

RELIGIOUS PROFILING IS BIGOTED

We have previously noted that Rhode Island Attorney General Peter Neronha has decided to conduct an investigation *only* of sexual misconduct by priests, allowing the clergy of every other religion a pass. Worse, he is giving a free pass to the public schools, where the problem—unlike that in the Catholic Church—is ongoing.

Neronha is conducting a witch hunt: none of the accused in his report are in active ministry. Just as unethical are the lawyers at Pintas & Mullins, a big law firm in Chicago. They are the ones who are fielding clergy abuse claims from alleged victims of priests in Rhode Island.

On the law firm's website, it has a section, "Rhode Island Clergy Abuse Claims." It only applies to the Catholic Church. Ministers, rabbis and imams who rape kids are of no interest to these guys. Just priests.

In a section titled, "Sexual Assault Lawyers Fighting for You," it says, "It should be underscored that these abuses extend to every faith and type of religious institution, including Islam, Judaism, Mormonism, and various denominations of Christianity, as well as in schools connected with these religions." This is a subterfuge. They say they are ready to hold these offenders accountable, yet there is no hot line for them—only for Catholic victims.

On April 21, Bill Donohue called the hot line and asked if they would accept cases from victims of ministers, rabbis, imams and public school teachers. The woman stumbled, and in a roundabout way said they would. He then asked why they don't have a hot line for these people. She got nervous and tried to worm her way out of it. He then asked if she were aware that

all 75 priests in Rhode Island whom they have an interest in are either dead or have been kicked out of ministry. Sheepishly, she said she knew that.

The month before, Donohue wrote a letter to William Pintas at the law firm. He explained why he was writing and then asked three questions.

- Do you have other websites advertising your law firm's services for victims abused by other religious groups?
- How many victims abused by other religious groups has your law firm represented?
- Is there a similar website for victims who were abused in Rhode Island's public schools?

As to be expected, he did not reply. What was he going to say?

Religious profiling is no less invidious than any other type of profiling. The Rhode Island Attorney General and Pintas & Mullins are wearing their anti-Catholicism on their sleeve. To single out the Catholic Church for a probe of sexual misconduct is just as bigoted as singling out African Americans for street crime.