

MICHIGAN AG'S ANTI-CATHOLIC BIAS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on actions taken by Michigan's new Attorney General that are disturbing:

Dana Nessel, Michigan's new Attorney General, is not off to a good start with Catholics. Last week, she held a press conference where she insulted Catholics. Her topic was a state investigation into allegations of Catholic clergy sexual abuse. She threw a sucker punch at Catholics by telling residents to "ask to see their badge and not their rosary" when contacted by investigators.

Why hasn't Nessel launched an investigation of every institution, religious and secular, where adults intermingle with minors on a regular basis? Why did she cherry pick Catholic ones?

Would she allow the authorities to contact residents seeking information about street crime committed by African Americans? Wouldn't that be racial profiling? And would she make a racial slur at a press conference on this subject?

By singling out Catholic institutions, Nessel is engaging in religious profiling. The only entity in the state, besides Catholic ones, that she is pursuing over allegations of sexual abuse is Michigan State University, home of the infamous Larry Nassar crimes and the cover up by university officials.

Is Nessel aware of the fact that the sexual abuse of minors is rampant in Michigan? In 2017, Michigan ranked 6th in the number of reported cases of human trafficking according to CARE House. In 2016, *USA Today* published a major story on how the 50 states deal with the sexual abuse of minors in the public schools. Michigan received an "F."

The newspaper noted the failings by reporting that “Weak screening, left to local school districts” was commonplace. “No information online about teacher disciplinary actions” was noted. Perhaps worst of all was the finding that “Some teachers’ misconduct [was] not shared with other states.” So Michigan just “passed the trash,” as it is known in the public school industry.

Michigan gets a failing grade for handling sexual abuse cases in the public schools and Nessel gives them a pass! It is almost too hard to believe. It proves that she is not interested in combating sexual abuse, for if she were she wouldn’t let public schools off the hook.

Further proof that Nessel discriminates against Catholics can be shown by accessing her website. Under “Initiatives” she lists five issues, the first of which is “Catholic Church Clergy Abuse.” She even has a form where the public can submit information about alleged offenses. There is a similar form that applies to Michigan State University, but there is no form for anyone else.

The Catholic Church does not own this problem. More important, it has made such great strides in recent decades that it is almost non-existent in this country today. The same is not true of other institutions.

To acquaint Nessel with the scope of the problem, we have compiled a tally of recent cases. Abusers include teachers, administrators, doctors, lawyers, family members, online predators, and law enforcement personnel. We have even included a list of recidivists, or repeat offenders. To read our tally, click [here](#).

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WASHINGTON POST GETS IT WRONG ON ABUSE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an editorial in today's *Washington Post*:

No one can fault the *Washington Post* for criticizing the Vatican summit on clergy abuse for being short on concrete prescriptions for reform. That much is true. But at the end of the editorial in today's paper it makes two accusations that are simply not true, and one that is misleading.

The editorial takes the Church to task for its "steadfast opposition to changes in state laws that prohibit survivors of pedophile priests from filing lawsuits years after the abuse took place," citing the Church's "unique history as a haven for abusers."

The misleading comment is the remark about the Church opposing changes in state laws that allow for prosecuting old cases. In virtually every instance where this has happened, those state laws have exempted the public sector.

In other words, state laws that allow for a "look back" provision *almost never* apply to students raped by public school teachers: those students have only 90 days to file a complaint. This is because of the antiquated doctrine of sovereign immunity. When the law applies equally to the public sector, there is no Catholic opposition, as recently evidenced in New York.

Thus, the editorial unfairly characterizes the Church's opposition. Would not the *Washington Post* condemn a state law that allowed for a "look back" provision for students abused

in the public schools but did not apply to private [read: Catholic] ones? Moreover, would the editorial page blast the public school establishment for opposing such a law on the basis of selective enforcement?

One of the two errors in the editorial, “Fine Words, Flimsy Deeds,” is the reference to “pedophile priests.” It is a fiction to charge that the Catholic Church has a pedophile problem. More than 19 of 20 accused clergy members *are not pedophiles*. Most of them—8 in 10—are homosexuals. This cover up by the editorial page is unconscionable.

Finally, there is *zero* evidence that the Church has a “unique history as a haven for abusers.” No institution has a unique history of harboring abusers, but if there is one that leads the way it surely is the family—that’s where most of the abuse takes place—followed by the public schools.

The *Washington Post* needs to get up to speed with these issues before lecturing the Catholic Church. We don’t own this problem, and we never did.

