

BIGOTED MINISTER REBUKED; GOV. PERRY BREAKS TIES

On October 8, Republican presidential candidate Gov. Rick Perry spoke at the Values Voter Summit, a conference sponsored by Tony Perkins' Family Research Council; there was an array of mostly evangelical speakers. Introducing him was Rev. Robert Jeffress, a Dallas pastor. Following the event, Jeffress made anti-Mormon comments. Then it was revealed that he had previously made anti-Catholic remarks. That's when we got involved.

Jeffress first got into trouble, tainting Perry in the process, when he spoke derisively about the Mormon faith of Mitt Romney; he said "Mormonism is a cult." Two days later, he chided Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism as "false religions." His remarks about Catholicism, however, were the most offensive.

In 2010, Jeffress said the Catholic Church was the outgrowth of a "corruption" called the "Babylonian mystery." He continued, "Much of what you see in the Catholic Church today doesn't come from God's word. It comes from that cult-like pagan religion. Isn't that the genius of Satan?"

Bill Donohue replied, "Where did they find this guy? When theological differences are demonized by the faithful of any religion—never mind by a clergyman—it makes a mockery of their own religion. Rev. Jeffress is a poster boy for hatred, not Christianity."

Veteran reporter Wayne Barrett subsequently called Donohue. By this time, Perry had distanced himself from Jeffress for his anti-Mormon remarks, so Barrett asked Donohue if he should do so again. Donohue said it would be wise for Perry to break all ties with him.

Donohue then went on "Hardball" with Chris Matthews to discuss

this issue on Oct. 13. Donohue made it clear that his beef was with Jeffress, and that he has good relations with many evangelicals.

That night, following the intervention of Catholic activist Deal Hudson, Perry called Donohue at home. They spoke candidly about the Jeffress incident, and related matters. Perry was sincere: nothing that the pastor said about Catholicism represents his views.

The next day, Donohue released a statement saying, "I very much appreciate Gov. Perry's interest in getting this issue behind him in a responsible manner. He succeeded. Case closed."

Just a few days before Jeffress started the controversy, Donohue was in Washington, D.C. meeting with prominent evangelicals like Perkins, Tim Wildmon, Dr. Richard Land and others. The goodwill generated there paid dividends for everyone a week later.

It seems not a presidential campaign goes by without a role for the Catholic League. And we still have a year to go. Stay tuned.

SUPER BOWL FIASCO?

When we learned that the NFL was weighing a decision to invite pop singer Madonna to perform at the 2012 Super Bowl, Bill Donohue pressed officials to drop the idea.

In 2004, the NFL invited 'N Sync's JC Chasez to sing during halftime of the Pro Bowl game. When Chasez said he was going to sing his latest single, "Some Girls (Dance with Women),"

the NFL objected, citing the sexual lyrics that may offend viewers (at the time, the NFL was still receiving flak over the Justin Timberlake-Janet Jackson Super Bowl controversy).

The NFL then asked Chazez to sing “Blowin’ Me Up (With Her Love)” instead. Chazez agreed to do so. Then the NFL decided that the singer had to drop the lyrics “horny” and “naughty” from the song. Again, Chazez acceded to the request.

The NFL then reconsidered the propriety of having Chazez sing altogether, and decided to withdraw the invitation (he was offered to sing the national anthem, but declined).

Donohue also wrote to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell explaining why the NFL cannot expect Catholics to be treated any different. For decades, Madonna has blatantly offended Christians, especially Catholics. The offensive lyrics, lewd behavior and misappropriation of sacred symbols are reason enough not to have her perform. Worse, she has repeatedly mocked the heart and soul of Christianity: Jesus, Our Blessed Mother, the Eucharist and the Crucifixion.

