

PENNSYLVANIA GRAND JURY REPORT DEBUNKED

Bill Donohue

Unlike most commentators and reporters, I have read most of the Pennsylvania grand jury report. The purpose of this statement is to debunk many of the myths, and indeed lies, that mar the report and/or interpretations of it.

Myth: Over 300 priests were found guilty of preying on youngsters in Pennsylvania.

Fact: No one was found guilty of anything. Yet that didn't stop CBS from saying "300 'predator priests' abused more than 1,000 children over a period of 70 years." These are all accusations, most of which were never verified by either the grand jury or the dioceses.

The report, and CBS, are also wrong to say that all of the accused are priests. In fact, some were brothers, some were deacons, and some were seminarians.

How many of the 300 were probably guilty? Maybe half. My reasoning? The 2004 report by the John Jay College for Criminal Justice found that 4 percent of priests nationwide had a credible accusation made against them between 1950-2002. That is the figure everyone quotes. But the report also notes that *roughly half that number were substantiated*. If that is a reliable measure, the 300 figure drops to around 150.

During the seven decades under investigation by the grand jury, there were over 5,000 priests serving in Pennsylvania (this includes two dioceses not covered in the report). Therefore, the percent of priests who had an accusation made against them is quite small, offering a much different picture than what the media afford. And remember, most of these

accusations were never substantiated.

Importantly, in almost all cases, the accused named in the report was never afforded the right to rebut the charges. That is because the report was investigative, not evidentiary, though the report's summary suggests that it is authoritative. It manifestly is not.

The report covers accusations extending back to World War II. *Almost all the accused are either dead or have been thrown out of the priesthood.* For example, in the Diocese of Harrisburg, 71 persons are named: 42 are dead and four are missing. Most of those who are still alive are no longer in ministry.

There are some cases that are so old that they are unbelievable. Consider the case of Father Joseph M. Ganter. Born in 1892, he was accused in 2008 by an 80-year-old man of abusing him in the 1930s. Obviously, nothing came of it. But the priest was accustomed to such charges.

In 1945, at the request of Father Ganter, a Justice of the Peace interviewed three teenage males who had made accusations against him. Not only did they give conflicting stories, *the three admitted that they were never abused by Ganter.* But don't look to the media to highlight this case, or others like it.

Myth: The report was warranted because of the on-going crisis in the Catholic Church.

Fact: There is no on-going crisis—it's a total myth. In fact, there is no institution, private or public, that has less of a problem with the sexual abuse of minors today than the Catholic Church. How do I know?

Over the past two years, .005 percent of the Catholic clergy have had a credible accusation made against them. No one knows exactly what the figure is for other institutions, but if there were a grand jury investigation of the sexual abuse of

minors in the public schools, people's heads would explode—it would make the Catholic Church's problems look like Little League. But no district attorney or attorney general has the guts to probe the public schools.

To single out the Catholic Church—without ever investigating any other institution—is akin to doing an investigation of crime in low-income minority neighborhoods while allowing white-collar crimes committed in the suburbs to go scot-free, and then concluding that non-whites are criminally prone. That would be a scam. So is cherry picking the Catholic Church.

Myth: The grand jury report was initiated to make the guilty pay.

Fact: False. It has nothing to do with punishing the guilty. Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh “Salacious” Shapiro admitted on August 14 that “Almost every instance of child abuse (the grand jury) found was too old to be prosecuted.” He's right. But he knew that from the get-go, so why did he pursue this dead end?

Why did he waste millions of taxpayer dollars in pursuit of alleged offenders when he knew he couldn't do anything about it? Because he, and his predecessor, Kathleen Kane (who is now awaiting prison for lying under oath and misusing her Attorney General's office) wanted to shame the Catholic Church.

Kane and Shapiro have never sought to shame imams, ministers, or rabbis—they just want to shame priests. Nor will they conduct a probe of psychologists, psychiatrists, camp counselors, coaches, guidance counselors, or any other segment of society where adults routinely interact with minors.

Shapiro, and those like him, are delighted with all the salacious details in the report. When it comes to non-priests, news reports on sexual misconduct typically note that a sexual offense has occurred, but readers are spared the graphic accounts. Not when it comes to priests—they love to get as

explicit as they can.

It's not just Shapiro who is interested in appealing to the prurient interest of the public. The lead story in the August 15 edition of the *New York Times* is another case in point: on the front page there is a photo of a handwritten note by a young male who describes how and where a priest allegedly touched him. Yet when accusations surface against the likes of Harvey Weinstein, all that is noted is the nature of the offense.

Myth: Shapiro is seeking to right these wrongs by pushing for legislation that would suspend the statute of limitations for sexual crimes against minors, allowing old cases to be prosecuted.

Fact: This is one of the most bald-face lies of them all. Neither Shapiro, nor Pennsylvania lawmaker Mark Rozzi, who is proposing such legislation, *has ever included the public schools in these proposed bills—they only apply to private [read: Catholic] institutions.*

In most states, public school students have 90 days to report an offense. That's it. Which means it is too late for a student raped by a public school teacher to file suit if the crime occurred this year at the start of the baseball season. Public institutions are governed under the corrupt doctrine of sovereign immunity, and few politicians have the courage to challenge it.

In the few instances where states have included the public schools in such legislation, guess who goes bonkers? The public school establishment. The teachers' unions, school superintendents, principals—they all scream how utterly unfair it is to roll back the clock and try to determine if the accused is guilty of an offense that took place decades ago. They are right to do so; lucky for them they are rarely called to action.

The reason we have statutes of limitation is because many witnesses are either dead or their memories have faded. The public school industry understands the importance of this due process measure, and rightfully protests when it is in jeopardy. So why is it that when bishops make the exact same argument, they are condemned for obstructing justice? The hypocrisy is nauseating.

