

DEVIL'S ROLE IN CHURCH SCANDAL

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the devil's role in the current crisis in the Church:

When we read that a cardinal asked young seminarians to sleep with him, thus corrupting them before they became ordained, and when we read that a few Pennsylvania priests used sacred objects like the crucifix to molest their victims, we cannot plausibly say that this is simply the work of men gone bad. No, it is the work of the devil. What other source would provoke such monstrosities?

The Apocalypse (12:7-9) speaks of Satan as the one who "seduceth the whole world." Jesus referred to Satan as the Father of Lies who perverted the truth. The Catholic Catechism says Satan's "seductive voice" seeks to turn us against God.

If Satan tempted our Lord in the desert, he is surely capable of tempting the clergy, and sometimes winning. Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen put it well when he said, "Satan stations more devils on monastery walls than in dens of iniquity, for the latter offer no resistance."

Demands for accountability matter, but without prayer, this crisis will not be resolved.

IT'S MORAL PANIC TIME

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the moral panic being engendered against the Catholic Church:

In the wake of the Pennsylvania grand jury's exclusive focus on sexual abuse by Catholic clergy, people are coming out of the woodwork with outlandish tales of long-ago horrific abuses at Catholic institutions, and Internet sites such as BuzzFeed are enthusiastically blaring every wild-eyed accusation.

The Catholic Church has never had a monopoly on the mistreatment of some young people, yet that is what is being promoted today. Why? To feed an anti-Catholic moral panic.

"A moral panic," as sociologist Ashley Crossman explains, "is a widespread fear, most often an irrational one, that someone or something is a threat to the values, safety, and interests of a community or society at large. Typically, a moral panic is perpetuated by news media, fueled by politicians, and often results in the passage of new laws or policies that target the source of the panic."

Can there be a better explanation for what is going on right now with regard to the Catholic Church?

The media, by focusing exclusively on abuse of minors in Catholic institutions—and stubbornly refusing to credit the Church for reforms that have made Catholic settings today among the *safest* places for children—perpetuate an irrational fear that the Catholic Church poses a unique threat to the safety of children.

Politicians fuel this irrational fear with investigations and grand jury probes that exclusively target the Church—ignoring widespread abuse in other faith communities, in youth sports and recreational programs, and *especially* in the public schools.

Then media and politicians team up to try to pass new laws—primarily to suspend the statute of limitations—that, again, exclusively target the Catholic Church, giving the public schools a pass.

And then of course the anti-Catholic bigots gleefully pile on, like the Freedom From Religion Foundation calling for Catholics to leave the Church. Of course this has nothing to do with their professed purpose of promoting separation of church and state. But it has everything to do with their *real* purpose: promoting hostility to religion, especially Catholicism.

This is a textbook case of moral panic—one that even too many Catholics are allowing themselves to get caught up in.

BEWARE OF CALLS FOR GRAND JURY PROBES

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on grand juries investigating sexual abuse:

In the wake of the Pennsylvania grand jury investigation of the Catholic Church, many states are now weighing probes of their own. To cherry pick the Catholic Church is unjust: If the goal is to root out predators, then no institution, private or public, should be spared. But this is not the goal, which is why only the Church is under review.

Consider some of the leading players behind this “Let’s get the Church” effort. I know them well.

Let’s begin with the Pennsylvania grand jury investigation. What triggered it? A probe of wrongdoing allegedly committed by Brother Stephen Baker at Bishop McCort High School in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown in the 1990s. Guess who the lawyer was for the alleged victims? An attorney from Massachusetts, Mitchell Garabedian. How did he find his way to

sue the Pennsylvania Catholic high school? He is no ordinary lawyer—he is an activist with a vendetta against the Catholic Church.

In 2006, Garabedian sued Father Charles Murphy of Boston for inappropriately touching a minor; the girl said the incident occurred 25 years earlier. On the eve of the trial, the woman dropped her suit. In 2010, Garabedian sued Father Murphy for allegedly fondling a man 40 years earlier. The accuser was deep in debt and his credibility was questioned even by his own family! After a six month probe by the archdiocese review board, the priest was exonerated.

