

ATTACK ON BISHOP FINN; PROTEST OF KC STAR-SNAP TIE

Beginning late October, we rallied behind Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop Robert Finn with vigor: we saturated the community with an ad that the *Kansas City Star* rejected for political reasons. Indeed, we hit virtually every Catholic church, school and lay organization in the area, along with other religious organizations, public and private schools and colleges, government officials, businesses and civic associations. We even contacted local bars, barber shops and beauty parlors. Here's what happened.

Last December, a police officer and an attorney were contacted by diocesan officials after a technician found photos of young girls on Rev. Shawn Ratigan's computer. While none of the pictures were pornographic, they were nonetheless disturbing.

Following the discovery of his fetish, Ratigan attempted suicide. He was then sent for psychiatric analysis: he was said to be suffering from depression, but was not diagnosed as a pedophile. After he violated strictures regarding his movement last May, the diocese contacted the authorities, *even though it had no legal mandate to do so*. It was then that even more disturbing photos were found.

In other words, Bishop Finn did what no other leader of any religious, or secular, organization has done: he put all the cards on the table and brought in the police *in a case where there was no complainant*. More than that, he asked for an independent investigation by a former U.S. attorney, Todd P. Graves.

Graves and a team of attorneys, former prosecutors and FBI officials issued a report concluding that while some matters may have been handled better, Bishop Finn was guilty of no

criminal wrongdoing (he had almost no role in this case). But that was not enough for the likes of the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP) and their lawyers. They drove public opinion on this issue, resulting in an unprecedented indictment of a bishop—on a misdemeanor, no less. Subsequently, they have been on a rampage finding new “victims” to sue.

At the end of October, Bill Donohue submitted a full-page ad (costing \$25,000) to be placed in the *Kansas City Star* exposing the shenanigans: it was turned down *without explanation*, even though the newspaper is in financial straits! The *Star*-SNAP alliance was indisputably cemented.

On November 15, Bishop Finn agreed to meet on a monthly basis with the Clay County prosecutor about any suspicious behavior of those in his employ; in return, charges have been dropped. Still to be settled are similar charges made by the Jackson County prosecutor.

NO TREE TAX

On November 9, we learned that the Obama administration had decided to promote the sale of fresh Christmas trees by imposing a 15-cent tax on them (the tax was being levied to pay for a PR campaign). We immediately put out a sarcastic news release “supporting” the idea. Later that day, the tax plan was revoked.

We maintained that President Barack Obama’s Agriculture Department got it right when it started to explore new ways to prop up the dying fresh Christmas tree industry. “Taxation, of course, is always the hands-down favorite way for the federal government to do business,” said Bill Donohue, “and no

president in American history has shown a greater fondness for taxation than Obama.”

Donohue continued, “The Catholic League heartily endorses this tax: the Christmas tree is a secular symbol, and by taxing them, we will have less of them. But our support is qualified. Obama would be wise to support a tax subsidy for nativity scenes. That would spur sales, thus endearing him to Christians who distrust him, while driving secularists over the cliff. Sounds like a win-win.” Donohue closed by saying, “Just think of it as a stimulus for keeping ‘Christ in Christmas.’”

The Obama administration scrapped its Christmas tree tax after it was reported that many critics had “derided” the idea. Count the Catholic League among them. But since the administration said it was only “delaying” the tax, look for it to be back next year.

LOOKING FOR DIRT

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

William Donohue

In 1968, David Horowitz became the editor of *Ramparts*, which at that time was far and away the most influential anti-American, left-wing magazine in the nation. He was well trained for the job: a self-described “Red Diaper Baby,” his secular Jewish parents were both members of the Communist Party. But midway through the 1970s, he began having “second thoughts,” and indeed co-hosted a conference by that name in 1987. The time had come for Horowitz to change; he has been a force in the conservative movement ever since (and friendly to the Catholic League).

Horowitz has said many times that the problem with conservatives is that they are too nice. Unlike leftists, they are not consumed with power. They go to work; attend church; play golf; go to baseball games; attend high school reunions; volunteer; donate to charities, etc. In short, they are the heart and soul of America. They try to be ethical, but sometimes fail. Left-wing fanatics fail all the time, and that's because they think ethics is for chumps.

The fact is that the foes of the Catholic Church don't use the same ethical playbook we do. As the Marxists have long said, "the truth is that which serves the cause." Winning matters—nothing more. This has been on grand display recently with the non-stop attacks on the Catholic Church, and no one has felt this more than Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop Robert Finn.