Myth: The priests “raped” their victims.

Shapiro said that “Church officials routinely and purposely described the abuse as horseplay and wrestling and inappropriate contact. It was none of those things.” He said it was “rape.” Similarly, the *New York Times* quoted from the report saying that Church officials used such terms as “horseplay” and “inappropriate contact” as part of their “playbook for concealing the truth.”

Fact: This is an obscene lie. Most of the alleged victims were not raped: they were groped or otherwise abused, but not penetrated, which is what the word “rape” means. This is not a defense—it is meant to set the record straight and debunk the worst case scenarios attributed to the offenders.

Furthermore, Church officials were not following a “playbook” for using terms such as “inappropriate contact”—they were following the lexicon established by the John Jay professors.

Examples of non-rape sexual abuse found in the John Jay report include “touching under the victim’s clothes” (*the most common act alleged*); “sexual talk”; “shown pornography”; “touch over cleric’s clothes”; “cleric disrobed”; “victim disrobed”; “photos of victims”; “sexual games”; and “hugging and kissing.” These are the kinds of acts recorded in the grand jury report as well, and as bad as they are, they do not constitute “rape.”

As for the accusation that Church officials described sexual misconduct as “horseplay,” one would think that there would be

dozens of examples in the report where officials described what happened as nothing more than “horseplay,” especially if it is part of the Church’s “playbook.”

Here’s the truth: In over 1300 pages, the word “horseplay” appears *once*! To top it off, it was used to describe the behavior of a seminarian, not a priest.

Myth: The abusive priests were pedophiles.

Fact: This is the greatest lie of them all, repeated non-stop by the media, and late-night talk TV hosts.

There have been two scandals related to the sexual abuse of minors in the Catholic Church. Scandal I involves the enabling bishops who covered it up. Scandal II involves the media cover-up of the role played by gay molesters.

Let me repeat what I have often said. *Most gay priests are not molesters, but most of the molesters have been gay.* Not to admit this—and this includes many bishops who are still living in a state of denial about it—means the problem will continue. Indeed, there are reports today about seminaries in Boston and Honduras that are disturbing.

How do I know that most of the problem is gay-driven? The data are indisputable.

The John Jay study found that 81 percent of the victims were male, 78 percent of whom were postpubescent. Now if 100 percent of the victimizers are male, and most of the victims are postpubescent males, that is a problem called homosexuality. There is no getting around it.

How many were pedophiles? *Less than five percent.* That is what the John Jay study found. Studies done in subsequent years—I have read them all—report approximately the same ratio. It’s been a homosexual scandal all along.

It won’t help to say that the John Jay report did not conclude

that homosexuals committed most of the offenses, *even though their own data undercut their interpretation*. The professors played the self-identity game: they said that many of the men who had sex with adolescent males did not identify as gay. So what?

If a straight priest who abused a teenage girl said he thinks of himself as gay, would the researchers list him as such? Self-identification that does not square with the truth is a lie. I recently spoke to a person in the media about this. I told him that I consider myself to be a Chinese dwarf—even though it is obvious that I am a big Irishman—and asked if he would describe me that way in his story. He got my point.

Shapiro fed the myth about this being a “pedophile” scandal when he said the victims were “little boys and girls.” This is a lie. Anyone who actually reads the report knows it is a lie. Most were postpubescent. This doesn’t make the molestation okay—the guilty should be imprisoned—but it is wrong to give the impression that we are talking about 5-year-olds when more typically they were 15-year-olds.

The *New York Times*, which has been covering up for homosexuals for decades, found it convenient to highlight the minority of cases where females were allegedly abused. So did many in the media who take their talking points from the *Times*.

The *Times* is so dishonest that it mentions a “somasochistic clerical pedophile ring in Pittsburgh that photographed boys they had posed to look like Jesus Christ, then gave them gold crosses to show they had been groomed.” The section of the report that discusses this alleged offense cites Father Gregory Zirwas as the ringleader.

Every person whom he groped was a teenager, meaning this was a homosexual ring. But, of course, the unsuspecting reader doesn’t know this to be the case.

In short, this is a ruse: the *Times* wants the reader to

believe that this is a pedophile problem, and that females are as much at risk as males, thus discounting homosexuality. This is patently untrue, but it feeds the lie that this is not a homosexual scandal. It also allows people like Anthea Butler, who calls God a "white racist," to say, "The Catholic Church is a pedophile ring."

Myth: Bishops who sent abusive priests back into ministry did so out of total disregard for the well-being of the victims.

Fact: This lie is perpetuated by the grand jury report when it ridicules bishops for having priests "evaluated" at "church-run psychiatric centers." The fact is that in the period when most of the abuse occurred—the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s—almost all persons in authority who dealt with sexual offenses, in any institution, relied on the expertise of those in the behavioral sciences.

Quite frankly, it was a time when therapists oversold their level of competence, and many continue to do so. *There were very few psychologists or psychiatrists at the time who didn't overrate their ability to "fix" offenders.* It was they whom the bishops relied upon for advice. Yet the media rarely hold them accountable for misleading Church lawyers and the bishops.

Myth: Cardinal Donald Wuerl is so guilty that he needs to resign.

Fact: This accusation, made by a CBS reporter, as well as others, is based on pure ignorance, if not malice. Shapiro played the same game when he lamented how "Bishop Wuerl" became "Cardinal Wuerl" after he allegedly "mishandl[ed] abuse claims." This is a scurrilous statement.

No bishop or cardinal in the nation has had a more consistent and courageous record than Donald Wuerl in addressing priestly sexual abuse. Moreover, the grand jury report—even in areas that are incomplete and unflattering—does nothing to dispute

this observation.

