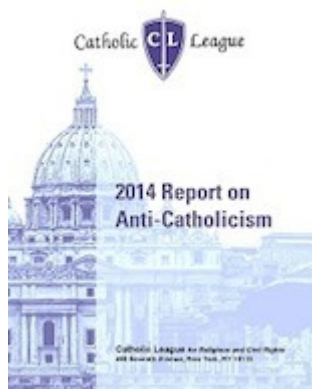


WAR ON THE BISHOPS



The following is an excerpt of a Special Report by Bill Donohue, originally published in the September edition of *Catalyst*.

The Catholic Church has many enemies these days, some of whom are ex-Catholics who left the Church a long time ago. They are joined by the disaffected, those who pretend (even convincing themselves) that they are Catholics in good standing. Most of these malcontents are lay men and women, but some are priests, and not a few are nuns. All of them are animated by a strong rejection of the Church's teachings on sexuality. Because they have the support of the secular media, they comprise a formidable group.

What motivates them today is the debased desire to take down a bishop. Not any bishop: They want to drop a bishop who is an outspoken defender of the faith. They really get excited when they learn of a diocese that was riddled with dissidents and is now almost dissident free.

Geopolitics is at work, as well. While they will work overtime to disable a bishop anywhere in the nation, they prefer to scalp a bishop from the mid-west. Why? Because that's where many of them live. It's also because it is easier for activists to dominate the news in mid-sized cities, as opposed to larger ones where it is much more difficult. Their attacks are orchestrated and well-coordinated: lawyers feed the activists and they feed the media.

Cardinal Raymond Burke, formerly the Archbishop of St. Louis

and then the prefect of the Vatican's highest court, has drawn the enmity of mid-western dissidents for years. He is despised because of his denunciations of Catholic public figures who reject the Church's teachings that bear on public policy issues. Burke's critics have no problem with the Nancy Pelosi who continually claim their Catholic status while doing everything they can to undermine the Church. They have a problem with him.

New York Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan hails from St. Louis and was the Milwaukee archbishop before coming to the Big Apple. He is hated because he cleaned up after his disgraced predecessor, Archbishop Rembert Weakland. Though Weakland embarrassed himself and the Church, he is still revered in left-wing Catholic quarters. He is liked because his views are similar to theirs.

They tried to take Dolan down because he moved the perpetual care fund, which was part of the regular archdiocesan accounts, to a cemetery trust fund. It did not matter that he was following the advice of his Financial Council; what mattered was that his enemies could play fast-and-loose with a contrived controversy. When Dolan moved to New York, they stayed on his trail. Terence McKiernan, the founder of BishopAccountability, pledged a few years ago to "stick it" to Dolan, and has accused him of "keeping the lid on 55 priests." Several attempts challenging McKiernan to release the names have failed. It's a lie and he knows it.

When Bishop John Myers of Peoria took over the Newark archdiocese, his enemies followed him. They went wild when it was learned that a priest was not being properly supervised after he had an encounter with a teenager 12 years earlier; he grabbed the boy while wrestling with him (in front of the boy's mother). In fact, what was really bothering his critics were Myers' strong positions on sexuality. The editorial page editor of the Newark *Star-Ledger*, an angry ex-Catholic, specifically took umbrage with Myers for his defense of

“marriage and life.”

Bishop Robert Finn of Kansas City-St. Joseph inherited a mess made by dissidents and cleaned it up. That made him a target. His enemies seized on the antics of a disturbed priest who took crotch-shot pictures of kids. It is important to note that the review board was contacted, the authorities were notified, and an independent investigation was ordered. But because much more offensive photos were later taken, Finn was found guilty of one misdemeanor for not reporting suspected child abuse. Had he done nothing, no one would have known about the priest because there was no complainant. No matter, they wanted his head and are still after him.

St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson was recently the victim of a campaign by anti-Catholics who tried to frame him. Their goal was to promote the pernicious idea that he did not know that child abuse was against the law. It failed, but what counts is that they tried. Because Carlson fought back, and because he rejects the libertine ideas of his critics, they sought to bring him down.