I first learned about Bishop Finn last year in Philadelphia at a Catholic Leadership Conference. It was my good fortune to meet Jack Smith, editor of *The Catholic Key*, the diocesan newspaper under Bishop Finn. Jack spoke for quite a while about how much he admired his bishop, convincing me that he was working for a very special person. So when the foes of the Church targeted Finn, it was easy to rally to his side. One of his foes is the *Kansas City Star*.

The *Kansas City Star* is one of the most ideologically corrupt newspapers in the nation. Indeed, it operates more like a left-wing tabloid than a respectable newspaper. It can do so largely because it has no competition in the area, especially in the print medium: there is no other newspaper of any size nearby. Moreover, local television stations often take their stories from what the *Star* dishes out each morning.

Here's a little background. A few years back, the *Star* went ballistic when Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline sought information on Planned Parenthood's abortion mills; he was searching for evidence of their failure to report cases of

child rape (to this day, the *Star* still condemns Kline for his inquiry). This is the same newspaper that singled out priests twelve years ago for a survey looking to determine how many had HIV or AIDS. Actually, it was looking for dirt.

When I told Jack in the latter part of October that I was submitting an ad to the *Star* exposing how the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) and its lawyers were seeking to take down Bishop Finn, he told me I shouldn't be surprised if they turned it down. He was right. They are just that corrupt.

Working with the *Star* is SNAP and its lawyers. We previously detailed our report on what happened at the SNAP conference held last July; they refer to the Church as the "evil institution." Jeffrey Anderson, who carries a truck load of dirt, has been busy filing suit, but most of the Kansas City work is being done by Rebecca Randles, one of his students.

In the first six months since Rev. Shawn Ratigan was publicly named by the Diocese, Randles filed almost two dozen lawsuits on behalf of her newly discovered "victims." The quotation marks are deliberate: I don't believe her. Are we to believe that these persons have come forth, many of whom are now claiming that their "repressed memory" has suddenly awakened, right after the Diocese called the cops on Ratigan? Is there something in the water in Kansas City, Missouri that accounts for this phenomenon? After all, there has been no burst of "repressed memory" cases in Kansas City, Kansas. Or elsewhere.

Four years ago it was reported by a team of psychiatrists and literary scholars that "repressed memory" was a cultural invention, having no basis in science. They examined the writings of literary figures prior to the modern era looking for discussions of this condition, but could not find any. By contrast, what we call paranoia and schizophrenia today were clearly seen as psychological maladies by fictional writers throughout the ages; but there was no such exposition of what

we call “repressed memory.”

Harvard professors Dr. Harrison Pope and Dr. James I. Hudson led the inquiry, and the team’s findings only confirmed their skepticism of this alleged reality. Yet the courts continue to give it credence, allowing rapacious lawyers like Randles to exploit it. Even more disturbing, no other institution in society has had “repressed memory” cases thrown at it with greater regularity than the Catholic Church. To put it differently, when they can’t find new dirt on the Church, they just invent it.

Bishop Finn is a good man. Keep him in your prayers. Merry Christmas!

On pp. 4-6, we have listed, in chronological order, our response to the attacks on Bishop Robert Finn. We had more to say beyond these releases, but they were mostly comments about our mass mailing to Kansas City, Missouri groups. We have not changed the tense of the verbs—we want you to see exactly how we handled this.

BISHOP FINN DESERVES BETTER

We will have a lot to say about Bishop Finn and his accusers, but for now, we want to make it clear that we stand by him without reservation. Why? Not because he is a bishop, but because nothing he did deserves the kind of reaction against him that is emanating from many quarters. Shortly, we will lay out the details of our support for him. Keep in mind the following:

Many strange photos (crotch-focused) of young girls, fully clothed, were found on the laptop of a priest last December;

one showed a girl naked. Though Bishop Finn never saw it, he was told of it. The result? The picture was described to a police officer the next day, and an attorney for the Diocese was shown the photo. It was determined that the photo, while disturbing, did not constitute child pornography. The priest learns that they're on to him; he attempts suicide; he almost dies; he recovers; he is sent for treatment; he is not considered to be a pedophile, but is said to be suffering from depression; he is then placed in a spot away from children; he is subjected to restrictions. After violating the restrictions, the cops are called; more damaging photos are then found.

