

2018 YEAR IN REVIEW

The Catholic League's *2018 Year in Review* is now available. It contains an overview of some of our most important victories over the last year, including the defeat of an anti-Catholic judge in Connecticut, a change in leadership at the National Endowment for the Arts, our victory in court defending the due process rights of accused priests in Pennsylvania, and much more.

To read it, click [here](#).

“TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD” INSULTS CHRISTIANS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the Broadway play, “To Kill a Mockingbird”:

“To Kill a Mockingbird” is a Broadway play based on the best-selling 1960 book by Harper Lee. In 1962, the book was faithfully adapted for the big screen, and it also went over big with the public. The play, however, takes liberties with Lee’s work, distorting her contribution. Indeed, parts of the play’s script are so unrecognizable that Lee’s estate sued the producers earlier this year over this issue.

It is not as though the play has evolved into a morally destitute version of the book—it has not—but it does contain a line, made up out of whole cloth, that insults Christians, and it appears at a seminal moment.

The alleged town drunk bellows, “When horror comes to supper,

it comes dressed exactly like a Christian.”

This line nowhere appears in the book or the movie. It was put there by playwright Aaron Sorkin, a left-wing secularist who has a history of offending Catholics, as well as traditionalists of all stripes.

Some may recall Sorkin’s jabs at Catholicism in his NBC show, “The West Wing.” He also likes to associate Tea Party conservatives with the head-chopping Taliban. In 2001, he boasted how important it was to use foul language on TV, arguing that it was time to use the Lord’s name in vain.

Sorkin’s latest attack on Christians is not only gratuitous, it is a complete inversion of Lee’s intent. She meant her book to be a story about tolerance and the evils of prejudice, not inducements to hatred. And she sure didn’t hate Christians. Indeed, she credited Christianity for its role in combating bigotry. Her novel, she said in a 1966 letter to the *New York Times*, was “Christian in its ethic.”

Sorkin has now taken Lee’s tribute and turned it into an assault on Christian sensibilities.

What makes this ugly saga even worse is the fact that the play is being offered to New York City public school students at a discount. That’s right, in cooperation with the city’s Department of Education, tickets are being made available to middle and high school students for \$10.

“When horror comes to supper, it comes dressed exactly like a

Fill in the gap with the name of any protected class of people, and then ask yourself what would happen if that line were used in the play instead of Sorkin’s choice. New York City would not be promoting that play—it would be condemning it.

Christians are different—they deserve to be insulted. That's exactly the way people like Sorkin think, and that's exactly why Christians view the cultural elites in Hollywood and New York City with such utter disdain.

CATHOLIC MALE JUDICIAL NOMINEE ATTACKED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the nomination of Brian C. Buescher for a federal district judge post:

Senators Kamala Harris and Mazie Hirono have raised questions regarding the suitability of Brian C. Buescher to be seated as a federal district judge. They have a problem with his sex and his religion. Their concerns are so illegitimate that it raises serious questions about their ability to scrutinize Catholic males for any federal post.

Buescher belongs to the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal organization. Like most practicing Catholics, he is pro-life. According to Harris and Hirono, those two characteristics are troubling, and could be disqualifying.

Do Harris and Hirono have a problem with Hadassah, the National Council of Jewish Women, or Women of Reform Judaism? Only Jewish women can belong to them.

Do they have a problem with the Catholic Daughters of the Americas? Only Catholic women can belong.

Do they have a problem with the League of Women Voters? Do they have a problem with the Daughters of the American

Revolution, founded in 1890? Do they have a problem with the American Association of University Women, founded in 1881? All ban men from joining.

Senator Hirono is troubled that the Knights of Columbus supported California's Proposition 8 (designed to limit the institution of marriage to a man and a woman). She calls this position "extreme." Is she calling all of those who supported Proposition 8 "extreme"? That would include millions of traditional Catholics, evangelical Protestants, Orthodox Jews, Mormons, and Muslims—all of whom came together to win in one of the nation's most liberal states.

Before being seated on the high court, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was co-founder of the Women's Rights Project at the ACLU. Applying the Harris-Hirono test—from a different perspective—this alone should have been a red flag. Would these women object if in the future such an affiliation might be considered disqualifying?