No one has endured a more vicious assault on his character than John Nienstedt, Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis. In order to understand the motivations behind these attacks, we need to disclose who the principal players are in this quest to scalp a bishop.

Attorney Jeffrey Anderson, the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP), and the *National Catholic Reporter* are leading the charge. Anderson is from St. Paul, SNAP honcho David Clohessy lives in St. Louis, and the *Reporter's* home is Kansas City, Missouri. All of them find a sympathetic ear with the media.

The *Kansas City Star*, the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* are their biggest fans. Outside of the mid-west, they have friends at the *New York Times*, *Boston*

Globe, National Public Radio and *Commonweal* magazine; the latter has become increasingly strident.

Examples of some of the attacks on bishops that the Catholic League addressed in 2014 follow.

June 10

Archdiocese of St. Louis – On June 9, attorney Jeff Anderson released video clips from a May 23 deposition transcript of St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson. It was vintage Anderson: he misrepresented the truth. The media, led by the editorial board of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, echoed the distortion.

The *Post-Dispatch* editorial said the following: “Mr. Anderson asked the archbishop if at the time [1984], he knew it was a crime for an adult to engage in sex with a child. ‘I’m not sure whether I knew it was a crime or not,’ Archbishop Carlson replied. ‘I understand today it is a crime.’” The editorial then hammered Carlson for his response, comparing him to “lawyered-up mobsters, politicians or Wall Street fraudsters.” The editorial board suggested that Archbishop Carlson “should resign and seek treatment for Alzheimer’s or some other form of dementia.”

However, what actually happened in the deposition was quite different than what the paper reported. The lead question in this exchange was never shown on the video clip. The question was: “Well, mandatory reporting laws went into effect across the nation in 1973, Archbishop.” At this point, Carlson’s lawyer, Charles Goldberg, interjected, “I’m going to object to the form of that question.” Anderson said he wanted to finish the question, and Goldberg agreed. Anderson then said to Carlson, “And you knew at all times, while a priest, having been ordained in 1970, it was a crime for an adult to engage in sex with a kid. You knew that right?” Goldberg jumped in again: “I’m going to object to the form of that question now. You’re talking about mandatory reporting.” Anderson agreed to rephrase it.

The *Post-Dispatch* editorial picked up at this point, never indicating that the question was predicated on Carlson's knowledge of mandatory reporting laws in the 1980s. In other words, the video clip was rigged by Anderson to make the archbishop look as if he didn't know it was a crime for an adult to have sex with a kid, and the media, led by the *Post-Dispatch*, published Anderson's propaganda as if it were true. It was obvious that the media never independently verified Anderson's selective account, for if they had they would have seen that not only was this exchange about mandatory reporting laws, but that the archbishop indicated several times in the same deposition that he knew it was a crime for a priest to have sex with a child.

Prior to the controversial exchange, Anderson asked Carlson several questions about Tom Adamson (a homosexual priest who had sex with teenage males). Carlson said, "I remember he was accused of sexual abuse. That's the trial I participated in." Having said as much, it was simply impossible to believe that Carlson did not know it was against the law for an adult to have sex with a minor.

Anderson also asked, "And you also knew when first degree criminal sexual conduct is written and recorded, that is the most serious of the sex crimes against a child. You know that?" To which Carlson said, "Correct." This was further proof that Carlson knew what the law was; this was also said prior to the controversial exchange.

After the exchange in question, Anderson asked Carlson, "But you knew a priest touching the genitals of a kid to be a crime; did you not?" Carlson answered, "Yes." Further exculpatory proof can be found throughout the deposition. On eight different occasions Carlson restated to Anderson that he told relatives of the victims to go to the police. He wouldn't have done so unless he knew a crime may have been committed.

Archbishop Carlson was framed by Jeffrey Anderson and the

media perpetuated his tale.

June 10 – 19

Archdiocese of San Francisco – Rep. Nancy Pelosi does not simply reject the Catholic Church's teachings on marriage, abortion, and contraception—she is a rabid foe of the Church's positions. However, she went beyond her usual stance by lecturing her archbishop on the folly of marriage, properly understood.