Why do I call Wuerl “consistent and courageous”? Because of Wuerl’s refusal to back down to the Vatican when it ordered him to reinstate a priest he had removed from ministry; this occurred in the early 1990s when Wuerl was the Bishop of Pittsburgh. The Vatican reconsidered and agreed with his assessment.

Who, in or out of the Catholic Church, has ever defied his superiors, risking his position within the company or institution, over such matters? Wuerl did. Who in Hollywood or in the media has?

The people now attacking Wuerl are doing so for one reason: as the Archbishop of Washington, he is the biggest fish the critics have to fry.

Here’s one more nugget. Shapiro proved how dishonest he is when he refused to excise a baseless charge against Wuerl. There is a handwritten note in the report attributed to Wuerl about his alleged “circle of secrecy” involving a priest who was returned to ministry. But it is not Wuerl’s handwriting. More important, Wuerl’s legal counsel informed Shapiro that “the handwriting does not belong to then-Bishop Wuerl,” but nothing was done to correct the record. So they intentionally misled the public.

Conclusion

The guilty should pay, and the innocent should not. This is a pedestrian axiom that is being trashed today when it comes to assessing priestly misconduct, something the Pennsylvania grand jury report has contributed to mightily.

No amount of compassion for those who have been violated by priests should ever be done at the expense of telling the truth, no matter how unpopular it may sound. To do otherwise is cowardly, shameful, and unjust.

What is driving the current mania over this issue is not hard to figure out. I am a sociologist who has been dealing with this issue for a long time, having published articles about it in books and international journals.

Here is what's going on. There are many vicious critics of the Catholic Church who would like to weaken its moral authority, and will seize on any problem it has to discredit its voice. Why? They hate its teachings on sexuality, marriage, and the family.

These very same people delight in promoting a libertine culture, one which ironically was the very milieu that enticed some very sick priests and their seminarian supervisors to act out in the first place.

There is nothing wrong with Catholic teachings on this subject: If priests had followed their vows, and not their id, we would not have this problem. Those who refuse to use the brakes God gave them, straight or gay, should be shown the gate or never admitted in the first place.

ATHEIST ACTIVISTS EMBRACE SEXUAL LIBERTINISM

William A. Donohue

At first glance, there doesn't appear to be a relationship between the views of atheist leaders and sexuality, but upon closer inspection, there clearly is. In so many cases, the hatred of religion that marks atheist activists is integral to their love of sexual libertinism. Indeed, the former abets the latter.

The nation's greatest defender of child pornography is the American Civil Liberties Union. It argued a case seeking to legalize it in the 1980s and lost in a unanimous decision in the Supreme Court.

The founder of the ACLU, Roger Baldwin, was an atheist and a nudist, though it should be noted that he never addressed the issue of child porn. But his organization did, and no one did a better job defending child pornography than Barry Lynn; in the latter part of the 1980s he was the legislative counsel for the ACLU in its Washington D.C. office.

Lynn's defense of the sale and distribution of child pornography made history when he testified before Attorney General Edwin Meese's Commission on Pornography in 1985. Dr. James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, was stunned listening to what Lynn had to say about the important role that child porn played in constitutional matters. Lynn, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, saw the depiction of kids in hard-core pornographic photos as a free speech issue.

Lynn went on to become the executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU). Under his tutelage, in 2000 AU sponsored Reel Affirmations X, a pornographic homosexual film festival. When asked what this undertaking had to do with his organization's mission, Lynn replied, "We oftentimes lend support to organizations which have a constituency sympathetic to our goals and objectives."

In other words, those who support gay porn are seen as sympathetic to the goals and mission of AU. That's quite a concession. More recently, AU was listed as a participant in the 2018 Pride Festival, an LGBT event.

AU also supports abortion-on-demand. Last year it rallied with NARAL Pro-Choice America, the pro-abortion giant, in support of the Health and Human Services mandate that sought to force

Catholic non-profit groups to pay for abortion-inducing drugs in their healthcare plans.

The current head of AU, Rachel Laser, previously worked for Third Way, a left-wing think tank that deals with abortion and gay rights. She continues to serve on the national board of NARAL. In fact, her first public address came in March when she spoke at an annual pro-abortion NARAL event. When she worked for Third Way, she led the gay rights initiative.

American Atheists is another atheist organization with a long history of support for libertine notions of sexuality. The founder, Madalyn Murray O'Hair, once boasted, "I will engage in sexual activity with a consenting male any time and any place I damn well please." She made her name by successfully bringing suit to ban school prayer.

Today, American Atheists promotes "Activist Toolkits," offering advice on how to attack religious organizations that are opposed to abortion and seek to promote abstinence-only sex education programs. Last year, it was a partner in the 2017 Women's March, an event primarily sponsored by Planned Parenthood.

The gay rights community also has a reliable partner in American Atheists. It works with the Human Rights Campaign to offer American Atheists Gay/Lesbian College Scholarships. Alison Gill, the National Legal and Policy Director of American Atheists, previously served as Senior Legislative Counsel at the Human Rights Campaign, a prominent gay rights group. Board member Marsha Botzer is former co-chair of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the national co-chair of the 2008 Obama Pride Campaign.

Lately, American Atheists has been reeling from disclosures of alleged sexual misconduct. Its president, David Silverman, was fired April 12 for sexually assaulting women.

Other atheist groups that align with the abortion and gay

rights movement include Freedom From Religion Foundation. Its co-founder authored a book, *Abortion Is A Blessing*. In November, it will feature Planned Parenthood president Cecile Richards at its annual convention.

The American Humanist Association has honored Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger, who was both a racist and eugenicist; it has gay rights projects as well. Similarly, the Center for Inquiry has teamed up with Planned Parenthood and NARAL.