When Father Murphy died in 2011, he was a broken man. Brian McGrory wrote about him in the *Boston Globe* saying that what Garabedian did was a “disgrace.” After reading the story, I called Garabedian to see if he had any regrets about pressing charges against Father Murphy. He went ballistic: He started screaming like a madman accusing the archdiocese of operating a “kangaroo court.” I asked him to calm down but he would not. Indeed, he made sweeping condemnations of all Boston priests.

A few weeks after my phone call, Garabedian spoke at a conference held by SNAP, a professional victims’ lobby that has been totally discredited. “This immoral entity,” he said, “the Catholic Church, should be defeated. We must stand up and defeat this evil.” This is not the voice of reason—it is the voice of a hater.

SNAP is leading the way calling for grand jury investigations in all the states. Its leadership has been devastated but it is now trying to resurrect itself. Here is what I wrote about it last year:

- It accepts kickbacks from attorneys
- It is motivated by a pathological hatred of the Catholic Church
- It has no respect for the rights of accused priests

- It lies about priests
- It lies about survivors
- It lies to judges
- It lies to the media
- It seeks to intimidate and silence its critics
- It blindsides diocesan officials with leaked lawsuits
- It abuses donations
- It exploits survivors by offering unlicensed counseling services
- It spends practically nothing on servicing survivors
- It manipulates the media by staging events
- It retaliates against employees who question its operations.

These are not baseless charges. To read more about it see my article, "[SNAP Implodes.](#)"

BishopAccountability is a website that is gleefully pushing grand jury investigations in the states. The media trust it as a reliable source. I don't. Its director, Terry McKiernan, once accused Cardinal Timothy Dolan, behind closed doors at a SNAP meeting, of "keeping the lid on 55 names" of predator priests. That's a lie. I have several times contacted McKiernan to give me the names, but he never does.

Illinois Supreme Court Justice Anne Burke is also behind the grand jury investigations. She is not an impartial observer. She believes that priests should not have constitutional rights. In 2006, she said a priest should be removed from ministry on the basis of a single unsubstantiated accusation. "We understand that it is a violation of the priest's due process—you're innocent until proven guilty—but we're talking about the most vulnerable people in our society and those are children." She never said whether *non-priests* should also be denied their constitutional rights.

Rebecca Randles of Kansas City, Missouri is demanding a statewide investigation of Catholic priests. She is the same

dishonest lawyer who sued me and lost in a trumped-up libel case against me. Her hatred of the Catholic Church is palpable.

Randles is best of buddies with Jeffrey Anderson, the most sue-happy lawyer in the nation. He has sued the Vatican several times and lost, and now he is leading the effort in Minnesota to launch a grand jury investigation of the dioceses. He once described himself as a “dedicated atheist.” His goal, he says, is to “sue the s*** out of them [the Catholic Church].”

These are the kinds of persons seeking grand jury investigations in the states. They are motivated by hate, not justice. It's about time Catholics opened their eyes to this reality and not allow themselves to be played by these people.

ANGRY CATHOLICS ARE BEING PLAYED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on how some Catholics are reacting to news stories about clergy sexual abuse:

The twin scandals of the summer of 2018 have taken a toll on Catholics. First we learned of the alleged acts of sexual abuse by (former cardinal) Theodore McCarrick, and then we learned of old cases of alleged clergy abuse found in the Pennsylvania grand jury report (most of which were never substantiated). Catholics are understandably livid, but the white-heat reaction that is evident in some quarters has only added to the problem.

Conservative Catholics have been especially strident in their comments. Unfortunately, they are being played. To be specific, their call for grand jury investigations in every state, and the wholesale release of priest personnel files, is playing into the hands of the enemies of the Catholic Church. So are their appeals to parishioners asking them to withhold contributions. Even worse are their demands for a mass purge of bishops.

Those who despise the Church are loving it: these Catholics are unwittingly carrying their water for them. Church-suing lawyers and Church-hating activists—there are many of them—are on a search and destroy mission to upend the Catholic Church. Angry Catholics are taking their bait by not insisting that every institution in society, public as well as private, be subjected to the same level of scrutiny.

All Catholics, beginning with the bishops, should resist calls for full disclosure that are not being demanded of every other institution, religious and secular. To do otherwise is to subvert the Church in the name of justice. Unless we insist on a level playing field—after all, we do not own this problem and have made great progress—there will be no justice for anyone, especially Catholics.

