

NEW YORK TIMES MAKES “COLLAPSED CATHOLIC” ITS TOP EDITOR

The New York Times announced today that Bill Keller has been named executive editor. Catholic League president Bill Donohue immediately took note:

“In a wide-ranging piece Bill Keller wrote for the New York Times on May 4, 2002, he said, ‘I am what a friend calls a ‘collapsed Catholic’—well beyond lapsed....’ He did not say who his friend was but let me guess. Anna Quindlen? Maureen Dowd? In any event, in this same column Keller offered the following insights:

- “Karol Wojtyla [Pope John Paul II] has shaped a hierarchy that is intolerant of dissent, unaccountable to its members, secretive in the extreme and willfully clueless about how people live.” Sounds like the newsroom commenting on Keller’s predecessor, Howell Raines.
- “Like the Communist Party circa Leonid Brezhnev, the Vatican exists first and foremost to preserve its power.” Now consider how Susan E. Tifft, co-author of a book on the Times, commented on the way the Sulzberger family (who own the paper) reacted to the Jayson Blair mess: “Even when it’s difficult, the family will do whatever they have to protect this jewel, their newspaper.”
- “He [the pope] has trained bishops that the path of advancement is obsequious obedience to himself.” Which is perhaps preferable to obsequious obedience to affirmative action.
- “This is, after all, the church that gave us the Crusades and the Inquisition.” This is, after all, the same newspaper that lied about the Communist slaughter of the Ukrainians in the 1930s, ran a grand total of 9 editorials criticizing the

Nazis in 1941, 1942 and 1943, and labeled Fidel Castro “an agrarian reformer.”

“Thus are Catholics acquainted with Bill Keller. It is worth remembering that during the Jayson Blair scandal, publisher Arthur Sulzberger Jr. said it was wrong to ‘demonize’ the top brass at the Times. We look to Keller to do likewise to the Catholic Church, ‘collapsed Catholic’ or no.”