

PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOLS MERIT GRAND JURY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on grand jury investigations in Pennsylvania:

Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro needs to explain why he never convened a grand jury to investigate the sexual abuse of minors in the public schools. That's where the action is—his state has one of the worst records on this score of any state in the nation—so why is he *only* interested in probing sexual offenses in the Catholic Church?

The grand jury was convened by Shapiro's predecessor, Kathleen Kane, who is now awaiting prison for perjury and abuse of office. The proximate cause of the probe was the revelation that administrators at Bishop McCort Catholic High School in Johnstown failed to adequately supervise Brother Stephen Baker, a serial abuser, in the 1990s.

When the grand jury was seated in April 2014, public school teachers were raping children, yet Kane did not see fit to convene a grand jury. [Here is a partial list of those crimes](#), which were reported in the press, six months prior, and six months after, the grand jury investigation of six Catholic dioceses was launched.

Shapiro has also had ample opportunity to investigate sexual assault of minors in the public schools, but he refuses to do so. He was sworn in as Attorney General on January 17, 2017. [Here is a partial list of those crimes](#), which were reported in the press, after he took office.

There are a lot of unanswered questions, issues the Pennsylvania media have shown little interest in following. Here are some of them.

- Why did Kane fail to commence a grand jury investigation of the public schools?
- Why has Shapiro failed to do the same?
- Why did both of them use an internal investigation conducted by officials at Bishop McCort High School to launch a probe of the entire Catholic Church in Pennsylvania?
- Why didn't the police contact Cambria County District Attorney Kathleen Callihan?
- Once she learned what happened, why didn't Callihan start a grand jury investigation of her own instead of pitching it to the state AG?

When Bishop Mark Bartchak learned of Brother Baker's offenses in November 2011—Baker turned himself in—he *immediately notified the authorities*. He also advised those who had brought the information to his attention to report it to the police.

When the Johnstown Police Department conducted an investigation, some accusers chose not to be identified; there was also a question whether the statute of limitations had expired. The police reopened the case in 2013 and on January 23, 2013, a report was issued. Baker committed suicide the same day.

- Has Shapiro ever learned of a single official from any public school who notified the authorities after he conducted his own internal investigation of sexual abuse?
- If some have, why didn't Shapiro use that as a springboard for a grand jury probe?
- Has a district attorney from any part of the state ever contacted him about sexual abuse in a local public school, asking him to do the probe?
- If some have, why didn't he use that as a springboard for a grand jury probe of every school district in the state, not just the reporting school, treating the

public schools the way he treats Catholic schools?

- Why hasn't Shapiro demanded that all legislation that would suspend the statute of limitations for crimes of a sexual nature against minors include the public schools?
- Why should the suspension of this basic due process right apply only to Catholic schools and other private institutions?

This is a scam. It is not about justice—it is about singling out the Catholic Church and letting every other institution off the hook. It smacks of bigotry.