Senators Harris and Hirono are playing a game: they are engaged in selective religious profiling and sexism. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor was not considered a problem with these senators, yet she is Catholic. But she is also reliably pro-abortion. End of story.

We saw this kind of religious profiling at work when Amy Coney Barrett was being considered for a federal appeals court post. Unlike Sotomayor, she is a pro-life Catholic. That's all that counts.

It's not just some Democrats who are out of line. Where are the Republicans challenging them on their religious profiling and sexism?

MEDIA REFUSE TO HOLD CBS ACCOUNTABLE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the way the media are treating CBS:

The CBS board of directors was given a verbal report this week on the sexual recklessness of their pope, CBS Chairman and CEO Les Moonves. But no one, save for the board, is allowed to see the full report.

CBS employees are furious, but too bad for them—transparency is not going to happen. One source explained why: “No report was made so that CBS could protect itself.”

Imagine the bishops saying no one is permitted to see its reports on sexual misconduct, explaining that they need to protect themselves. What would the august *New York Times* say?

A little over three months ago, on September 13, an editorial in the *New York Times* called out the Catholic Church for the homosexual scandal (which it falsely says is a pedophilia scandal), citing “the lack of transparency or accountability among bishops” as one of the problems.

Where is the *New York Times* editorial on the contempt that CBS has for transparency? Where are all the other media outlets—print, internet, broadcast TV, and cable?

Is it because the media don't want to open up a hornet's nest about sexual misconduct within their own ranks that they don't demand CBS exercise transparency? Or is it because transparency is a game, a card that the media play when it affects the Catholic Church?

Either way, it shows how utterly insincere the media are about sexual offenses. Who the victimizer is should not matter, but

sadly it does.

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ILLINOIS AG REPORT REEKS OF POLITICS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a report by the Office of the Illinois Attorney General on the Catholic Church:

Catholics are being played again, this time in Illinois.

Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan has released a report by her office on sexual abuse by the Catholic clergy in Illinois. Before addressing her report, consider the backdrop to her investigation.

A few years ago, one teacher at a Northwestern Pennsylvania high school, Brother Stephen Baker, was reported to the authorities on grounds that he allegedly molested a minor in the 1990s. Who reported him? His bishop, Altoona-Johnstown Bishop Mark Bartchak.

What happened next? The Pennsylvania Attorney General, who is now in prison, launched a state-wide probe of six of the eight dioceses in the state. That was all it took—one old case to ignite a huge probe of nearly all Catholic dioceses in the state extending back to World War II.

Illinois Attorney General Madigan said it was that grand jury report that inspired her to launch her investigation. The Pennsylvania grand jury report was released in August. Which

begs the question: Why didn't Madigan launch an investigation of the public schools throughout the state following revelations of a *Chicago Tribune* report on sexual abuse in Chicago? That report was released in June.

The *Chicago Tribune* found that there were 523 credible cases of rape and sexual abuse of Chicago students over the past decade. Even more astounding, in the last three months—between September and December—Chicago public school officials fielded 624 new complaints, including a teen track star who was allegedly raped 40 times by her coach. Worse again, these school officials “knew about these abuse cases and hid them from the public for eight years.”

Why didn't Illinois Attorney General Madigan insist on a probe of every public school in the state, dating back decades?

Kids are being raped by public school teachers right now in Illinois, but this does not concern her. There is no “Teacher Abuse Hotline” posted on her website, but there is a “Clergy Abuse Hotline.” Furthermore, we know that she is not interested in cases of abuse committed by the clergy in all religions. Just one.

This is why I say Catholics are being played.

Catholics, and the public, are being led to believe that the Catholic Church owns this problem. It does not. It is widespread, but few prosecutors have any interest in examining current cases of sexual abuse in the public schools, never mind cases of abuse committed by the clergy in other religions. They are too busy uncovering decades-old cases of abuse committed by priests.

Regarding the Illinois Attorney General's report, there are many unanswered questions.

Why is the report being touted as an examination of alleged sexual abuse in Illinois, when that is only partly true? The

Clergy Abuse Hotline allows callers to report instances outside the state, or, as the report says, "in Illinois and elsewhere."

Who called the Hotline? They were "survivors who were abused decades ago." Why are they not referred to as *alleged* survivors? Did they ever report their alleged offense? "Survivors informed the Office [of the Illinois Attorney General] that, at various times over the years, they reported the abuse they suffered to one of the Illinois Dioceses."