On June 19, San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone spoke at a Washington rally organized by the National Organization for Marriage. Pelosi urged him to cancel his plans because the event was not supported by her homosexual friends. Her unmitigated arrogance was on full display when she invoked a remark by Pope Francis. "If someone is gay and is searching for the Lord and has good will," the Holy Father said, "then who am I to judge him?"

The pope's comment had absolutely nothing to do with the institution of marriage; he was addressing homosexual individuals. Moreover, he said nothing that any of his predecessors would have found disagreeable.

Archbishop Cordileone responded to Pelosi as well as a motley group of public officials, community activists, religious leaders, and gay advocates who were also upset that he supports marriage, properly understood. It is a striking sociological moment when elites stage a protest of an archbishop in the Roman Catholic Church simply because he believes—as the whole world has believed for thousands of years—that marriage is the union of a man and a woman.

Those who are quick to brand support for traditional marriage hateful need to look in the mirror. As Archbishop Cordileone said in his excellent response to his critics, "for those who support the conjugal understanding of marriage, the attacks have not stopped at rhetoric. Simply for taking a stand for

marriage as it has been understood in every human society for millennia, people have lost their jobs, lost their livelihoods, and have suffered other types of retribution, including physical violence.”

The archbishop, who is chairman of the bishops’ Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, offered to meet with those offended by his participation in the march. He asked “before you judge us, get to know us.”

When gays go naked in the streets of San Francisco, and mock Catholicism in patently obscene ways, Pelosi is never offended. What offends her is her archbishop’s public defense of the Church’s teachings on marriage.

July 1 – August 1

Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis – An orchestrated crusade was carried out against St. Paul and Minneapolis Archbishop John Nienstedt by activist groups and the media with attorney Jeffrey Anderson, SNAP and the *National Catholic Reporter* leading the charge. They found a sympathetic ear in the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, National Public Radio, Minnesota Public Radio, and *Commonweal* magazine. Jennifer Haselberger, a canon lawyer who resigned from the archdiocese earlier in the year provided the fuel for the attacks.

Haselberger is the darling of *Commonweal*, Minnesota Public Radio, and SNAP; she spoke at the latter’s conference in August. It is a source of great irony that she was suspended by the archdiocese for failing to deal expeditiously with a complaint, yet her signature complaint against the archdiocese was that it didn’t move expeditiously to deal with accused priests.

Over the summer, Haselberger submitted an affidavit to Anderson claiming to have endured “months of harassment, threats, and intimidation”; she pledged to provide examples.

In fact, she provided not a single example of being threatened by anyone, and the examples that she offered of being harassed and intimidated are so weak they only work to undermine her credibility. Moreover, even she admits to at least 17 occasions where her version of events differed with that of her co-workers.

A week before Haselberger gave her affidavit, *Commonweal* printed a lengthy article detailing what she told them: the archbishop was under investigation for inappropriate sexual conduct with seminarians and former priests. Nienstedt announced the investigation on the same day, July 1, claiming innocence. She leaked this information after having learned of it from the law firm that was conducting an investigation, a probe initiated by Nienstedt.

Exactly one week after Haselberger's uncontested affidavit was taken, Minnesota Public Radio aired a documentary that featured all the familiar players, complete with piped-in melodramatic music. For an outlet that prides itself on objectivity, it was nothing but a left-wing hit job. That teed things up for Anderson, who conveniently released Haselberger's statement the next day. The day after that, Laurie Goodstein published her story in the *New York Times*, and two days later her newspaper published a scathing editorial on Nienstedt. On the same day, July 18, two journalists, one from the *National Catholic Reporter*, called for the archbishop to resign. This set the tone for Minnesota newspapers which then called for him to resign.

