

NEW YORK TIMES' DUPLICITOUS SEX ABUSE POLICY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the sexual abuse policy of the *New York Times*:

Just as we [showed](#) the rank hypocrisy of the *Boston Globe* in its handling of sexual misconduct among its own employees, we will show today the same duplicity on this issue that is evident at the *New York Times*.

New York Times reporter Glenn Thrush has been accused of sexual misconduct by four female journalists. An in-house inquiry found that Thrush did misbehave. "While we believe that Glenn has acted offensively, we have decided that he does not deserve to be fired," said Dean Baquet, the executive editor. They decided to allow him to undergo counseling instead.

This is not an indefensible position, but it smacks of pure hypocrisy when it is made by the *New York Times*. The Catholic Church used to treat offending priests this way—do an in-house inquiry and send the guilty to counseling—but when it did, the *New York Times* went bonkers. It demanded that the authorities be immediately contacted and the guilty priest be given his walking papers. Indeed, it ridiculed the idea that "counseling" was sufficient.

Did Baquet contact the police? Did he report Thrush to the New York District Attorney—that is what Cardinal Timothy Dolan does when he learns of an accusation against a priest. Why did Baquet think it was sufficient to handle sexual misconduct as an in-house matter?

Baquet defended his policy by saying, "Each case has to be evaluated based on individual circumstances." Yet when that same policy was followed by the Catholic Church, it was found

objectionable by the *Times*. It demanded “zero tolerance” for *all* offenses.

To make matters even more sickening, consider that the story on Thrush that appears in today’s edition also includes several other stories and columns that rap the Catholic Church for its handling of these issues.

Yesterday, the *Times* had a front-page story on the death of Cardinal Bernard Law, the Boston archbishop who presided over the sexual abuse scandal there. In case readers missed the rehashing of the scandal, the *Times* ran an obituary on Law today that is almost identical, word-for-word, to yesterday’s story. Both stories condemned Law for not reporting the offending priests to the authorities.

The news story and the obit should have had the decency to say to readers that it does not believe that its own offending employees need to be reported, just those who work for the Catholic Church.

There is another news story today that takes the Vatican to task for not making good on “zero tolerance” for offending priests, citing Australian prelate Cardinal George Pell as an example. It faults the pope for allowing Pell a leave of absence after being “formally charged with sexual offenses.”

First of all, Pell has never been found guilty of any wrongdoing. Second, what this story does not mention is that Pell has never been told what he is being charged with!

In yesterday’s *Herald Sun*, an Australian newspaper, it ran a story with this headline: “Secret Charges Against George Pell Released.” It specifically says that secret charges “have not yet been publicly released but were given to lawyers” representing the media. The story also says that “the specific charges he [Pell] is facing, or the number of alleged offenses, is not yet known.”

Why isn't this travesty of justice not the issue? The *Times* would never stand for this kind of injustice if it were one of its own.

Adding to this insanity is a column in today's *New York Times* by columnist Bret Stephens insisting that Matt Damon was right when he said that there is a difference between "patting someone on the butt and rape or child molestation."

I have been saying this for 15 years: most of the abuse committed by priests involved "inappropriate touching," yet every time I mentioned this I have been accused of making excuses. Now all of a sudden people like Stephens, and [Joan Vennochi](#) of the *Boston Globe*, have adopted my position, and it is considered enlightening.

Moreover, one of the offenses that Pell is likely to be accused of involves a "butt" infraction: he is accused of grabbing a boy's behind when he tossed him in a pool decades ago. Is the *Times* now willing to concede that this "offense" is less serious than the charges against Thrush, for whom it has shown great compassion?

Best of all today we have an "editorial observer" piece by Elizabeth Williamson. She is still fuming over Cardinal Law, and even admits that she refused to baptize her 13-year-old son because of the Boston archbishop.

Williamson should resign immediately.

She works for a man who covered up serial child rape for decades. Mark Thompson, the president of the New York Times Company, was in charge of the BBC when Jimmy Savile molested kids in the "corridors, staircases and canteens" of the BBC's headquarters. Thompson claims he never knew of Savile's 61 sexual assaults, four rapes, and one attempted rape, though the evidence does not support him. (See the Catholic League news release of 2-11-16, "*New York Times* Lectures Vatican.")

All organizations have their inconsistencies, but few are more guilty of rank hypocrisy than the *New York Times*.

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