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OXFORD UNION SET FOR STAGED DEBATE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on tomorrow’s debate at the Oxford Union:

At the beginning of December, I was [invited](#) to participate in a debate at the Oxford Union on the alleged sins of the

Catholic Church. I agreed. A month later, I was disinvited. Those who extended the invitation then lied about it.

Oxford Union president Daniel Wilkinson was among the liars. Why did he chicken out? Couldn't he find someone to debate me? Or was he afraid I would win? Either way, someone got to him. That he categorically refused to speak to the media about this issue—I sure didn't—speaks volumes about his veracity.

In my place, one of the persons asked to defend the Catholic Church is a known Church hater, Marci Hamilton. In her assaults on the Church, she works cooperatively with Mitchell Garabedian, one of the persons she is scheduled to “debate”! As I have said, having Hamilton defend the Church is analogous to having a supporter of the Klan defend African Americans.

In short, Wilkinson has made a joke of himself and brought discredit to this once venerable institution. It, too, is now a joke. That's quite a legacy. Oh, Danny boy.

CARDINAL PELL'S APPEAL IS JUSTIFIED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the conviction of Cardinal George Pell:

Australian Cardinal George Pell was convicted in December of molesting two choirboys in the 1990s, but it was not until yesterday that the details were disclosed; charges against Pell that would require a second trial over other allegations were dropped. Pell's lawyers are appealing the conviction.

There are many holes in the story that led to Pell's

conviction. To begin with, one of the boys who was alleged to have registered a complaint overdosed on drugs and died. More important, the boy's mother said her son admitted, on two occasions, that Pell never abused him. This does not matter to the boy's father: He says he is going to sue the Church or Pell once the appeal is resolved. Let him. And let him sue his wife for libeling their son.

Regarding the other boy, the sole complainant, he said that Pell made him perform oral sex on him after saying Mass at Melbourne's St. Patrick's Cathedral two decades ago. I have already [written](#) extensively about this, so I will not repeat it here.

However, I will offer a good summary of what this one boy alleges to have happened. The quoted parts are taken from a well-researched news story published today by Rod McGuirk of the Associated Press; he writes from Melbourne.

"The jury convicted Pell of abusing two boys whom he had caught swigging sacramental wine in a rear room of Melbourne's St. Patrick's Cathedral in late 1996, as hundreds of worshippers were streaming out of Sunday services.

"[Robert] Richter, his lawyer, had told the jury that only a 'mad man' would take the risk of abusing boys in such a public place. He said it was 'laughable' that Pell would have been able to expose his penis and force the victim to take it in his mouth, given the cumbersome robes he was wearing.

"The jury was handed the actual cumbersome robes Pell wore as archbishop. Over his regular clothes, Pell would wear a full-length white robe called an alb that was tied around his waist with a rope-like cincture. Over that, he would drape a 3-meter (10-foot) band of cloth called a stole around his neck. The outermost garment was the long poncho-like chasuble.

"More than 20 witnesses, including clerics, choristers and altar servers, testified during the trial. None recalled ever

seeing the complainant and the other victim break from a procession of choristers, altar servers and clerics to go to the back room.

“The complainant testified that he and his friend had run from the procession and back into the cathedral through a side door to, as [Mark] Gibson, the prosecutor, said, ‘have some fun.’

“Monsignor Charles Portelli, who was the cathedral’s master of ceremonies in the 1990s, testified that he was always with Pell after Mass to help him disrobe in the sacristy.” He maintains the charges are totally false.

In other words, one of the alleged victims says he was never a victim, and the other can find no one—not one among over 20 who were with him that day—to support his story.

Keep Cardinal George Pell in your prayers. It is not easy for any priest, never mind a high-ranking one, to get a fair trial today. The hysteria and the animus that exist makes for a toxic environment.

DEMS REJECT UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a Senate vote yesterday:

The Democratic Party Platform says, “Democrats have been fighting to secure universal health care for the American people for generations, and we are proud to be the party that passed Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act.”

Yesterday, they walked away from that pledge, finding an

exception to its universal coverage. If a baby survives an abortion, he is not entitled to health care. The majority of Democrats voted to permit infanticide; only three voted for the bill that would protect the kids. President Trump denounced what the Democrats did.

Some of the Democrats who explained their vote were factually wrong. Sen. Mazie Hirono, for example, said it has always been a crime to kill a baby or to let him die after birth. Wrong. It is legal in New York State. Moreover, her vote makes it easier not to charge a doctor with malpractice for failing to attend to the needs of an infant who survives an abortion.

