

HITCHENS IS BACK FROM THE DEAD



Bill Donohue takes note of the resurrection of Christopher Hitchens:

Hitchens has been brought back from the dead by Slate and Andrew Sullivan, but it won't do them any good. Yesterday, they republished a hit piece by the atheist from 2010 that was vintage Hitchens: the man was a great polemicist but a third-class scholar. Facts never mattered to him.

Hitchens said the scandal "has only just begun." Wrong. It began in the mid-60s and ended in the mid-80s. Current reports are almost all about old cases.

Hitchens said Munich Archbishop Joseph Ratzinger (the pope) transferred an offending cleric to another parish. Wrong. Ratzinger's deputy placed the priest in a new parish after he received therapy (the tonic loved by those pushing rehabilitation), and even the *New York Times* admitted there was no evidence that Ratzinger knew about it. By the way, there were 1,717 priests serving under him at the time.

Hitchens said Ratzinger wrote a 2001 letter to the bishops telling them it was a crime to report sexual abuse. Wrong. The letter dealt with desecrating the Eucharist, and the sexual solicitation by a priest in the confessional (the letter cited a 1962 document detailing harsh sanctions).

Hitchens said Ratzinger was obstructing justice when he crafted new norms on sexual abuse in 2001. Wrong. He actually added new sanctions and extended the statute of limitations

for such offenses.

Hitchens says Ratzinger ignored accusations against Father Marcial Maciel. Wrong. It was Benedict who got him removed from ministry (he was too infirm to put on trial) and put his religious order in receivership.

In short, Hitchens' hatred of Catholicism allowed him to swing wildly. That he should be resurrected by Slate and Andrew Sullivan makes them all look incompetent, as well as vicious.