

WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE ASSOCIATED PRESS?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the latest attack by the Associated Press (AP) on the Catholic Church:

Something is going on at AP that needs to stop. There is a concerted effort on the part of this American wire service to smear the Catholic Church. This is the third time in the past three months that AP has *unfairly* slammed the Church on the subject of clergy sexual abuse.

In October, AP was critical of the Church for not keeping tabs on priests removed from ministry—as if other institutions monitor the behavior of their former sex offenders. In November, it published anecdotal stories—with no summary evidence—of some Catholics who were unhappy with their diocese for the way it investigated cases of alleged abuse.

Never once did it report that this problem is almost non-existent in the Catholic Church today: the stories are all about dead priests or those who were kicked out of the priesthood. Now it is back again, with another installment of its “investigation.”

“Church Offers Little Outreach to Minority Victims of Priests.” That is the title of the story it released over the weekend. AP put three reporters on this non-story: they could not come up with one statistic to prove their point that somehow the Church treats minority victims different from non-minority victims.

Even the anecdotes the reporters roll out don't support their thesis. No one claimed that he was treated differently because of his minority status. Didn't an editor catch this? Embarrassing.

It begins with a lie: the reporters say “the church has done little to identify and reach sexual abuse victims.” It must be thinking about the public schools. In fact, no institution has established independent compensation programs for alleged victims, asking them to come forward with their story, other than the Catholic Church; many dioceses have followed the lead of the Archdiocese of New York.

The reporters follow up with an accusation that is hollow. They claim that there is no “concerted outreach” to minority victims. That’s right. Like every institution in the nation, the Church does not employ bean counters, or play identity politics, in its handling of sexual misconduct.

If AP is unhappy with the Catholic Church for not collecting data on the racial and ethnic profile of alleged victims, perhaps it can open its own books to the public showing how it keeps racial and ethnic data on its miscreants.

Then the story gets worse. It quotes some professor from Case Western Reserve University, Brian Clites, who is supposedly an expert on this subject (I never heard of him). He says the Church has a practice of shipping predator priests to poor minority neighborhoods. What evidence did this “leading scholar on clergy sexual abuse” provide? None. It was his unsupported opinion.

As it turns out, there is a reason why no one knows who this guy is. Clites is not a “leading scholar” of anything. He has never published a book on any subject. Type his name in the Amazon search engine under “books” and up pops, “Did you mean brian clothes?”

That’s how well known this “leading scholar” is. Oh, yes, there is a listing for him at Case Western and it says he is working on his first book (about alleged victims). Didn’t an editor catch this? Embarrassing.

There is something sinister going on at AP. It is cherry

picking the Catholic Church, turning up nothing but old cases of abuse and inane “findings” like the one it just published.

Maybe the managing editor can explain what their game is.

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