CHURCH REFORMS ARE WORKING

Catholic League president Bill Donohue shows why Church reforms are working:

No entity in America today, private or public, has more institutionalized mechanisms in place to check for the sexual abuse of minors than the Catholic Church.

That is why in the last two years for which we have data, only .005 percent of the clergy have had a credible accusation made against them (see the Annual Reports on this subject, July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, and July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016; they are posted on the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops).

Yet the media continue to advance the invidious stereotype that the Church has an on-going problem.

The institutionalized mechanisms that account for the progress are the reforms made by the USCCB and the dioceses.

The USCCB issued its first guidelines for reporting alleged offenses in 2002. Titled the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People,” it was revised in 2005, 2011, and 2018. Once a diocese learns of an accusation, it notifies the local law enforcement officials.

Many dioceses have also implemented their own strictures. To cite one example, the Archdiocese of New York instituted an Independent Reconciliation and Compensation Program. It is aimed at uncovering abuse allegations and making compensation once the cases have been authenticated.

These reforms were responsible for the proceedings against Theodore McCarrick (formerly a cardinal). It wasn’t law enforcement that exposed the allegations against the former New Yorker, it was Cardinal Timothy Dolan, the Archbishop of New York.

Breaking just this week are reports that Father Kevin Lonergan of the Diocese of Allentown (Pennsylvania) groped a 17-year-old girl and sent nude photos of himself to her. How did his case come to light? It wasn’t law enforcement—it was Allentown Bishop Alfred Schlert who notified the authorities in early June, right after he learned about it.

This case proves once again that the system works. But the

media are not reporting it fairly.

The headline posted by USA Today Network about an Associated Press story on Father Lonergan reads, "Pennsylvania Priest Faces Charges As Sex Abuse Fallout Grows." This is indefensible. It suggests that this one case comes right on the heels of similar cases, when, in fact, the grand jury report was about old cases dating to World War II.

The Daily Beast, a far left-wing media outlet, ran a story on Father Lonergan without ever mentioning that it was the Diocese of Allentown that reported this case to the authorities.

Reuters, the British news agency, was worse: it falsely reported that "The Allentown Diocese removed Lonergan from his duties after prosecutors alerted them to the case." The *New York Post* picked up this bogus story, thus leading readers to think that the diocese acted after it was notified by law enforcement, when it was just the opposite.

The Catholic Church should be subjected to the same degree of scrutiny that is afforded all other institutions in society. But the corollary is also true: it should be treated just as fairly. It isn't, and that is the problem.

REFUTACIÓN DEL INFORME DEL GRAN JURADO DE PENNSYLVANIA

Para leer el análisis del presidente de la Liga Católica, Bill Donohue, sobre el informe del Gran Jurado de Pensilvania, haga clic [aquí](#) (*Spanish version of our analysis of the PA Grand Jury report*)

INDIANA PRIEST ASSAULTED AT THE ALTAR

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a priest who was attacked in church:

Father Basil Hutsko was getting ready to say Mass on Monday morning at St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church in Merrillville, Indiana (he was praying at the altar) when a man came up behind him and assaulted him.

The priest was grabbed by the neck, choked, thrown to the floor, and beaten mercilessly. His head was pounded against the floor, leaving him unconscious. The attacker was yelling, "This is for all the kids!" The police are investigating this as a hate crime.

While the primary blame for this attack belongs to the assailant, secondary blame must be shared by (a) those who have embarked on a torrent of hate speech against the Catholic Church, and (b) those Catholics so angered by recent news stories that they are assigning collective guilt to all the clergy. Failing to distinguish between the innocent and guilty creates situations like this.

These two types of responses, the former from the left and the latter from the right, have created a milieu that invites hate-filled persons to engage in violence. By blaming all the priests, and all the bishops, for the deeds of a few enablers and a few offenders in their ranks, they have crafted an environment where acts like this are bound to happen.

Pray for Father Hutsko, and for those who share primary and secondary responsibility for what happened.

CAN'T ARGUE WITH AD HOMINEM ATTACKS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on reaction to his [analysis](#) of the Pennsylvania grand jury report:

The outpouring of support and commendation I have received regarding my analysis of the Pennsylvania grand jury report is much appreciated, especially when it comes from priests and bishops. The response has been so positive that it is being translated into Spanish and will soon be widely distributed.