No decision had been made when we went to press.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN THE CROSSHAIRS

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

William Donohue

“We have been in the throes of the culture war for the past half-century, but never has it been more imperative to buckle your seat belts until now. Quite frankly, the culture war is

about to explode.” I wrote those words in *Catalyst* after Barack Obama won the 2008 presidential election. My predications are not always right, but this one was spot on.

“Please don’t misunderstand me—I am not blaming Barack Obama for all of what is about to happen,” I said. So who was I speaking about? “Many work in Hollywood, the media, the universities, the arts and in the non-profit sectors of the economy. They are fundamentally unhappy with themselves, God, nature, the U.S. and Western civilization.” These secular modernists saw in Obama’s victory, I pointed out, “a golden opportunity to wage war on traditionalists.” That they have.

Nearly three years into the Obama administration, it is clear that religious liberty is in the crosshairs of the culture war: on one side are the so-called progressives, assisted by the weight of the federal government; on the other side are the traditionalists, absent government assistance. As is often the case, most of the issues touch on sexuality: abortion, contraception and same-sex marriage.

A culture war cannot be mitigated without a modicum of respect for the conscience rights of all parties to it. Obama won the election fair and square and he is entitled to staff the executive branch with people of his own choosing. But he is not entitled to run roughshod over our “First Freedom”—the right of Americans to exercise conscience rights, especially those liberties grounded in our Judeo-Christian tradition.

On May 17, 2009, President Obama pledged his support for conscience rights before the graduating class at the University of Notre Dame. Five days later, Cardinal Francis George of Chicago, then the head of the bishops’ conference, released a public statement commending the president. Unfortunately, Obama’s policies never matched his rhetoric. Want proof? During the debate over Obamacare, we were told over and over again that conscience rights would be respected. It is now painfully obvious that we were had.

Just read this issue of *Catalyst* alone to find evidence of the mounting threats to religious liberty that are being waged by the Obama administration. And because the “progressives” have been energized beyond the Beltway, states with highly liberal-left populations have waged their own assault on conscience rights.

There is something refreshing about candor, even when it hurts, but don't expect intellectual honesty from these people. They will tell you how much they love diversity, but “live and let live” is not what they believe: they believe in ramming their politics down our throats.

The Obama administration, citing a religious exemption, defends itself by saying it is not true that Catholic healthcare providers are being forced to allow contraceptive and sterilization services. But the exemption is a fraud: to qualify, Catholic institutions must hire and service mostly Catholics. Of course, if they did that, they would no longer be worthy of the name Catholic, and would indeed be branded as bigots by the very people offering up this functionally meaningless exemption.

In other words, all that talk we heard about how Obamacare would not violate religious liberty was flatulent. But the good news is that some of those who trusted the Obama administration are now pressing it to make good on its initial pledge. Sr. Carol Keehan, president of the Catholic Health Association, and Father John Jenkins, president of Notre Dame, have expressed their concerns about the disrespect shown for conscience rights.

As disturbing as anything is the determination of the Obama administration to do away with the legal provision called the “ministerial exception.” This provision protects religious institutions in its hiring practices, keeping the government properly at bay when it comes to making decisions affecting such things as criteria for the clergy. In a case before the

U.S. Supreme Court, which involves a teacher at a Lutheran school who was relieved of her duties because of an extended disability, the Obama administration did not seek some narrow ruling which respected the overarching religious right; rather, it took the occasion to excise this civil liberty altogether.

Fortunately, the lawyer who represented the Obama administration was so extreme in her undisguised contempt for religious liberty that it appears to have backfired. In the oral arguments that were recently completed, Obama appointee Justice Elena Kagan took the attorney to task for her extremism. While the case will not be decided until next year, it looks like the Obama administration's secular zealotry may have boomeranged.

Another issue that is fraught with religious-liberty implications is homosexual marriage. Already, the conscience rights of those who object to this absurdity are being trampled upon in states that have legalized this condition. Thus does it show that opt-out clauses are not satisfactory to this one-size-fits-all crowd. They like mandates.

