

# CHURCH-SUING DISCIPLINED

# LAWYER

John Aretakis, one of the nation's most outspoken attorneys suing the Catholic Church over cases of sexual abuse, was disciplined for his behavior. He had his practice suspended for one year following a decision by the Committee of Professional Standards in Albany, New York for professional misconduct. Aretakis was accused of engaging in "frivolous conduct by making false accusations against judges" and for "undignified and discourteous conduct degrading to the court."

The real story here, however, is not some unethical lawyer out to rip off the Catholic Church. The real story is the way his colleagues at the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP) reacted—with deadening silence. Their relationship includes more than joint protests outside Catholic churches: When Aretakis announced in April 2008 that he was running for Congress (he lost), he was introduced at the press conference by Mark Lyman, SNAP's Capital Region Director.

We should hold SNAP officials to the same ethical standards it holds others. And by that measure, we gave this professional victims' group an "F." Their hero is a disgrace and so are they.