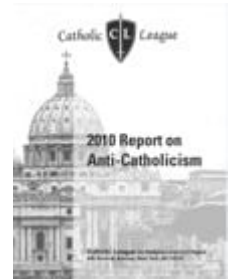


Papal

PAPAL WITCH-HUNT



In the spring of 2010, there was a concerted effort by the media, led by the New York Times, to blame Pope Benedict XVI for the sex abuse scandal in the Roman Catholic Church. What follows is a list of news releases that we issued on the role that the New York Times played in this papal witch-hunt:

March 15: NEW YORK TIMES GUNNING FOR THE POPE

On March 10, the *New York Times* ran an article on sex abuse in the Catholic Church stating that in Austria a priest abused a boy 40 years ago. On March 14, readers learned of a German case where a man says he was abused in 1979. But when Rabbi Baruch Lebovits was found guilty the week before on eight counts of sexually abusing a Brooklyn boy, the *Times* failed to report it. This was not an accident—it was deliberate.

Worse, on March 13, the *Times* ran a front-page story saying that in 2002, when the sex abuse scandal in Boston hit, the pope—then Cardinal Ratzinger—“made statements that minimized the problem.” No quotes or evidence of any kind were given. “Minimize the problem.” Interesting phrase. In 2005, the *Times* reported that in 2002, Ratzinger believed that “less than 1 percent of priests are guilty” of sex abuse (it was later found that 4 percent was a more accurate figure). The *Times* characterized his remark by saying he “appeared to minimize the problem.” Looks like they got their talking points down just fine.

What the *Times* could have said was that on January 9, 2002, three days after the *Boston Globe* broke the story on sex abuse, it ran a story reporting that Ratzinger had sent a letter to the bishops worldwide saying that “even a hint” of the sexual abuse of minors merited an investigation. But to do so would have compromised the conclusion it sought to reach.

If the *Times* were truly interested in eradicating sex abuse, it not only would report on cases like Rabbi Lebovits, it

would not seek to protect the public school establishment. But it does. Here's the proof. In 2009, there were two bills being debated in Albany on the subject of sex abuse: one targeted only private institutions like the Church, giving the public schools a pass; the other covered both private and public. The *Times* endorsed the former.

March 16: NEW YORK TIMES TARGETS THE POPE AGAIN

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, March 13 in a front-page article. On March 16, it ran a front-page article on the same story. Was there any difference? Yes. In the article from the 13th, the *Times* was only able to identify the priest as bearing the initial "H." On the 16th, it had 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* did 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 on the 16th 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* left 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.

March 19: *NEW YORK TIMES* GIVES THE WRONG IMPRESSION

We commented on a front-page article in the March 19 *New York Times* on a sex abuse incident that took place in Germany 30 years ago:

“For decades it was common practice in the church not to involve law enforcement in sexual abuse cases.” Thus did the *Times* give the impression that outside the Catholic Church, secular and religious organizations typically called the cops when they learned of abuse cases by employees. This is pure, unadulterated bunk. The rule, not the exception, was to deal with such matters internally.

Only recently have there been any laws mandating that the authorities be notified. What really takeschutzpah is the fact that the *New York Times* did not endorse a bill last year in New York State which would have treated public institutions the same way it would have treated private institutions in dealing with sex abuse.

In the 1960s, 70s and 80s—the very period when the vast majority of cases of priestly sexual molestation took place—the prevailing *zeitgeist* was to rehabilitate and renew. Had the Church dealt punitively right off the bat with alleged offenders, it would have been branded heartless and un-Christian at the time. How perverse it is, then, that those who sold us the idea that every malady could be cured by rehabilitation are now the very ones condemning the Catholic Church for following their prescription. That they are selectively doing so is all the more infuriating.

Anyone who thinks this twisted thinking is confined to the *New York Times* isn't keeping up with liberal sentiment on this issue. It's the norm.

March 25: *NEW YORK TIMES* AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

We commented on the front-page article in the Thursday, March 25 *New York Times* about priestly sexual abuse:

Media requests to deal with this subject made it difficult to provide an adequate response to that day's article by Laurie Goodstein. But the time had come to ask some serious questions

about why the Times was working overtime with wholly discredited lawyers to uncover dirt in the Church that occurred a half-century ago. Those questions were raised in an ad we wrote that was published in the March 30 *New York Times*. This was the last straw.

March 26: NEW YORK TIMES TRIES TO KEEP FLAME ALIVE

"Pope Was Told Pedophile Priest Would Get Transfer." That was the headline in the March 26 *New York Times* piece on the pope. Yet the *Times* offered absolutely no evidence to support this charge. All it said was that his office "was copied on a memo" about the transfer of Peter Hullermann. According to Church officials, the story said the memo was routine and was "unlikely to have landed on the archbishop's desk."

Let's say Archbishop Joseph Ratzinger, now the pope, did in fact learn of the transfer. So what? Wasn't that what he expected to happen? After all, we know from a March 16 *Times* story that when Ratzinger's subordinates recommended therapy for Hullermann, he approved it. That was the drill of the day: after being treated, the patient (we prefer the term offender) returns to work. It's still the drill of the day in many secular quarters today, particularly in the public schools. A more hard-line approach, obviously, makes more sense, but the therapeutic industry is very powerful.

In other words, there is no real news in that day's news story. So why print it? To keep the flame alive. We alerted our members to look for the *Times* to run another story saying they had proof Ratzinger knew of the transfer. Did they think that after he approved the therapy that Hullermann would be sent to the Gulag?

We noted that the March 25 *Times* story on the half-century old case concerning Father Lawrence Murphy would be the subject of an upcoming op-ed page ad. Meanwhile, we took advantage of every TV and radio opportunity to set the record straight. The pope is a great man, and the Catholic League is proud to stand by him.

March 29: NYT UNFAIRLY CITES POPE'S ROLE

We criticized an op-ed article and a news story in the *New*

York Times about Pope Benedict XVI's role in the case of Father Lawrence Murphy:

In the March 28 *Times*, columnist Maureen Dowd said that Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now the pope, "ignored repeated warnings and looked away in the case of the Rev. Lawrence C. Murphy, a Wisconsin priest who molested as many as 200 deaf boys." Wrong. Her own newspaper said it has no evidence that he even knew of letters that reached his office in 1996 about this matter.

The March 29 edition of the *Times* had a news story which said that Ratzinger "did not defrock a priest who molested scores of deaf boys in the United States, despite warnings by American bishops about the danger of failure to act, according to church files." Wrong. Besides the fact that there is no evidence he even knew of the case, his office actually lifted the statute of limitations—the abuse took place in the 50s and 60s—and began an investigation. Murphy died while the inquiry was proceeding.

