

UNJUSTIFIED RAID ON CARDINAL DINARDO'S OFFICE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on agents who raided the office of Cardinal DiNardo:

When law enforcement agents act like bullies, justice is sundered. That's what happened last month in Michigan when the police raided all seven Catholic dioceses—including the home of one bishop—in search of evidence of sexual abuse by the clergy.

It happened again yesterday when the local police force, the Texas Rangers, the local D.A.'s office, and other agencies raided the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, headed by Cardinal Daniel DiNardo. They were looking for evidence concerning Rev. Manuel LaRosa-Lopez; he has been accused of molesting two teenagers more than a quarter century ago. The priest says he is innocent of all charges.

Why the raid? The archdiocese says it is wrong to call it a "raid" because they were cooperating with law enforcement. But when dozens of cops and the Texas Rangers show up, unannounced, carrying boxes they expect to fill with documents, records, electronics, etc., what else should we call it? It is precisely because the archdiocese was cooperating with law enforcement that this mad search for data was so unnecessary.

How did the agents even know that the priest was accused of molesting two teenagers at the end of the last century? The cops never apprehended him. The authorities found out because DiNardo notified them. That's how.

Was DiNardo procrastinating? The alleged male victim didn't make his claim until August of this year, and—Isn't this curious?—days later the alleged female victim followed suit.

DiNardo met with the male accuser and immediately removed the priest from ministry. He did more than that: DiNardo contacted the Children's Protective Services. The next day a warrant was issued for the priest and he turned himself in that evening. He was booked on September 11 and released two days later on bond. He is due in court on January 10, 2019 for a hearing.

What made the alarms go off? The archdiocese admitted it was still looking for more documents on the priest, and law enforcement appeared satisfied. So what broke?

CBS did a hit job on DiNardo last week, one which we [exposed](#), and this surely played a role in getting the agents ginned up. They want to assure the public they are doing their job. But their job doesn't include dragnets.

"We do believe, based on our research, that there will be a secret archive that will have information on this case," said J. Tyler Dunman of the special crimes unit for the Montgomery County District Attorney. "Secret archives"? They are what organizations such as CBS call confidential records, but it sounds more melodramatic to label them "secret archives."

Why the dragnet? The agents are not simply looking for evidence against the accused priest—they are going fishing. Dunman admitted that "if we come across additional documents or evidence of criminal conduct," they will grab them as well. The hunt is on.

Montgomery County District Attorney Brett Ligon said, "This is not a search warrant against the Catholic Church." So what is it? He disingenuously admitted, "We're going to go wherever the investigation requires us to go." In other words, they are using the accused priest as a pretext to raid the offices of the archdiocese.

Why didn't the D.A. subpoena the records? Because that would not have accomplished their real goal—which is to go wherever the raid takes them.

That this is happening at a time when the FBI has been stiffing congressmen for years in their requests for records pertaining to the Obama administration and Hillary Clinton—absent any raids—makes it all the more disturbing.

The bishops are under siege. What will the bullies think of next? Call on the Navy Seals to find records of inappropriate touching that was allegedly committed a half-century ago by dead priests? They surely won't convene a grand jury probe of the public schools today. Bet on it.