Look for this fight to go down to the wire.

ROLLING STONE GETS UGLY: VILE HIT ON PHILLY ARCHDIOCESE

The following article was written by Bill Donohue in response to a recent attack on the Catholic Church published in Rolling Stone magazine:

The sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church provides grist

for the mill to those who harbor an animus against it, so a certain amount of cheap shots are to be expected. But what was printed in the September 15 edition of *Rolling Stone* was not the typical below-the-belt attack: it represents a new low in yellow journalism.

The author of "The Catholic Church's Secret Sex-Crime Files," Sabrina Rubin Erdely, is not a religion reporter; she writes mostly about health issues. But she knows how to smear, and knows how to exploit stereotypes. As we will see, she is also dishonest

Erdely's article focuses on the problems in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Three grand juries have yielded a great deal of material on alleged instances of clergy sexual abuse, and much of the attention has centered on Msgr. William Lynn. It is alleged that he played a key role in covering up crimes for his superiors, and it is Erdely's contention that the past three archbishops of Philadelphia, Justin Cardinal Rigali, Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua and John Cardinal Krol, allowed priestly sexual abuse to continue with impunity. Lynn, along with two priests, one ex-priest, and one former lay schoolteacher, are scheduled to stand trial next year on these matters.

Before addressing Erdely's article, it is important to discuss several facts she does not mention. Beginning in 2003, 61 cases of priestly misconduct were examined by the archdiocese. Twenty four were dismissed because the accusations could not be substantiated. Of the 37 remaining cases, three priests were suspended immediately following the grand jury report that was released earlier this year; 21 additional priests were subsequently suspended, leaving 13 unaccounted for. Of the 13, eight were found not to have a credible accusation against them; one has been on leave for some time; two are incapacitated and no longer in ministry; two more belong to religious orders outside the archdiocese.

This means that no credible accusation was made against the majority of the priests (the initial 24 plus the eight newly absolved, or 32 of 61). Moreover, *none* of the 24 who are currently suspended has been found guilty of anything. To top things off, the charges against them include such matters as “boundary issues” and “inappropriate behavior,” terms so elastic as to indict anyone. Erdely, of course, never mentions any of this, because to do so would get in the way of her “priests-are-rapists” theme.

As with any form of prejudice, there are staples that are commonly employed by bigoted writers. Anti-Catholics, for instance, like to play on the stereotype that the Church operates in secret, as a top-down organization, run by Rome. True to form, not including the title of Erdely’s piece, the term “secret” appears 16 times in her article. The Church is also branded a “rigid hierarchy” (as opposed to one that is “nimble”?); it also sports a “vertical framework” (never mind that it is structurally impossible for any organization to have a “horizontal” one). This is the kind of melodramatic language that is important to Erdely’s agenda; it invites the reader to think the worst about the Church.

Msgr. Lynn’s alleged “conspiracy,” we are told, was “encouraged by his superiors—an unbroken chain of command stretching all the way to Rome.” Nowhere in her article does Erdely even attempt to demonstrate the veracity of this outlandish claim. She simply drops it at the beginning of her piece, planting the seed she wants to sow: the pope is the ultimate bad guy. One paragraph later, without a trace of evidence, she says the problems in Ireland happened “with tacit approval from the Vatican.” Later, she quotes an ex-priest to the effect that the entire abuse issue will eventually be shown to “unravel all the way to Rome.”

This is vintage Catholic bashing. Every problem in the Catholic Church is traceable to the pope. According to this vision of reality, the Holy Father knows what the priests are

doing from Boston to Bombay. More than that, they are merely carrying out his secretive and palpably devious commands.

Now if someone said that the president of the United States, as the Commander-in-Chief, knows what American troops are doing from Alaska to Afghanistan, and should be held responsible for their misconduct, we'd think he was mad. But it is considered acceptable, in certain circles, to play the pope-is-omnipresent card, and get away with it. When placed alongside his alleged omnipotence, what we have is a caricature of the pope that is suitable for science fiction. Or *Rolling Stone*.