This account is quite different from what is being said in the media. To take one example, an editorial in the *New York Times* said that Finn "knew of the photos last December but did not turn them over to the police until May." This makes it sound as if Finn knew about hundreds of photos of child pornography and did nothing about it. In fact, there was *one* photo, *that was not sexual in nature*, that was initially found. Moreover, a police officer and an attorney were notified immediately. Later, after the priest proved to be recalcitrant, the police were contacted.

KANSAS CITY STAR vs. CATHOLIC CHURCH

We recently contacted *the Kansas City Star* about running a full-page ad on October 30. The ad is a critical statement about the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), and their attorney friend, Rebecca Randles. The ad was written because we strongly defend Bishop Finn against the politically

motivated attacks on him.

Everything looked good to go: on October 25, we submitted the ad and gave them our credit card information to pay the \$25,000 fee. On October 26, we received an e-mail saying, "The Publisher has respectfully declined and did not share the details as to why."

We have done newspaper ads for decades, especially for the *New York Times*. It is common practice to fact-check an ad, asking for documentation to substantiate something in it, but never have we been turned down, much less *without explanation*.

We know what's going on. The *Kansas City Star* has long been in bed with SNAP, just as SNAP is in bed with attorneys like Randles and her mentor, Jeffrey Anderson. All are decidedly anti-Catholic. To wit: on September 25, the *Star* ran a 2223-word front-page Sunday news story on SNAP. To say it was a puff piece would be an understatement. The Church has never been treated with such kid gloves.

We'll start blanketing the Kansas City, Missouri area with copies of the ad that the *Kansas City Star* doesn't want readers to see; no secular or religious organization will escape us. They can impose a gag rule on us in their newspaper, but they cannot control us. Our campaign against the *Star* and SNAP will be on-going.

SUICIDE OF THE KANSAS CITY STAR

Our news release on the decision by the *Kansas City Star* to reject the ad exposing the phony victims' group, SNAP, and its

attack on Bishop Finn, reached approximately 200 employees of the *Star* and about 300 media outlets in the Kansas City, Missouri area; another 1500 media outlets around the nation received it. All will continue to receive our releases on this subject.

Much of the chatter has focused on the wisdom of turning down \$25,000. Consider the following: In June 2008: 10 percent of the *Star's* workforce is cut; Sept. 2008: 65 employees accept buyouts or are laid off; Nov. 2008: 50 employees are let go; March 2009: 15 percent of the workforce is cut; Aug. 2009: More buyouts are offered; one-week unpaid furlough is instituted; Jan. 2010: another dozen are terminated; May 2010: another dozen get their pink slips; Sept. 2010: another dozen are booted; Jan. 2011: 20 others are shown the door.

Ten years ago, there were 1,869 employees at the *Star*; today there are 840. Given these data, turning down \$25K must mean the *Star* is more concerned about getting Bishop Finn than it is the welfare of its own workers. Looks like the *Star* is suicidal.

The McClatchy Company owns the *Star*, and its advertising revenue is down 10 percent between the third quarter 2010 and the third quarter 2011. The Board of Directors will receive this release, as will the three major investors: John Paulson, Stephen C. Mildenhall and Andrew Feldstein. They are not going to be happy.

KANSAS CITY STAR AND ANTI-

CATHOLICISM

The SNAP-*Star* alliance against Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop Robert Finn is a natural: both are anti-Catholic. As evidence of SNAP's bigotry, see our report on its July conference. As for the *Star*, consider its infamous 1999 "survey" of priests.

Twelve years ago, the *Star* did a survey of priests across the nation. They were asked such things as: identify your sexual orientation; discuss whether you have HIV or AIDS; assess how the Church is handling this issue; and explain whether the Church should change its teachings on celibacy and homosexuality. *No other religious or secular institution was surveyed.* In response, we sent our own survey to a random sample of *Star* employees, asking questions about their sexual orientation and disease status. At least we admitted that our "survey" was a joke—the *Star* actually thought itself serious.

The purpose of the *Star's* survey was to report that HIV or AIDS was rampant among priests and that the Church's response was heartless. Expecting that most would disagree with celibacy and the Church's teachings on homosexuality, the end game would then be realized: this is how the *Star* expected to manipulate public opinion, putting pressure on the Church to change its teachings.

What a disappointment. Almost 100 percent (99.1) said they either did not have HIV or AIDS, or did not think they had it. Two-thirds said the Church was "caring and compassionate" about priests with HIV or AIDS, and only four percent were critical. Yet virtually *all* the remarks printed in the *Star* came from priests who were critical of the Church! Angered by the results, the *Star* showed even more contempt for privacy rights by combing the death certificates of deceased priests looking for dirt.

