

MARK FOLEY PLAYS THE CATHOLIC CARD

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on news that former congressman Mark Foley was abused by a clergyman:

"We already knew that Mark Foley claims he's an alcoholic who suffers from mental illness, and yesterday his lawyer told us what everyone in Washington already knew—Foley is gay. What apparently no one knew was that Foley was allegedly abused by a clergyman when he was a teenager in high school. Since Foley is a Catholic, the suggestion is that a priest abused him.

"Foley's lawyer says his client never molested anyone, which begs the question: why play the Catholic card? Together with his other maladies, Foley is obviously seeking to exculpate his behavior, despite protestations to the contrary by his attorney. Foley knows that the public is prepared to believe the worst about priests in today's environment—they can count on Jay Leno to bash priests one more time—even though only .02 percent of the 42,000 priests in the U.S. had a credible accusation of sexual abuse made against him in 2005. But he will stop at nothing to mitigate his actions.

"As for the alleged abuse, it's time to ask some tough questions. First, there is a huge difference between being groped and being raped, so which was it Mr. Foley? Second, why didn't you just smack the clergyman in the face? After all, most 15-year-old teenage boys wouldn't allow themselves to be molested. So why did you?"