

SMOKE OF SATAN

Two reports were recently released on the sexual abuse scandal. By all accounts, 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 honesty about the scandal.

In many ways, the National Review Board's report vindicates what the Catholic League has 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 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!

Perhaps most important, the report concluded that "the smoke of Satan" entered the Church. Ironically, this is exactly what Pope Paul VI said in 1972. Many laughed at him then, but few are laughing now.