

WASHINGTON POST MAKES FALSE CLAIMS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an editorial in today's *Washington Post*:

In the first paragraph of the November 13 editorial in the *Washington Post*, it says that the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church "raged unchecked for decades and, even after it was exposed in 2002 by the Boston Globe, has been met by the church hierarchy with denial, temporizing, stone walling and half-measures." That is factually wrong.

Indeed, during this time span, no institution in America, religious or secular, has had less of a problem with the sexual abuse of minors than the Catholic Church.

Here are the data on the number of clergymen (priests and deacons) who have had a credible accusation (not substantiated) made against them during the year listed.

2004	22
2005	9
2006	14
2007	4
2008	10
2009	6
2010	7
2011	9
2012	6
2013	9
2014	6
2015	7
2016	2
2017	6

Average: 8.36

Consider the most recent reports on this subject, covering the last two years for which we have data: .005 percent of the clergy have had a credible accusation made against them.

There is no basis in reality for the *Washington Post* to conclude that the Dallas norms adopted by the bishops in 2002 have not worked. Clearly they have. Here's why.

Review boards staffed by professionals in several fields are empowered to deal with accusations. Once an allegation is deemed credible (the bar is quite low) the accused must step aside pending an investigation. Moreover, virtually every person who works or volunteers for the Church must undergo training programs learning how to combat the sexual abuse of minors.

Also, many dioceses now have programs that invite alleged victims to come forward in pursuit of justice. It was just such a program that led Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York, to turn in a sitting cardinal (McCarrick), as well as one of his auxiliary bishops. What institution can match these initiatives? Certainly not the public schools, about which we hear nothing from those who never stop bashing the Catholic Church.

There is much work to be done, but fair-minded assessments of the progress that has been made since the Dallas reforms would not concur with the misinformed editorial in the *Washington Post*.

Contact Fred Hiatt, editorial page editor:
Fred.Hiatt@washpost.com