Did all of the alleged survivors register a complaint at the time of the offense, or just some? If some, how many? More important, there is no evidence that the Attorney General's office sought to verify any of these accusations. Yet it takes Church officials to task for disregarding allegations brought to their attention.

The report says that "The Illinois Dioceses often disregarded survivors' allegations by either not investigating the allegations, or finding reasons not to substantiate the allegations."

Perhaps some of the allegations were not found credible on the face of it (e.g., the accused priest wasn't even in the parish where his alleged offense occurred at that time). The report shows its true colors when it accuses Church officials of "*finding* reasons not to substantiate the allegations" (my italic.) Does the Attorney General's office have evidence that Church officials contrived their conclusions? If not, why the stab?

The report acknowledges that in some cases the alleged victim chose not to have his name made public (a not uncommon practice). In other cases, a criminal investigation was already underway. In still others, the clergy had fled the country. These are all plausible reasons why Church officials decided not to launch a probe. But the authors of the report

do not see it that way, and act as though non-Church officials typically start probes in similar instances. This is nonsense.

Perhaps most unconvincing of all, the report concludes that “Based on its review, the Office believes that additional allegations should be deemed ‘credible’ or ‘substantiated’ by the Illinois Dioceses.” On what grounds? On what basis does the Attorney General’s office make such a determination? It provides not one iota of evidence to make such a claim.

To say it “believes” this to be true means nothing. What specific cases did it find that should have been deemed credible or substantiated by Church officials? In other words, can the Attorney General’s office *substantiate its claim*?

There was a time when the Illinois Attorney General’s office raised questions about sexual abuse in the public schools. For example, it was distressed to learn that school officials did not accept its recommendation that cases of sexual abuse should be reported to the authorities. Instead, these officials insisted on doing their own probes first, arguing, quite persuasively, that in more than half the cases they examined, there was nothing to the charges.

That time was the mid-1980s. “Teachers Slip Through Abuse Law Loophole” was the headline of this December 8, 1985 story in the *Chicago Tribune*.

To this day, there has never been a grand jury investigation of the public schools in Illinois, *or in any other state*. Which is why Catholics are being played. We don’t own this problem, but the elites in government, the media, and education would like everyone to think we do.

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“MARY MAGDALENE” MOVIE FIZZLES

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the fate of the movie, “Mary Magdalene”:

“Mary Magdalene” made the big screen in the U.K. and Australia, but it never made it to the U.S. That’s largely because the film was left in limbo when the Weinstein Company, the movie’s American distributor, crashed following the arrest of Harvey-the-predator-Weinstein. The movie also didn’t get the most raving reviews.

We are mentioning this today because tomorrow marks the one-year anniversary of our attempt to dissuade the Weinstein Company from opening the movie on March 30, 2018. That was Good Friday. Given Harvey’s penchant for making anti-Catholic movies, we were expecting the worst. He even sought to have another public feud with me.

That is why I wrote to David Glasser, president of the Weinstein Company, asking him to reschedule the film. As it turned out, the movie was not virulently anti-Catholic.

It now appears that Harvey was trying to get me to give him some cheap publicity by beckoning me to attack him. As it turned out, his cheap behavior wound up giving him a boatload of publicity. Moreover, the movie went nowhere. Strike three was his arrest.

To read my letter to Glasser, spelling out all my concerns, click [here](#).

“THE GUEST BOOK” IS INSIGHTFUL

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on last night's episode of the TBS Show, “The Guest Book”:

In the December 18 episode of the TBS sitcom, “The Guest Book,” the plot centered around a character named Dave who is having marital problems with his wife. As he is about to start a fight with her, he goes unconscious and has a near death experience. He meets his “guardian angel” named Gabe, and has the following exchange:

Gabe: “Now I’ve been told you’re a Catholic, right?”

Dave: “Yeah, I am. [I] went to Mass every Sunday and confessed all my sins. I mean that’s good, right?”

Gabe: “Yeah, if you like telling random old men embarrassing s***. Look, there are over 4,200 religions in the world and not one of them comes close to the truth about the specifics of who created the earth. Not one.”

Gabe then continues to talk about God:

Gabe: “Look, you’ll meet [God] one day, but until then I suggest you lower your expectations. I mean, he’s a good guy, but it’s not like he’s some magical entity in the sky. Just a brilliant dude that got bored one day and decided to create a universe.”

