

CATHOLIC BASHING IN IRELAND PEAKS

Finally, Catholic bashing in Ireland may have peaked: a pushback is evident.

Leading the charge is Dublin Archbishop Diarmuid Martin. He is not counseling Catholics not to admit real instances of wrongdoing, only that the assaults on the Church have gone too far. He noted that embedded in the culture is a relentless drumming up of “the sins of [the Church’s] members, painting every individual and every moment in the history of the Church with the same condemnation.”

The Catholic bashing has been going on for far too long, so it is a relief to see this kind of pushback.

Martin spoke up for the clergy and the religious. “I notice a certain justified resentment among priests and religious [orders] and committed Catholics at somehow being unfairly under attack as they live out their faith and their ministry generously and with dedication. There is a sense in which they feel the time has come to stand up and respond.”

The Dublin archbishop is right: The piling on has gotten ugly. If Martin, the clergy, and the laity don’t stand up for themselves, they will only whet the appetite of their enemies to seek more vengeance.

Irish Central, which flagged this story, also cited an opinion piece in Irish Times by a history professor at University College Dublin, Diarmaid Ferriter.

He raised objections to the “cartoon history of the nuns” that has become such a sport in Ireland. “It is unfair and unhistorical to imply that nuns involved in this area [hospital care for women and children] were devoid of humanity

and motivated by greed.” He added that the “‘bad nun’ version of Irish history needs to be challenged...”

These statements by Archbishop Martin and Ferriter are encouraging, but more needs to be done about challenging the many false accusations made against Irish nuns.