

IF ONLY PRIESTS WERE TERRORISTS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on two editorials in today's *New York Times*:

In the *New York Times* editorial, "A Right Without a Remedy," a strong plea is made for the U.S. government to respect the constitutional rights of detainees at Guantánamo Bay. There is another editorial, "Acts of Contrition," that takes the Catholic Church in Ireland to task for cases of priestly sexual abuse. The former editorial says absolutely nothing about why suspected Muslim terrorists who want to blow up the U.S. are being held in custody, and the latter editorial says absolutely nothing about the rights of accused priests. If only priests were terrorists.

The *Times* says the Church in Ireland "has a long way to go to cleaning house," insisting that "reforms are lagging" and "some predator priests are still in ministry." It is thrice wrong.

In 2005, the Irish Bishops' Conference issued a comprehensive report on reforms underway, "Our Children, Our Church: Child Protection Policies and Procedures for the Catholic Church in Ireland." In 2008, another report was released, "Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland." In 2010, the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland published its 2009 Annual Report.

The latter document shows that 42 percent of the new allegations made in 2009 were about deceased priests. "None of the allegations reported to the National Office originated from children or young people. Some went back to events that took place in the 1950s and 1960s." Not a single priest who has had an accusation made against him is in full ministry, and those who are in limited ministry are there despite the fact that "the allegation that caused the removal from full

ministry has not been confirmed through any civil or canonical court process.” In other words, the *Times* got it wrong again. It should correct the record.

Contact the Public Editor, Arthur S. Brisbane:
public@nytimes.com