One of Erdely's goals is to get the reader to hate Msgr. Lynn. She does this sometimes by playing with words. Lynn didn't just go to the seminary and become a priest. No, the seminary he attended is a "stately" campus (as opposed to the more pedestrian type), with "soaring" chapels (in contrast to ones with a flat roof?). It was there that this "friendly, overweight boy" with an "acne-scarred face" experienced "military-style indoctrination," a form of "brainwashing." Later, of course, the happy-fat-ugly kid who had been brainwashed would take his "solemn oath of obedience" and become a priest.

Erdely's description of the priesthood is not a reflection of her Jewishness—Jews have written excellent works on the Catholic Church—it is a reflection of her stupidity. "The goal of the priesthood is a lofty one: a man placed on a pedestal for his community to revere, an *alter Christus*—'another Christ'—who can literally channel the power of Jesus and help create the perfect society intended by God." There are so many flaws in this sentence that Erdely would find no relief in repairing to *Catholicism for Dummies*; it assumes an elementary understanding of the subject.

The article makes much of matters that are unexceptional. Erdely says Msgr. Lynn followed the "unspoken rule" when

dealing with accusations of abuse, and this meant never calling the police.

Now anyone who knows anything about this issue knows that *no organization*, secular or religious, ever did anything different. From the teaching establishment to the mainline Protestant denominations, these matters were routinely dealt with through therapy and referral; internal sanctions existed, but calling the cops was not considered proper (many in the Orthodox Jewish community *still* insist on treating these issues internally).

Similarly, Erdely finds reason to hammer Msgr. Lynn for allowing an accused priest to resign for "health reasons," when, as Erdely correctly says, Msgr. John Gillespie left because of more serious matters. She is right to criticize Lynn, but she leaves the impression that what he did was unconventional. Just recently, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg lied to the public about the reason why his Deputy Mayor Stephen Goldsmith resigned. The mayor not only drew little flak, he refused to apologize (Goldsmith did not resign because he did a lousy job policing the effects of a winter snow storm—he quit because he was arrested for beating his wife). While it is fair to say that this doesn't justify Lynn's behavior, it is not fair to act as if Lynn were some kind of freak.

Quoting studies that back up an author's position is commonplace, played by partisans on all sides, but Erdely doesn't do just that: she manages to distort the truth by elevating the status of authors she approves of, and concealing the identity of authors whose work she dislikes. For example, she refers to a dated study from 1990 by Richard Sipe, an embittered ex-monk, on the subject of celibacy. She refers to Sipe as a psychologist who found that only half of all priests practice celibacy. While no one can say for certain what the real figure is, the truth of the matter is that Sipe does not hold a Ph.D. in psychology; he is a mental

health counselor.

On the other hand, she refers to a study published this year on the subject of clergy sex abuse, saying it was funded by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. She never mentions who conducted the study, namely, professors from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Nor does she disclose that the professors have unequivocally said that the bishops had absolutely nothing to do with either its methodology or its findings.

Worse, Erdely implies that the bishops were up to something sinister. "To lower the number of clergy classified as 'pedophiles,' the report redefines 'puberty' as beginning at age 10—and then partially blames the rise in child molesting on the counterculture of the 1960s." She gets it all wrong.

Actually, the authors set the age of puberty at eleven, not ten, though they would not have been wrong had they done so: the American Academy of Pediatrics uses the age of ten, and many reputable health sources say the onset of puberty begins at the age of nine. Erdely wants us to believe that puberty begins much later, and that is because her goal—like that of so many of the Church's critics—is to deflect blame away from those who are, in fact, responsible for most of the molestation, namely homosexuals.

