

BISHOP ROBERT FINN RESIGNS

On April 21, Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop Robert Finn.

In 2012, Bishop Finn was found guilty of a misdemeanor for failing to report Fr. Shawn Ratigan to the authorities once he learned of sexually explicit images of minors on his computer. The Catholic League defended him against his critics, some of whom were vicious, and it is worth repeating why.

- In 2010, a computer technician found disturbing crotch-shot photos of girls fully clothed on Ratigan's computer; there was one naked photo of a non-sexual nature.
- Even though there was no complainant, a police officer and an attorney were contacted by diocesan officials. They both agreed that the single naked photo did not constitute pornography.
- After Ratigan attempted suicide, he was evaluated by a psychiatrist—at the request of Finn. Ratigan was diagnosed as depressed, but was not a pedophile.
- Finn put restrictions on Ratigan, which he broke. The diocese then contacted the authorities, though it had no legal mandate to do so.
- Finn ordered an independent investigation, even though there was no complainant.
- When it was found that Ratigan was again using a computer, an examination revealed hundreds of offensive photos.
- The Vicar General, Msgr. Robert Murphy, then called the cops (Finn was out of town).
- A week later Ratigan was arrested.

On the day Finn resigned, Bill Donohue was quoted by the Associated Press saying, *"He's a good man. No one called his office and complained specifically that their child was being*

abused. If he didn't give a damn, he could have ignored it completely and told everyone in his office to ignore it. He didn't. He called the authorities. The way he's been treated is simply not fair."

BIGOTED LAWYER SUSPENDED

On December 15, 2011, Bill Donohue filed a formal complaint with the Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility in St. Paul, Minnesota against attorney Naomi Isaacson for making a series of patently anti-Catholic remarks. The case was referred to the courts in Wisconsin, where Isaacson is also licensed. On March 20, 2015, the Supreme Court of Wisconsin suspended her for one year and ordered her to pay \$6,600 in court costs.

Below is an excerpt of Isaacson's bigoted comments that triggered the complaint:

- She called U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Nancy Dreher [who is not Catholic] "Popess Dreher" and "a secret Catholic Knight Witch Hunter."
- She called U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Dennis O'Brien a "dastardly Jesuit."
- She called the court-appointed bankruptcy trustee a "mindless numbnut [who] would follow church orders with a vengeance."
- She accused judges and trustees of conspiring to liquidate the company's assets "for pennies," saying the proceeds will go "to members of the Catholic Church."
- She referred to a contempt-of-court order by Judge Dreher, saying, "We may as well flush her papal bull order down the toilet."

- She said the court “is an arm of the church to force the minority to be converted or face the consequences just like during the Dark and Middle Ages.”
- She called one trustee “Grand Inquisitor.”
- She said Judge O’Brien converted the case to Chapter 7 “on papal orders.”
- She accused the Church of bringing illegal immigrants to America “so their population can outrun that of the Protestants and they can turn the country into another Spain.”
- She said: “The Catholic Church has millions of Jesuits working undercover around the country to fulfill the church’s agenda. They give orders, pull the strings, and their puppets like Nancy Dreher jump like zombies.”

Last September, the Catholic League succeeded in getting her equally anti-Catholic lawyer, Rebekah Nett, suspended for a year. Sweet justice. Former New York City Mayor Ed Koch, who supported our case, must be looking down from heaven with a smile.

OBAMA DISPARAGES CHRISTIANS

During the White House Easter breakfast, “On Easter,” President Obama said, “I do reflect on the fact that as a Christian, I am supposed to love. And I have to say that sometimes when I listen to less than loving expressions by Christians, I get concerned.”

Bill Donohue gets more than concerned when he hears President Obama denigrate Christians—no one can forget his swipe about them clinging to their guns or religion—he gets nauseous.

The president had a grand opportunity to say something timely

and urgent, such as the following: “I do reflect on the fact that as a Christian, I am supposed to love. This is not always easy, especially when Muslim barbarians single out Christians for execution in Kenya.”

A few weeks ago, Obama could not muster the courage to mention by name the religious affiliation of those who were chosen for execution—they are called Christians—but he has no problem letting the name Christian roll off his lips when it comes to disparaging them.

The reason why Obama did not mention Christians by name a few weeks ago is because he does not want to offend Muslims. The reason he mentioned Christians by name just recently is because he does not mind offending Christians. It’s just that simple, and just that sick.

