

POPE CRACKS DOWN ON SEX ABUSE



Bill Donohue comments on Pope Francis' crackdown on sex abuse:

As Pope Francis proved today, he has no stomach for child exploitation, or for any type of sexual abuse. His decision to revise the norms affecting these crimes, complete with more stringent penalties, is a welcome tonic. However, he does not need to be congratulated for this initiative—he needs to be supported by those in a position to do so.

Child sexual abuse is a serious worldwide problem. It affects every secular and religious organization where there is sustained interaction between adults and children. In the West, it is aided and abetted by a sick culture bent on eroticizing youth. From advertisements in magazines and on billboards, to TV shows during the day and in the evening—to say nothing of music videos and the movie industry—we are inundated with hyper-sexualized portrayals and images, the result of which is a morally debased milieu.

When it comes to racial tensions, many are quick to point to the “root causes” of poverty and injustice. But these same persons show little or no interest in addressing the “root causes” of child sexual exploitation. As we recently saw in the debate over gun control, those who were screaming the loudest for stricter gun laws were typically silent on the role Hollywood plays in fostering violence in our culture. The same is true about sexual exploitation—there is a reluctance to get Hollywood to do something about its role in furthering this problem.

The Catholic Church had a problem with priestly sexual abuse in the 1960s and 1970s, but today it has the cleanest record of any institution. Currently, child sexual abuse is a problem in places like Hollywood, Indian reservations, the Orthodox Jewish communities, the public schools, and, of course, in the home (boyfriends and stepfathers are the worst offenders). Wherever it exists, it must be stomped out. Thank God Pope Francis is leading the way.