Sen. Tina Smith said the bill sponsored by Sen. Ben Sasse would “compel physicians to provide unnecessary medical care.” Wrong. Babies born alive often require medical care, and when it is not given, some die.

Every Democrat who is either running for president, or planning to run, voted to legalize selective infanticide. The Democrats no longer support universal health care.

MICHIGAN AG INSULTS CATHOLICS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a recent remark made by the Michigan Attorney General

On February 21, Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel held a press conference in Lansing to update the public on its investigation into allegations of clergy sexual abuse. She encouraged Michigan residents to “ask to see their badge and not their rosary” if contacted at home by investigators.

Many Michigan Catholics, including spokesmen for the dioceses,

have asked Nessel to apologize, but she refuses to do so.

There is no room for religious bigotry in American society, anymore than there is for racial bigotry. When those making the offensive comments are public officials, it is even more disturbing. If Nessel does not apologize, Michigan Catholics will have no confidence in her ability to impartially apply the law.

When the Virginia governor was charged with engaging in racially insensitive behavior, it became a national issue, not just a Virginia one.

That is why the Catholic League is inviting Catholics outside of Michigan to contact Nessel's office. We are also blanketing the media throughout the state.

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CHURCH NEEDS MORE MASCULINE PRIESTS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the need for more masculine priests:

The assault on masculinity has been going on inside and outside of the Catholic Church for decades, but it is now at a fever pitch. To cite one recent example, in his February 21 article, *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof blamed masculinity for the sexual abuse scandals in the Catholic and Southern Baptist Churches. The Southern Baptist Convention was recently investigated by reporters.

Kristof quotes Serene Jones, president of the Union Theological Society: "They [the two Churches] both have very masculine understandings of God, and have a structure where men are considered the closest representatives of God."

This remarkable comment deserves a serious rejoinder. But first a word on why the Southern Baptists were targeted and why Kristof interviewed Jones.

Why did the *Houston Chronicle* and the *San Antonio Express-News* investigate the Southern Baptist Convention? There are several other Baptist denominations, so why the Southern Baptists? Alternatively, why didn't they choose to probe the Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, or Presbyterians?

Let me take a wild guess. It's for the same reason the media, until now, have focused *exclusively* on the Catholic Church: both Churches are known for their orthodox Christian teachings on sexuality. If they can be discredited, their moral voice will be compromised. One would have to be ideologically blind not to see what's going on.

Why did Kristof tee it up for the president of the Union Theological Seminary? Because he knew she would feed his narrative. This New York-based institution has long been home to "progressive" thinkers, including dissident Catholic theologians (it has even employed those who have been banned from teaching at Catholic colleges due to their wholesale rejection of Catholicism).

More substantively, Kristof's thesis—masculinity is related to sexual abuse—is so spurious that even he admits to its flaw.

For starters, he summarizes his argument by citing the Catholic Church's male clergy and the "submissive" role occupied by females, but then a light goes off in his head. If this is the case, he wonders, then why haven't most of the victims in the Catholic Church been women and girls?

Here is how he puts it. “It’s complicated, of course, for many of the Catholic victims were boys...” Actually, there is nothing complicated about it—he is simply wrong. Masculine priests, those who are naturally attracted to females, account for very little of the sexual abuse.

Kristof can’t even get this little bit right. The vast majority, 81 percent, of the victims were male. That’s not “many”—it’s most. And they were not boys: 78 percent were postpubescent; adolescents are properly regarded as young men. But to admit this is to admit that homosexual priests are responsible for the lion’s share of the abuse. And no one at the *New York Times* is going to admit to this verity.

The Catholic Church needs more masculine priests, not fewer. To put it differently, though matters are better today, for many years the Church had too many priests who were either effeminate or sexually immature. We’ve seen where that got us.

POPE SLAMS RELENTLESS ACCUSERS

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

Media reaction to comments made by Pope Francis linking constant accusers of the Catholic Church to the devil was predictable. When the pope says something that the media see as undermining the profile of the Holy Father that they want to project—as an ally of liberal causes—they typically ignore his remarks. They did so again today.

Here is a sample of those media outlets that did not report on

the pope's statement linking non-stop accusers of the Church to the work of the devil:

ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *Daily News*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *USA Today*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Kansas City Star*, *Miami Herald*, *Dallas Morning News*, and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

Prominent media outlets that did report on what the pope said include Fox News, MSNBC, Associated Press, Reuters, *Boston Herald*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and the *New York Post*.

Pope Francis is being attacked today by virtually every professional victims' group—most are not a true organization—as well as by pundits and activists. Before defending what the pope said, which is easy to do, consider the context of his remarks and what he actually said.