CHRISTIAN BASHING MARKS EASTER SEASON

The following examples illustrate how the Easter season was marked by anti-Christianity:

- On April 6, Chris Hardwick used his Easter Monday Comedy Central show, “@Midnight,” to make a joke about Jesus’ resurrection: “Jesus woke up from a nap and now all sins have been wiped clean to make room for even more heinous ones. Whatever you did doesn’t matter so you can go out and be a d*** for another 365 days.”
- On Easter Sunday, the anti-Christian organization, Freedom From Religion Foundation, placed an ad in the *New York Times* arguing that religious liberty laws promote “hate.”

- On Holy Saturday, the *Washington Post* re-ran a Sally Quinn interview with James Carroll wherein he branded the Church anti-Semitic; she became an atheist at age 13 and then evolved into a “non-religious” person, and he is a Catholic-bashing ex-priest.
- On Good Friday, David Letterman joked about the pope’s physical, saying his weight gain may be a function of “a little too many Communion wafers.”
- On Holy Thursday, Letterman made ten jokes about the pope’s physical; all the comments were attributed to the attending physician. The joke listed as #1 was: “I know you don’t use it, but I still have to take a look at it.”

The animus against Christianity that is routinely expressed by the entertainment industry and the media is not without serious effect. How else to explain why we did not celebrate religious liberty during Holy Week? Instead, the discussion centered on how religious liberty is the enemy.

R.I. TEACHERS CAN OBSERVE GOOD FRIDAY

Teachers in Cranston, Rhode Island were successful in a lawsuit that they filed against the Cranston school district after being told classes would be held on Good Friday. As a result of the lawsuit, the school committee decided schools will be closed on Good Friday for the 2015-2016 school year. This comes after a recent court decision ruled that Rhode Island teachers could absent themselves from school to observe Good Friday.

Jewish teachers in Cranston are allowed to take off on Rosh

Hashanah and Yom Kippur, but originally, Catholics were required to teach on Good Friday. This didn't sit too well with Catholics, so on March 16 they sued. Now the edict, which was issued by school superintendent Judith Lundsten, has been overturned by court order.

The reasoning put forward by Lundsten is specious at best and obnoxious at worst. "Based on information and belief, Good Friday has no required services," she said. But it is not the business of government agents to assess holy days, or religious traditions, weighing them on their state scale. That is exactly what Lundsten did: she decided that because Catholics are not required to attend Good Friday services, they should not be allowed to go to Church services during the day.

Moreover, these same public school officials allowed Jews to take off Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah. Did they really think that their attempt to stiff Christians would not backfire?

According to the court decision, as long as teachers submitted their request by April 1, they could observe Good Friday, with impunity.

This issue should never have made its way to the courts. Cranston officials look enfeebled when they demand proof that Good Friday services are held at area churches. If they were practicing Christians, they wouldn't have to ask such a dumb question.

If the issue is satisfying the minimum number of school days that are required by state law—not an unreasonable issue—why shouldn't all traditional holidays, secular as well as religious, be considered for reevaluation? Why not propose to keep the schools open on Labor Day or Martin Luther King Day?

There was a time when people such as Cardinal John O'Connor had to plead with professional baseball not to have opening day on Good Friday. Now we've descended to such a low that

Catholic public school teachers have to fight for their right to attend liturgical services on Good Friday. What's next—requiring Catholic employees to bring a pastor's note proving they were in church?

KENNETH WHITEHEAD, R.I.P.

Long-time member of the Catholic League's board of directors, Kenneth Whitehead, died of cancer on April 16. He was a prolific author, activist, diplomat, government administrator, and linguist; he also translated many books from French and German to English.

Ken authored, or co-authored, 27 books, ranging in subject from the Second Vatican Council to Catholic higher education. His work on the Catholic Catechism, written with Msgr. Michael Wrenn, was a cogent response to the volume's critics. Whether discussing religious liberty or public policy, he never lacked for insight or courage. He also served as a diplomat in Rome, Lebanon, and Libya, and later as Assistant Secretary of Education in the Reagan administration.

As a board member of the Catholic League for over two decades, Ken authored 25 articles and book reviews for us; some were published in our monthly journal, *Catalyst*, and others were posted online. His scope was large: he provided a masterful review of the many books written by scholars who defended Pope Pius XII, and was just at home writing about ObamaCare. When asked to represent the Catholic League at Washington functions, he never turned us down.

Ken was a convert to the Catholic Church, and a brave and brilliant defender of the faith. He was also extremely kind and self-giving. To say he will be missed is an

understatement. He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Margaret, and their four sons.