It was one thing for pundits to play fast and loose and ignore the evidence. It was doubly distressing when those who write for the *New York Times* did so. While this may come as a shocker to the *Times*, no priest can be defrocked until he is found guilty. If the inquiry was on-going when Murphy died, there is no way he could have been defrocked.

This is particularly disgusting given that the *Times* is ever so sensitive about the civil liberties rights of accused jihadists.

March 31: POPE'S CRITICS LACK EVIDENCE

Much of the accusation against Pope Benedict XVI in the case of Wisconsin priest Father Lawrence Murphy rested on his alleged disinterest in pushing for Murphy to be defrocked. Contradicting this smear was the judge in the Murphy trial and the *New York Times* itself.

Father Thomas Brundage was the judicial vicar for the Milwaukee Archdiocese who presided over the trial of Father Murphy from 1996-1998. Never once did the *Times* contact him, but had they done so they would have learned the following. "At no time in the case, at meetings that I had at the Vatican, in Washington, D.C. and in Milwaukee," said Brundage,

"was Cardinal Ratzinger's name ever mentioned." He added that he was "shocked" when the media tried to connect Ratzinger's name to the case. Murphy died, by the way, when he was still a defendant in a church criminal trial.

Even the *New York Times* had acknowledged that there is no evidence that in 1996 Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (the pope) was even aware of proceedings against Murphy. Moreover, the investigation did not even have to be launched given that the statute of limitations had expired.

We knew what was going on. There were those who are wholly unimpressed by the evidence—they just wanted to get the pope. No doubt there was wrongdoing done in the Murphy case, but it was morally outrageous to lay it at the foot of the pope. Indeed, the pope's critics looked rather enfeebled given what Father Brundage and the *Times* said about his complicity.

We challenge anyone to produce a single piece of evidence that the pope did anything wrong.

April 6: HOW TO SOLVE THE ABUSE PROBLEM

We explained to the press how the Catholic Church could resolve the sex abuse scandal.

We said the best thing the Catholic Church could possibly do would be to mimic the success of the public schools, especially in New York City. For example, the *New York Times* ran a story on April 6 about an accused priest from India who was stationed temporarily in Minnesota a few years back. He would never have seen the light of day had he been assigned to a "rubber room."

The *New York Post* had recently described the "rubber rooms" as places where educators accused of wrongdoing sit for months, or even years, at full pay while their case is being investigated. What do they do? They are known for "snoozing at their desks, holding jam sessions, playing board games, and breaking into fights." Moreover, "Doodling is a popular pastime. Others read every word of a newspaper. Many gulp down cup after cup of coffee." There are currently 675 teachers in the "rubber rooms," costing the City over \$40 million a year in salaries alone. Some of the accused have been drawing full pay for 12 years. (Soon after we issued our release, the City decided to shut down the "rubber rooms" but still the teachers

were paid to perform “clerical” duties.)

The good news was that the *Times* doesn’t care about the “rubber rooms,” which explained why it seldom wrote about them. Best of all, the *Times* never once editorialized against them. Indeed, it didn’t even like to report on efforts to insure greater rights for the molesters. For example, when New York Assemblyman Peter Abbate, Jr. introduced a bill to terminate in-house disciplinary inquiries for all civil servants, thus making it easier for abusers to skate. But it never made the *Times*.

The lesson to be learned was quite simple. The Catholic Church should never remove accused priests from ministry—they should assign them to a “rubber room” where they can do something productive, e.g., finger painting, with no cut in pay. Following the lead of the teachers’ unions, the Church should work against all reform efforts. And when it is criticized for cheering laws making it easier for the accused to get away scot-free, it should just say it is modeling itself on the exemplary work of the teachers’ unions. The *Times* should understand. Shouldn’t it?

April 7: MAUREEN DOWD’S WHINY MOMENT

Maureen Dowd had an article in the *New York Times* titled, “The Church’s Judas Moment.” We couldn’t resist issuing a rejoinder.

It is next to impossible for Maureen Dowd to write a piece about the Catholic Church without sounding whiny. Always the victim, Maureen is forever put upon by the boys in robes. That she desperately wants to try one on for size is obvious, but, alas, this is a problem without a remedy. Well, not quite: there are still a few mainline Protestant churches open that might welcome her.

Maureen confessed that she was so flustered by the Vatican, New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan and Bill Donohue that she could not write her column, and that is why she invited her “devout Catholic” brother Kevin to pen one in her place. That was a mistake.

Dowd’s brother wrote that since Vatican II, laypeople have been “performing the sacraments.” He later wrote that “Married people and laypeople giving the sacraments are not going to

destroy the church.” Someone needed to inform him that laypeople are not permitted to give the sacraments.

Devout Kevin also seemed confused about another matter, although this time he was not alone. He cheered the “liberalized rules of the Vatican,” but noted with sadness that celibacy was not dropped. As a result, he said, the Church ended up “drawing on men confused about their sexuality who put our children in harm’s way.” But homosexuals are no more confused about their sexuality than heterosexuals. He did deserve credit, however, for noting that too many of the wrong guys got into the Church following Vatican II.

We wished Maureen a speedy recovery and hoped the R&R would have an alembic effect. And we hoped Devout Kevin accessed a copy of *Catholicism for Dummies*.

April 20: NEW YORK TIMES MARKS POPE’S ANNIVERSARY

We commented on the way the *New York Times* marked the 5th anniversary of Pope Benedict XVI:

The news story was remarkable, even for the *Times*. Readers learned that the sexual abuse scandal is “growing” and is “quickly defining his papacy.” Furthermore, the pope has “alienated Muslims, Jews, Anglicans and even many Roman Catholics.”

In point of fact, the scandal ended about a quarter century ago: the timeline when most of the abuse took place was the mid-60s to the mid-80s. The only thing “growing” is coverage of abuse cases extending back a half-century, something the *Times* has contributed to mightily. To say his papacy is being defined by old cases may be the narrative that suits the *Times*, but it most certainly is not shared by fair-minded observers.

Yes, many Muslims were alienated by the pope’s brutal honesty in calling out Islam for its subordination of reason, and indeed many proved his point by resorting to violence. The heroics of Pope Pius XII in saving as many as 860,000 Jews during the Holocaust is a stunning record, especially as compared to the editorial silence that the *Times* exhibited in addressing the Shoah at the time. It is not correct, as the *Times* said, that the pope attempted “to rehabilitate a Holocaust-denying bishop,” rather he attempted to reconcile a break-away Catholic group which unfortunately had as one of its members a Holocaust-denying bishop. Anglicans unhappy with

the pope's outreach to the disaffected in their ranks represent an embarrassing chapter for them, not Catholics. And it is hardly surprising that those Catholics who intensely disliked Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger are, for the most part, the same ones who reject Pope Benedict XVI.