As for the role of the counterculture, the John Jay social scientists correctly cited the libertine culture in which the sexual revolution took place. Moreover, the timeline of the abuse scandal, 1965-1985, is indeed a reflection—not a justification—of the collapse of standards. In this regard, New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan got it right when he said that the scandal is over. Indeed, it's been over for roughly a quarter century. In short, it is Erdely, not Dolan, who is wrong on this issue.

All through the article, Erdely uses unnamed sources to make

her points, thus making it impossible to validate her work. Two alleged victims, "James" and "Billy," are worth a second look.

Fr. Edward Avery is implicated in both cases. Regarding "James," Avery admits to fondling him when he was 18; "James" says the fondling began when he was 15. Either way, Avery is a disgrace, but this case raises an issue that must be addressed: why did so many of the males who claim victim status allow themselves to be abused when they were teenagers, or even older? This is said not to exculpate guilty priests, but it is said to question the accounts of many "victims." Surely an 18-year-old is capable of rebuffing unwanted advances.

No matter, Cardinal Bevilacqua ordered an investigation of Avery in June 2003, and his successor, Cardinal Rigali, removed the priest from ministry that December. In 2005, Rigali asked the Vatican to remove him altogether, and in 2006 Pope Benedict XVI had him defrocked. None of this timeline is mentioned by Erdely; to do so would get in the way of her goal of smearing the cardinals.

Those who want to stick it to the Church like to offer a graphic depiction of the alleged sex acts that priests reportedly engaged in with their victims. Catholics like Maureen Dowd and Chris Matthews have played this card with precision, but they are no match for Erdely. She treats the *Rolling Stone* readers to some of the most salacious renderings imaginable, drawing from the grand jury testimony of "Billy," a man who claims he was worked over by two priests and one lay teacher, beginning when he was 10.

The grand jury testimony of "Billy" tells us about some key items not mentioned by Erdely. "Billy" called the Philadelphia Archdiocese on January 30, 2009, to say he was abused by the three men when he was 10 and 11. He spoke to a victims assistance coordinator, Louise Hagner, offering a basic

description of what allegedly happened. He said he did not want to get into any of the details, saying pointedly that he planned to sue the archdiocese.

What happened next is what any good investigator would have done: Hagner followed up on "Billy's" terse complaint, seeking more information. When Hagner and another staff member went to "Billy's" house for more information, he initially balked, but then agreed to meet them outside by their car. At that point he got graphic. But was his account true? This question must be raised because "Billy" admitted that when he made these comments he was flying high on heroin.

A defense lawyer who learns that his client made a highly explicit accusation while higher than a kite will obviously ask him to repeat his story when sober. But should he be believed? A separate, but positively critical issue, is why Erdely never told her readers that "Billy" admitted to being on heroin when he made his sensational claims.

Erdely is similarly irresponsible in her discussion of Daniel Neill. She writes that he was abused by Fr. Joseph Gallagher, and that his account was found wanting by the archdiocesan review board that investigated his case. He killed himself in 2009. Sounds awful, until we get all the facts, that is.

In 1980, Neill complained that Fr. Gallagher fondled him when he was an altar boy at St. Mark's in Bristol, Pennsylvania. His accusation was deemed not credible by the principal of the school, and so the case was dismissed. Moreover, the boy's parents did not sue the school.

Fast forward to 2007. Neill, knowing that a grand jury had been impaneled to look into old cases, decided to report his alleged abuse to the Philadelphia Archdiocese. Not surprisingly, the investigators could not substantiate an uncorroborated accusation of an alleged act of abuse that occurred 27 years earlier, and so they dismissed the case. In

July 2008, Neill was notified of the decision, and a year later, in June 2009, he killed himself. In April 2011, after hooking up with the most notorious Church-suing lawyer in the nation, Jeffrey Anderson, his family sued the archdiocese, blaming it for the suicide. None of this is mentioned by Erdely.