It is possible, of course, to be both an atheist and a sexual traditionalist. But the fact remains that at least since the post-war period, atheist activists have, in most instances, been sexual libertines. Why? What is the tie between atheism and abortion and gay rights?

The connection is a profoundly distorted vision of liberty. As I have noted several times before, for many Americans, the three most dreaded words in the English language are “Thou Shalt Not.” This is doubly true of atheist activists. They don’t want to be told how to express themselves sexually, and they sure don’t want to hear how God is commanding them to practice restraint.

We have traveled a long way since the Founders promoted Christianity and counseled against unleashing the passions. Regrettably, atheist organizations have contributed mightily to the corruption of our culture.

BEE’S TV SHOW REELING

The Catholic League protest of Samantha Bee’s TBS TV Show, “Full Frontal,” is paying dividends: sponsors continue to

flee.

Her filthy show has long targeted Catholicism, but when she used a vulgar term to describe President Trump's daughter, she went beyond obscene. We decided to take aim at her advertisers.

In the last issue of *Catalyst*, we cited the following sponsors who discontinued advertising on Bee's show after we asked them to do so: Verizon, Procter and Gamble, Wendy's, and Ashley HomeStore; the latter was very critical of her show.

Bee's show took a few week hiatus in late June-early July, airing reruns. When it returned, so did we. We asked The Wonderful Company, producer of Wonderful Pistachios, to pull its ad. It did. We asked Popeyes to withdraw advertising. It did. We requested Burger King to do the same. It did not. Indeed, it continued to advertise for two more weeks, but we did not give up.

On August 15, after striking out with appeals to the Burger King CEO, we heard from Burger King president José Cil. When he learned of our concerns, he said, "our advertising plan never targeted this show in particular," conceding that a "small number of our television ads have appeared." The good news is that he said, "we won't be advertising with this show going forward." They did not.

This shows what can happen when we persevere. Yielding is for losers.

OLD ABUSE CASES SURFACE; CRITICS GO BONKERS

This was a tough summer for the Catholic Church. Revelations of sexual misconduct involving Cardinal Theodore McCarrick (he is no longer a member of the College of Cardinals) kept surfacing, and then came the Pennsylvania grand jury report on clergy abuse. For our part, we never wavered, making our voice loudly heard in the media.

All of the cases were about instances of sexual abuse extending back decades: not a single news report cited a new incident. Yet the impression given by the media was that these were on-going; this perception only fed an already overheated environment.

The Pennsylvania grand jury report named priests who were never given an opportunity to defend themselves. It also published lies, many of which were contested by some bishops before publication, but were never given the time of day. To read Bill Donohue's thorough analysis of the report, which was widely distributed, see pp. 8-10.

Critics took particular aim at Cardinal Donald Wuerl. They alleged that he must have known about McCarrick's misdeeds because he succeeded him as the Archbishop of Washington. Others criticized him for not doing enough to combat priestly sexual abuse when he was Bishop of Pittsburgh. Donohue quickly defended him against these cruel distortions of his record; see pp. 11-12.

The anger that many Catholics experienced at these stories about old cases—most of the priests accused in Pennsylvania are either dead or have been removed from ministry—allowed their emotions to cloud their thinking. They took on a stridently adversarial position against the hierarchy.

These Catholics became so unhinged that they called for grand jury investigations in all 50 states. Not of every institution—only Catholic ones. Thus did they show how they have been played by the enemies of the Church.

They want financial probes and priest personnel files to be released. They want Catholics to stop giving to the Church, and some even asked for all the bishops to resign at once. But they never made the same demands of others, allowing the public schools, Christian schools, and yeshivas off-the-hook.

They are being played. They are doing what the arch-enemies of the Catholic Church want—they are promoting mutiny. This kind of purist mentality is what Jesus warned about, but evidently these Catholics never learned that lesson.

Yes, “the guilty must pay,” but the innocent must also be protected. Most bishops and priests are good men who do not deserve to be trashed.

CHEAPENING ANTI-SEMITISM

What is worse than anti-Semitism are bogus charges of it. That is what Philly.com did on August 8. This media outlet is an important source of news in the Philadelphia area, so what it prints must be taken seriously.

It has twice embarrassed itself recently: first, by publishing an article by John Baer that makes not-so-veiled accusations of anti-Semitism, where there is none; and second, by defending him.

Baer was writing about Bill Donohue’s criticisms of the Pennsylvania grand jury report on six dioceses in the state.

One of Bill's complaints is that the Catholic Church was the only institution to merit a grand jury report, though the problem of sexual abuse occurs in every private and public institution where adults interact with minors. Indeed, the public schools in Pennsylvania have one of the worst records in the nation, yet they never come under scrutiny.

Here is what Baer said:

A statement from league president Bill Donohue argues Shapiro singled out the church: 'A grand jury report on sexual misconduct in any institution could also serve the prurient interests of the public.'

This is the ever-popular everybody-does-it defense. But crimes are crimes. And crimes committed against children are the worst. Especially when committed by clergy. Then covered up. Why wouldn't any prosecutor always go after the worst?

I suspect among hard-core church supporters there's an ugly undercurrent of, well, you know, Shapiro's Jewish, as is former Philly DA Lynne Abraham, who released the '05 report. And isn't that a little suspicious?

No. That's a little anti-Semitic.

And as for me? I still hope there's a hell.

Here is Donohue's complaint:

Mr. Fitzgerald,

I am copying John Martin on this complaint because I have dealt with him before and found him to be honorable.

My complaint is straightforward. In a column posted today by John Baer on Philly.com, he ends his article ("Looking back, looking ahead at Catholic clergy sex abuse") by accusing me of being "a little anti-Semitic." His evidence? I critically mentioned Lynne Abraham and Josh Shapiro in a news release.

