

SMEARING CARDINALS GEORGE AND MAHONY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on attempts to smear Chicago Archbishop Francis Cardinal George and Los Angeles Archbishop Roger Cardinal Mahony:

“As reported today in the *Chicago Tribune*, Mary Gail Frawley-O’Dea, a psychologist who was chosen to address the bishops in 2002, sent Cardinal George a letter saying he might be considered ‘an accessory to soul murder’ because he didn’t act quickly enough to remove an accused priest, Rev. Daniel McCormack, from ministry.

“The best summary of the case of Father McCormack is a *Chicago Tribune* editorial of February 23. Without giving the Chicago Archdiocese a pass, it focuses on the handling of this matter by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). This agency investigated Father McCormack and, unlike the police and the Cook County prosecutors who found no credible allegations against the priest, DCFS did. But it never notified the archdiocese or the school where McCormack worked that it was investigating him, and even after it concluded that he may be guilty, it still said nothing! Is O’Dea aware of this? Does she care? This case, which is complicated—and for which Cardinal George has issued an apology for not acting quicker to remove the priest—is one which would never lead any fair-minded person to charge the Chicago Archbishop with being ‘an accessory to soul murder.’

“Cardinal Mahony recently made some controversial remarks about pending immigration legislation, and has been roundly criticized in some quarters for doing so. It was this subject that led KABC talk-show host Doug McIntyre to explode yesterday, calling Cardinal Roger M. Mahony a ‘molester’: he said the ‘M stands for molester.’ Cardinal Mahony should sue

McIntyre for libel.

“There is nothing bigoted about criticizing any priest, including the pope. But what O’Dea and McIntyre have done isn’t criticism—it’s hate speech.”