

ATLANTIC MONTHLY DEFAMES PADRE PIO

In the November issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*, there is a brief article by Tyler Cabot titled, "The Rocky Road to Sainthood." Of Padre Pio, one of the most revered priests in recent history to have been canonized, Cabot writes, "Despite questions raised by two papal emissaries—and despite reported evidence that he raised money for right-wing religious groups and had sex with penitents—Pio was canonized in 2002."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue blasted the article today:

"The short summaries of eight persons who were either beatified or canonized was written by a man with an obvious ideological agenda: Tyler Cabot hates the Catholic Church. That alone would not make him all that unusual these days, but what is surprising is that in a highly regarded magazine like the *Atlantic Monthly* someone as ignorant as Cabot would be published.

"In the September 24, 1998 edition of the *New York Times*, there was an article on Padre Pio that said he was the subject of 12 investigations commissioned by Rome; he died in 1968. One of the last investigations was a 1960 report by Rev. Carlo Maccari alleging that Padre Pio had had sex with female penitents twice a week. One of Padre Pio's fellow monks was so upset with such allegations that he actually snuck a microphone into his rooms (including, apparently, the confessional), but in the end yielded nothing. Now here's the clincher, not reported by Cabot: Father Maccari, who became an archbishop, later recanted his story and wound up praying to Padre Pio on his deathbed.

"In his lifetime, Padre Pio was the object of great jealousy

by some Vatican officials. Some, like Maccari, even went so far as to defame him. And now we have ideologues like Cabot trying to do the same thing. As for Padre Pio raising money for 'right-wing religious groups,' our only disappointment is that the Catholic League was not founded until five years after he died. Otherwise, we might have asked him to do a fundraiser so we could fight bigots like Tyler Cabot."

TV ELITES BASH PRIESTS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on the latest incidents of priest bashing by elites on television:

"The elites are in full gear this fall bashing Catholic priests, especially on TV. For example, consider this totally gratuitous cheap shot made during the October 10 episode of the CBS show, 'Two and a Half Men.' Here was the question: 'Do Catholic priests make good babysitters?' Here was the sarcastic reply, 'Is the pope Catholic?'

"The line could have been, 'Do gay priests make good babysitters?' But it wasn't. That's because the bigots who wrote this show don't want to offend homosexuals, even though everyone knows—but most refuse to admit it—that it is gay priests who account for about 80 percent of the cases of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church.

"And if you want to know who's the latest talking head living in denial about this matter, consider Joy Behar of the ABC show, 'The View.' On the October 13 episode, Behar showed us her brilliance with the following comment: 'This is precisely why I object to when the Church says that they are not gonna have gay priests in the Church. As if gay equals pedophilia. It does not. If it did then the gay priests would be having

sex with each other if they were just gay. They're not just gay. They're sick. They're pedophiles.'

"Now no one ever said that gay equals pedophilia, though there are data which show that gays are disproportionately represented in cases of pedophilia. In any event, it's nice to know that in the same episode of 'The View,' another savant, Meredith Vieira, managed to indict most Americans when she remarked, 'I think organized religion is a dangerous thing.' Kind of the way most of us feel about organized atheism—it is so much easier to tolerate when it's unorganized.

"Of the three major networks, ABC, CBS and NBC, the first two have the worst record of bashing Catholics. Thus does the pattern continue."

PRIEST FILES IN LOS ANGELES MADE PUBLIC

Catholic League president William Donohue addressed the public release of priest personnel files in Los Angeles today:

"There is so much blame to go around. Among the culprits are the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, some priests, many therapists, some lawyers, some alleged victims and some in the media.

"It is beyond belief that molesting priests were moved from parish to parish when any sensible person in charge would have removed these deeply troubled men from any contact with children. On the flip side, the archdiocese has sold out its priests by turning over personnel files on men who were born in the 19th century, have long ago died and cannot defend

themselves from charges which even the archdiocese admits are not credible. So what we have is a garbage pail of information about priests—including those who have been accused of molestation when they were between the ages of two and five—that should never have been made public. Obviously, in current cases of credible accusations of a criminal nature, such files should be turned over to the authorities. But the wholesale dumping of files is an outrageous abuse of civil liberties.

