

JEFFREY ANDERSON SUES VATICAN—AGAIN

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the news that Jeffrey Anderson will hold a press conference today announcing that he is filing suit against the Vatican and Pope Benedict XVI over the failure to defrock Father Lawrence Murphy, the Wisconsin priest accused of molesting deaf boys many decades ago:

Anderson has sued the Vatican many times, and has never won. He knows he will lose again this time, but that means nothing to him. What this is all about is grandstanding: getting more PR for himself and throwing more mud at the Catholic Church.

The Vatican was never notified of Murphy's alleged misconduct until 1996. At that time, officials could have dumped the case—just as the civil authorities did in the mid-1970s when they first learned of it—invoking the statute of limitations. Instead, Murphy was put on trial; he died while it was on-going in 1998.

Fr. Thomas Brundage, the judge in the Murphy trial, has said that the name of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now the pope, was never mentioned by anyone at the time. Even Laurie Goodstein, who broke the story for the *New York Times*, never said that there is any evidence that the pope knew of the Murphy case.

In other words, Anderson is once again seeking to exploit his clients—his plaintiff is an alleged victim of the dead priest—just to knife the Church. This has nothing to do with justice, but it has a whole lot to do with malice. This is a frivolous lawsuit, one that merits punitive action taken by the court against Anderson.