

CARDINAL PELL TARGETED AGAIN

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on new charges against Cardinal George Pell:

No Catholic figure has been more victimized by bogus charges of sexual abuse than Cardinal George Pell. Now two other accusers have come forward, and their stories don't pass the smell test any more than the others did.

Pell is in prison awaiting awaiting a decision on his appeal for allegedly abusing two boys in 1996. One of the boys, who died of drug overdose, told his mother on two occasions that it was all a lie—he was never abused by Pell. This makes suspect the charge of the other boy: they were allegedly abused at the same time and in the same place. They have no witnesses, nor will anyone vouch for them. The latest charges are just as spurious.

Two men who lived in the same orphanage in the Australian city of Ballarat, Victoria have now come forward to make accusations of sexual abuse against Pell; the alleged offenses took place in the 1970s.

In 2016, Victoria police contacted Bernie [his surname is being withheld by reporters] and Philip Clarke as part of their investigation of Pell. Their allegations, along with others, were either withdrawn, dismissed or dropped.

Clarke now says Pell inappropriately touched him in a YMCA swimming pool. When he was contacted by the Victoria police and asked if Pell had ever abused him, he had a chance to nail Pell, but he never did. He says he didn't want to have any part of it at that time, but now he has changed his mind.

Brett O'Neill was a regular at the same pool during this time. He says he never saw Pell do anything wrong. "No...if something had been a bit out of whack with George," he said, "I think

our parents would have got involved. If they had thought that there was something not right, they would've been in the change rooms."

Bernie's story is even more suspect. He says Pell inappropriately touched him while showering at the orphanage run by the Sisters of Nazareth. But it was established during the 2018 hearings at Melbourne's Magistrates' Court that Pell had only been to Nazareth House once. That was in 1980 when it was closing. The current head of the Sisters of Nazareth told the media that she has no knowledge of Pell ever being at the home.

Why didn't Bernie tell the cops his story when he was interviewed by them? He claims the psychological pressure of having to deal with a trial was too much for him, but not anymore. He's good to go.

The timing of these revelations is more than curious—they are scandalous. The High Court of Australia will deliver its ruling on Pell's case in Brisbane on April 7.

In other words, these men never came forward before, did not tell their tales to the police when they were interviewed, and just now decided to go public, one week before the High Court's ruling. Conveniently, Bernie was featured on an ABC-TV program (Australia) that just aired.

The vendettas against Cardinal Pell are astonishing. Please keep him in your prayers as we approach Holy Week.

THE PLIGHT OF FALSELY ACCUSED PRIESTS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on priests who recently had accusations made against them dropped:

In 1987, Raymond Donovan, former Secretary of Labor under President Ronald Reagan, was acquitted of charges that he conspired with the mafia for a business transaction. When he walked out of court a free man, he was asked by the media how he felt. He famously quipped, "Which office do I go to get my reputation back?"

The same question is being asked by falsely accused priests, though they don't garner much attention from the media. Ask yourself this: How many times have you seen an exonerated priest interviewed on TV?

Everyone knows when charges are made against a priest—it's all over the news—but aside from a few stories about priests whose case has been tossed, there isn't much interest in detailing what these men have gone through. It's sexy to report accusations; it's unattractive to report acquittals.

The following is a list of priests in the first quarter of 2020 whose case was either found to be unsubstantiated by a church review panel or was thrown out by the courts.

- A Valley County, Nebraska jury found Fr. John Kakkuzhiyil not guilty of first-degree sexual assault. He was accused of forcible sexual assault of a woman in 2018. ["Priest Cleared of Sexual Assault," www.theindependent.com, January 9]
- Two Buffalo priests, Monsignor Peter J. Popadick and Fr. Paul M. Nogaró, were returned to ministry after the Diocese of Buffalo was unable to substantiate allegations of child sexual abuse against them. The

accuser refused to cooperate with the diocese. ["2 Buffalo Diocese Priests Accused of Sex Abuse Returned to Ministry," *Buffalo News*, January 18]

- Another Buffalo priest, Fr. Roy T. Herberger, sued his accuser for lying about charges of sexual abuse against him (the accuser is suing the diocese but not the priest); the priest is charging him with slander. The alleged offense took place in the 1980s and no charges were made until 2018. The accuser said he was a student at St. Ann School in the mid-1980s, but there is no record he ever attended the school. Herberger said "there is no proof, no evidence, not even an inkling, just an accusation and all of a sudden, people like me are put on the front page of papers, picture, name on television, and I mean, that's just not fair." ["Priest Files Defamation Suit Against His Accuser," *Buffalo News*, January 23]
- A Kentucky priest, Fr. David Glockner, was accused of inappropriately touching two teenage girls, and had the charges dropped both by an independent investigation by his religious order and a grand jury. ["Northern Kentucky Catholic Priest Cleared of any Wrongdoing," www.cincinnati.com, February 5]
- Paul Angelicchio was reinstated by the Diocese of Syracuse after it was determined that charges of sexually abusing a boy in the early 1980s could not be substantiated. The accuser refused to cooperate with the diocese. ["Accused Priest Reinstated by the Diocese," *Post-Standard*, February 6]
- In September, 2019, a Wisconsin judge dismissed one of six counts of sexual misconduct against Fr. William A. Nolan, and the jury found him not guilty of the remaining counts. But the Diocese of Madison commenced its own investigation of him and in March, 2020 it deemed all allegations against him not credible. ["Priest Accused of Sex Abuse Cleared by Madison Diocese," www.gazettextra.com, March 7]

- Hugh Lang, former schools superintendent of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, had his conviction of February 6 tossed when an Allegheny County judge agreed with a post-sentencing motion filed by his attorney. The initial judge, who was removed from the bench over alleged racist remarks, was found to have erred when he allowed spurious evidence to be used against the priest. ["Ex-Pittsburgh Priest Accused of Sexually Abusing Child Has Conviction Tossed," www.triblive.com, March 9]
- An independent investigation of an Augustinian priest from Andover, Massachusetts, Fr. Peter Gori, found charges of sexual abuse from 30 years ago to be unsubstantiated. The accuser could not recall details of what happened, and his account was at variance with facts about the priest's assignment history. The attorney for the accused is Mitchell Garabedian of "Spotlight" fame; he has had previous cases against priests thrown out. ["Andover Priest Reinstated After Sexual Abuse Investigation," www.bostonglobe.com, March 30]

Then there is the case of Fr. John Onderko from Illinois. The 83-year-old priest was removed from ministry by the Diocese of Peoria for alleged sexual abuse dating back decades ago. He says he was never told of the accusations, which he denies. He has sued the diocese saying he was denied due process. ["Accused Priest in Rock Island Sues Peoria Diocese," <https://qctimes.com>, March 10]

As Ray Donovan put it, how do these priests get their reputation back?