

REPORTS ON PRIESTLY SEXUAL ABUSE WELCOMED

Catholic League president William Donohue offered the following remarks today on the two studies that were released regarding the problem of priestly sexual abuse:

“The researchers at John Jay did a fine job. But it is the men and women of the National Review Board that deserve the plaudits of all Catholics: they had the courage to speak honestly about the scandal.

“In many ways, the National Review Board’s report vindicates what we have been saying for the past two years. The report notes that the scandal began in the late 1960s and trailed off considerably after 1984. This coincides with the onset of the sexual revolution and its waning after AIDS was discovered in 1981.

“We have also been saying that enabling bishops, ensconced in a culture of clericalism, and molesting priests, most of whom are homosexuals, are the central players in the scandal. The review board cited episcopal clericalism as contributing to ‘a culture of secrecy,’ and it noted that 81 percent of the victims were male, most of whom were postpubescent: ‘we must call attention to the homosexual behavior that characterized the vast majority of the cases of abuse observed in recent decades.’ The board correctly stressed that ‘there are many chaste and holy homosexual priests who are faithful to their vows of celibacy.’ This is exactly what we have been saying all along: while most gay priests are not molesters, most of the molesters are gay. Unfortunately, many continue to live in a world of denial about this issue.

“The lawyers and psychologists who gave advice to the bishops are correctly blamed by the report. Indeed, the psychologists

still recommend keeping molesters in the priesthood! They should be shown the gate immediately.

“The report also says that ‘the smoke of Satan’ entered the Church. This is exactly what Pope Paul VI said in 1972. While non-believers will scoff at this observation, sensible Catholics know it to be true.”