

KANSAS CITY STAR IS A JOKE

In the 28 years that Bill Donohue has been president of the Catholic League, few newspapers have been more hypocritical in their coverage of the Catholic Church than the Kansas City Star. It added to its legacy on July 28 when it ran an editorial claiming that the Church is still not transparent in its handling of the sexual abuse of minors.

The newspaper says the Church can correct this alleged deficiency by publishing a list of priests who were “credibly accused.” It praises those dioceses which have done so. Donohue doesn’t. If anything, they are deserving of our condemnation, not commendation. The accused have rights, and that includes Roman Catholic priests.

Why should the Catholic Church publish a list of accused priests *when no institution in the United States publishes a list of its employees who have been accused of sexual misconduct* (or any offense, for that matter)? If they did, the list of those who work in the media would be extensive.

Moreover, if the names of those who have been accused, but not convicted, were made public by their employer, the employee should sue for reputational damage. In fact, the Catholic League filed an amicus brief in a case involving 11 Pennsylvania priests whose reputational rights were damaged when a grand jury report was made public listing their accused status. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled 6-1 in our favor in December 2018.

In a report on the public schools published in 2016 by USA Today, it found the following. “Congress passed a law in December 2015 requiring states to ban school districts from secretly passing problem teachers to other jurisdictions or face losing federal funds. But 45 states have not instituted the ban.”

The sentinels at the Kansas City Star should get on this one right away. But they won't—it doesn't involve the Catholic Church.

In 2011, when the Kansas City Star was relentless in its news stories on clergy sexual abuse, we sought a corrective: we offered the newspaper \$25,000 to pay for an advertisement that sought to set the record straight, especially about the work of SNAP. We were denied without an explanation. It was not as though the newspaper couldn't have used the money—in the previous decade it had laid off a thousand employees. We all know why it was turned down.

For all of these reasons, the Kansas City Star is a joke.