This is just the way Hollywood writers think. They have no religion, save for their politics, which they treat reverentially. It also shows how confused they are. In the first exchange, we learn that no religion can account for the

creation of the earth, but that is reversed in the second exchange. The religion being referred to is obviously found in the bible.

Of course, there is only one religion out of the 4,200 that the writers are interested in: Catholicism. Which explains the reference to the guardian angels, confession, and the Mass.

We can't help but notice that the exchanges begin with a discussion of sin, a subject that is verboten in Tinseltown. The Catholic League appreciates this insight into Hollywood's collective conscience this Christmas season, shallow though it is.

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DAVID BROOKS CROSSED THE LINE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an article in today's *New York Times*:

There is a column in today's *New York Times* by David Brooks on the demise of *The Weekly Standard* that demands a response. The neo-conservative magazine closed for several reasons, among them being the decision by its editor in chief, Stephen Hayes, to increase the staff by a third at a time of declining sales (the magazine lost 7,000 subscriptions, or a decline of 10 percent, in the last two years). Hayes took this risk with the blessings of the magazine's primary benefactor, Philip Anschutz.

For Brooks, Anschutz is the problem, not his friends at the magazine who ran the shop. Whether he is right or not is not my concern. My concern is how Brooks frames his argument.

Brooks calls Anschutz “a professing Christian [who] decided to close the magazine at the height of the Christmas season, and so cause maximum pain to his former employees and their families.”

Brooks’ ability to read the heart and mind of Anschutz is quite something, but it is not nearly as astounding as his Christian-baiting remark. He could have simply slammed Anschutz for making a crass decision, but no, that was not good enough: He had to call him out for being “a professing Christian” who stuck it to employees and their families at “the height of the Christmas season.”

Brooks writes for a newspaper that smells anti-Semitism whenever George Soros is criticized.

On October 30, a front-page news story said that “The baseless claims that George Soros is financing the migrants as they trek north, which carry a strong whiff of anti-Semitism, have been one of the most consistent themes of commentary on the caravan from the right.”

On November 1, a front-page news story said that those who call Soros a “globalist” and a “left-wing radical” are guilty of employing “barely coded anti-Semitism.”

If the *New York Times* were as sensitive to Christian-baiting as it is anti-Semitism, it would have edited Brooks’ column. Is Brooks a bigot? No. But he crossed the line in this instance.

BOY SCOUTS TOOK THE INCLUSION BAIT

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the fate of the Boy Scouts:

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is exploring the possibility of declaring bankruptcy. How could an organization which had roughly 5.5 million members in the early 1970s, and now commands only 2.3 million, collapse so rapidly?

Several factors are at work, but none are more important than the left-wing assaults on the BSA, and the role of molesting Scout masters.

In the early 1990s, I was asked by the Center for the Study of Natural Law at the Claremont Institute in California to write a monograph on the problems facing the BSA. The second edition of *On the Front Line of the Culture War: Recent Attacks on the Boy Scouts of America* was published in 1993, the year I came to the Catholic League. More than any other left-wing entity, it was the ACLU that first declared war on the BSA.

The ACLU started suing the BSA left and right, and this, in turn, inspired other left-wing organizations to do likewise. The ACLU sued over the Three "G's"—Gays, Godless, and Girls—hoping to force the organization to allow homosexuals, atheists, and girls to join. While the BSA officials initially fought these efforts, they eventually succumbed to the politics of inclusion, changing its traditional standards to appease its critics.

History shows, however, that hard-core ideologues are not interested in being appeased—they are interested in winning. In this case, victory meant the demise of the BSA.

The only one of the Three "G's" that the BSA held the line on

were the atheists. But even there, the organization that prided itself on honoring the Judeo-Christian ethos adjusted its sails to appease its critics. So they let anyone join who professed a belief in anything, ranging from devotees of Zeus to Wiccans.

Allowing girls to join the BSA was long considered a non-starter: after all, there is an organization called the Girl Scouts of America. But to zealots this is not enough—their radical egalitarian agenda demanded that the girls crash the BSA. Last year, the BSA gave in and allowed girls to join.

