



Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church

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Letters to the editor
New York Times

9 May 2011

Dear Editor,

In a letter received by the Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church (ARCC) dated January 26, 2011, Archbishop Dolan affirmed his support for both the Catholic League, and its president, Mr. William Donohue.

Yet in the past month, Mr. Donohue and the Catholic League ran a full-paged advertisement in the NY Times entitled, "Straight Talk About the Catholic Church" which we find to be filled with inaccuracies, distortions, and insensitivities regarding the clergy abuse situation. It is offensive and a scandalous embarrassment to the Catholic Church. Statements made in this ad directly conflict with the Archbishop's recent public statements recommitting the U.S. bishops to addressing the clergy sex abuse matter in the Church. Having publically supported Mr. Donohue, Dolan's continued silence on the ad seems to offer tacit agreement to its contents.

Most appalling in this ad is the statement, "they weren't children and they weren't raped." Mr. Donohue's blanket statement is simply wrong. While the John Jay report did not raise questions of pubescence, it does state that over 70% of victims were aged 14 or below. To any parent, those are children. Also, almost 20% of victims were females, which would refute Mr. Donohue's claim that this matter is about homosexuality. Finally, sexual assault is not about sexuality; it is about power, violation, and robbing youths of their innocence; these constitute violations against several Commandments. The cover-ups by hierarchy, even if not violations of canon law, are scandalous violations of the 8th Commandment, a law which surely must be seen as taking precedence over canon law.

As to the severity of the issue, we remind the Archbishop that sexual assault of a minor is a felony. Moving priests rather than addressing the issue is also a felony called "aiding and abetting a felon." Furthermore, lying or covering up such movement is also a crime called "obstruction of justice."

Having publically supported Mr. Donohue, Dolan's failure publically to denounce this ad and those who placed it will leave Catholics with no alternative but to conclude that the Archbishop tacitly by his silence approves of felonious behaviors, exempts members of the clergy from the 8th Commandment, does not seriously wish to protect God's children, and merely provides lip service to ending this injustice in the church.

Sincerely yours,

Patrick Edgar, DPA, President, Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church (ARCC)