Nienstedt tried to reach out to the media to tell his side of the story, but what interested them was not his account, it was his sexuality. To be exact, they wanted to know what he did in bed, and with whom: three media outlets questioned him about his sexual behavior. He told the *Star-Tribune*, "No, I'm not gay. And I'm not anti-gay." When asked by the *Pioneer Press* if he had had sex with men since becoming archbishop, he said, "No. Not even before." A homosexual reporter for KMSP,

Fox 9 Minneapolis, also asked the archbishop about his sexuality.

Those out to get Nienstedt cannot be shamed, but they can be stopped. Unfortunately, too many Catholic activists and writers who knew he was being railroaded went mute. It was apparent that the attacks were carefully orchestrated and well-coordinated: lawyers fed the activists and they fed the media.

August 20

Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph – The *Kansas City Star* issued its sixth call for the resignation of Bishop Robert Finn in three years. The occasion was a judge who agreed with the findings of an arbitrator that Finn had violated a 2008 agreement on policies regarding the reporting of child abuse.

The *Star* has been after Bishop Finn since 2010 when a computer technician found disturbing crotch shot photos of fully clothed girls on the computer of a priest; there was one naked photo of a non-sexual nature. A police officer and an attorney were contacted by the diocese and restrictions were placed on the priest. After the priest violated the restrictions Bishop Finn ordered an investigation *even though there was no complainant*. Porn pictures were discovered and Bishop Finn was convicted of not reporting suspected child abuse.

The *Star's* impotence is a function of its misplaced authority: it has no legitimate perch upon which to tell Catholics who their bishop should be. Furthermore, its relentless attacks on Bishop Finn show a maniacal fixation that speaks more about its own problems than any alleged problems Finn has.

August 24

Diocese of Lafayette – The media, activists and dissident Catholics were up in arms over the decision of Lafayette Bishop Michael Jarrell not to publish the names of 15 priests who were accused of abuse prior to 1984. The list was not new

and there were no new accusations of abuse; in fact all of the accused priests were either deceased or long-removed from ministry. Rather, victims' advocates decided to target Bishop Jarrell and waged a media blitz in an attempt to shame the bishop. Bill Donohue was invited by the *Daily Advertiser* to write an op-ed in defense of Bishop Jarrell:

Kudos to Lafayette Bishop Michael Jarrell for not publishing the names of priests accused of a sexual offense. His decision is identical to the one that the leaders of every other institution, public and private, have long come to: it is unethical to do so. Why should the Catholic Church be any different?

A reporter came to my office a few years ago asking me about this issue. Specifically, she asked how I could defend a bishop for not posting the names of accused priests on his diocesan website. I immediately asked for her boss' name and phone number. She wanted to know why. "Because I am going to report you for sexually harassing me, and then I want to see if your name is going to be posted on the website of your cable news employer." She got the point.

I am the CEO of the Catholic League. If someone called me making an accusation against one of my staff members, I can assure you I would not call the cops. No employer would. I would do the same as everyone else: I would conduct my own internal investigation, and would only go to the authorities if I thought the charge was authentic.

There is a profound difference between an accusation, a credible accusation, a substantiated accusation, and a finding of guilt. The assumption behind all three levels of accusations is that the accused is innocent, yet this seems not to matter much anymore, especially when the accused is a priest.

The leader of a professional victims' group maintains that we

need to know the names of the credibly accused priests in Lafayette so that parents can protect their children. Nonsense. Of the 15 priests, seven are dead, five have moved away, and three are retired. None is in ministry. Moreover, all the accusations stem from alleged offenses dating back prior to 1984. In short, it is more than hype to suggest that kids are in danger—it is expressly demagogic, designed to whip up public sentiment against priests.

What is really sickening about this issue is that so many decent and innocent priests have had their reputations ruined by vicious accusers who remain anonymous. No one demands that we make public the names of the accusers, but somehow we are all supposed to know the identity of the accused. Correction: only when it comes to priests are demands made to publish the names of the accused.

The New York Times has a Business Ethics Policy that reads, "Any employee who becomes aware of any conduct that he or she believes to be prohibited by this Policy or a violation of the law...is expected to promptly report the facts forming the basis of that belief or knowledge to any supervisor of the legal department."

