

# NEW YORK TIMES GIVES WRONG IMPRESSION

The *New York Times* has recently published numerous stories looking to tie Pope Benedict XVI with various sex abuse cases; one of those stories focused on an incident that took place in Germany 30 years ago by a priest named Peter Hullermann. At the time, the pope, known as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, was archbishop of Munich.

Regarding how the Church handled the Hullermann case, the *Times* reported, "For decades it was common practice in the church not to involve law enforcement in sexual abuse cases." Thus did it give the impression that outside the Church, secular and religious organizations typically called the cops when they learned of abuse cases by employees. This was pure, unadulterated bunk. The rule, not the exception, was to deal with such matters internally.

Only recently have there been any laws mandating that the authorities be notified. What really takes chutzpah is the fact that the *New York Times* did not endorse a bill last year in New York State which would have treated public institutions the same way it would have treated private institutions in dealing with sex abuse.

In the 1960s, 70s and 80s—the very period when the vast majority of cases of priestly sexual molestation took place—the prevailing zeitgeist was to rehabilitate and renew. Had the Church dealt punitively right off the bat with alleged offenders, it would have been branded heartless and un-Christian at the time. How perverse it is, then, that those who sold us the idea that every malady could be cured by rehabilitation are now the very ones condemning the Catholic Church for following their prescription. That they are selectively doing so is all the more infuriating.