Not surprisingly, there has also been a wave of hateful and often obscene phone calls, emails, and tweets. We don't reply to the crazies.

A few years ago I was talking to Alan Dershowitz about some issues—he has been the target of much vitriol lately as well—and he said something to the effect that “Bill, I’m older than you. I’ve lived through McCarthyism, the civil rights movement, the Vietnam war, but never have I seen more hatred in America than today.”

Matters have only gotten worse. To cite one example, there is an article by Andrew Ferguson posted online by the *Weekly Standard* that reeks of hatred. Never once does he challenge anything I said in my analysis of the grand jury report. All he does is rant.

“Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report Debunked.” That’s the fairly unremarkable title of my article. But it sent Ferguson reeling—he accused me of choosing a “grandiose and self-congratulatory title.”

My first sentence also pushed him over the edge. “Unlike most commentators and reporters,” I wrote, “I have read most of the Pennsylvania grand jury report.” Again, fairly pedestrian stuff. Here is what Ferguson said about that one sentence:

“This is what the philosophers call an ‘argument from authority,’ with a special twist: the authority Donahue [sic] cites is his own. *While all you bedwetters were getting your panties in a twist, old Bill D was stayin’ up doin’ his homework.*”

Ferguson’s piece continues to go downhill from there. Never once does he show that anything I said is false. He can’t—he marshals not a single fact. His entire screed is an ad hominem attack that is strewn with name calling, and void of any empirical evidence, data, logic, or reason.

It is impossible to argue with such folks. But the next time Ferguson flies off the handle he should at least learn to spell my name right.

POPE’S REMARKS ON THE FAMILY AND SEXUALITY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on remarks made by Pope Francis:

The World Meeting of Families is underway in Dublin. Pope Francis will speak to the crowd in a few days.

While the Holy Father’s comments on economic issues, the environment, and migration reflect his more liberal leanings, his statements on marriage, the family, and sexuality evince a

more traditional moral outlook.

The media have not widely reported on his remarks regarding the latter series of issues. To read some of his more poignant comments, click [here](#).

DELIRIOUS REACTIONS TO CHURCH ABUSE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the reaction to the Pennsylvania grand jury report on priests:

While some Catholics are spinning out of control over cases of sexual abuse committed by the dead and the laicized, MTV will present the Michael Jackson Video Vanguard Award to Jennifer Lopez on August 21. No one from the media, and certainly no finger-pointing Catholic, will question why there is an award named after an accused child abuser.

Actress and director Asia Argento, who was one of the first out of the starting blocks accusing Harvey Weinstein of rape—and one of the pioneers of the #MeToo Movement—has been exposed for paying \$380,000 to a minor she sexually assaulted *after she outed Weinstein*.

No one is calling for an investigation of Hollywood perverts, even though over 400 Hollywood executives and employees have been named for sexual misconduct in the past year-and-a-half. That's over 100 more than the number of Pennsylvania priests implicated in sexual abuse over the past 70 years.

Over at CBS, the executive producer of "60 Minutes," Jeff Fager, is back at work, after being out for a few weeks. He's

still being investigated for alleged sexual misconduct; six former employees have made accusations against him. The CBS top brass said it was time to put him back in the saddle, and no one in the media is objecting.

Les Moonves fared better—he never had to leave. The CEO of CBS is accused of sexually abusing six women; his investigation is still on-going. Earlier this month, he showed up at a press conference, but before he spoke the media were informed that only questions on second-quarter financial results would be entertained. The press dutifully complied.

It's back-to-school time, and that means more kids will be sexually molested. Fortunately for the public school teachers, they will be protected by their union chiefs. More important, *no one will call for a grand jury investigation*. As for the victims, if they don't file notice of a claim within 90 days, they are out of luck, *and nobody will do anything about it*.

In short, zero tolerance is only supposed to apply to the Catholic Church.

This, of course, means nothing to those Catholic purists who want massive probes of every diocese in the nation, and are now demanding that every bishop in the nation should step down. Why? Because of predatory priests long dead or long thrown out of the priesthood.

Whatever happened to “get the guilty” and “protect the innocent”? Calls for collective purges—which include mostly innocent bishops—are unjust. Indeed, they are un-Christian.