“We know from the files that have been released that in 79 percent of the cases, the alleged victim was male; this comports with the figure of 81 percent cited by the John Jay study of priests nationwide. And we know from the latter study that almost 8 in 10 of the alleged male victims were postpubescent, meaning that the problem is homosexual priests. Yet many in the media continue to lie—they say the problem is pedophilia when the data directly say otherwise. No, homosexuality does not cause molestation, and there are many good gay priests, but the fact remains that most of the problem priests are gay.

“The therapists who said they could ‘fix’ these men are either incompetent or deceitful. Some of the lawyers are hustlers and some of the alleged victims are liars: It is not a coincidence that in the last few years a record number of alleged victims have come forward.

“Get the guilty and protect the innocent. Exercise common sense and have the courage to execute. And stop the lying. That’s my recipe.”

ABC-TV AFFILIATE (KOMO) JUSTIFIES BIGOTRY; CORPORATE OWNER PURSUED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue explained the Catholic League's strategy for dealing with the ABC-TV affiliate in Seattle, KOMO:

"A week ago today, I wrote a news release regarding an anti-Catholic remark that had been made the day before by KOMO-TV commentator, Ken Schram. In his comments on a piece of public art that was to be displayed in Seattle depicting a naked man and a naked boy, Schram said, 'The sculpture might as well as be called the priest and the altar boy.' I wrote another release on October 3 criticizing Schram for demanding that Bill Bennett be fired for making a hypothetical comment that some interpreted as being racist. Apparently, Schram felt his own libelous statement on priests was entirely justified.

"After bringing this matter to the attention of ABC officials in Burbank on October 4, we were instructed to speak to Schram's boss, Dick Warsinske. I explained our complaint to him on October 5 and his October 6 response reached me today. He defended Schram's bigotry by saying that 'the issue of pedophile priests is well known.' His only concession was to remove the offensive statement from their website.

"I have now written to the executive committee of Fisher Communications, Inc., the Seattle owner of KOMO-TV. We want an apology, and nothing less. In my letter, I said that Schram's comment indicting all Catholic priests for the misbehavior of some in their ranks was nothing less than rank bigotry. 'Every institution and demographic group has its share of dirty laundry,' I said, 'but nothing justifies collective guilt.' We Catholics demand nothing less than the

identical treatment afforded those who publicly denigrate other segments of our society. To do anything less is to condone anti-Catholicism.

“We expect to get a more professional response from Fisher Communications than we have received from KOMO-TV.”

PHILLY LAW FIRM HUSTLES CATHOLIC VICTIMS

Catholic League president William Donohue responds today to an advertisement that was recently run in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*:

“Because a tiny minority of Catholic priests have molested young persons, anti-Catholic bigots are having a field day: they think they’ve been given a green light to bash Catholicism. Those who seek to exploit the scandal usually do so for ideological reasons, but there are others who are driven by greed. Consider the following ad that was placed in the A section of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on October 5:

Legal Counsel To

VICTIMS OF PRIEST SEXUAL ABUSE

“Printed below the headline is the contact information. The law firm is Eisenberg, Rothweiler, Schleifer, Weinstein & Winkler.

“The law firm, which is one of those infamous slip-and-fall types, is shameless. So is the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for running the ad. It is not likely that it would run an ad asking public school students who have been sexually abused by

their teachers to contact them. But when it comes to priests, the usual ethical precepts no longer apply.”

U.S. PREMIERE OF “THE CALL TO FATIMA”

It is with great enthusiasm that the Catholic League announces the U.S. launch of the documentary film “The Call to Fatima.” EWTN will host the first North American televised broadcast of this award-winning documentary at 8pm (ET) on Saturday, October 8.