In other words, crimes of a sexual nature need not be reported to the police, just the legal department. If this policy is good for reporters, why isn't it good for bishops? The best part of the Times' policy says that those who make false accusations are subject "to discipline up to and including termination." The bishops should adopt this policy immediately.

I am so proud of Bishop Jarrell for acting fairly and courageously.

September

Diocese of Venice – Dissident lay Catholics in Southwest Florida, along with some priests, declared war on Bishop Frank

Dewane. He is the Bishop of Venice and is by all accounts a loyal son of the Church. Which is why they were out to get him.

Dewane drew the ire of Catholic malcontents, and ex-Catholics, because of his orthodoxy. His critics are largely drawn from the ranks of the elderly, and are overrepresented by ex-priests and ex-nuns. They were being aided and abetted by the media. This occasioned a strong response from us: we took on Fox 4 TV, which covers Fort Myers, Cape Coral, and Naples.

The war on Bishop Dewane started in January when ten priests wrote a letter to the Apostolic Nuncio accusing the bishop of governing by "intimidation, the use of fear, shaming, bullying and other non-Christian behaviors." The letter was made public in May when it was sent to the media, and unfolded in an unseemly manner this fall.

The accusing priests refused to come forward and let the accused know of their identity. In fact, they never sent Dewane a copy of their letter (he learned of it through the media). To make matters worse, these cowardly priests did not provide a scintilla of evidence: no specific examples of Dewane's alleged "non-Christian" behavior were offered.

Dewane subsequently released a statement saying that the priests' letter "lacks all credibility." Furthermore, he said that the accusations are "sweeping generalities and are simply false or unfounded." The statement concluded, "With the general nature of the unfounded complaints in the letter that was released, one has to wonder who is being bullied by whom?"

To answer the charges in the letter, Bishop Dewane convened a meeting of all the priests in the diocese. Most priests said that their complaining colleagues should have met with the bishop and handled this matter internally. That's what real men do.

Not surprisingly, Call to Action and Voice of the Faithful,

two wholly discredited groups, piled on. In a state of utter desperation, they reached out to Pope Francis, asking him to enter the fray. Their letter to him was replete with unsubstantiated accusations, and loaded with vitriol.

The Catholic League contacted every parish in the diocese rebutting the charges against Bishop Dewane. Bill Donohue also wrote a detailed letter to Fox 4 TV challenging their professionalism. The station offered a lengthy reply. While it was unconvincing, it was far less partisan than its reporting. We trust they got the message.

CHRISTIAN GENOCIDE MUST END

Children are being beheaded, women are being raped, men are being crucified, and Christians are being forced to "convert or die." This is the essence of radical Islam: the barbarians even kill Muslims, as well as Christians, Jews, and others who are not like them. To make sure the homes they destroy are the right ones—the Christian ones—they mark them with an "N." It means Nazarene. We've seen that kind of branding before in Nazi Germany.

The United Nations General Assembly convenes tomorrow. It needs to act on Resolution 2170, unanimously passed on August 15 by the Security Council. It invokes Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter authorizing a military response. Islamic State terrorists need to be stopped, not contained. If the caliphate is not crushed, the United States risks being bombed again.

Resolution 2170 calls for sanctions to be levied against those who are financing, arming, planning, and recruiting these jihadists. It calls for asset freezes, travel bans, and an arms embargo. The United Nations must now make good on its pledge. More must be done: The United Nations should initiate proceedings in the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity.

The Obama administration needs to give the Kurds, the Iraqis, and all those who are willing to fight the terrorists, the arms they need to win. We are not fighting criminals—we are fighting Islamic State savages who have engaged in acts of war. What is at stake is the preservation of Western civilization and the Judeo-Christian ethos upon which it was built.

The Catholic Church rightly eschews a military response to conflict, but there are times when a "just war" is necessary. That time is now. Either the forces of peace and freedom will prevail, or the forces of death and totalitarianism will triumph. The international community, led by the United States, must act now.

Bill Donohue
President



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