

NEW YORK TIMES TARGETS THE POPE AGAIN

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the latest attack on the pope by the *New York Times*:

Once upon a time there was a homosexual priest who was accused of molesting boys in Germany. That was 30 years ago. At the approval of Archbishop Joseph Ratzinger (now the pope), he was sent away for therapy and was later reinstated; years later, under a new archbishop, there was another incident and more therapy.

We know this because the *New York Times* (which does not like to report on molesting rabbis in 2010), told us about this on Saturday in a front-page article. Today, it ran a front-page article on the same story. Was there any difference? Yes. On Saturday, the *Times* was only able to identify the priest as bearing the initial "H." Today, it has real news: his name is Hullermann. And now "H" has been suspended.

Was it wrong to send abusers to therapy? Is it wrong today? The *Times* does not say. While it is painfully obvious that psychologists and psychiatrists have oversold their competency in treating abusers, it has long been considered to be both scientifically and ethically sound. It still is. Perhaps that view is unwarranted, but it is flatly unfair to cherry pick Catholic decision-makers for indictment when therapy fails.

The *Times* also wrote today that when the pope was Cardinal Ratzinger under Pope John Paul II, he was "in charge of reviewing sexual abuse cases for the Vatican." In doing so, the *Times* leaves the impression that Ratzinger was in charge of overseeing these cases when the scandal developed. Nonsense. The *Times* reported on January 9, 2002 that he had just been appointed to this role. Thus, he had nothing to do

with this issue at the time when most of the abuse took place (mid-60s to mid-80s).

The *Times* has a vested ideological interest in keeping this story alive. To say it dislikes Pope Benedict XVI intensely is an understatement.

Contact NYT Public Editor Clark Hoyt: public@nytimes.com