The pope can be justly criticized for missteps in governance and communications, but to paint him as a divider is a cruel caricature being promoted to hurt him, in particular, and the Church, in general.

The following is a list of news releases that we issued related to the papal witch-hunt that was started by the New York Times:

March 18: *ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER* SLANDERS PRIESTS

On the blog site of the March 17 *Orange County Register* was a series of questions and answers on the subject of sexual abuse. At the top, under the headline question, "Think you can spot the sex offender in the crowd?", was a silhouette of a priest: faceless, the silhouette was clearly a male wearing a priest's collar and black jacket. None of the questions or answers mentioned anything about a priest, or about religion in general. This entry was still posted a day later on the blog of the Santa Ana, California newspaper.

We called the newspaper a disgrace. By slandering tens of thousands of Catholic priests all across the nation, the *Orange County Register* carved out a special place for itself in the annals of journalism.

When the Danish cartoon controversy exploded in 2006, the *Register* refused to offend Muslims by printing the depictions of Muhammad. Ken Brusic, the editor, explained the decision by saying that to publish the cartoons the newspaper "would needlessly offend many in our community and would add little to the debate." But offending Catholics, especially Catholic priests, is perfectly legitimate.

We said that nothing short of an immediate apology will suffice, and it should come from the top, Terry Horne, president and publisher.

March 19: *ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER* GETS THE MESSAGE

On March 18, the Catholic League protested the blog site of the *Orange County Register* which showed the silhouette of a priest in a Q & A section on sexual abuse. The following day we received an apology.

Thanks to our members who pounded the newspaper with e-mails, the president and publisher of the *Register*, Terry Horne, released a letter of apology to complainants. "Singling out one group, especially in such a recognizable way, was unfair and inappropriate." He ended his letter by saying, "We hope you will forgive the lapse in judgment. And I hope you will accept my personal apology."

On the blog site, the newspaper posted the Catholic League's news release from the previous day. The logo of the Catholic League was placed at the top. We accepted the apology. Case closed.

March 23: PUSH FOR CELIBACY IMPLIES GAY GUILT

Reports in Ireland and Germany of decades-old cases of priestly sexual abuse triggered an array of articles, surveys and talk-show discussions on the need for the Church to end the celibacy requirement. The implication was that more heterosexuals, and less homosexuals, would be drawn to the priesthood, thus alleviating the problem.

The reasoning is sound: as we have seen from several studies—including the one just released by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops—80 percent of the victims are male. Just as important, the majority of the victims are post-pubescent. In other words, we are talking about homosexuality, not pedophilia.

Those who fancy themselves progressive would never, of course, say there is a homosexual link to priestly sexual abuse. But they know it to be true in their heart of hearts. For example, no one seriously believes that pedophiles would be inclined to marry if celibacy were lifted—they are not interested in adults. But surely homosexuals would find the seminaries and parishes less attractive if most of the men were married.

So as not to be misunderstood, it is nonsense to say that homosexuality causes sexual abuse. Moreover, it is both untrue, and unfair, to say that most gay priests are molesters. They are not. But it is also true that most of the molesters are gay. Is this not the unstated predicate of progressives pushing for an end to celibacy? Why else recommend doing away with it?

In short, the only difference between most progressives and most conservatives on this issue is that the latter are not afraid to identify the elephant in the room.

March 24: MEDIA MOSTLY IGNORE SEX ABUSE DATA

Bill Donohue commented on the way the media reacted to the 2009 annual report on priestly sexual abuse that was released by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:

There was a 36 percent decline in allegations of clergy sexual abuse between 2008 and 2009. As usual, most of the alleged offenders are either dead and buried, have already been thrown out of the priesthood, or are missing. There were six allegations made in 2009 involving minors. Six. As always, males are the preferred target. The report gave an age breakdown but did not mention the significant role played by homosexuals. Media reports never mentioned it either.

Here's how the media responded. AP ran a story of 864 words, but most newspapers ignored it: only two—the *Asbury Park Press* and the *News Journal* (Wilmington, Delaware)—decided to run it. The *Washington Post* did a responsible job by covering it in 505 words. The *St. Paul Pioneer Press* also offered a decent summary. By contrast, the *New York Times* ran a 92-word article. The *Chicago Tribune* did much the same. None of the other big dailies—from the Catholic-bashing *Boston Globe* to the reliably anti-Catholic *Los Angeles Times*—even bothered to mention it. NPR gave it short mention, but the broadcast and cable stations ignored it.

It was all so predictable. Bad news about the Church is front-page news, but good news goes largely ignored. To those who say it's no different with any other group, consider this. AP reported on March 24 that a rabbi accused of raping a 7-year-old girl in New York a decade ago was arrested the day before outside his Arizona synagogue. Aside from a very brief article in the *New York Daily News*, not a single newspaper in New York or Arizona—or anywhere else—bothered to print it.

March 30: MSNBC LIBELS THE POPE

On March 30, we issued a release instructing people to go to the home page of MSNBC and click on "World News." From there we said to click on "Americas." Next click on the article, "Losing Their Religion? Catholicism in Turmoil." Scroll down and in the "Click for Related Content" section there was an article entitled, "Pope Describes Touching Boys: I Went Too Far." Clicking on this piece took the reader to an article about a homosexual German priest who had sex with males in the 1980s. *It said absolutely nothing about the pope. Yet MSNBC*

painted Pope Benedict XVI as a child molester in the tease to the article.

We said a retraction, and a sincere apology, were in order. We also said they should also investigate how this happened and who was responsible.

March 30: NBC APOLOGIZES FOR MSNBC'S HIT ON POPE

NBC apologized for the article on MSNBC's website entitled, "Pope Describes Touching Boys: I Went Too Far." The article had nothing to do with the pope.

NBC said the attributed quote was erroneous and they corrected the error. An apology was also extended. The apology was accepted. We hoped that whoever was responsible for this outrageous post was questioned about it and that appropriate measures were taken.