I would like an apology and a retraction.

Please check the Catholic League website for several other statements I have made recently about the grand jury report and you will see that I have also mentioned people such as Mark Rozzi, Seth Williams, and Kathleen Kane. According to Baer's logic, that would make me anti-Italian (Rozzi), anti-black (Williams), and anti-Catholic (all three). Indeed, it would make him both anti-Irish and anti-Catholic for simply criticizing me.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bill Donohue
President
Catholic League

Here is Fitzgerald's response:

Mr. Donohue,

Thank you for writing. My reply is straightforward as well. First, John Baer is an opinion columnist, with wide latitude to sound off on events with his personal reflections on them. Second and most important, Baer did not in this piece accuse you of anti-Semitism. He accurately quoted a statement you issued on behalf of the Catholic League expressing your opinion that Pennsylvania's attorney general had unfairly singled out the Church for prurient reasons. Later, Baer says he "suspects" that there may be an "undercurrent of anti-Semitism" among some of the most intense critics of Attorney General Shapiro. He does not accuse you personally of anything.

I respect your position and have given your complaint serious consideration, but in this case believe that no apology or retraction is necessary.

Respectfully,

Thomas Fitzgerald
Politics and Governing Editor
The Philadelphia

Here is Donohue's reply to him:

Mr. Fitzgerald,

You are dancing on the head of a pin. Yes, Baer did not directly accuse me of anti-Semitism but he certainly implied as much. For him to do that to a person who combats discrimination and defamation—and who works cooperatively with Jews—is scurrilous.

By the way, opinion columnists have responsibilities, as well as reporters. If Baer had made an anti-Semitic remark, I am sure he would hear it from you.

I have one last request: Let me know if you discussed this matter with Baer (I am not asking for the contents of the discussion).

Thanks,
Bill Donohue

Anti-Semitism is cheapened when people like Baer make false accusations. It is worsened when people like Fitzgerald defend him.

DELIRIOUS REACTIONS TO CHURCH ABUSE

While some Catholics are spinning out of control over cases of sexual abuse committed by the dead and the laicized, MTV

presented the Michael Jackson Video Vanguard Award to Jennifer Lopez on August 21. No one from the media, and certainly no finger-pointing Catholic, questioned why there is an award named after an accused child abuser.

Actress and director Asia Argento, who was one of the first to accuse Harvey Weinstein of rape, was exposed for paying \$380,000 to a minor she sexually assaulted *after she outed Weinstein*.

No one is calling for an investigation of Hollywood perverts, even though over 400 Hollywood executives and employees have been named for sexual misconduct in the past year-and-a-half. That's over 100 more than the number of Pennsylvania priests implicated in sexual abuse over the past 70 years.

Les Moonves, CEO of CBS, is accused of sexually abusing six women; his investigation is still on-going. Earlier this month, he showed up at a press conference, but before he spoke the media were informed that only questions on second-quarter financial results would be entertained. The press dutifully complied.

It's back-to-school time, and that means more kids will be sexually molested. Fortunately for the public school teachers, they will be protected by their union chiefs. More important, *no one will call for a grand jury investigation*.

This, of course, means nothing to those Catholic purists who want massive probes of every diocese in the nation, and are now demanding that every bishop in the nation should step down. Why? Because of predatory priests long dead or long thrown out of the priesthood.

Whatever happened to "get the guilty" and "protect the innocent"? Calls for collective purges—which include mostly innocent bishops—are unjust. Indeed, they are un-Christian.

SCAPEGOATING CARDINAL WUERL

Bill Donohue

It is one thing for the laity to be angry about recent revelations regarding former cardinal Theodore McCarrick, and the Pennsylvania grand jury report on molesting priests (which is riddled with lies, see pp.8-10), it is quite another to allow emotion, not reason, to guide one's perspective on these twin scandals. Yet that is what is happening.

The most angry comments are directed at Cardinal Donald Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington: He is being blamed for the twin scandals. This is patently unfair—there is no basis for either accusation.

I have known Cardinal Wuerl for 30 years. I met him when I was a professor at La Roche College in Pittsburgh, and had the opportunity to assess his record during his first five years of service as the Bishop of Pittsburgh. It was outstanding.

Cardinal Wuerl is not only an authority on the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and a prolific author, he is one of the most brilliant and courageous bishops in the nation. He is now being battered by people who know nothing about him, but just want to get the biggest scalp they can find, and that would be the Archbishop of Washington. The haters are found on both the right and the left in the Catholic community, especially the right. They've become delirious.

It is being said that Cardinal Wuerl must have known all about what McCarrick allegedly did and chose to do nothing about it. Aside from rumors, which are a staple in every workplace, Wuerl was in no position to know anything about McCarrick's alleged sexual behavior with seminarians, and he certainly was

in no position to know anything about more recent allegations involving minors.

Consider the timeline of McCarrick's predatory behavior with seminarians, which allegedly took place in the 1980s down the Jersey Shore.

When McCarrick was installed as Bishop of Metuchen in 1982, Wuerl was executive secretary to Bishop John Marshall of Burlington, Vermont. When McCarrick became Archbishop of Newark in 1986, Wuerl was an Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle. In 1988, Wuerl became Bishop of Pittsburgh, and in 2006 he took over as the Archbishop of Washington.

In short, Wuerl was in Burlington, Seattle, and Pittsburgh when McCarrick was allegedly preying on seminarians in his home in Sea Girt, New Jersey. To hold him accountable for McCarrick's deeds is absurd and patently unfair. Moreover, he had nothing to do with financial settlements arranged by the Diocese of Metuchen (2005) and the Archdiocese of Newark (2007).