GEORGIA LAWMAKERS SMEAR ARCHDIOCESE

The Georgia legislature recently passed a bill, the Hidden Predator Act, that would lift the statute of limitations for two years on civil suits filed against alleged sexual abusers. It is rightly being opposed by the Archdiocese of Atlanta, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations. The bill still has to be signed by the governor of Georgia.

As Catholics have seen over and over again, when state legislatures suspend the statute of limitations, they almost never apply to the public schools, even though that is where most of the molestation occurs. Georgia is no different. So we know what the agenda is.

One of the Georgia lawmakers who favors the bill is State Representative Jason Spencer. But he is not content to voice support for it—he has waged a bigoted anti-Catholic campaign against the Atlanta archdiocese. Recently, he repeatedly branded the archdiocese a “pro-child predator special interest group” that is part of the “child sexual predator lobby.”

Rep. Spencer is a Republican conservative pro-life legislator who belongs to a Christian interdenominational church. But his Christian affiliation obviously does not stop him from promoting anti-Catholicism.

Rep. Spencer should apologize to Catholics. He should also be sanctioned by his colleagues for his bigoted remarks.

Accordingly, the Catholic League contacted Spiro Amburn, Chief of Staff for House Speaker David Ralston and asked for Speaker Ralston's leadership on this matter. The League encouraged all Catholics to do the same.

WANT TO HELP VETERANS?

Bill Donohue on Battle Buds: "There are few civic duties more important than helping veterans reintegrate into society, and there is no organization that provides greater assistance than Battle Buds. Founded by Tim O'Connor and Peter Gaudet, this supervised mentorship program helps returning veterans get anchored and find needed services, thus enabling them to contribute to society; it's a win-win for all of us."

For more information, see battlebuds.org. To donate, contact buds@battlebuds.org.

MEDIA CREATE STORY ABOUT POPE AND GAYS

On March 3 and 5, the Vatican released statements on the pope's trip to two Italian cities. It noted that he would have lunch with prisoners at "Giuseppe Salvia," a detention center in Poggioreale. The Vatican's website also mentioned the visit. So what's the big deal?

The media have flagged this as a sit-down with gays. In fact,

90 prisoners from three local prisons were chosen by lottery, and ten of them were selected, by chance, from a unit that houses gays and transgendered men, along with those who have AIDS. Here's the spin:

"Pope to Meet LGBT and HIV Prisoners on Visit to Naples" (Crux)

"Pope Will Break Bread with Gay, Transgendered Inmates" (Huffington Post)

"Francis to Lunch With Prisoners, Including Those Who Are Transgender, Gay, or Have AIDS" (*National Catholic Reporter*)

"Report: Francis to Have Lunch with Gay, Transgender Prisoners in Naples" (Patheos)

"Gay and Transgender Inmates to Lunch with Pope Francis During Prison Visit" (Religion News Service)

"Pope Francis to Dine with Gay and Transgender Inmates in Naples Prison" (*Time*)

"Even 10 Transsexuals Have Lunch with the Pope in Poggioreale" (Vatican Insider)

"Gay and Transgender Inmates Invited to Lunch with Pope Francis during Prison Visit" (*Washington Post*)

Leave it to our gay-crazy media to create a gay-happy story.

MOCKING THE POPE, KIDS AND

BRUCE JENNER

A few weeks ago, Comedy Central aired a roast of Justin Bieber that was recorded earlier. Comedian and roast-master Jeff Ross arrived on the red carpet dressed as the pope; he was wearing a white robe, a mitre, and carried a staff with Bieber's face on it. He was accompanied by two women dressed as sexy nuns.

Red-carpet host Sarah Tiana engaged Ross in a conversation, and at one point said to him, "Have a great time at the show, you look amazing, you're going to be hilarious." To which Ross replied, "Bless you, Sarah, congratulations on all of your abortions."

The night before, Jamie Foxx cracked a joke about Bruce Jenner. "We got some groundbreaking performances here, too, tonight. We got Bruce Jenner, who will be here doing some musical performances. He's doing a his-and-her duet all by himself."

Making fun of the pope, and joking about children killed in the womb, is standard stuff on Comedy Central, which is why Ross will not pay a price for his antics. Making fun of Bruce Jenner is taboo, which is why Foxx was blasted on social media.

This is America 2015. It's okay to mock the pope, treat serial abortion as a laughing matter, but not crack a joke about a man who hates being a man.

What is the connecting thread? The Catholic Church teaches that life begins at conception and that God created man and woman. Our cultural elites believe that human nature is a fiction, which is why they reject the scientifically grounded tenets of Catholicism.