March 30: HYSTERIA MARKS POPE'S CRITICS

Seldom had we seen such delirium over an innocent man, namely Pope Benedict XVI. Christopher Hitchens wanted to know why the European Union was allowing the pope to travel freely. Perhaps he wanted the pope handcuffed at the Vatican and brought to the guillotine. Margery Eagan of the *Boston Herald*, another big fan of the Catholic Church, said, "The Pope should resign." One looked in vain for a single sentence in her article that implicates his guilt in anything. Then we had the *Washington Post* indicting priests by painting all of them as child abusers in a cartoon. There were many other examples of this kind of hysteria.

As indicated in our *New York Times* op-ed page ad that day, the pope is innocent. Indeed, he is being framed. No one had any evidence that he even knew of the case of Father Lawrence Murphy. Indeed, his office didn't find out until 1996 and then it did the right thing by summoning an investigation (it could have simply dropped an inquiry given that the statute of limitations had run out). No matter, the pope's harshest critics blamed him for not defrocking a man whom he may never have heard of, and in any event was entitled to a presumption of innocence. Or was he? There are not just a few who would deny civil liberties protections to priests.

It is a sad day when al-Qaeda suspects are afforded more rights than priests. That this kind of intellectual thuggery should emanate from those who fancy themselves tolerant and fair-minded makes the sham all the more despicable.

April 1: VATICAN GOES ON THE OFFENSIVE

Cardinal William Levada, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, directly took on the *New York Times* for its coverage of the Father Murphy abuse case in Wisconsin. Commenting on the news story by Laurie Goodstein, Levada wrote, "The point of Goodstein's article, however, is to attribute the failure to accomplish this dismissal [of Father Murphy] to Pope Benedict, instead of to diocesan decisions at the time."

Cardinal Levada had it just right. The wrongdoing in this case rests in Wisconsin. Why did the victims' families wait as long as 15 years to report the abuse? Why were the civil authorities unconvinced by what they uncovered? Why did Milwaukee Archbishop Rembert Weakland wait almost two decades before he contacted the Vatican?

Weakland's record in handling sex abuse cases is a matter of record. In 1984, he branded as "libelous" those who reported cases of priestly sexual abuse (he was rebuked by the courts for doing so). Ten years later he accused those who reported such cases of "squealing." And, of course, he had to resign when his lover, a 53 year-old man, revealed that Weakland paid him \$450,000 to settle a sexual assault lawsuit (Weakland took the money from archdiocesan funds). It's a sure bet that if Weakland were a theological conservative—and not a champion of liberal causes—the media (including the *National Catholic Reporter* and *Commonweal*) would have been all over him.

We also needed to learn from Goodstein why she waited until Wednesday, March 30, to interview Father Thomas Brundage, the priest who presided over the Murphy trial. Brundage has said that the pope, then Cardinal Ratzinger, had absolutely nothing to do with the Murphy case. And we need to know why Weakland never gave Brundage a letter he wrote asking him to call off the trial.

There's dirt in the Murphy case, but it sits in the U.S.A.—not Rome.

April 1: ATTEMPTS TO CENSOR DONOHUE FAIL

Bill Donohue commented on the attempts to censor him:

"Producers have been telling me for years that my critics have implored them never to invite me back on any program. But they always do. While the media are overwhelmingly liberal, they have an obligation to offer different points of view. Hence,

their non-stop invitations asking me to speak.”

The attempt to silence Donohue came from the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, Call to Action and the Interfaith Alliance. The three organizations joined hands and demanded that the media “ignore Bill Donohue.” Their complaint? Donohue’s telling the truth about the role homosexual priests have played in the abuse scandal.

The data collected by John Jay College of Criminal Justice show that between 1950 and 2002, 81 percent of the victims were male and 75 percent of them were post-pubescent. In other words, three out of every four victims have been abused by homosexuals. Puberty, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, begins at age 10 for boys.

No problem can be remedied without an accurate diagnosis. And any accurate diagnosis that does not finger the role that homosexuals have played in molesting minors is intellectually dishonest. We called for the cover-up to end, as well as the attempts to muzzle Donohue’s voice. Everything he said is what most people already knew, but were afraid to say. It was time for some straight talk.

April 6: ASSOCIATED PRESS GETS A TIP

AP reported that in the course of a TV interview on Sunday, April 4, the archbishop of Santiago, Chile said he was investigating “a few” cases of priestly sexual abuse. We decided to give AP a tip by bringing similar stories to its attention, all of which were reported in the previous week in the U.S. (since March 31), but *none* of which it chose to cover:

- A Milford, Connecticut teacher’s aide pleaded no contest to sexually assaulting a high school student.
- A Brookville High School teacher in Pennsylvania was charged with aggravated indecent assault; indecent exposure; corruption of minors; possession of obscene material; sexual abuse of children; and unlawful conduct with minors.
- A middle school gym teacher in Athens, New York was arrested on charges of sex abuse and forcible touching.
- A Morrisville-Eaton Central School District teacher outside Utica, New York was arrested for forcibly touching a girl over a three year period, beginning at the age of 11, and for endangering her welfare.
- A former Teacher of the Year in Bullitt County, Kentucky was

indicted by a grand jury on sexual abuse charges.

- A teacher at Olin High School in Iowa was charged with sexually exploiting a freshman. This same teacher faced similar charges two years ago when he taught in another school, and was simply moved from one school district to another.

Every day there are religious and secular leaders, all over the world, who learn of accusations of sexual misconduct, but none are given global coverage by AP *unless* it involves someone like the archbishop of Santiago. That AP thought his admission was newsworthy, but did not deem it worthy to cover the above half-dozen examples, was revealing. Now it may be a lot sexier to get the Church, but serious journalism ought to be guided by more professional standards of inquiry.

April 9: ABUSE SCANDAL IS *NOT* WIDENING

Every news story and commentary that stated the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church is widening was factually wrong. The evidence showed just the opposite—it has been contracting for approximately a quarter century. Here's the proof: the John Jay College of Criminal Justice—not exactly an arm of the Catholic Church—has shown repeatedly that the vast majority of the abuse cases took place from the mid-60s to the mid-80s. And the reports over the last five years show a rapid decline. The latest report, covering 2008-2009, shows exactly six credible allegations made against over 40,000 priests and tens of thousands of others working for the Catholic Church.

Almost all of the chatter about the alleged widening of the scandal was a direct result of media sensationalism. A perfect example could be found in an April 9 Reuters story. The headline read, "Norway's Catholic Church Reveals New Abuse Cases." But what was new was not a new wave of incidents, rather it was an admission by the Norwegian Catholic Church of four cases of alleged abuse that it had not previously disclosed. Two of the cases dated back to the 1950s; another dated back two decades; and the fourth one was based on "rumors."