What we do know about Wuerl is that he distinguished himself early on by confronting priestly sexual abuse.

When Wuerl became Bishop of Pittsburgh in 1988, he learned of a few cases of molestation involving minors. Against the advice of attorneys, he met with the victims and their families. A few months later, he removed Father Anthony Cipolla from ministry.

Cipolla maintained his innocence, but Wuerl was convinced he had mental problems, and notified the Vatican about it in 1989. Wuerl told the Congregation for Clergy that "it would be morally impossible to assign Father Cipolla, who is in need of serious psychological treatment, to the pastoral care of the faithful in the Church."

Cipolla appealed to the Congregation for Clergy, but it sided

with Wuerl.

In 1991, Cipolla appealed to the Vatican Signatura, the Catholic Church's Supreme Court. In 1993, the high court overruled Wuerl, ordering him to reinstate Cipolla. Wuerl said no—he would not return him to ministry. Wuerl argued that there were “inaccuracies” in the Signatura's decision and asked the Vatican to reopen the case.

In 1995, the Vatican reversed itself, agreed with Wuerl's assessment, and Cipolla was officially barred from public ministry.

In 1989, the year after Wuerl's first encounter with sexual abuse as a bishop, he launched a Diocesan Review Board. At that time, the bishops had no institutionalized mechanism for assessing sexual offenses—the bishops' conference never had one until 2004—putting him way ahead of the curve.

It is no wonder that Wuerl's courageous decisions were appreciated by so many. Critics on the left, notably the National Catholic Reporter, said in 1993 that “Wuerl should be applauded for refusing to reinstate accused pedophile Father Anthony Cipolla despite a Vatican Supreme Tribunal order.” [Note: Cipolla, like most molesting priests, was a homosexual, not a pedophile.]

In 2002, the New York Times singled Wuerl out as the leader among bishops determined to root out bad behavior. “Bishop Wuerl stands on one end of a broad spectrum of how Catholic leaders have responded to the sexual abuse crisis in the church,” crediting him with “seeking ways to prevent abuse and to hold pedophiles accountable.” [The pedophile myth is a staple in left circles.]

Praise for Wuerl also came in 2002 from Tim Bendig, who claimed he was molested by Cipolla. Speaking of Wuerl, he told CBS News, “I think it's a commendable job. I really do, especially from a victim's standpoint, to have kind of your

day in court, if you will, where a bishop—a bishop of the—of the city of Pittsburgh just blatantly says, ‘We don’t want this priest.’ And—and he fought it all the way to Rome.”

In 2006, the liberal-leaning Pittsburgh Post-Gazette noted how effective Wuerl was when he was Bishop of Pittsburgh (he had just been appointed Archbishop of Washington). “When other dioceses around the nation were mired in an ugly abuse scandal involving priests who preyed on younger church members, Pittsburgh was unscathed.”

Conservatives such as Michael Novak also applauded Wuerl’s move to Washington. He noted that Wuerl’s “reputation was as one who knows his theology, who is brave and forthright in it, has a good, stout character and is not deterred by criticism.” Novak concluded, “I think it’s a good choice.”

These plaudits, of course, were prior to the release of the Pennsylvania grand jury report. The report does raise some questions about Wuerl’s handling of a few cases. News stories are focusing on Father Ernest Paone and Father George Zirwas.

Paone was accused of molestation in the early 1960s and was granted a leave of absence for psychological, physical, and spiritual reasons in 1966. The following year he relocated to California. He never worked in Pittsburgh ever again, and no further charges were made against him. However, he was still under the authority of the Pittsburgh bishop, and in 1991 Bishop Wuerl reassigned him to the Diocese of Reno-Las Vegas.

In the same section of the grand jury report that notes this case, it says the following:

“On June 30, 1989 [one year into his tenure in Pittsburgh], Bishop Donald Wuerl sent a letter to the Vatican with respect to several diocesan priests who had recently been accused of sexually abusing children and whose cases had generated significant publicity. In the letter, Wuerl documented his diocesan policies for sexual abuse and stated his

responsibility as Bishop was to determine the course of action in these cases. Wuerl wrote that Catholic parishioners had a right to know whether a priest accused of such crimes had been reassigned to their parish."

Father George Zirwas was the subject of complaints between 1987 and 1995. He was sent for psychiatric help in 1988 and was returned to ministry after the therapists said he had been treated successfully.

As usual, they were wrong—psychologists and psychiatrists have long oversold their level of competence—and he was accused again in 1991 and 1995. Wuerl should have removed him from ministry but instead gave him a leave of absence. Zirwas moved to Havana, working with the poor, and was murdered there in 2001.

Wuerl is now being criticized because he allowed Zirwas to receive a stipend and other benefits, and because he presided at his funeral. So what? Wuerl was just following canon law—even priests removed from ministry are not denied some financial support.

Maybe that's wrong, but it is unfair to pin this on Wuerl. As for the funeral, yes, bishops have been known to preside at the funeral of many despicable persons—it's what they do. They leave the final judgment to God.

Like everyone, Wuerl must be judged on the basis of his overall record, and in his case it is meritorious. In his 18 years as the Bishop of Pittsburgh, he fielded 19 new cases of accusations against priests. In 18 of those cases, the priest was immediately removed from ministry.

It's a shame that more bishops don't have as good a record as Donald Wuerl. It's also a shame to hear angry Catholics—who don't know what they are talking about—attack him. Cardinal Wuerl has served the Catholic Church with distinction and is deserving of our commendation, not condemnation.

ASSOCIATED PRESS CLAIMS NUNS ARE ABUSED

They made it sound like a tidal wave. Radio news reports were all agog over angry nuns, inspired by the #MeToo movement, turning on abusive priests. As it turned out, there were just a few.

