

# GANGING UP ON ARCHBISHOP NIENSTEDT



Bill Donohue comments on the latest attacks against Archbishop John Nienstedt of St. Paul and Minneapolis:

Not until a Minneapolis law firm finishes its investigation of Archbishop Nienstedt will we be able to know the answers to important questions, but it is not too early to condemn the rush to judgment that is being orchestrated by familiar foes of the archbishop. Here are some fast facts.

The war against Nienstedt began before he assumed his current post in 2008. Leading the charge were gay activists, dissident Catholics, and ex-Catholics. Last December, out of the blue, emerged an unidentified man who claimed Nienstedt touched his behind in 2009 while the archbishop was posing for a group picture. Nienstedt denied the charge and did something *no leader would ever do*: he stepped down. Not surprisingly, after the police investigated, the case was dismissed.

After a former archdiocesan employee, who had been suspended for failing to deal expeditiously with a complaint, made accusations that the archdiocese had failed to act expeditiously with molesting priests, Nienstedt convened a task force. It found "shortcomings."

Then, out of the blue, Nienstedt was accused of inappropriate behavior of a non-criminal nature that allegedly occurred many

years ago. Nienstedt denied wrongdoing, saying there was only one accusation: an ex-priest accused him of the “crime” of touching his neck.

It is striking that almost every problem priest who worked in the archdiocese did so before Nienstedt took charge in 2008.

More important, Nienstedt is being accused of harboring molesting priests. There is a profound difference between a priest who serves in active ministry, and one who does not. If someone knows of a molesting priest who is currently working in active ministry in the archdiocese, we need to know who he is. It’s time to name names, or shut up. In the meantime, Nienstedt, who has been found guilty of nothing, deserves to be treated as an innocent. Stay tuned.