The same Reuters story opened by saying these four stories come "two days after it [the Norwegian Catholic Church] revealed that a bishop who resigned last year did so after abusing an altar boy." That made it sound like a Church cover-up. Only at the end of the story did the reader learn that the

reason why this story had not emerged until then was precisely because the victim initially asked that it not be made public. There is no other religious or secular institution that was cherry-picked by lawyers and the media like that of the Catholic Church. If what happened in the 1950s qualifies as news when it happened in the Catholic Church, then surely it would be news to learn of all those who were abused a half-century ago by ministers, rabbis, school teachers and others. But it will never happen—such news fails to make the media salivate.

April 12: MEDIA COVER-UP OF SEX ABUSE WIDENS

We commented on a news story that was posted by the Associated Press titled, “Vatican to Bishops: Follow Law, Report Sex Abuse.” The Vatican decided to add a sentence to its guidelines on sex abuse, making plain the need for bishops to follow civil reporting laws. Here is how AP decided to frame the issue: “Victims, government inquiries and grand juries have all charged that the Catholic Church created what amounted to a conspiracy to cover up abuse by keeping allegations that priests raped and molested children secret and not reporting them to civil authorities.”

Now if there is a conspiracy to cover-up sex abuse, it belongs to the ACLU, Planned Parenthood and media outlets like AP—not the Catholic Church. For example, in 2002, in New York State, it was the New York Civil Liberties Union and Family Planning Advocates (the lobbying arm of Planned Parenthood) that pressured lawmakers not to pass a mandatory reporting law. Why? Because Planned Parenthood counselors learn of cases of statutory rape on a regular basis, and the last thing it wants to do is turn in its clients. New York State bishops, on the other hand, supported the law, but don’t look to AP—or any other news source—to drop the hammer on the ACLU and Planned Parenthood.

There is a cover-up going on all right, and it involves civil libertarian and pro-abortion groups teaming up with the teachers’ unions to stop real reform. Meanwhile, the public is led to believe that the bishops are the guilty party. Add to this the media cover-up of the role that homosexual priests have played in the scandal, and the conspiracy only widens.

April 13: VATICAN CITES ROLE OF HOMOSEXUALITY

On April 12, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Vatican’s

secretary of state, said that “there is a relation between homosexuality and pedophilia.” The number-two Vatican authority cited psychologists and psychiatrists as having made this claim.

It should be obvious to everyone that homosexuality does not cause predatory behavior, and nothing that Cardinal Bertone said contradicts that fact. But he is right, and his critics are wrong, to say that there is a link between homosexuality and the sexual abuse of minors. To be specific, homosexuals are indeed overrepresented—for whatever reason—as child molesters.

The authorities in a free society have a moral obligation to protect homosexuals from bullying and unjust discrimination. But no amount of political correctness justifies a cover-up: if any group is overrepresented as contributing to a social problem (as are the Irish in relation to alcoholism), then it must be dealt with squarely.

To the extent that practicing homosexuals find it more difficult to enter the priesthood (and this has been true for some time), the sexual abuse scandal will check itself. As a matter of fact, it already has.

April 15: ASSOCIATED PRESS GETS WISE ADVICE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue offers the Associated Press (AP) some words of advice:

What a fabulous story the AP has today on 30 Catholic priests accused of abuse who were transferred or moved abroad. AP put some money into this investigative report: it spans 21 countries in six continents. Now consider the following:

- In October 2007, AP released a report on sexual misconduct committed by public school teachers and found 2,570 cases over a five year period. In fact, it’s much worse than this. As AP disclosed, “*Most* of the abuse never gets reported.” [Our emphasis.]

- Why does *most* of the abuse go unreported? “School administrators make behind-the-scenes deals to avoid lawsuits and other trouble. And in state capitals and Congress, lawmakers shy from tough state punishments or any cohesive national policy for fear of disparaging a vital profession.”

- What happens to molesting teachers? “Too often, problem teachers are allowed to leave quietly. That can mean future abuse for another student and another school district.”

Indeed, it happens so often it is called “passing the trash” or the “mobile molester.”

- Moreover, “deals and lack of information-sharing allow abusive teachers to jump state lines, even when one school does put a stop to the abuse.”

Advice to AP: Do a story on the “mobile molesters,” using the report on priests as a model, i.e., don’t just write an article—name the names of the teachers, principals and superintendents. Also, track down molesting teachers in Maine where it is illegal to make public the cases of abusing teachers. Go to California and Hawaii where AP was stonewalled in 2007 from getting hard information on molesting teachers, and this time do your own investigating. For more advice, call our office.

May

Sam Harris wrote on Project Reason’s website calling for the arrest of Pope Benedict XVI when he visited England. In his article, Harris called the Church an institution “that preferentially attracts pederasts, pedophiles, and sexual sadists into its ranks, promotes them to positions of authority and grants them privileged access to children.” He continued by saying, “The scandal in the Catholic Church—one might now safely say the scandal *that is* the Catholic Church—includes the systematic rape and torture of orphaned and disabled children.” (His italics.) His most heinous remark was, “It is no exaggeration to say that for decades (if not centuries) the Vatican has met the formal definition of a criminal organization devoted—not to gambling, prostitution, drugs, or any other venial sin—but to the sexual enslavement of children.”

August

Attorney William McMurry, who sued the Holy See for being complicit in the sexual abuse of his three clients, sought to end the lawsuit; similar suits were still pending. McMurry won a settlement from the Archdiocese of Louisville in 2003 for \$25.7 million.

McMurry acknowledged that “Virtually every child who was abused and will come forward as an adult has come forward and sued a bishop and collected money, and once that happens, it’s over.” That’s right—once they got their check, they cashed out. But not McMurry: his motives were more primordial. Which

is why he continued.

What collapsed was the heart and soul of McMurry's interest: his attempt to put Pope Benedict XVI on trial. It was his objective to hold men in Rome accountable for the behavior of men in Louisville, simply because they all worked for the same organization. McMurry knew this was a high bar to clear—proving culpability on the part of the Holy See for what goes on in Kentucky—and so he decided it was a futile exercise.

There was one other reason why McMurry quit: he couldn't find any more alleged victims. But it was not for lack of trying. He admitted he searched in vain for months looking to find any man who may have been groped. "No one who has not sued a bishop is in a position to help us despite our best efforts over the past several months," he said.

Just think about it. Every day, for several months, William McMurry and his colleagues went to work in hot pursuit of finding some adult man who may have settled out of court. It did not matter how trivial the offense, how many decades ago it occurred, or how old the alleged victim was, all that mattered was that the offender had to be a priest. No minister, rabbi, school teacher, coach, counselor or psychologist would do. And now the gig is up.