Two things immediately happened: the BSA lost 425,000 members in the month it made the announcement (October 2017), and last month the Girl Scouts sued them as well. Inclusion anyone?

The biggest headache for the BSA came from homosexual activists. They won the support of the media, higher education, left-wing legal groups, even corporate America. In 2013, the BSA allowed homosexual boys to join and in 2015 it ended its ban on gay adult leaders. In 2017, it yielded again, ruling that biological boys who identify as girls can join. Not much left after that.

In 1920, ten years after the BSA was founded, it started a “red flag” system to identify adult males who were known to sexually abuse the boys and young men. It would later be known as the “Ineligible Volunteer Files,” commonly referred to as the “perversion files.”

Fast forward to October 2012. The Oregon Supreme Court ordered the release of 1,200 confidential files detailing cases of sexual molestation that occurred between 1965 and 1985. It was this that started a wave of lawsuits, with victims, alleged and real, seeking lucrative financial settlements. This proved to be devastating.

In 2012, the *Los Angeles Times* also got its hands on 1,600 confidential files dating from 1970 to 1991. In most cases,

the BSA found out about the sexual abuse after it had been reported to the authorities.

It is hard to say exactly how many of the molesters were pedophiles (those who hit on prepubescent boys or girls) and how many were homosexuals (those who hit on postpubescent males). For reasons that are entirely political, the media have shown no interest in getting to the bottom of this.

Why the left-wing assault on the BSA? It is a bastion of traditionalism, and that is one thing the Left hates, especially the core Judeo-Christian values. It is also a voluntary organization, one of the most important intermediate associations in the nation; these social institutions separate the individual from the state.

Leftists are nothing but statist: They want the power to control the people. Thus, anything that stands in their way—such as the family, church, and voluntary associations (the BSA)—are an obstacle to the power and reach of the state. Following the philosophy of Rousseau, these institutions must be destroyed.

Would matters have turned out differently had the BSA officials not adopted the politics of inclusion? Hard to say, but at least they could have made their mark in the culture war. Instead, they caved, and now they are paying the price.

WASHINGTON POST COLUMNIST GETS IT WRONG

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a *Washington Post* column that appeared yesterday:

Washington Post columnist Margaret Sullivan wrote a particularly flawed piece that appeared on the front page of the Style section in yesterday's edition of the newspaper.

She is not happy that the conviction of Australian Cardinal George Pell on charges of sexual molestation didn't get more news coverage. A retrial was ordered after the first trial resulted in a hung jury (10 of the 12 jurors concluded he was not guilty), though Sullivan failed to mention this. His case is almost certain to be appealed. It should be. Anyone who has studied his ordeal knows how bogus the charges are (click [here](#) for my account).

Sullivan acknowledges that the Australian courts are guilty of censoring the news about Pell's trial, but still finds a way to drag the Catholic Church into this. "The secrecy surrounding the court case—and now the verdict—is offensive. That's especially so because it echoes the secrecy that has always been so appalling a part of widespread sexual abuse by priests."

Sullivan then goes on to praise the *Boston Globe* for its stories on the Catholic Church, applauds the victims' group SNAP (Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests), and concludes by touting journalists "whose core mission is truth-telling."

This is hard to stomach. I just got [stiffed](#) by the truth tellers at the *Boston Globe*—they refused to allow me to see the raw data upon which their "study" of bishops was made. When I confined my request to reading the transcripts of the interviews they conducted, I was again stiffed.

To be sure, there are lots of good journalists who are driven by truth telling, but they sure don't include the top editors at the *Boston Globe*. They are masters of secrecy.

SNAP is thoroughly corrupt—I [exposed](#) them as a monumental fraud years before they crashed (their latest incarnation is a

joke). That is why it is shocking to read Sullivan quoting one of their Aussie agents. Their credibility is totally shot.

The *Washington Post* also has a flawed record when it comes to truth telling. Just this [month](#), I slammed them and the *New York Times* for not publishing a story on the court decision overturning the conviction of Australian Archbishop Philip Wilson. Yet both newspapers ran a story on his conviction in July. This is inexcusable.

“Washington Post Makes False Claims” was the title of my November 13 [news release](#) showing how the newspaper was factually wrong in reporting on the progress made by the Catholic Church on sexual abuse. I provided the data; they offered opinion.

There are noble journalists in America. There are also plenty of frauds.