

# BIGOTRY            EXPLAINS            FALSE ACCUSATIONS

False accusations against priests are hardly uncommon these days, but when anti-Catholicism accounts for lies against lay Catholics, the problem only worsens. Consider the recent news concerning Tim Udinski.

After Udinski was fired as the lacrosse coach at Lansdale Catholic High School last year, he made several accusations over a seven-month period claiming that the football coach and the new lacrosse coach were sexually abusing students. He also maintained that the principal of the suburban Philadelphia school, Tim Quinn, knew about the offenses.

After detectives spent 184 hours on this case, interviewing 97 people (at a cost of more than \$8250), they determined that the charges were bogus. Standing by itself, this wouldn't be big news, but what made it so disturbing was Udinski's motive: he admitted that he fabricated the whole story, just so he could "get the Church."

Landsdale Catholic High is in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and it was to the archdiocese that Udinski sent his anonymous e-mails. Montgomery County DA Risa Vetri Ferman acknowledged that Udinski sought to exploit the high profile that the sexual abuse of minors has been given. Indeed, she questioned, "How do you undo that? How do you unring the bell?"

Here's the clincher. When asked why he lied, Udinski said, "I just wanted to *get back at the church*, Tim Quinn, and I was just generally mad." (Our italics.)

Over the past three years, 173 false accusations have been made against Catholic priests nationwide. Also, on July 6, Philadelphia Archbishop Charles Chaput stated that four of the six priests who were recently investigated were found suitable

for ministry. Isn't it time we learned the names of those who make false charges? And how do we "unring the bell" for all those priests—and lay persons—whose reputations have been smeared by merchants of bigotry and greed?

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## MADONNA LIBELS THE POPE

Madonna was back in the news recently for offending concertgoers in France. In her latest video that accompanies the song, "Nobody Knows Me," French National Front party leader Marine Le Pen was shown sporting a swastika on her head. After the video was played during Madonna's July performance in Paris, the National Front said it was going to sue her. What did not attract much attention was Madonna's vile attack on Pope Benedict XVI.

The full video of "Nobody Knows Me," which is part of Madonna's MDNA Tour, is replete with religious symbolism. The most offensive part for Catholics occurs when anti-gay protesters are shown just before Madonna's face morphs into that of the pope; at the point where the pope's face appears, protesters holding gay-bashing signs are shown on both sides of him. The accompanying lyrics, which include the refrain, "Won't let a stranger give me a social disease," ties the pope to hate speech directed at homosexuals. Moreover, photos of gay youths who recently committed suicide are also shown during this sequence.

What is particularly sick about this attack is that the protesters are not only not Catholic, they are *anti-Catholic*! Anyone who doubts this to be true only needs go to the website of the Westboro Baptist Church and find pictures of these church members holding signs that read "God Hates Fags"—the

exact signs shown in the video. To demonstrate how relentlessly anti-Catholic these people are, we noted that on their events calendar, they announced they were going to picket St. Joseph Catholic Church in Shawnee, Kansas on July 22: the church was called a “whorehouse” and the priests were labeled “rapists.”

Madonna not only libeled the pope, she attributed to the Catholic Church the hate speech of those who hate Catholics, as well as homosexuals. That the media gave scant coverage to this part of her bigoted performance was also disturbing.

Madonna isn't getting any younger, so her days of insulting us are numbered.

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## **ALEC BALDWIN LIBELS PRIESTS**

Leading up to his summer wedding, actor Alec Baldwin got into a spat that almost turned violent when he reacted with a vengeance against a photographer on a New York City street. Out of nowhere, Baldwin blurted, “I know you got raped by a priest or something.”

There was absolutely no context in which it would make any sense for Baldwin to react this way. What it suggested is that Baldwin is a man whose animus against Catholicism is so deep that virtually anything can set him off. That he got married in a Catholic church the day after his blow up makes this story even more bizarre.

A few weeks following this incident, Baldwin disrupted church services insisting on doing a reading at Mass. The congregation, aware of his outburst, stood and turned their backs on him during the reading. One churchgoer said that his

statement not only maligned every priest, but the parishioners as well, which was why they decided to take action.

This was obviously not the first time Baldwin went off the rails. But it is the first time we know of where he libeled priests. This guy's resume just gets sicker and sicker. Unfortunately, his Hollywood friends always cover for him.

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## **ELITES NOT SERIOUS ABOUT CHILD ABUSE**

At the end of July, a bill was passed by voice vote in the Massachusetts House expanding the time period on civil claims of child sexual abuse. The next day, an editorial in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* called for Pennsylvania lawmakers to allow a two-year window for filing civil lawsuits in such cases. Neither of these efforts was serious about combating child sexual abuse, and both endorse discriminatory legislation.

In Massachusetts, the bill that was passed would do absolutely nothing about child sexual abuse that occurs in the public schools; it applied exclusively to private institutions, such as the Catholic Church. Similarly, the editorial in the *Inquirer* said absolutely nothing about blanketing the public sector; unless a bill specifically targets the sovereign immunity status of the public schools, they remain exempt.

It would never be tolerated if a lawmaker pushed for a bill that sought new ways of punishing sexual harassment in non-profit organizations, but had no application in the corporate world. The ACLU (a non-profit) would scream bloody murder. The newspapers would also chime in.

To end this posturing about the welfare of children, someone needs to introduce legislation that only targets the public sector. After the storm, we can have a serious discussion about new legislation that treats both the private and public sectors equally. As it stands now, the elites continue to perpetuate a scam.