HATE SPEECH

The following is a sample of some of the vitriol that was directed towards Pope Benedict XVI and the Catholic Church during the papal witch-hunt:

Roseanne Barr, "Roseanne World Blog," April 3: "I am starting to think that any parent who takes their kids to catholic churches from now on should lose custody. Taking your kid where you know sex offenders hang out is inexcusable!!!"

Leonce Gaiter, Huffington Post, April 3: "Now, with evidence that the current Pope enabled the rape of children by his priests through inaction, it is appropriate to examine the Church's suitability to dictate morality and spirituality to the rest of the world."

Rosie O'Donnell, "Rosie O'Donnell Show," April 5: "I mean, if there was an organization, let's just say the—you know, the—I don't want to say that, but the Boys' Club, or one of the—you know, had the history of child abuse—you know, child torture and rape that the Catholic Church has, would you ever give

money to the Boys' Club or the Girls' Club?...I'm saying that, to support an organization that—at the top of the infrastructure, are people willing to ignore the mass child abuse and torture and sexual molestation of its own constituents. I mean, it's almost like when you read about—you know, cults, Jonestown and all these cults—that they allow—you know, sexual perversity and sexual behavior.”

Andy Ostroy, Huffington Post, April 7: “The Church remains cavalier in its denial and arrogant defense of itself and of its failed self-policing mechanisms. It acts as if it's above the law and shrouds itself in secrecy, and its predatory monsters are afforded leniency and forgiveness no other common criminal would receive.”

Cindy Rodriguez, Huffington Post, April 9: “The Church not only attracts sexual deviants, it protects them.”

Michele Somerville, Huffington Post, April 26: “The pimping of children and the readiness to sacrifice them on the altar of Vatican public relations, the fear and distrust of women, and the compulsory celibacy for priests—are all interrelated. They're bundled in the twisted, deep-rooted tangle of the erotic pathology that burns within and radiates outward from the College of Cardinals, pitting the Church's venality against the gentleness of the Christ in its people. The Vatican's megalomaniacal dysfunctions and failures of imagination—which take the forms of misogyny, homophobia, anti-Semitism, and a readiness to victimize its most vulnerable—are inextricably bound; they are low-hanging fruit of the poisoned tree of the Vatican's commitment to ruling by fear, when it should be guiding by love.”

Christopher Hitchens, Newsweek, May 3: “The case for bringing the head of the Catholic hierarchy within the orbit of law is easily enough made. All it involves is the ability to look at a naked emperor and ask the question ‘Why?’ Mentally remove his papal vestments and imagine him in a suit, and Joseph Ratzinger becomes just a Bavarian bureaucrat who has failed in the only task he was ever set—that of damage control.”

Alex Wilhelm, Huffington Post, May 5: “It does not appear that there was a time that the Church was effective at preventing child abuse—this is a problem that reaches back to the earliest days of its formation and practice.”

MEDIA FEED BIGOTRY

Bill Donohue wrote the following article for the June Catalyst demonstrating how the media was instrumental in adding fuel to the fire of anti-Catholicism:

Young people get bits of information from the Internet; urbanites pick up free newspapers stuffed with short stories; others rely on snippets of news from radio or TV; millions depend on wire service stories in their hometown newspapers; and a slim minority are able to access in-depth articles in newspapers and magazines. So when any person or institution is being hammered night after night, a negative impression is bound to stick, independent of whether the "facts" are really facts. Such is the case with the wave of media attacks on the pope.

NewsBusters.com keeps a close eye on the media, and the day after Laurie Goodstein of the *New York Times* ran her piece on Father Lawrence Murphy, the Wisconsin priest who molested deaf boys extending back to the 1950s, it disclosed that critics of the Church outnumbered defenders by a margin of 13-1 on ABC, CBS and NBC. A few weeks later, the Media Research Center found that 69 percent of the 26 news stories carried by the three networks featured reports that presumed papal guilt.

Given these two factors—the limited amount of hard news consumed by most people these days, and the clear media bias against the Catholic Church—it is hardly surprising to learn that the pope's "Poor" ratings on handling the abuse scandal literally doubled between 2008 and 2010. However, a month later, it appeared that a backlash had set in, at least among Catholics.

In a *New York Times* poll taken in late April and early May, the pope's favorability rating among Catholics had jumped from 27 percent at the end of March (when the abuse stories were just getting started) to 43 percent. The evidence that this was due to a backlash against the media is supported by the finding that 64 percent of Catholics said the media had been harder on the Catholic Church than on other religions; almost half said the abuse stories were blown out of proportion.

The backlash was warranted. Not only that, but much of what was being reported was simply not true, though the misinformation was often passed on as if it were factual. Let's just take one of the more famous untrue "facts" that

have been floated at the expense of the pope, namely, the one that contends that the abuse scandal is widening under the tenure of Pope Benedict XVI. This claim was made by Roland Martin on CNN, as well as by many other commentators.

The real fact of the matter is that, as the John Jay College of Criminal Justice landmark study of 2004 showed, the vast majority of the abuse occurred between the mid-1960s and the mid-1980s. Now it is true that we did not hear much about this problem during that time, but it is nonetheless true that by the time the *Boston Globe* exposed the Boston Archdiocese in 2002, most of the worst of the scandal was behind us. Fast forward to 2010 and what we have now is nothing but a media-driven scandal: the cases recently trotted out go back a half century or more.

The impression that the scandal is widening is also contradicted by the latest report on this issue. Between 2008 and 2009, exactly six credible allegations were made against over 40,000 priests. There is no organization in the world—never mind the United States—that could match this record. Just as important, there is no other institution that is having its old dirty laundry hung out for everyone to see.

If the media were to launch an investigation of Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, public school teachers, camp counselors, psychologists and psychiatrists (to say nothing of stepfathers, boyfriends and other “partners”) then, yes, it’s okay to include Catholics. But when only one group is targeted, and every other one gets a pass, then those who belong to this entity have every right to scream “Witch-Hunt.” In this case, the more apt term would be Papal Witch-Hunt.

The irony is that Pope Benedict XVI has done infinitely more to correct the abuse problem than Pope John Paul II did. It was Benedict who pressed for investigations of priests who had previously escaped an inquiry. It was he who put into place procedures of a more punitive sort. It was he who spoke of the “filth” within the Church. It was he who reopened the case of Father Marcial Maciel Degollado, and is now about to render another judgment on the order he founded, the Legionaries of Christ. It was he who met with the victims. All considered, this is not so much an irony as it is an injustice: Pope Benedict has done much to improve conditions.