The hysteria was the work of the Associated Press. It ran a story on nuns who have allegedly been abused by priests; it was picked up by many media outlets across the nation. The reporters, Nicole Winfield and Rodney Muhumuza, made several provocative remarks, and in doing so they went well beyond mere reportage: they editorialized.

They began by citing one nun who claimed that a priest in Italy forced himself on her while hearing her confession. They never identified the alleged victim, nor did they explain why her confession took place in a university classroom. We do know that the alleged offense is not new—it happened nearly 20 years ago.

From this unverifiable anecdote we learn that this nun is “one of a handful worldwide to come forward recently” about this issue. We later learn that “about a half dozen sisters” in Chile have stepped forward with their stories. Such a small number would give most journalists pause, but not these ones.

The AP reporters say that their “examination” of nuns being abused by priests extends to Europe, Africa, South America, and Asia. What investigation? When did it start and when did it finish? There are approximately 700,000 nuns worldwide. How many did these reporters interview? How did they decide whom to interview? Or did they simply Google some old news stories?

They never say.

Why did they choose to investigate nuns, and no one else? They cite recent news stories about Cardinal Theodore McCarrick as having brought the Catholic Church back into the news on this subject. Can we expect a similar “investigation” of Bollywood females working in Mumbai now that Les Moonves is all over the news?

The sophomoric nature of this “investigation” is one thing; it is quite another when journalists make the jump from reporting to editorializing. They argue that the problem of nuns being abused by priests is “global and pervasive, thanks to the universal tradition of sisters’ second class status in the Catholic Church and their ingrained subservience to the men who run it.”

If Winfield and Muhumuza want to become op-ed writers, they should resign as reporters and do so. But to inject their own bias into their news stories is indefensible. It is also hypocritical.

Just last December, the Washington Post ran a story headlined, “No One Should be Surprised by Journalism’s Sexual Harassment Problem.” The subtitle is particularly apropos: “Women in the Industry Have Long Been Treated as Second-Class Citizens.”

Are the women who work at AP second-class citizens as well, or just the nuns they “investigate”? One thing is for sure: AP has a history of sexual misconduct among its employees. Indeed, in the same article just mentioned, AP is cited as a company where women who work there have filed sexual abuse complaints with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Conveniently, they settled out of court in the 1970s. Do they still settle out of court?

The AP story on the nuns mentions two previous studies on this subject. In 1994, Sr. Maura O’Donohue found that some degree of sexual abuse of nuns by priests occurred in many nations,

especially Africa. The Vatican said it was aware of the African problem, noting that it is “restricted to a certain geographical area.”

More recently, the AP reporters say that a 2013 book, *The Nuns of Sant’ Ambrogio*, is the “most sensational account” ever offered. They say the book is based on “the archives of the Vatican’s 1860s Inquisition trial of abuse, embezzlement, murder and ‘false holiness’ inside a Roman convent.”

That’s true. What the reporters don’t tell the reader is that the book is not about priests abusing nuns. It’s about lesbian nuns. It focuses on Sr. Maria Luisa, who was known as a “sociopath, embezzler, false saint, sexual predator, pathological liar and murderer.” She coerced young nuns into lesbian initiation rites. Not exactly the narrative pushed by the AP reporters.

Many journalists love to report on dirt in the Catholic Church, but who reports on dirt in their own house? No one.

Last December, the Columbia Journalism Review mailed surveys to 149 newsrooms asking about their policies governing sexual misconduct. It was sent to human resources directors, senior editors, communications directors, and press officers. The number who responded? Zero.

There is a game being played, and it is scurrilous. The AP has done major stories on sexual abuse in the schools (2007); sexual misconduct in law enforcement (2015); sexual assault by fellow students (2017); sexual abuse by U.N. peacekeepers (2017); sexual misconduct by state lawmakers (2018); and sexual assault by doctors (2018).

Not until the AP turns its cameras and notepads on journalists, including their own colleagues, will they have any real credibility.

MOTHER TERESA'S ORDER UNDER FIRE

Over the summer, Mother Teresa's order, the Missionaries of Charity, came under fire for allegedly being involved in a baby-selling racket in Kolkata. There is little doubt that four babies were sold by a lay woman working with the nuns. But attempts to pin the blame on the nuns are specious.

This story unfolded on June 29 when government officials from social welfare and child protection agencies showed up at Nirmal Hriday (Tender Hearts), a home for the dispossessed run by the sisters in Ranchi. The proximate cause of their visit was a report that a woman had given birth there on May 1. The mother quickly decided to surrender the boy to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC).

A ward helper at the home, Anima Indwar, and the mother, said they would surrender him to CWC. But this never happened. Instead, Indwar contacted a couple looking to adopt and offered to sell the baby. The biological mother did not want her child, and on May 15 he was given to the couple without registering the adoption.

When an official from CWC began asking questions, Indwar asked the couple to return the child, temporarily, saying she was simply following procedures. Indwar then gave the boy back to his mother, without informing the adopted parents. The parents wanted the child back and filed a formal complaint with CWC. This is what triggered the inquiry.

Were the nuns in on this scheme? Indwar reported to Sister Concelia, the nun in charge of the unwed mothers section at Nirmal Hriday. It is alleged that Sister Concelia was

complicit in the transaction. But was she?

There is a statement from Indwar saying that Sister Concelia was not present when the baby was given to the adopting couple. Moreover, Indwar admits that she sold the four babies.

In a video statement, Sister Concelia said the following: "I came to know that a baby, delivered in May, was missing when the Child Welfare Committee came to check. We found that the baby had been sold by a staffer." She confronted Indwar.

