

SPIKE IN FALSE CLAIMS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the spike in false claims made against priests:

The report on clergy abuse was released a week ago today, and for some reason, there has been virtually no reporting on what may be the most important finding of them all: the 42 percent increase in accusations found to be unsubstantiated or false. The number of such claims jumped from 12 percent in 2009 to 17 percent in 2010, the largest, by far, in any one year.

The report does not say what accounts for the sharp increase, so it cannot be said with certainty what is causing it. But if I had to guess, it has to do with one thing: the word is out that the clock is ticking, so if someone wants to cash in with a bogus claim, he had better come forward before it's too late.

Whatever the cause is, it puts priests in jeopardy: all it takes is for someone to drop a dime, make up an accusation, and hire a lawyer on a contingency fee basis. The beauty of it all is that his true identity will not be disclosed publicly; he will be assigned the name John Doe 101, and the accused will not know who he really is. Better yet, the priest may already be dead.

A more aggressive approach by the dioceses is badly needed. False claimants should be sued for perjury and slander. Not until these "victims" pay a price for their maliciousness will justice be done.

Shame on the media for ignoring this story.