One of the most important reforms ushered in by Pope Benedict

was the decision to raise the bar on practicing homosexuals. While homosexual men are not *per se* barred from the seminaries, those who have been gay activists, or are practicing, are. And because the overwhelming majority of victims have been post-pubescent males, the more difficult it is for homosexuals to enter the priesthood, the more likely it is that sexual abuse will continue to decline.

As for the Father Murphy case, the evidence shows that the pope was never personally involved. Yet this didn't stop Philip Pullella of Reuters from writing that "The *New York Times* reported the Vatican and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict, were warned about Murphy but he was not defrocked." However, Laurie Goodstein of the *Times* never said that the pope was personally aware of the Murphy case, and Father Thomas Brundage, the judge in the trial, has said that the pope's name never came up in discussions in Milwaukee, Washington or Rome.

Just as bad is Cal Thomas, the evangelical writer and activist. He wrote a seriously flawed piece, one that asserted that "The trial was never held." One wonders whether anyone fact checks his articles. It must be pointed out that the Vatican could have dropped the case (as the civil authorities did in the 1970s), citing the fact that the statute of limitations had expired. But it didn't.

It was the Murphy case that got the whole media-driven scandal started. And it was not by accident when it happened. On Sunday, March 21, the House passed the health care bill. On Tuesday, March 23, President Obama signed it into law. On Thursday, March 25, the Goodstein piece on Murphy appeared in the *Times*. What am I getting at?

Health care had dominated the news for weeks in the run-up to the House vote. Now no newspaper that is sitting on what it believes is a major story wants to compete with an issue that literally overwhelms the news. So two days after Obama signed the bill into law, it was safe to pull the trigger. And it worked—the Murphy story took the lead, eclipsing all other news stories. As an added bonus, the following week was Holy Week, guaranteeing massive media coverage of the unfolding scandal. Those who think this was just a coincidence, think again. On the day the Murphy story broke, protesters from SNAP, the professional victims' group that thrives on

scandals, were seen on TV demonstrating in Rome. Was it just a coincidence that they happened to be there? Did they travel to Rome for a pasta special?

So who tipped them off? Jeffrey Anderson. Anderson is the maniacal Catholic-hating attorney who has made an estimated one hundred million dollars suing the Catholic Church (in 2002, he admitted to making \$60 million, but he refuses to say how much more he has made in the last eight years). In any event, it was Anderson who fed Goodstein the information for her story on Murphy. How do I know this? Because on CNN she admitted it. Here is what she said an attorney working on this case told her: "I have some interesting documents I think you might want to look at." Though she does not identify the attorney, this was Anderson's case.

Back to SNAP. How do we know it was Anderson who tipped them off? Because he is their principal benefactor. Several years ago, *Forbes* magazine disclosed that Anderson regularly greases SNAP.

See the connection? Anderson, motivated by hatred and greed, goes after the Catholic Church, and he, in turn, gives critical documents to Goodstein, knowing the *New York Times* would love to nail the Church; and then he gives the heads up to his radical clients, SNAP, who travel to Rome just in time to appear before the TV cameras when the story breaks on March 25.

What is driving Anderson, the *Times* and SNAP? Anderson's daughter was once molested by a psychologist who happened to be a former priest. So why doesn't he sue the American Psychological Association? Because there's much more money, and fun, to be had sticking it to the Church. As for the *Times*, as I said in the op-ed ad I wrote on this subject, it hates the Church's teachings on abortion, gay marriage and women's ordination so much that it delights in bashing Catholicism. SNAP is fueled by revenge and money: the activists will go to their grave screaming "it's payback time"; and because they have no other stable job, they thrive on lawsuits and the kick-backs they effectively get from steeple-chasing lawyers.

Another vicious lie is the one that maintains that the Catholic Church handled these abuse cases in a manner that was very different from the way others handled them. Nonsense.

Back when the scandal was flourishing, in the 1970s, everyone knew what the drill was: whether the accused was a priest, rabbi, minister, public school teacher, counselor—whomever it was—he was immediately put in therapy. Then, upon a clean bill of health, he was returned to his job. Was this wrong? In many cases it was. Who pushed for this? Ironically, many of those in the same liberal circles who are now pointing fingers. Back then it was chic to have an analyst, and there wasn't any psychological or emotional malady that the therapists couldn't cure. Or so they thought. Indeed, had a bishop sidestepped his advisors—some of whom acted more like therapeutic gurus—and decided to throw the book at the accused, he would have been branded as heartless and un-Christian by the Dr. Feelgood types. So for many of them now to get on their high horse saying there was a cover-up, when in fact what happened was the decision to conform to the prevailing *zeitgeist*—as understood and promoted by liberals—is sickening.

When the Murphy report on the situation in Dublin was released, one of the major conclusions was that if the bishops had followed canon law, instead of recommending therapy, the scandal may have been avoided. Sadly, this is true.

Yes, big mistakes were made, but the advice and the strategies employed in the Catholic Church were not any different than existed elsewhere. Moreover, all the news about the scandal today is not about new cases, it's about old ones. So why is the Church being singled out? For the very reason the Catholic League was founded in 1973.

PAPAL U.K. TRIP

After Pope Benedict XVI announced that he would visit the United Kingdom in September, his critics went ballistic. The following is a sample of some of the commentary:

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, *New Scotsman*, June 10: "Describing the Papacy as 'deceitful and unrighteous,' the Free Presbyterians highlighted recent global exposure of child abuse by Roman Catholic clergy, and suggest the Pope has connived in a cover-up."

Cristina Odone, *Sunday Telegraph*, September 5: "Catholics have watched in horror as, almost daily and almost in every country, broken men and women have come forth to tell of their ordeal at the hands of abusive priests."

Sinead O'Connor, *Guardian*, September 5: “‘Catholic’ has become a word associated with negativity, with abuse, with violence... The fact is, tragically, it’s been brought into disrepute by the people running it.”

“Benedict is in no position to call himself Christ’s representative. The pope should stand down, the Vatican should stand down, not only because of the cover-up, they’re incredibly arrogant, they’re anti-Christian. They don’t have the remotest relationship with God.”

Peter Tatchell, *Telegraph*, September 8: “Benedict XVI put the interests and image of the church before the welfare of children and young people. He is unfit to remain as Pope. He should resign.”