Here are some other unpleasant facts that she decided to omit. The grand jury report says that Neill's account was based on "the corroboration of other witnesses." Wrong. There was no corroboration by anyone. While the report says there were a few altar boys who said that they, like Neill, had discussed masturbation in the confessional, "none of them said they were molested by Fr. Gallagher."

More important, the report never said that even one of these friends was witness to—or even heard about—the alleged abuse. And indeed the only person Neill said he discussed his travails with at the time was the priest's sister. Why he chose only her is not known, but what is known is that the grand jury reported that she was mentally retarded. But don't expect to learn any of this by reading *Rolling Stone*.

Finally, there is the matter of the District Attorney who started the grand jury investigations in the first place, Lynne Abraham. Erdely mentions her role, but only in the most positive terms. Here is what the reader was not told.

Abraham launched her investigations into wrongdoing in the Philadelphia Archdiocese ten years ago. From the very beginning, she knew full well that she would come up empty: the matters she probed fell outside the statute of limitations. So why press the issue? Her goal was to indict in the court of public opinion, allowing uncontested grand jury testimonies to affect the reputation of the Church. Everything she did was fodder for a new round of hearings and condemnations.

What is not generally known is that it was absolutely unethical for Abraham to focus her exclusive attention on the Church, acting as if no other secular or religious organization had any track record of concealing the sexual abuse of minors. Why was it unethical? Because that was not her charge. On March 31, 2011, I sent a letter in the overnight mail to Abraham, the text of which appears below:

“In the Grand Jury report of September 26, 2001 (First Judicial District, Criminal Trial Division), it says that the Grand Jury was charged ‘to investigate the sexual abuse of minors by individuals associated with religious organizations and denominations.’ You were the District Attorney at that time.

“Could you identify which ‘religious organizations and denominations’ you pursued, other than the Roman Catholic Church? It is important to the process that we ascertain accurate information.”

Abraham never replied. Is there any wonder why?

There has been wrongdoing—too much wrongdoing—by members of the Catholic clergy. Reporting on it is not a problem; selectively reporting on it is. Worse still are malicious distortions of the kind found in Erdely’s diatribe.

RELIGIOUS RIGHTS THREATENED

Catholics have been mobilized in great numbers to respond to imminent threats to religious liberty. The threats come mainly from government, with the Obama administration leading the way.

The president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan, announced in October the establishment of *the Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty*; Bridgeport Bishop William Lori will chair the committee. The Catholic League pledged its full support.

Bishop Lori knows first-hand how contemptuous government can be of religious liberty—he fought a prospective state takeover of the administrative affairs of the Catholic Church in Connecticut. Archbishop Dolan is also no novice: he has fought anti-Catholic bigotry for years. The Catholic League has worked with both bishops before, and has done so successfully.

The Department of Health and Human Services is seeking to force private healthcare providers to carry contraceptive and sterilization services; it also wants to force the USCCB's Migration and Refugee Services to provide "the full range of reproductive services." In addition, the federal government is seeking to force international relief programs to offer reproductive health services.

To show the seriousness of this issue, 20 national Catholic organizations signed a letter protesting the "preventive services" mandate that would force Catholic employers to pay for sterilization and contraceptives, including drugs that induce abortion. "As of now," the statement said, "a narrowly-written religious exemption to the rule would apply only to church institutions that hire and serve mostly Catholics."

Meanwhile the Department of Justice is attacking the Defense of Marriage Act, arguing that support for marriage is a form of bigotry. In a disturbing move, it is also attacking a religious liberty known as the ministerial exception; this right insulates religious employers from state encroachment.

At the state level, New York recently legalized gay marriage, providing a very narrow religious exemption; the Illinois Catholic Conference has been fighting for months to maintain

its policy on adoptive and foster care services; and the California Catholic Conference protested a state mandate to allow the controversial HPV vaccine Gardasil free of charge to young girls without parental consent.

