

# NEWS FLASH: PRIESTS HAVE RIGHTS

The rights of priests have been under siege for some time now and recently the attacks against them reached a fever pitch. In a vicious editorial, the *Seattle Times* said that 37 priests in the Philadelphia archdiocese have been allowed to continue in ministry despite a finding of sexual misconduct by a grand jury. But the grand jury did not find anyone guilty—they weren't empowered to do so. Moreover, most of the accused were initially investigated and cleared even though 24 were recently suspended on a second look. Most important, if mere accusations are the new bar for contacting the cops, then this should apply to all institutions.

Archbishop Dolan, head of the bishops' conference, recently reaffirmed the "resolve to deal firmly" with offending clerics. For this he was condemned by the National Survivor Advocates Coalition, for engaging in a "shellgame." BishopAccountability.org, took aim at the Bridgeport diocese for not listing the names of "accused priests." SNAP expressed anger at the Philly archdiocese for doing what it is entitled to do—pay the fees of an accused cleric.

In the *National Catholic Reporter*, Jamie L. Manson ripped into Dolan for his remarks on "60 Minutes" in which he correctly said that the scandal is "over with." Unhappy with the Church's teachings on sexual ethics, she spoke derisively and disrespectfully of the archbishop. Here's the real problem: this newspaper wins annual awards from the Catholic Press Association, and Manson was given an award from the same group last year.