

# NY GOV. AND AG DOWNPLAY SEXUAL ABUSE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on how New York officials are handling accusations of sexual harassment:

When Kathy Hochul succeeded Andrew Cuomo as governor of New York (she was his lieutenant governor), she was asked about the culture of sexual abuse that had arisen under her boss. "Anyone who crosses the line will be addressed by me." Not true.

Hochul is giving a pass to an accused sexual abuser in her administration, Ibrahim Khan, the former chief of staff to Attorney General Letitia James: he is accused of sexually harassing a former AG employee, Sofia Quintanar. Hochul said last week that she does not support an investigation of this matter. But when it came to probes of accused priests, she supported all of them.

Attorney General Letitia James was also tough on Cuomo. "Allegations of sexual harassment should always be taken seriously. There must be a truly independent investigation to thoroughly review these troubling allegations against the governor, and I stand ready to oversee that investigation and make any appointments necessary." Not true.

Now that allegations are being made about her chief of staff, James changed her tune. Indeed, she is accused of covering up for Khan for two months as she ran for reelection. Why didn't she call the cops—the bishops are supposed to call the cops when they learn of accusations against one of their priests—and let them handle the matter?

Here's the answer. James discovered the due process rights of Khan, rights that she never insisted on when priests were being charged. "We're protecting the rights of individuals and

it's important to understand this was a private investigation...." She added that "it's important we protect the privacy of individuals." Are not priests individuals?

The next time an accusation is made against a priest in New York State, the bishops should refuse to cooperate with the authorities. They should publicly state that they are taking a page out of the Hochul-James book and conduct their own private investigation, asserting the due process rights of priests.

This is beyond hypocrisy—the governor and attorney general are playing us, making a mockery of justice. Elected officials in both parties need to demand equal justice and demand a probe of why Hochul and James are treating the alleged victim of sexual misconduct—a woman in their employ—with such casualness.

Whatever happened to the #MeToo movement? And weren't women supposed to be treated better when their boss was a woman?