At issue is the right of religions to practice their beliefs freely, without government coercion. That we should even have to fight to exercise our First Amendment rights is dismaying. The Catholic League has been voicing its objections to state encroachment on religion for many years, but only in recent times has it declared government to be the number-one threat.

Fortunately, those who belong to other religions are realizing what is at stake, and they have joined with us to fend off these threats. But we are being besieged on all sides, with powerful interests out to deny us our basic liberties. If they win, the cause of freedom is lost.

OBAMA v. RELIGION

In October, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on a case that involves the “ministerial exception,” a provision that bars the government from making employment decisions regarding a church’s ministers. The position articulated by Leandra R. Kruger, who represented the Obama administration, was the subject of a revealing series of exchanges with the Justices.

After Kruger dodged a pointed question by Chief Justice John Roberts on the specific religious nature of the case—all she would allow was that associational rights were involved—Justice Antonin Scalia pressed her even further: “That’s extraordinary. That’s extraordinary. We are talking here about the Free Exercise Clause and about the Establishment Clause, and you say they have no special

application?”

Later, Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan asked Kruger about this same issue. When Kruger indicated that the “ministerial exception” was not grounded in the First Amendment, Kagan, citing Scalia’s concern, said “I too find that amazing, that you think that the Free—neither the Free Exercise Clause nor the Establishment Clause has anything to say about a church’s relationship with its own employees.”

Jesus selected only males to be his apostles. Following suit, the Catholic Church selects only men to be its priests. No one has ever questioned this First Amendment right, until now: the Obama administration wants to gut the “ministerial exception” that allows religious institutions to exercise autonomy in their employment decisions.

What happened at the Supreme Court is the icing on the cake: after lying to the American people that Obamacare would not threaten the religious prerogatives of the Church—it now wants to force Catholic healthcare providers to offer sterilization and contraceptive services (abortion will be next)—it says the government should not be barred from policing the hiring policies of any church. Thus has Obama taken the culture war to new extremes.

“HANDCUFF THE POPE!”

Recently David Clohessy, national director of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), gave an interview with *Time* magazine. What he said was quite revealing.

Clohessy explained that it is SNAP’s goal to jail the pope: “We’re not naïve. We don’t think the Pope will be hauled off

in handcuffs next week or next month. But by the same token, our long-term chances are excellent.”

We were glad Clohessy bared the truth about SNAP. In August, we released a report on what happened at a recent SNAP conference, demonstrating how deep-seated and irrational their hatred is of all things Catholic.

When asked about our report, Clohessy told the Catholic weekly, *Our Sunday Visitor*, that “It just makes me incredibly sad and frustrated when some people assume the worst about survivors’ motives.”

After learning what SNAP and its allies said about the Catholic Church behind closed doors, we don’t need to assume anything about their motives. They’re obscene. Clohessy’s latest admission—they won’t rest until the pope is behind bars—just adds to the evidence. SNAP has become, without doubt, the most anti-Catholic organization in the United States, surpassing even Catholics for Choice.

COVERAGE OF THE POPE VARIES WIDELY

During Pope Benedict XVI’s recent trip to Germany, we took a look at how two different newspapers covered the story.

Perhaps the two most premier newspapers in the U.S. and Germany are the *New York Times* and *Der Spiegel*, respectively. During the first day of the pope’s trip, the *Times*’ story focused on the pope’s protesters, mentioning such issues as celibacy, sexual abuse, gay rights, divorce, and the role of women. In the 1144-word story, there was one sentence on the

message the pope hoped to deliver. By contrast, *Der Spiegel's* headline read, "Financial Crisis, Religion and a Bit of Protest." Most of the story was on the pope's message.

On the second day of his trip, the *Times'* first three paragraphs were mostly devoted to the protesters, and five of the first six paragraphs reflected negatively on the Church. Of the 20 paragraphs in the news story, four mentioned the pope's message. *Der Spiegel* had two news stories that day, and the way they began is striking. One said of the pope, "His bluntness has surprised many—and could transform the visit into a rousing success." The other said, "The pope's highly anticipated speech in Germany's parliament Thursday was met with a standing ovation by politicians..." The standing ovation was not mentioned by the *Times*, but twice it said "dozens" of members of Parliament boycotted the speech.