By any measure, the *Star* showed its bias, as well as its

necromania.

KANSAS CITY STAR-SNAP ALLIANCE

Respectable newspapers are expected to be objective, and not become the voice box of activist organizations. This is not true of the *Kansas City Star*; its relationship with SNAP is incestuous.

To take the latest example, on November 1, Judge James Dale Youngs of the Circuit Court of Jackson County, Missouri, dismissed a case brought by SNAP lawyer Rebecca Randles against the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph; Randles never even bothered to respond to the motion to dismiss. But the real story here is why senior *Star* reporter Judy L. Thomas, who wrote about the initial lawsuit, never told readers about this development.

When this suit was initially filed on March 8, the *Star* ran a story by Thomas about it on p. 7. And guess who announced it? SNAP. So now that Randles and SNAP look foolish, or worse, why wasn't this reported? By the way, Thomas made reference to this case several times in the intervening months. Moreover, in the past three months, Thomas cited SNAP ten times in her stories. So why the cover-up about the motion to dismiss the lawsuit?

The editorial board of the *Star* has similarly been compromised. On May 21, its editorial on the Fr. Shawn Ratigan case cited SNAP's criticisms of the diocese. Ten days later, in another editorial, it once again favorably quoted SNAP. Perhaps most interesting was the editorial of June 4 that

called for Bishop Robert Finn to resign: one day before, in a news story which named SNAP, it just happened to say that “Some Catholics will gather today and call for the resignation of Bishop Robert Finn....” How cute. First have some local “Catholics” call for the bishop to resign, and then let the brave souls at the newspaper follow suit.

The *Star* is nothing more than an echo chamber for SNAP.

KANSAS CITY STAR IS IMPLODING

The *Star* is in free fall: for the first time since before World War II, its daily circulation has fallen below 200,000 (the Sunday circulation is only about 300,000). Circulation numbers are of particular concern to newspaper advertisers—it determines the rates they are charged.

Because we believe in transparency, and because the *Star* purports to believe in truth in advertising, we are writing to the CEO's of the *Star*'s biggest advertisers letting them know they may be paying too much for their ads. Those advertisers are: Target; Kohl's; Best Buy; Macy's; Dick's Sporting Goods; Dillard's; Wal-Mart; Cabela's; Sears; Verizon; and Sprint.

We will also let the big advertisers know that the data will only get worse. To be specific, between the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas and the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, there are approximately 1.5 million Catholics in the *Star*'s immediate readership area. Once they learn that the *Star* refused to run our ad blowing the whistle on the enemies of Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop Robert Finn, more will bail.

We are sharing the ad we wrote with all the CEO's. After all, they need to know why the *Star* is imploding so they can make

an informed decision on where to park their advertising dollars. And since the holiday season is fast approaching, what better time to reconsider their contract with the *Star*. Social justice demands no less.

MEET THE CHURCH-SUING LAWYERS

SNAP announces a lawsuit against the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. The diocese, headed by Bishop Finn, knows nothing about it. But attorney Rebecca Randles does: she coordinated the attack with SNAP. Virtually all the cases date back decades, and no one from the *Kansas City Star* questions any of it. This isn't an anomaly—it's the norm.

Randles got her start with Jeffrey Anderson, the most successful Church-shakedown lawyer in the nation. On June 2, they (and another attorney) sued Bishop Finn about a matter he had nothing to do with. Since then, Randles has been finding new "victims" at a record pace.

Randles and Anderson came together 20 years ago to represent David Clohessy (now SNAP's director). After watching the movie "Nuts" in 1988 he suddenly "remembered" being molested by a priest decades ago. The lawsuit failed because the statute of limitations had expired.

Randles then made history when she was the first attorney to file suit against a priest in Missouri. It was another "repressed memory" suit where the accuser suddenly recalls being molested decades ago. After first winning, an appeals court threw it out—the clock had run out on such claims. She vowed to push for a new strategy: she argued that the "trigger" for such claims should start when alleged victims "remember" when they were abused. In 2006, her dream came

true: the Missouri Supreme Court said that a guy who suddenly remembered being molested 30 years prior could sue. Ever since, the suits against the diocese have never stopped.

Both Anderson and Randles give generously to SNAP, and indeed Randles has been known to pressure her clients to fork over some of their settlement money to her friends. The *Star* knows all of this, yet it continues the cover-up.