"When I initially asked the staffer about the baby," Sister Concelia said, "she did not want to tell me anything. It was only when I kept pressing for details that they told me the baby had been sold." Allegedly, some of the money went to a guard, and some to "a sister," though Indwar did not keep any of it.

Now ask yourself: Why would Sister Concelia press Indwar about the details of the sale of the baby if she were in on the deal? Moreover, Indwar herself admitted that the nun was not present at the time. None of this seemed to matter to the authorities.

When Sister Concelia was questioned by the police, she was not provided with counsel. Reportedly, she admitted playing a role in the transaction. She subsequently acquired a lawyer.

Her attorney says she was set up. Sister Concelia told him she "was forced by the police to give her statement." Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas, a local auxiliary bishop, went further, saying the police are "treating the whole of Mother Teresa's organization as a criminal gang."

Sister Mary Prema Pierick, the head of the Missionaries of Charity, says she is cooperating with the authorities. But she is livid over what she says are the "many myths being spread, information distorted and false news being diffused and baseless innuendos being thrown about regarding the Mother

Teresa Sisters.”

Sister Prema is particularly incensed about the police raids on their homes. On July 4, the police seized records and 11 unwed mothers from Nirmal Hriday, and two days later they took 22 children, including a one-month-old baby, from the Shishu Bhawan Home in Hinoo.

What makes these raids so outrageous is that just two weeks prior the CWC described the homes as providing an “excellent environment for the care of children.” However, this matters little to anti-Catholics, the most prominent to emerge is author Taslima Nasreen.

Nasreen took the opportunity to indict the entire Missionaries of Charity, and its founder, Mother Teresa. “Mother Teresa charity home sells babies, it is nothing new. Mother Teresa was involved with many illegal, inhumane, immoral, unethical, unprincipled, wicked, fraudulent, barbaric acts.”

This is a lie. In Bill Donohue’s 2016 book, *Unmasking Mother Teresa’s Critics*, he explored all of these accusations, and more, and found them to be wholly unfair and inaccurate.

It comes as no surprise that Nasreen is a Catholic basher and an atheist. When asked in 2015 if there is anything wrong about celebrating Christmas, she tweeted, “Yes. I can’t celebrate lies. Jesus’s mom was not a virgin for sure. And he was no God’s son either.” She admitted in 1994 that she was an atheist.

Among the Indian defenders of the sisters is Mamata Banerjee, Chief Minister of West Bengal and a member of the All India Trinamool Congress. She condemned the “malicious attempts to malign their name.” She blames the Hindu nationalist party, the Bharatiya Janata Party, for targeting the nuns.

Most important, the Catholic Bishops Conference of India has condemned the government for pressuring Sister Concelia to

give a statement.

Those seeking to indict the Missionaries of Charity have failed to produce the unqualified evidence that has surfaced regarding the complicity of Anima Indwar. Trying to rope the sisters into this scandal is the real scandal.

ARE THERE TOO MANY JEWS ON SUPREME COURT?

Are there too many Jews on the Supreme Court? Just raising the question is enough to raise eyebrows. In some circles it would be proof of bigotry. Count us among those who would detect at least a whiff of anti-Semitism. Why, then, are pundits questioning the Catholic representation on the Supreme Court, and getting away with it?

The latest example comes by way of a recent article originally published by Religion News Service; it has been picked up as an op-ed by several newspapers. "Catholic-Heavy Supreme Court Moves Right as the Church Moves Left." That is the title of an article by Jacob Lupfer.

What occasioned Lupfer's concerns about a "Catholic-Heavy" Supreme Court was President Trump's selection of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to sit on the Supreme Court. Lupfer describes Kavanaugh as a "doctrinaire conservative," one who is "more heavily and outwardly invested in his Catholic identity than his mentor [Justice Anthony Kennedy]."

Is this because Kavanaugh is a lector at his parish? Is it because the nominee cited his work helping the poor while working for Catholic Charities? The red flag thrown by Lupfer

was followed by some red meat for anti-Catholic bigots. He says Trump is “exacerbat[ing]” and “heighten[ing]” the “angst (or excitement)” about “the institution’s ever more conservative Catholic majority.”

In other words, it is not the bigots who are to be blamed for raising the issue about too many Catholics on the high court, it’s Trump’s fault.

Lupfer then offers a pass to Senator Dianne Feinstein for her anti-Catholic attack on Judge Amy Coney Barrett, who was on Trump’s short list to replace Justice Kennedy.

In her questioning of Barrett, Feinstein said of her, “The dogma lives loudly within you.” We all know what that meant. Lupfer manages to spin Feinstein’s bigoted comment saying it was nothing more than a “gaffe.” No, a gaffe is unintentional. Feinstein’s comment was scripted. And she never apologized.

Lupfer offers a dire warning. “The triumph of conservative Catholicism on the court has a dark lining,” he informs. The “darkness,” he says, is evident in the way “the Catholic Supreme Court” has ruled on liberal causes.

“The Catholic Supreme Court”? Kavanaugh, who is Catholic, may replace Kennedy, who is also Catholic. The other four Catholics are Chief Justice John Roberts, Justice Clarence Thomas, Justice Samuel Alito, and Justice Sonia Sotomayor. It should be noted that Sotomayor identifies as a “cultural Catholic,” not a practicing one.

Conveniently, Lupfer never mentions that three of the Supreme Court Justices—Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, and Elena Kagan—are Jewish. Do we have too many Jews on the Supreme Court?

Jews are approximately 2 percent of the population, yet they make up a third of the high court. Catholics are not nearly as overrepresented: they are approximately 25 percent of the

population and make up slightly more than half of the Supreme Court.

We don't have too many Catholics or too many Jews on the Supreme Court. What we have are some of the best jurisprudential minds in the nation. Those who think otherwise are the problem, not the religious affiliation of those on the high court.