

NY AG MISREPRESENTS BROOKLYN DIOCESE

The Diocese of Brooklyn, ably led by Bishop Robert J. Brennan, has entered into an agreement with the Office of New York State Attorney General Letitia James regarding the diocese's two-decade child protection policy. Both organizations have issued a press release on this matter. But there are instances where the Office of the Attorney General's (OAG) account misrepresents the terms of the agreement that were reached with the Diocese of Brooklyn (DB); in some instances, existing Diocesan policies are not properly noted by OAG.

- OAG says the Diocese **“failed to consistently comply** with its own policies and procedures for responding to sexual abuse.”

DB notes that the agreement specified that the Diocese's **“policies and procedures were significant** and improved the Diocese's response to sexual abuse.”

- OAG claims **“The Diocese did not have policies in place** to ensure a prompt and thorough response to allegations of sexual abuse or misconduct.”

DB says the agreement admitted that **“in most cases, the Diocese timely referred the Abuse Allegations** to the Diocesan Review Board and hired an independent investigator to investigate the charges.”

- OAG argues that **“the Diocese will also post online a confidential portal and telephone number for submitting complaints.”**

Breaking News: The Diocese has had such a phone number for 20 years.

- OAG opines that **“The Diocese will also refer all complaints**

it receives to law enforcement.”

Hello! Unlike other religious and secular institutions—which are never scrutinized—the Diocese has been doing this for a very long time.

- *OAG* contends that **“The agreement requires the Diocese to take significant action to prevent and address allegations of clergy sexual abuse”** and make reforms such as **“Installing an independent, secular monitor** who will oversee the Diocese’s compliance with policies and procedures....”

Fact Check: It was the Diocese which **proposed the appointment of an independent third party** to monitor compliance.

Why *OAG* misrepresented the Brooklyn Diocese’s response to these issues is unknown. But the public, and state lawmakers, need to know the truth. It is important for the state not to feed anti-Catholicism, and one way to avoid doing that is to accurately report interactions with Catholic officials.

As Bill Donohue recounts in his book, *The Truth about Clergy Sexual Abuse: Clarifying the Facts and the Causes*, there is no institution in the nation that has a better record in combating the sexual abuse of minors today than the Catholic Church. This is not open to debate: the data are conclusive. And this has been true for decades.

The heyday of the scandal was between 1965 and 1985. Current reports are typically about old cases. The fact of the matter is that almost all the offending priests are either dead or have been kicked out of ministry. To suggest otherwise is egregiously unjust.

We contacted Attorney General Letitia James and all members of the New York State legislature.