

TIMES TRIES TO NAIL ARCHBISHOP DOLAN

On May 17, the *New York Times* ran a front-page article on New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan trying to pin some dirt on him, but as usual the story contained nothing.

Times reporter Serge F. Kovalski had been investigating Archbishop Dolan for a year, and he gave it his best shot in this article. There was nothing for Dolan to worry about—Kovalski failed to lay a glove on him. But it wasn't for lack of trying: unprofessionally, he allowed a professional victims' group, SNAP, to drive his 3784-word story.

No other newspaper in the nation would post a front-page story on a religious leader that led nowhere, save for the *Times*. In classic fashion, the reader was teased at the beginning with this nugget: the professional victims were disappointed when they learned that Dolan, then the newly installed archbishop of Milwaukee, "had instructed lawyers to seek the dismissal of five lawsuits against the church." Now the only question that really mattered is whether Dolan made the right decision—not whether those reflexively inclined to believe the worst about the Catholic Church were disappointed. But the reader had to search in vain to find an answer: the story never addresses this issue again. So we know Dolan was right.

Much coverage is given to a priest who sued his accuser. Interestingly, the accuser had a psychiatric history of lying and blaming others, and no one ever spoke badly about the priest. Largely unresolved, one wonders why this case was even mentioned, unless it was to put Dolan in a bad light for standing by the priest. Isn't that what those who run the *Times* would do if a less than credible accusation were made against one of their reporters? Or would they throw the

accused overboard?

The story made a big deal about the fact that not all dioceses post the names of guilty priests, and that many do not list religious order priests. So what? Why should the Church be held to a different standard? Where are the names of all the public school teachers found guilty?

In any event, the story on Dolan revealed more about the *New York Times* than it did Archbishop Dolan.