

# WITCH HUNT AGAINST CHICAGO ARCHDIOCESE

Earlier today, Catholic League president Bill Donohue criticized *Roll Call* for an irresponsible story on Father Daniel Coughlin. Prior to becoming House Chaplain, the Chicago priest ministered to troubled priests. Though he did nothing wrong, the story left the impression that he did. Now a so-called victims' advocacy group, Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), is accusing Father Coughlin, and Chicago Archbishop Francis Cardinal George, of wrongdoing.

Donohue addressed this new development today:

"There is no group in America that has made more wildly unsubstantiated accusations against the Catholic Church than SNAP. Now it's feeding off the *Roll Call* story, waxing delirious once again. Yesterday it accused Father Coughlin of helping to 'conceal felonies,' yet offered not one iota of evidence that the priest ever broke the law.

"Today it says Coughlin 'oversaw pedophiles,' a charge that was flatly contradicted even by *Roll Call*: the newspaper said that 'Coughlin was not responsible for overseeing the men.' Moreover, SNAP's comment that 'There's no evidence that he [Coughlin] called police or warned parishioners about them' is too cute by half: SNAP has no evidence that Coughlin was ever in a position requiring him to call the cops or issue warnings about anything. SNAP may just as well have said there is no evidence Coughlin ever called the fire department about a church fire.

"SNAP, which is largely unemployed these days given the reforms of the Catholic Church, is now pointing fingers at Cardinal George. Unfortunately, there are some in the media—like those who covered SNAP's press conference today—who

give credence to this witch hunt. SNAP needs to either put up or shut up. Moreover, it would be great if the media did a '60 Minutes' piece unmasking SNAP.

"Father Coughlin and Cardinal George are great men who have served the Catholic Church with distinction. They deserve better than this."