None of this is by chance. The *Times* entertains the most radical views on abortion, feminism and gay rights of any major newspaper in the nation. Moreover, its secularist orientation is pronounced.

Der Spiegel did not give the pope a pass (nor should it), but it nonetheless treated him fairly. The *New York Times*, by contrast, focused more on the pope's critics, as well as those Church teachings its critics loathe. Are they blind to their bias?

RASH OF OLD ACCUSATIONS SURFACE

On the last day of September, we pointed out the accusations that were made against priests in that month alone:

- A 34-year-old man said he was abused in the 1980s by a priest from Portland, Oregon.
- In the same diocese, a 41-year-old woman said she was also abused in the 1980s, adding that this explains her series of failed romantic relationships.
- An 83-year-old priest from Charlotte, North Carolina was accused of molesting a teenage male in the 1970s.
- A California priest was accused of molesting teenage males in the 1970s.
- A priest from Ohio was accused of “misconduct” that allegedly took place in the 1970s.
- Two Missouri priests were each accused of molesting a boy in the 1970s.
- A woman said a priest from Maine abused her in the 1970s.
- A priest from Chicago was accused of abusing a girl in the 1970s.
- An 85-year-old priest from Baton Rouge was accused of abusing a boy in the 1950s.
- Montana nuns were accused of abusing students in the 1940s.
- A convicted sex offender from California said he was abused in 2001 by a priest.
- A Missouri couple, which up until now never admitted that their son committed suicide in 1983, sued the local diocese for their son’s death, claiming he was abused by a priest.
- The parents of a young man who committed suicide say they blame a priest who wrestled with their son. Some of the man’s friends say he spoke about a wrestling incident, but never said there was anything sexual about it; others say the man told them he felt the priest’s genitals rubbing up against

him.

Bill Donohue said, "In this climate, which is profoundly hostile to priests, one would have to be awfully naïve not to wonder why all of these allegations surfaced in just one month about such dated incidents. I would love to see the financial statements of the accusers."

ANTI-CATHOLICS BASH THE BISHOPS

Several organizations, led by the anti-Catholic group, Catholics for Choice, recently joined hands and sent a letter to Kathleen Sebelius, the Secretary of Health and Human Services regarding the coverage of contraception and sterilization under Obamacare.

Catholics for Choice teamed up with other anti-Catholics—many of whom have been excommunicated from the Catholic Church—to assail the bishops. What was exercising them was the determination of the bishops to denounce the anti-Catholic provisions of the Obamacare legislation: the Church leadership has been protesting the proposed mandate that Catholic healthcare providers offer contraceptive and sterilization services (the opt-out stipulations are functionally non-existent).

"As progressive Catholic organizations," the first sentence of the letter reads, "our social justice tradition compels us to speak out and advocate for the least among us." But the least among us are the most defenseless among us, namely, the unborn. It is precisely this segment of the population that these people say are not deserving of the right to life.

The letter was published in the dissident weekly, the *National Catholic Reporter*. The headline was also revealing: "What the Bishops Won't Tell You." In other words, the bishops are lying to Catholics. Furthermore, the group went so far as to oppose the most elemental of all civil liberties—the right to conscientiously object, on the basis of religion, to state strictures mandating compliance with acts deemed immoral. The letter even referred to "*burdensome* conscience clauses." (Our *italic.*)

By pitting themselves against opt-out provisions like conscience clauses, these activists are proving what practicing Catholics have been saying all along: those who want Obamacare want to shove their secular agenda down the throats of the faithful. Nothing bothers them more than diversity—they want a "one size fits all" bill that codifies their politics.