The Holy Father was talking about the love that Saint Padre Pio had for the Catholic Church. He then said, "He who loves the Church knows how to forgive, because he himself is a sinner and is in need of God's forgiveness." Continuing with this theme, he then addressed those on the other end (the following is taken from press.vatican.va)

"One cannot live an entire life accusing, accusing, accusing the Church. Whose is the office of the accuser? The devil! And those who spend their life accusing, accusing, accusing, are—I will not say children, because the devil does not have any—but friends, cousins, relatives of the devil."

This was followed by a comment that "flaws must be indicated so they can be corrected, but at the moment the flaws are noted, flaws are denounced, one loves the Church."

The pope is so right. He is not saying that no one should criticize the Catholic Church—he has done so many times himself—he is talking about those who have made a career out

of attacking the Church.

This surely would include professional victims' groups such as SNAP, a morally bankrupt group that we have [exposed](#) for lying and deceiving the public. It would also include the rapacious lawyers who fund them, such as Jeffrey Anderson.

Among the media, perhaps no outlet is more guilty of relentlessly attacking the Catholic Church than the *National Catholic Reporter*. They love to promote the voice of the most strident dissident and ex-Catholics, affording them ample space to assault the Church's teachings on women and sexuality. More than that, they want the bishops to censor media outlets that talk about all the good the Church does.

Two days ago, a columnist for the *National Catholic Reporter*, Michael Sean Winters, repeated his call to shut down EWTN. He is particularly incensed with EWTN's flagship show, "The World Over," hosted by Raymond Arroyo. Winters even attacked EWTN's founder, Mother Angelica.

"I have said it before and will say it again, the bishops of this country need to lance this media boil. That was obvious at the time of the apostolic visitation of Mother Angelica's monastery in 2000. It has only become more obvious since."

Banning free speech, of course, is a signature of the Left.

Pope Francis speaks the truth. There is a difference between criticizing members of the clergy who are delinquent—including those who work at the Vatican—and condemning the Church, 24/7. Such agenda-ridden persons are driven by power, and there is nothing noble about such a pursuit.

The pope is to be commended for saying that those who relentlessly find fault with the Catholic Church are doing the work of the devil. It will not do to applaud the Church's soup kitchens while obsessing on the Church's defects, real and contrived. This gig is up.

CLERICALISM DOES NOT CAUSE SEXUAL ABUSE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the notion that clericalism causes sexual abuse:

It is popular in left-wing circles to adopt the Marxist vision of society, one which interprets social interaction purely on the basis of power. According to this perspective, society consists of power brokers and their subjects, and not much more. This is a very narrow lens, a myopic condition that blinds them to reality.

Applied to the clergy sexual abuse scandal, those on the Left, such as the *National Catholic Reporter* and Faith in Public Life, blame clericalism, or elitism, as the cause of the scandal.

An editorial in today's *National Catholic Reporter* says clergy sexual abuse has "its roots deep in a clerical culture that valued secrecy, privilege and power over the welfare of child victims and their families."

Similarly, John Gehring of Faith in Public Life (who is funded by atheist billionaire George Soros) says today that "The root cause of this existential crisis for the church is clericalism, an insulated patriarchal culture where priests and bishops are viewed as a privileged class set apart."

Father Hans Zollner, a Jesuit who is helping to organize the bishops' summit on sexual abuse, also believes that "abuse of power" is the cause of the scandal.

Clericalism, of course, has never provoked a single priest to

abuse anyone. That is a function of sexual recklessness, a behavior more commonly exercised by homosexual priests than their heterosexual counterparts. In short, irresponsible decisions account for sexual molestation, not a mantle of power.

Think of it this way. If elitism caused sexual abuse, then those who occupy positions of power in the National Education Association (NEA) should be more likely to abuse minors than the teachers who occupy a subordinate position. But it is not the NEA executives, anymore than it is the bishops, who are sexually acting out, it is the teachers and the priests who serve under them.

Does this mean that clericalism plays no role in the scandal? No. There are two parties to this problem: the enabling bishops and the molesting priests.

Some of the former failed to act responsibly because they had a “bishop knows best” mentality, which is a form of clericalism. But that had nothing to do with the behavior of the abusers. Others listened to the therapists, many of whom were not supportive of the Church’s teachings on sexuality, and who therefore contributed to the problem. Their role in the scandal is still underreported and underrated.

The preoccupation with clericalism on the part of so-called progressive Catholics has more to do with their myopia, and their desire to divert attention away from homosexuality, than with a pursuit of the truth. No one should fall for their game.

