

GAY ROLE IN ABUSE SCANDAL ACKNOWLEDGED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an article about gay priests and sexual abuse:

Any honest observer of the priestly sexual abuse scandal knows that the lion's share of the molestation was committed by homosexuals, not pedophiles. Now an online *Washington Post* article by Robert Mickens acknowledges this verity. This is virtually breaking news: the liberal media and pundits have ritualistically called this a pedophile problem.

The most exhaustive study on this issue was done by researchers at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and they concluded that less than five percent of the predators were pedophiles. Indeed, 81% of the victims were male, and 78% were post-pubescent, meaning that homosexuality—not heterosexuality or pedophilia—was in play.

Mickens writes about the case of Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the former Archbishop of Washington who allegedly preyed on seminarians. He begins his piece by coming clean on what has been going on all along: “It is the fact that almost all of them concern males—whether they are adolescents, post-pubescent teens or young men.”

He then seeks an explanation. His first observation is undeniable: “psychologically healthy gay men do not rape boys or force themselves on other men over whom they wield some measure of power or authority.” But then he falls back on the old saw about homophobia causing gay men to become predators.

He blames the Church for adopting policies that “actually punish seminarians and priests who seek to deal openly, honestly and healthily with their sexual orientation.” What is driving the problem, he says, is “homophobia,” the result of

which “keeps gay men in the closet.” His logic is deeply flawed and does not square with the evidence.

Everyone agrees that the heyday of traditionalism in the Catholic Church was the 1950s. Everyone also agrees that traditionalism came under severe attack in the late 1960s, peaking in the 1970s.

The sexual abuse of minors was infinitesimal in the 1950s and exploded in the 1970s. In other words, when gay priests were mostly in the closet, the abuse problem was not an issue. It became one when the Church let down its guard in the 1970s, particularly in the seminaries.

The timeline of the abuse, when most of the problem took place, is not in doubt—the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s. This is the period of the sexual revolution: libertine cultural currents hit every institution in society, including the Catholic Church. To put it differently, this is when “homophobia” came under attack!

This is not a plea for punishing homosexual priests. It is a plea to abide by the policy adopted by Pope Benedict XVI: men with “deep-seated homosexual tendencies” should not be welcomed in the seminaries. That stricture has served the Church well since it was adopted in 2005: the decline in new cases of sexual abuse has been dramatic, and is almost non-existent in the United States today.

Two months ago, Pope Francis picked up on this discussion, strongly backing the position of his predecessor. “These tendencies, when they are ‘deeply rooted,’ and the practice of homosexual acts, can compromise the life of the seminary beyond that of the young man himself and his eventual future priesthood.” Well said.

Blaming “homophobia” is a dodge. It is employed as justification for recreating the very milieu that created the problem in the first place. We should never want to return to

a time when good heterosexual men left the seminaries because they were surrounded by gay men acting out with impunity.