Keith Porteous Wood of the National Secular Society, *Irish Post*, September 8: “This anti-Catholicism of which Adamus complains is shared by most British Catholics, sickened by their church hierarchy’s dogma driven policies on contraception, homosexuality and even abortion. That is why Mass attendance here has halved in just 20 years and why only a quarter of Catholics agree with the official line on abortion—and fewer still on homosexuality and contraception.”

Bernard Wynne, spokesman for Catholic Voices for Reform, *Telegraph*, September 8: “The church, I think, is deeply misogynist and we have to change that.”

Julie Burchill, *Independent*, September 8: “How broad-minded this country is, when we consider that the British taxpayer will shortly be shelling out millions of pounds to protect a former member of the Hitler Youth who believes Anglicans will burn in Hell when the Pope visits this country next week—Just after we commemorate the beginning of the Nazi Blitz on this country!”

“The behaviour of the Church during the Second World War, and to the Jews generally, was vile—and REALLY makes me wonder if it wouldn’t have been possible to pick a Pope who HADN’T been in the Hitler Youth? Closer to home, let alone legions of child-raping holy men, only last week a leading light in the Catholic Church defended its role in moving a priest believed to be involved in three bombings which killed nine people, including Catholics, in the village of Claudy, Co Londonderry, in 1972. The youngest was an eight-year-old girl: ‘suffer little children,’ indeed.”

Christopher Hitchens, Slate.com, September 13: "We have recently been forcibly reminded, the Roman Catholic Church holds it better for the cries of raped and violated children to be ignored, and for the excuses and alibis of their rapists and torturers indulged, and for a host of dirty and willful untruths to be manufactured wholesale, and for the funds raised ostensibly for the poor to be paid out in hush money and shameful bribery, rather than that one tiny indignity or inconvenience to be visited on the robed majesty of a man-made church or any limit set to its self-proclaimed right to be judge in its own cause."

Peter Tatchell, CNN.com, September 16: "We do not believe that the pope should be honored with a state visit, given his role in the cover up of child sex abuse by Catholic clergy. Even today, he is refusing to hand the Vatican's secret sex abuse files to the police in countries worldwide. He is protecting the abusers. This makes him complicit with sex crimes against children. Such a person does not deserve the honor of a state visit."

"Pius XII was no saint. The fact that Pope Benedict wants to makes him a saint shows how far he has strayed from the moral and ethical values of most Catholics and most of humanity."

Reverend Ian Paisley, September 16: "We are here for a very solemn and serious reason today, the whole day is nonsense... I have just seen the statement made today which says that if you pay £25 to be at the Mass in Scotland your sins will be forgiven. No man can forgive sins but Christ himself, it is misleading nonsense."

Andrew Copson, Chief Executive, British Humanist Association website: "The Protest the Pope campaign is calling on the British government to disassociate itself from the Pope's intolerant teachings on issues such as women's rights, gay equality and the use of condoms to prevent the spread of HIV." "The Pope's attitude to lesbian and gay people is just one of the many stances that the Vatican State holds which are damaging to human dignity and human rights."

Pepper Harow, Protest the Pope: "We really think that we got the message across that the Pope is not welcome on a State visit. His outspoken state policies on homosexuality, condoms, education and abortion, as well as the child abuse scandal, continue to affect the rights of millions of individuals

across the world and mean that he should not be given the honour of a State visit."

Atheism UK website: "This is yet another example of hypocrisy of the church. What we have here is an institution that claims moral superiority and preaches respect for life. That it is able to abandon its own teachings when it suits them is deplorable and dishonest. It seems the church does not care what crimes it commits, just so long as they do not get caught. It's clear that the Catholic Church places the survival of the Institution above the welfare of ordinary men, women and children."

"We do not wish to see a man who calls himself 'God's Vicar on Earth' and is thereby purely deluded, coming to this country and spreading his poisonous and demonstrable false doctrine to the people of this country, not to mention that he is implicated in the cover up of child rape and that he is making British taxpayers pay for the privilege in these financially troubled times."

Richard Dawkins, *New Humanist Magazine*: "Go home to your tin pot Mussolini-concocted principality, and don't come back."

Humanist Society of Scotland: "There are particular grounds in Northern Ireland for opposition to the visit. First of all, there is strong evidence that Pope Benedict was complicit in the cover-up of the abuse of children throughout the island by continuing to insist that accusations of paedophilia within the priesthood should be treated by the Church's own exclusive jurisdiction. Secondly, the Pope's insistence that the Catholic Church maintains its own schools is prolonging segregated education, which is detrimental to the future of peace."

Geoffrey Robertson, Human Rights Lawyer: "For 30 years, as Cardinal Ratzinger, from 1981 on, he was in charge of what to do about paedophile priests and he declined on the whole to even defrock them. It's been many centuries since a Pope has resigned but it would be a very dignified and honourable action."

"It's gone on throughout the world. Wherever the church is, there have been abusers."

National Secular Society Website: "You can show your disapproval of Ratzinger by protesting against the legal bans that the Vatican has fought for on abortion and stem cell

research. And also for his obdurate, and breathtakingly irresponsible, opposition to contraception. It fuels a population growth that is unsustainable. Women in poverty-stricken circumstances in countries with dwindling resources are doomed to have large families that they cannot support and who frequently starve. And his using all means, even dishonest ones, to prevent condom use causing untold numbers to die unnecessarily of AIDS because the only known barrier against the disease, condoms, is denied to them."

"Gay people from around the country will also be coming to put two fingers up to Benedict's constant defamation and insults.... Make no mistake, the Vatican has declared war on gay people and this is the time to start the fightback."

"Ratzinger is, without doubt, guilty of enabling this culture of secrecy and betrayal to continue throughout the thirty years he has been at the top of the Vatican hierarchy both as a Cardinal and as Pope. He has done little to correct it because he still considers that the reputation of the church is more important than the future lives of children who are mercilessly abused, indeed raped, by his priests."

Terry Sanderson, president of the National Secular Society: "I cannot believe that we are lauding the head of an organisation that not only insults and denigrates homosexuals, tries to restrict the rights of women by banning contraception and abortion, but deliberately lies about the effectiveness of condoms in the fight against AIDS. This invitation is a rebuke to all those Britons who are incensed by the horrific revelations that are emerging daily about the Vatican's activities. The Government should be sharply criticising rather than welcoming this man."

"We are not going to try to arrest the pope, but we do want him to know that his teachings are profoundly inhumane and damaging to so many people."

"Protest the Pope started as a protest about the cost of this visit, but others have joined that have different issues with Ratzinger – women who want to take their rightful place in the churches life, priests who want to see an end to the celibacy rules, gay people who are–when they are indentified–driven from the seminaries and the priesthood."