ASSESSING GAY PRIESTS' ROLE IN THE SCANDAL

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the upcoming Vatican meeting on priestly sexual abuse:

According to Vatican observer Edwin Pentin, it is “not clear” whether “the role of homosexuality in the abuse crisis” will be addressed at the Vatican summit on clergy sexual abuse; it begins tomorrow. One thing is for sure: every effort to downplay the role of gays is being made.

A front-page story in the February 18 edition of the *New York Times* is typical of the way most of the media are covering this subject. “Studies repeatedly find there to be no connection between being gay and abusing children. Yet prominent bishops have singled out gay priests as the root of the problem, and right-wing media organizations attack what they have called the church’s ‘homosexual subculture,’ ‘lavender mafia,’ or ‘gay cabal.’”

Furthermore, Cardinal Blase Cupich, who will be at the summit, says that while most of the problem is a result of “male on male” sex abuse, “homosexuality itself is not a cause.” He says it can be explained as a matter of “opportunity and also a matter of poor training on the part of the people.”

All of these statements can be challenged. First of all, not all studies have shown that there is no link between homosexuals and the sexual abuse of minors.

A good summary of the literature that shows the central role of homosexual priests in the abuse scandal can be found in an [article](#) by Brian W. Clowes and David L. Sonnier. The most recent research that challenges the conventional wisdom on this subject is the [study](#) by D. Paul Sullins, a sociologist who teaches at Catholic University of America. He found that

the link between homosexual priests and sexual abuse was strong.

Let it be said emphatically that it is morally wrong to blame all gay priests or to bully someone who is gay, be he a priest or a plumber. It is also wrong to call on all gay priests to resign: such a sweeping recommendation is patently unfair to those gay priests who have never violated anyone.

However, it is not helpful to the cause of eradicating the problem of sexual abuse in the priesthood to dismiss a conversation about the obvious. We can begin by talking honestly about who the victims are.

Notice that the *New York Times* says there is no connection between homosexuality and abusing "children." This is a common way of framing the issue, and it is a deceitful one. Most of the victims were adolescents, not children. In other words, the problem is not pedophilia.

We know from one report after another, in both this country and abroad, that approximately 80 percent of the victims are both male *and* postpubescent. Ergo, the issue is homosexuality. This does not mean that homosexuality, per se, *causes* someone to be a predator (Cupich is technically right about that), but it does say that homosexuals are disproportionately represented in the sexual abuse of minors. We cannot ignore this reality.

The American Pediatric Association says that puberty begins at age 10 for boys. A study of more than 4,000 boys examined by a doctor, nationwide, also put the figure at age 10. The John Jay report on priestly sexual abuse found that less than 5 percent of the victims were prepubescent, meaning that pedophilia is not the problem.

The John Jay researchers try to protect homosexuals by saying that not all the men who had sex with adolescent males consider themselves to be homosexuals. But self-identification

is not dispositive. If the gay priests thought they were giraffes, would the scholars conclude that the problem is bestiality?

It was the John Jay researchers who first floated the “opportunity” thesis that Cardinal Cupich picked up on. This idea is flawed. Predator priests hit on boys not because they were denied access to girls, but because they *preferred* males. More important, there is something patently unfair, as well as inaccurate, about this line of thinking.

It suggests that many priests are inclined to have sex with minors—and will choose the sex which offers them the greatest opportunity. There is no evidence to support this unjust indictment. Also, girl altar servers date back to 1983, after Canon law was changed. They became even more common in 1994 when Pope John Paul II ruled that girls can be altar servers.

If the “opportunity” thesis had any truth to it, we should have seen, over the past few decades, a spike in altar girls being sexually abused by priests, but this has not happened. Indeed, 80 percent of the victims are still male and postpubescent.

The notion that “poor training” is responsible for the scandal raises the obvious question: If all seminarians, straight and gay, were trained the same way (they were not segregated), then why didn’t the “poor training” that the heterosexuals experienced lead them to sexually abuse minors?

Finally, every honest observer who has examined this subject knows there is a homosexual subculture in the Church. Two months ago, Pope Francis said “homosexuality is fashionable and that mentality, in some way, also influences the life of the church.” Previously, he spoke about the “gay lobby” in the Church. Moreover, a 2016 decree on training for priests spoke about the “gay culture.” Also, it was Father Andrew Greeley who used the term “lavender mafia.”

Pope Francis is not a “right-winger,” and neither was Greeley.

We need to stop, once and for all, playing politics with this issue and face up to some tough realities.