“The Call to Fatima” provides in-depth coverage of the miraculous events that occurred at Fatima. Tracing the first visits of the angel and the Blessed Mother to three young children, it also covers the events that unfolded for years afterward, including the death and funeral of Sr. Lucy, the last surviving visionary.

Among the many accolades heaped on the film are first prize at the International Polish Film Festival and praise from the Vatican,

Thomas McCormack, the film’s producer, will briefly discuss the work at New York’s St. Patrick’s Cathedral on Thursday, October 13, following the Angelus at 11:30 am.

MIERS' RELIGION ALREADY UNDER FIRE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on what some are saying about U.S. Supreme Court nominee Harriet Miers' religion:

"The anti-religious secularists on the Left are more concerned about keeping abortion-on-demand legal and keeping our society free from religious influence than any other issues. It is what defines them. Imbued with hate, they are already targeting the Christian status of Harriet Miers. And when it comes to hate, few can match the vitriol of Mollie Ivins, the syndicated columnist from Texas.

"In her tirade against Miers, Ivins doesn't so much focus on the high court nominee's credentials as she does her religion. Her screed, titled, 'The Unification of Church and State,' is revealing because it accurately conveys her deepest worry: namely, that a committed Christian may actually be appointed to the Supreme Court. 'Miers, like Bush himself,' Ivins notes, 'is classic Texas conservative Establishment, with the addition of Christian fundamentalism.' In case one doesn't know what Ivins means by that, she helpfully accommodates: 'What I mean by fundamentalist is one who believes in both biblical inerrancy and salvation by faith alone.' By which she really means—LOOK OUT—THIS DAME IS DANGEROUS.

"There's more. She later says that Miers' church 'states on its website that it believes in biblical inerrancy, full immersion baptism, original sin and salvation dependent entirely upon accepting Jesus Christ. Everyone else is going to hell.' She then proceeds to trot out JFK on separation of church and state, the one Catholic anti-Christian bigots love to cite.

“What is truly remarkable about this is that Miers has said nothing about her religion (she was born Catholic and later became an Evangelical Christian) to provoke Ivins. Moreover, the Interfaith Alliance, American Atheists and the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Rights have already urged senators to beware of Miers.

“Look for more of these fanatics to surface soon. Remember, it’s all about abortion and creating a totally secular society.”

TV COMMENTATOR WHO LIBELED PRIESTS WANTS BILL BENNETT FIRED!

Catholic League president Bill Donohue wrote the following news release today on KOMO-TV commentator Ken Schram:

“Ken Schram, a commentator for the ABC affiliate in Seattle, was the subject of a news release we issued on Friday regarding a remark he made the day before. On September 29, Schram said on the air that an artistic display of a nude man reaching for a nude boy ‘might as well be called the priest and the altar boy.’ Thus far, ABC has done nothing about this issue. To make matters worse, on September 30, Schram told viewers that he wants Bill Bennett ‘kicked off the radio airwaves’ for making a hypothetical comment about blacks and abortion.

“Schram’s distortion of Bennett’s remarks led him right into the gutter. Commenting on Bennett’s professorial point, Schram said, ‘Well, that got me to thinking hypothetically: If

only Bennett's mother had had an abortion, the world would be without one more detestable bigot.'

"The duplicity could not be more stark. Bill Bennett has been the victim of the worst kind of smear—a calculated effort to intentionally misrepresent his point by taking his words out of context so that he can be branded a racist. And now everyone from the Bush White House to New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg is beating up on him to demonstrate how much they deplore racism. They are a disgrace. And to top it off, Ken Schram's libelous statement about priests is being treated with impunity. Justice is being stood on its head.

"We are currently pursuing ABC officials in New York and Los Angeles seeking a just outcome. Incredibly, the intolerance that so many elites have for racism is matched only by their tolerance for anti-Catholicism."