purpose of a mission was to organize a religious community in isolation that could nourish itself physically and spiritually. Surplus production was to feed other missions and local towns and presidios. Profit was never a consideration, unlike plantations, where profit was the purpose and reason for their creation."

Did the Missionaries Eradicate Indian Culture?

No. While missionary outreach clearly altered many elements of Indian culture, as Orfalea notes, "the fact is, the California Indian did not disappear. From the low point at the turn of the [20th] century (25,000 remained), the Indian population has grown to well over 600,000 today, twice what it was at pre-contact." Indeed, today there are over one hundred federally recognized California tribes with tribal lands, with many others seeking recognition.

Not only did the missionaries not wipe out the native language of the Indians, they learned it and employed Indians as teachers. Some cultural modification was inevitable, given that the missionaries taught the Indians how to be masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, and painters. The Indians were also taught how to sell and buy animals, and were allowed to keep their bounty. Women were taught spinning, knitting, and sewing.

"Although many historians once thought that Indian culture had been eradicated in the missions," Sandos says, "anthropologists and other observers have provided evidence to the contrary."

Should Serra Be Made a Saint?

The evidence which has been culled for over 200 years, from multiple sources, is impressive, and it argues strongly for including Father Serra in the pantheon of saints.

A total of 21 missions were established by the missionaries, nine of them under the tenure of Serra; he personally founded six missions. He baptized more than 6,000 Indians, and confirmed over 5,000; some 100,000 were baptized overall during the mission period. Impressive as these numbers are, it was his personal characteristics that made him so special.

"To the Indian," Orfalea writes, "he [Serra] was loving, enthusiastic, and spiritually and physically devoted." His devotion was motivated by his embrace of Christianity and his strong sense of justice. To put it another way, his love for the Indians was no mere platitude. "Love thy neighbor as thyself" was routinely put into practice; he knew no other way. But it was his humility, coupled with his merciful behavior, that distinguished him from all the other missionaries.

Serra was so merciful that he said, "in case the Indians, whether pagans or Christians, would kill me, they should be pardoned." This was not made in jest. He insisted that his request be honored as quickly as possible, and even declared, "I want to see a formal decree" on this matter.

Father Serra deserves to be made a saint. He gave his life in service to the Lord, battled injustice, and inspired everyone who worked with him to be a better Christian. That Saint Serra will now inspire people all over the world is a certainty, and a great testimony to his noble legacy.