

JUSTICE IN PHILLY FOR MSGR. LYNN?

Bill Donohue

This afternoon, Common Pleas judge Gwendolyn N. Bright will decide whether to end the ideologically charged war on Msgr. William Lynn, or allow a new trial.

Lynn was convicted of child endangerment on two occasions, and both convictions were overturned. The Philadelphia D.A. who is pressing the case against Lynn, Seth Williams, was arrested this week, yet he still remains in office. Deborah R. Gross, chancellor of the Philadelphia Bar Association, has called for him to resign, but he refuses to do so.

Williams was charged by federal authorities with bribery, extortion, honest services fraud, and wire fraud. He is alleged to have received gifts that range from luxury vacations in the Dominican Republic to sofas, all in exchange for cutting deals with his friends. This man is so low that he even stole more than \$20,000 from his adopted mother, an elderly woman in poor health.

Williams is responsible for the conviction of Msgr. William Lynn, the first U.S. Church official ever to serve time in prison for his handling of priestly sexual abuse. Williams did not start the war on Lynn, but he brought it to new heights.

The attack on the Catholic Church in Philadelphia began in 2001. That was when a grand jury was charged "to investigate the sexual abuse of minors by individuals associated with religious organizations and denominations." The D.A. was Lynne Abraham. After a second grand jury was convened, I wrote to her asking which religious organizations and denominations she had pursued, other than the Catholic Church. She never answered. That's because she gave all other religions a pass.

In 2005, Abraham gave up: not a single priest was prosecuted. But the war on the Church in Philly was not over. Enter the new D.A., Williams, in 2010.

Williams went for the big prize—he sought to bring down a bishop. He failed, so he set his sights on Msgr. Lynn, a top aide in the archdiocese.

It cannot be easily summarized just how corrupt Williams is. Even if he had not been busted by the feds this week, *the record shows that his war on Msgr. Lynn is the most unethical assault ever conducted by a D.A. against a high-ranking member of the Catholic clergy in American history. Worse, the corruption extends beyond Williams.*

To read our account of what has transpired in Philadelphia, click [here](#). Meanwhile, please keep Msgr. Lynn in your prayers.