

LONG ISLAND CATHOLICS RALLY TO SUPPORT BISHOP MURPHY

On July 25, we began a petition drive of Catholic League members in Nassau and Suffolk counties on Long Island in support of Rockville Centre Bishop William F. Murphy. We did so after Voice of the Faithful on Long Island called for the bishop to resign. Two months later, we had amassed more than 6,000 signatures.

It has been the position of the Catholic League all along that there was nothing in the report by Massachusetts Attorney General Thomas Reilly that warranted the resignation of Bishop Murphy. In addition, in the book released by the *Boston Globe* on the subject, *Betrayal: The Crisis in the Catholic Church*, there was nothing incriminating said about Bishop Murphy. In short, he's innocent.

Unfortunately, this wasn't enough to satisfy those bent on "paying back" the Church: their anger is such that they have lost all sense of rationality and proportionality. That is why Voice of the Faithful, at least on Long Island, can no longer be taken seriously—it has discredited itself by engaging in a witch hunt against Bishop Murphy.

We answered the accusations of Voice of the Faithful with a point-by-point refutation of its charges; our report is available on our website ([here](#)). We proudly stand by that report.

It is amazing to see the names of thousands of priests, brothers, nuns and lay people who signed the petition and wrote letters of support. Like other Catholics, they are outraged at those responsible for the scandal. But what makes our supporters different is their ability to discern the difference between innocence and guilt. That is why they are

justly angry at those who seek to exploit the scandal to further their own political agenda.

One of the sidebar stories to this issue is the way *Newsday*, the Long Island daily, blacked us out. There was no story in the newspaper on September 26, the day following our news release. To make matters worse, *Newsday* ran a piece on September 25 about an upcoming meeting of Voice of the Faithful that was basically an announcement blown into a news story.

William Donohue immediately called the new editor-in-chief, Howard Schneider, to register a complaint. Schneider asked Donohue if *Newsday* had run a story on the commencement of the petition drive. He told him it had. Schneider expressed surprise that it didn't do the follow up on the results. But still no article was run.

Newsday and Voice of the Faithful lose credibility when they give away their hand. Both lay claim to being neutral yet their behavior belies something else is at work. That the Catholic League received several times as many signatures in support of Bishop Murphy—from only our own people—than Voice of the Faithful can claim in total membership on Long Island, is a reality that cannot be squashed.